March 2020 Prayer and Praise

As we enter this season of Lent, we have the privilege of considering our faith through the life, death, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. His story of love and sacrifice gives us purpose and meaning in who we are and in all that we do.

Our lives of faith contain not only times of pain, struggle, and questions; but also hope, beauty, and healing found only in relationship with the One who loves us best. This poem captures many of these truths. I pray it encourages you and creates space for deeper reflection in both your faith and your practice during this special season.

Christy Secor RN, DNP, CDWF, NCF Professional Ministries Director

Mark Me
~by Allan Roy Morton Jr.

Mark me for your own
Craft this body
It is yours
Stewarding it is my delight
Who am I kidding?
It's my challenge
My cross to bear

"What happened to you?
Does that hurt?
Why are you this way?"
The questions of a child uttered
Of an adult still wondering
What was God doing?
What is He doing?
Tell me His story enshrined in your flesh.

Covering our scars
Minding our wounds
Fading our stretch marks
Obsessed with thoughts
I'm less than
Incapable
Useless
A burden

Hide not your scars
Your pain
What you deem ugly
In whose eyes are they a reproach?
Don't hide
Boast
BOAST in what makes you weak
Makes you feel…less than.

How are you less?
Is His image marred because of your scars?
Earthen vessels carrying the glory of God
Image bearing
You have His eyes
Your pain signs to me!
It is God's call to Creation.
"Remember the curse…!"
Yes, how can I forget

"But remember who breaks it."
How through suffering it is undone
It is undone
Undone
And then, the resurrection.

Oh Jacob, why do you limp?
Has your God cursed you?
Has He left you hobbled in this life?
Disfigured?
Slowed for your enemies to surround and consume you?

Oh no, young one
A smile across his aging lips
This – it is a sign of His healing
A promise
A new name
A reminder
Wrestling with God is good

March Prayer Calendar

- March 1 – We praise God for the quality manuscripts the *Journal of Christian Nursing* has been receiving and how this will add to the body of knowledge of the profession. Please continue to pray for God to raise up additional authors and reviewers for the *JCN*.
- March 2 – Pray for the Nurses Christian Fellowship student chapters who are participating in the Back-Door Loss coaching program. This is a program to help chapters continue to be on campus

and thrive from year to year. Pray for God to open doors and provide student leaders to continue the work of NCF on campus.

- March 3 – Please be praying for wisdom and discernment for government, healthcare, and school officials as they seek ways to manage and mitigate the coronavirus outbreak.
- March 4 – We thank God for this faithfulness in our recent Ministry Partner Development sprint which helped raise support for the prayer and financial needs of NCF staff. It was an opportunity to see God at work and to support staff members who are a part of our team.
- March 5 – We lift up students and professionals who are dealing with mental health crises. We ask God to protect each person and to provide a network of others who can provide care and godly counsel. Pray these situations will be used to help those who are hurting recognize the loving God who walks with us in whatever challenges we face.
- March 6 – May God give wisdom and discernment to NCF staff and volunteers who are preparing materials in preparation for National Nurses Week. May these materials be used to draw nurses to a closer relationship to Jesus Christ and reconnect them to their purpose and calling.
- March 7 – Skip McDonald, who works with nursing students and faculty in the southeast, has recently published a book providing Bible studies that focus on our mental health. May God use her book, *God's Word and Mental Health*, to shine light in dark places.
- March 8 – Praise God for a new professional nurse group that's beginning in Austin, Texas. We ask God to use this group in a mighty way to support and encourage nurses in both their faith and in their practice.
- March 9 – We ask God for His eyes to see the events and adjustments that are a part of our day. May we lean into Him and trust Him through these interruptions.
- March 10 – We continue to life up in prayer NCF's National Director, Kathy Schoonover-Shoffner, while she is on sabbatical. May she experience rest, reflection, and productivity in the months ahead.
- March 11 – We ask God to continue to move in the hearts and lives of nurses who are struggling to find support, rest, and purpose. May they be drawn closer to Him and reminded of their value and worth – not in what they do, but in who they are as sons and daughters of the King.
- March 12 – Pray for the timing and staff support that is needed as we seek to move forward with some technological updates that will better support our members.
- March 13 – Pray for NCF staff raising support. Pray for them to be encouraged as they ask for partners in the gospel. Pray for the Lord to provide all their needs.
- March 14 – We ask God to be at work in the hearts and lives of nursing students and nurses who are traveling on missions trips across the country and around the globe. May God use their efforts to spread hope, comfort, and the love of Jesus Christ.
- March 15 – We thank God for the tremendous group of professional nurse group leaders who volunteer their time to support our nurse groups around the country. May God provide insight, creativity, and encouragement as they seek to reach others in their profession. May these groups be safe places for nurses and nursing students to share their stories.

- March 16 – May God continue to guide and bless Christy Secor as she serves as NCF's Interim Director during Kathy's sabbatical. Pray that He would provide energy, time, wisdom, and rest.
- March 17 – Pray for new student leaders to say "yes" to leading in the fall in all of our NCF student chapters.
- March 18 – Pray for the families of NCF's staff who are facing physical and emotional health challenges. We ask that God would provide protection and healing.
- March 19 – May the Lord continue to bless and to build NCF's membership among nursing students, faculty, practicing nurses, and retired nurses. May what we do provide opportunities for connecting our faith and our practice more deeply.
- March 20 – Prayer for our *Journal of Christian Nursing* team as they have picked up additional duties for the journal while Kathy is on sabbatical. Pray for eyes to see and catch the details and updates that are needed with the articles being published.
- March 21 – We thank God for the creativity and insight of Leanne Snavely and Jessica Harper who make up our marketing and communications team. May God continue to pour new and fresh ideas into their thought process as they serve students and nurses.
- March 22 – Pray that spring break would be restful for our nursing students and that they would return to campus refreshed and ready to finish the semester.
- March 23 – Pray for travel mercies for Christy Secor as she participates in InterVarsity's Collaborate conference March 23rd – 26th and learns more about how to communicate more effectively with iGens.
- March 24 – We ask God for wisdom and discernment with the plans being made to meet this summer as NCF and *JCN* teams.
- March 25 – May nursing students, faculty, and nurses experience a renewed sense of purpose in their calling as they care for patients, families, communities, and each other.
- March 26 – The Christian Community Health Fellowship conference, https://www.cchfconference.org/, is being held March 26th – 28th. Pray this will be an encouraging conference for anyone interested in or committed to healthcare among the poor and underserved. Please pray attendees will be encouraged, refreshed, and challenged by their time at the conference.
- March 27 – We praise God for the passion and expertise Jen Wojtysiak, NCF's Student Ministries Director, brings to all she does. May God continue to lead and guide her.
- March 28 – We ask God to provide support and encouragement to Katharine Provost, NCF's Campus Staff Minister, who is raising her support. May God lay on the hearts of others the desire to partner with her in ministry.
- March 29 – Pray for nursing students who also have family members who are facing health challenges. May they sense God's presence with them and have the support they need.
- March 30 – We thank God for the strong *Journal of Christian Nursing* team being led by Kris Mauk. We praise God for the ongoing communication, teamwork, and commitment to excellence as Kris, Cathy Walker, and Karen Schmidt, along with *JCN*'s other contributing editors, prepare each edition of the *JCN* for publication.

- March 31 – We ask God to guide the conversation that will be taking place tonight among our professional nurse group leaders in our monthly webinar call. May God use this time to bind us closer together to each other and provide insights as we lead our groups.