

FOR THOSE SHELTERING IN PLACE DUE TO COVID-19

O Compassionate Shepherd,

You gather us into your one fold, your one church: always, but sometimes in different places.

You bear us all on your generous shoulders, especially those of us home in safety from COVID-19 or shut-in from age or infirmity.

We worry that our world and our own community have become dangerous with a terrifying infection that afflicts us indiscriminately and takes some of us without warning.

We feel alone, often to the point of solitude and sadness.

We long to encounter you again in the community of faith and our celebrations of the gift of Holy Eucharist which sustains us and heals us.

Our anxiety and confusion bring us doubt.

But we know that you are with us.

There are times that we wonder whether our faith is enough; our hope is strong; or our love draws us to that often hidden mystery of your abiding presence.

We ask you to accept our loneliness, not as a contest we somehow must endure, but rather as a journey into our souls to re-discover ourselves.

Help us to let go of the frustrations that make us relive the days and nights that never seem to end.

Accept our fears and frustrations, not as complaints, but as a sincere sacrifice so that the intentions of our hearts may be true and holy.

Give us strength in mind to resist feelings of inadequacy and self-withdrawal that only deepen our solitude and seclusion.

Give us strength in body to take up physical activity to lessen the severities and intensities of our own medical conditions and physical weaknesses.

Give us strength in spirit to find and celebrate our own lives, for all that we have endured both in joy and in sorrow.

But, most of all, give us peace in our souls so that the pandemic in which we now live may not defeat us physically, mentally, or spiritually.

May the Spirit of power and wisdom come upon us and overshadow us with the fortitude of resilience and determination so that we may live our life without fear.

You walk with us, carry our crosses with us, and hold us in your loving embrace.

Amen.