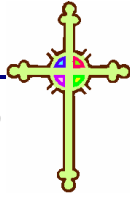


Reflection



Hope gives us the strength to develop a peaceful optimism towards life. Hope gives us courage to face seemingly insurmountable obstacles. When facing the darkness, fear, and pain, hope teaches us that we can begin to understand and accept our imperfections and make use of the tremendous potential we possess. By seeing the world through the lens of hope, we can truly begin to honour our uniqueness. Through honouring our own uniqueness, we can then come to appreciate and honour the precious uniqueness of others.

Perhaps the deepest insight we can acquire from letting our hearts run to hope is that we are truly never alone. With that realization, we can unlock a wellspring of love and enthusiasm for life. By turning to hope, we discover that God has given us the ability to turn our life around, and through that turning, we discover the light within us.

—Author Unknown

Those who would like to, are invited to name one thing that gives them hope...

Closing Prayer

We pray in thanks for those with hope around us, for eyes to see the ever-present hint of spring within our soul.

Thanks be to You for the gentle, persistent power of Your love that asserts itself within us, and will not be denied until it buds, then bursts, full-flower.

We praise You for Your patience, with our blindness and our short-lived memories, and stand dumbfounded that You accept us all and all within us and dare to take delight in us. This alone is cause for hope—to know Your ease with our dis-ease of self. We trust that what You know and love of us give peace today and future promise.

Amen

—Joyce Rupp

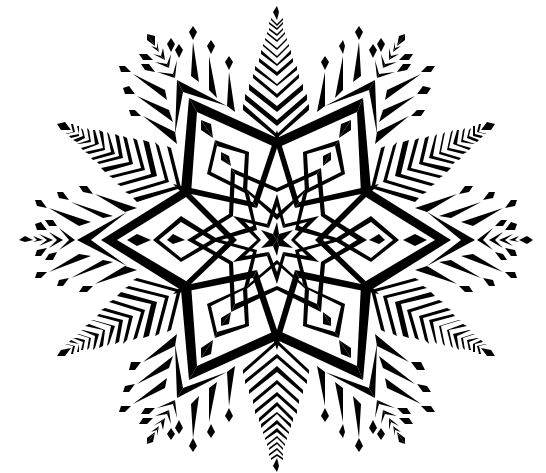


Compiled by Les Miller and Melinda Rapallo
York Catholic District School Board



HOPE IN WINTER

A Liturgy



“In the depth of winter, I finally learned that there was in me an invincible summer...”

Albert Camus



Opening Prayer

Leader: We pray to You,
O Promised One,
And ask,
what hope have You to give us
When heaviness weighs on us like a blanket
and our hearts can find small cause
for joy?
What promise can you make
That would restore our spirit?
We see need on every side,
Hear questions without answers,
Feel hunger with no food that
satisfies.

How long, O God,
Before You come?
How long before You once more
work wonders
in our hearts and land?
We have need for You.
We go blind for lack of hope.
Come quickly,
Promise of our God.

All: Amen

-Source Unknown




Antiphonal Prayer

Left side: Praise to you for summer, fall
and spring.
But faith reserves the right to wonder
when chill of winter invades our bones.

Right side: Where are you when a sign
is asked and none is given,
and barrenness in earth and soul is all
we know?

Left: Enough of it! We've had enough of
grey and cold and emptiness.
Life wears heavily and joy becomes a
victim in the winter of our hearts.

Right: What good is death if Easter
never comes, if any sign of risen
life is only in our memory and
promises are all past due?



Left: Revive. Restore. Lift up our
hearts and, with them, all creation.
Breathe upon your world and warm us
all.

Right: What word have you for those
who wait, for those who long like deer for
running streams,
like infants for their mothers' breasts,
who yearn like birds for flight?
What word have You for us who wait?

-Source Unknown



Scripture Reading: Isaiah 40:28-31

*Let us listen to the words of the prophet
Isaiah.*

The Lord is the everlasting God, the
Creator of the ends of the earth. He
will not grow tired or weary, and His
understanding no one can fathom.
He gives strength to the weary, and
increases the power of the weak...
those who hope in the Lord will renew
their strength. They will soar on wings
like eagles; they will run and not grow
weary, they will walk and not be faint.
The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.



*Dear God,
You gave me light
when I couldn't find my way.
You gave me today when I lost yesterday.
You gave me hope when all hope was gone
You gave me strength so I could carry on...
M. R.*