

A LITURGY FOR THOSE WHO FEEL

Abandoned By One Who Chose Suicide

You know our grieving is far from over, O Lord.
You know our healing is incomplete.
You know we are not whole.

Though the initial shock of loss
subsides in time, the aftershocks endure,
and we must perpetually reckon the cost.

For it is a compounding harm,
tallied across every meaningful moment—
good and ill alike—in which
we must learn what it means
to wrestle anew with the nuances
of all these empty spaces;
empty because the one who should have
been here to labor, to lament, to console,
encourage, or celebrate with us is,
 by their own choice,
so conspicuously absent.

I feel forsaken by one in whom
I placed great trust, O God.
I know a deep loneliness
no other soul can touch, like a pit hollowed
beneath the foundations of my existence,
an ever-present void into which it seems
my whole world might crumble.

I find it harder now to love,
and to let myself be loved,
as my instinct is to duck and cover,
run and hide, or scratch and fight
against the very compassions I need,
for fear of letting another near enough
to pierce my heart again.

And yet I know, if left unchecked,

these ripples of resentment will eat away
all future joy in life,
as surely as the slow workings of rain and rust
will flake and crumble iron.
But for your merciful,
tendering work, O Christ,
our hearts would finally be hidden
beneath impenetrable gnarls of scar tissue,
unable to give and receive again.

So let me now—and every time
such emotions arise—address them
before they perform their malignant work.
Lead me by your Spirit
to weed this field of heart and mind and soul,
lest it be overgrown and choked
of all that is good.

I did not choose to be saddled
with this long labor of forgiveness, O God,
but it is not a work I would neglect.
Be now—when I feel most abandoned—
the wellspring of all solace,
teaching me to trust you better,
teaching me to lament, to confess,
and to release all bitterness.
Let me receive the true comfort
of these eternal truths:

You, O God, are a loving father who has
never abandoned his children.
You, O Jesus, are a faithful bridegroom
who laid down his life for his bride.
You, O Spirit, are always with us,
so that we are never forsaken or alone.

All that I most deeply need,
is constantly and faithfully offered in you.
You are my refuge and my comfort.
Even in this.
And in your presence, my Lord and my God,
I can uncover my wounds,

express my doubts and fears,
give vent to my frustrations,
my disappointments,
my anger, my grief.

In your presence alone I can both
feel these things and also learn to release them,
like a child folding paper boats
and setting them adrift in a swift stream
to watch them spin away
toward the ocean of your infinite love.

Intercede for me, O Christ.
In the place of these profound hurts
that will not be completely healed in this life,
and in the quiet that will follow these questions
that have no satisfying resolution,
meet me with your gentle presence.
Lead me from here
to the place of your peace.

Father, by the work of your Spirit
enable me to forgive _____
for the pain they have left me
to wrestle with in this season.
May your great mercies cover them,
and all consequences of their choice.

I offer to you, O God, these hurts,
and all other sufferings
that the enemy of my soul
might intend for evil and harm,
so that such wounds would not
render me brittle, but rather more supple,
as you—a potter watering and working
a soft clay—tenderly fold and smooth
such sorrows into the better design of
your vessel. Shape me into a reservoir
of your glory, your mercy, and your love.

Amen.

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