



## **Interfaith Perspectives: Prayers in Times of Difficulty**

This booklet contains prayers from the six major world faiths which are recited in times of difficulty. These reflect our diverse, multi-faith community, as well as informing the RE curriculum at primary and secondary levels. It consists of Christianity (Church of England), Christianity (Roman Catholic), Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism and Islam. These prayers are shared in this resource as a source of support at this time of great uncertainty.

**Faith Section**

## Interfaith Perspectives: Christianity (C of E)

The Church is the community of men and women centred around Jesus and being his presence in the world. The Church of England has provided a range of resources to support worship at home and, importantly, guidance on how the activities of the Christian communities nationally will continue in light of the Coronavirus. More information can be found using the following link: <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-liturgy-and-prayer-resources>

Below is a selection of recommended prayers:

<b>A Prayer for Guidance</b>	<b>A Prayer for the world</b>	<b>A Prayer for Protection</b>
<p>Assist us mercifully, O Lord, in these our prayers and supplications, and dispose the way of <i>thy</i> servants towards the attainment of everlasting salvation; that, among all the changes and chances of this mortal life, they may ever be defended by <i>thy</i> gracious and ready help; through Jesus Christ our Lord. <i>Amen</i></p>	<p>God of love and hope, you made the world and care for all creation, but the world feels strange right now. The news is full of stories about the Coronavirus. Some people are worried that they might get ill. Others are anxious for their family and friends. Be with them and help them to find peace. We pray for the doctors and nurses and scientists, and all who are working to discover the right medicines to help those who are ill. Thank you that even in these anxious times, you are with us. Help us to put our trust in you and keep us safe. <b>Amen.</b></p>	<p>O God, the protector of all who trust in you, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy: increase and multiply upon us your mercy; that with you as our ruler and guide, we may so pass through things temporal that we lose not our hold on things eternal; through Jesus Christ our Lord.</p>

## Interfaith Perspectives: Christianity (RC)

Guidance from the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales acknowledges that in these disturbing times the rhythm of prayer must continue and that the faith community of believers have an important role to play. The daily effort of kindness and mutual support for all will ease the burden of anxiety and fear and will open communication which can be a lifeline to the vulnerable at this time. Catholics are reminded that 'The Lord is my shepherd, there is nothing that I shall want.' Additional prayers are noted below:

### Prayer to our Lord for the grace of Healing and Protection

Lord Jesus Christ, you travelled through towns and villages curing every disease and illness. At your command the sick were made well. Come to our aid now, in the midst of the global spread of the Coronavirus, that we may experience your healing love. Heal those who are sick with the virus. May they regain their health and strength. Heal us from fear, which prevents neighbours from helping one another. Heal us from pride, which can make us claim invulnerability to a disease that knows no borders.

Good Lord, healer of all, stay by our side in this time of uncertainty and sorrow. May those who have died from the virus rest in peace and rise in glory. Be with the families of those who are sick or have died. As they worry and grieve, defend them from illness and despair. Be with the doctors, nurses, researchers, and all medical professionals who seek to heal and help those affected and who put themselves at risk in the process. May they know your protection and peace. Be with the leaders of all nations. Give them the foresight to act with prudence and charity for the well-being of the people they serve. Stay with us, Lord, and grant us your peace. Amen.

### A Prayer for Protection

May the Lord Jesus Christ be with me, that He may defend me; may He be within me, that He may conserve me; may He be before me, that He may lead me; may He be after me, so that He may guard me; may He be above me, that He may bless me, who with God, the Father and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns forever and ever. Amen.

**Source:**

<https://www.ourcatholicprayers.com/prayer-for-Christ's-protection.html>

## Interfaith Perspectives: Judaism

Chief Rabbi Lord Jonathon Sacks reflects on the global pandemic bringing out the best in us. Simultaneously, a threat which is affecting all nations at the same time can only unite us. This is a time for the faith community to maintain courage and hope. He reminds us that our vulnerabilities are exposed, and we are facing a great fragility. In response, he speaks of a covenant of human solidarity and human good that speaks not of 'I' but a greater 'we'. Some additional prayers from the Torah, the Book of Psalms are noted below:

### A Psalm of David (23)

The LORD *is* my shepherd; I shall not want.  
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters.  
He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.  
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou *art* with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.  
Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.  
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

### Psalm 102

Adonai, hear my prayer, let my cry come before You. Do not hide Your face from me in my time of trouble; turn Your ear to me when I cry, answer me speedily.

## Interfaith Perspectives: Hinduism

In the Bhagavadgita, God gives us the assurance that His devotees, who are immersed in the thoughts of Him and soaked by intense devotion to Him are freed forever from the bonds of mortal life. Prayers align our hearts and minds with the highest purpose of our lives, which is salvation or self-realisation. There is no power in the world other than the power of prayer that can take us so close to the heart of God and connect us to Him in ways which we cannot even imagine. The power of prayer is such that even the gods as Indra, Vayu and Agni employ it when they seek the help of other gods like Brahma, Vishnu or Siva. We can change our lives and our destinies, using the power of prayers. Even the most difficult tasks can be performed with confidence when we unite the spiritual power of our prayers with the power of our intentions. From a spiritual perspective, it is good to pray with the right attitude, for a righteous cause. Our prayers should be aimed for our spiritual welfare as well as the welfare of others. Equally important is to express love and devotion to God through our prayers with no aim or desire. A mantra to Kali the Divine Protector is noted below as an example of a prayer to elicit intense devotion.

