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**Prayer 8: For compassion**

***To begin***

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

*Centre yourself now in silence. Take five deep breaths in and out. Allow your mind to become a little quieter. Put everything except this prayer away from you. Give yourself a few minutes of stillness to calm yourself before you begin. Become aware of God's Spirit with you inspiring you in your prayer.*

***My prayer today***

At the heart of some of the greatest movies ever made and greatest stories ever told is a very important quality; the quality of compassion. We see it in Stephen Spielberg's *Schindler's List*, in Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, in the movie *12 Years a Slave* and in the book, *the Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*. It's even a theme in *Frozen 1* and *Frozen 2*! To be able to feel compassion is important because it leads us to action. And so today we pray for compassion,

*Generous God*, fill us with compassion and concern for others, young and old, that we may look after one another in these challenging days.  
Bring healing to those who are sick with the virus and be with their families.

May those who have died rest in your eternal embrace.  
Comfort their family and friends.

Strengthen and protect all medical professionals caring for the sick and all who work in our medical facilities.  
Give wisdom to leaders in healthcare and governance that they may make the right decisions for the well-being of people.

We pray in gratitude for all those in our country who will continue to work in the days ahead in so many fields of life for the sake of us all.  
Bless them and keep them safe.

Amen. (Adapted, Kildare and Leighlin Diocesan Liturgical Resources)

Now take a moment to look at this image below. It is a picture of a woman looking at herself in the mirror and smiling.

If you wish, take a moment to look at yourself in a mirror.

Sometimes, other people show more compassion to us than we show ourselves. How are you with that?

But how do you see yourself? This isn't a 'selfie' moment; this is you being real about how God, your loving Father, sees you.

Remember that God doesn't make mistakes, remember that God sees you as you really are; his wonderful work of art. Spend some moment being with that thought. God made you and God loves you.

Now, spend some time reflecting on the ways you can be a bit hard on yourself. Allow yourself to realise that in these really difficult times, it's actually okay not to be on top of everything, it's okay to not feel as if you're doing everything that needs to be done. God is with you in all that you're doing.

Be gentle with yourself in the way that God is gentle with you his beloved son or daughter.

Allow yourself to feel gentleness and compassion towards yourself. You aren't perfect but that's absolutely okay with God and with the people who love you.



### ***A word from scripture***

Psalm 102 Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name!  
Bless the Lord, O my soul, and never forget all His blessings. The Lord is compassion and love, slow to anger and rich in mercy.

### ***To conclude***

*Pray these or words of your own in response to today's prayer.*

- God you are Compassion and Love. Help us to live as you want us to live, seeing others' needs and putting them first.
- Jesus, our Brother, you love us. You know what it is to suffer. Help those who are suffering. Bring them your peace.
- Holy Spirit, be with me. Breathe your strength into me, make me brave and kind, focused and aware of what needs to be done. Help me to be gentle and kind to myself.

*If you have time, a lovely uplifting song to finish your prayer is Bruno Mars's, You can Count on Me. This is a song about friendship and it captures well God's friendship with us as well.*

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yc6T9iY9SOU&list=PLhX6vSH1PZxcQtZUdfnW1zR\\_waq4A6ozn](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yc6T9iY9SOU&list=PLhX6vSH1PZxcQtZUdfnW1zR_waq4A6ozn)

Conclude as always by saying slowing the Our Father.... .. and by blessing yourself, In the Name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. AMEN