### Kalika-Yei Mantra

#### In Sanskrit

ॐ कलिं कालिका-येइ नमः

#### In English

“Om Klim Kalika-Yei Namaha”

**Benefit:** This mantra is believed to bring relief from all kinds of difficulties, no matter how complex.

## Interfaith Perspectives: Buddhism

The purpose of Buddhist Prayer is to awaken our spirit and our inner ability of compassion, wisdom and strength, rather than to request external forces based on idolising, fear and worldly or heavenly gain. Buddhist prayer is a form of meditation because it is a practice of inner reconditioning. Buddhist prayer substitutes the negative with the virtuous and points us the better things of life. A key practice is to carve time throughout the day to communicate with the Divine and chant. Metta Karuna, a symbolic prayer in Buddhism combines 'metta' as a desire for living beings to be happy with 'karuna' as a desire for all living beings to being free of pain and suffering.

### Metta Karuna Prayer

O Amida, Oneness of Life and Light,  
Entrusting in you Great Compassion, may you shed the foolishness in myself,  
Transforming me into a conduit of love. May I be a medicine for the sick and weary,  
Nursing their afflictions until they are cured; May I become food and drink,  
During time of famine May I protect the helpless and the poor, May I be a lamp,  
For those who need you Light, May I be a bed for those who need rest, and guide all seekers to the Other Shore.  
May all find happiness through my actions and let no one suffer because of me.  
Whether they love or hate me, whether they hurt or wrong me,  
May they obtain true entrusting, Through Other Power, and realise Supreme Nirvana.

Namo Amida Buddha

## Interfaith Perspectives: Sikhism

Prayer is a central part of Sikh devotional life with beautiful hymns (Hukamnama), meditations (Naam Simran), devotional readings (Paath) and five daily prayers (Nitnem Banis). Additionally, the practice of 'Seva' is a symbolic act of compassion, simply helping someone without regard for any compensation. This virtue has been embraced at the heart of Sikh Dharma as the highest expression of worship – as it is the same as serving God. It is the doing of the service that is important, not merely the feeling of compassion or empathy. In each moment of doing seva, a Sikh holds an inner intention of prayerful connection to the Divine – connection to the Divine present in the person who is being served; but also, the connection to the Divine in all materials involved in the seva. These difficult times present multiple opportunities to embody seva for the faith community. The following hymns are applicable at times of difficulty.

*Har Praan Prabho Sukhdaatae*

"The Lord is My Life's Breath, He is the Masterful Bestower of Peace"

*Toon Samrath Saran Ko Data Dukh Bhanjan Sukh Ra-e*

"You are the Almighty Bestower of Protection, the Defeater of Distress, and King of Joyous Comfort."

## Interfaith Perspectives: Islam

### Prayers from the Qur'aan

Read Aayat ul Kursi (chapter 2 : verse 255) every morning, evening and after each Fardh Salat. In hadeeth it is mentioned as being a means of protection from all calamities. "Whoever recites Aayat ul Kursi after every Salat (obligatory prayer), the only barrier between him and paradise is death." (Sunan Nasa'i)

One should read Surah al Ikhlāas (chapter 112), Surah al Falaq (chapter 113) and Surah al Naas (chapter 114) every morning, evening and before sleeping. The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said: "Recite Surah al Ikhlāas and al-Mu'awwidhatayn (Surah al Falaq and Surah al Naas) three times in the morning and the evening. It will suffice you in all respects." (Tirmidhi)

### Prayers from the Sunnah

#### Supplication 1

It is reported that Abdullah bin Umar (r.a) would read this du'aa when leaving his home:

اللَّهُمَّ سَلِّمْ بِيَّ وَسَلِّمْ لِيَّ

'O Allaah, keep me safe and keep others safe from me.' (Al-Aadaabul Mufrad)

#### Supplication 2

Anas ibn Maalik (r.a) narrates that the Prophet ﷺ would say:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْبَرَصِ وَالْجُنُونِ وَالْجُدَامِ وَمِنْ سَيِّئِ الْأَسْقَامِ

'O Allaah, I seek refuge in You from vitiligo, madness, leprosy, and bad diseases' (Sunan Abī Dāwūd)

*This supplication should be read regularly at all times.*



### Supplication 3

'Uthmaan ibn 'Affaan (r.a) narrates that the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said, "Whoever reads three times in the morning and evening:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الَّذِي لَا يَضُرُّ مَعَ اسْمِهِ شَيْءٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

'In the Name of Allaah, by whose Name nothing in the earth or the heaven is harmed, and He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing', nothing will harm him (Sunan al-Tirmidhī; Sunan Abī Dāwūd).

*This supplication should be read thrice in the morning and thrice in the evening (preferably after Fajr and after Maghrib prayers).*

### Supplication 4

'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar (r.a) said, "The Prophet ﷺ would not abandon these words in the evening and the morning:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ الْعَافِيَةَ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ، اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ الْعَفْوَ وَالْعَافِيَةَ فِي دِينِي وَدُنْيَايَ وَأَهْلِي وَمَالِي، اللَّهُمَّ اسْتُرْ عَوْرَاتِي وَآمِنْ رُوعَاتِي، اللَّهُمَّ احْفَظْنِي مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْ، وَمِنْ خَلْفِي، وَعَنْ يَمِينِي، وَعَنْ شِمَالِي، وَمِنْ فَوْقِي، وَأَعُوذُ بِعَظَمَتِكَ أَنْ أُغْتَالَ مِنْ تَحْتِي

'O Allaah, I ask You for wellbeing in this world and the hereafter. O Allaah, I ask You for forgiveness and wellbeing in my religious and worldly affairs, and my family and my wealth. O Allaah, conceal my faults and keep me safe from my fears. O Allaah, protect me from the front and from behind me, and on my right and on my left and from above, and I seek refuge in Your greatness from receiving unexpected harm from beneath me.'"

(Sunan Abī Dāwūd; Sunan Ibn Mājah).

*This supplication should be read at least once in the morning and once in the evening.*