

## April 2020 Prayer and Praise

These past few weeks have been ones of intense change for each of us. There has been much to mourn. Faculty members are working long hours transitioning their courses to online formats and supporting students. Nursing students are coping with changes in clinicals and delays in pinning ceremonies and graduations. Faith community nurses are trying to find ways to connect and support members of their communities. Nurses are working with a lack of personal protective equipment. Families have no time to mourn. Our patients are frightened. We are frightened.



This month as we honor and remember the crucifixion and death of our Lord Jesus Christ; the family, friends, and followers of Jesus Christ also had much to mourn. I cannot even begin to imagine their pain, confusion, grief, and anxiety. What they didn't realize on Good Friday was that there was also going to be much to celebrate. Resurrection and victory over death were just around the corner. A new covenant had begun. The waiting was over.

Psalm 27:1 (NIV) reminds us:

The Lord is my light and my salvation—  
whom shall I fear?  
The Lord is the stronghold of my life—  
of whom shall I be afraid?

We serve a God who is present with us in all we face. Our God “provides beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, [and] the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness” (Isaiah 61:3a). There is hope.

What is He calling us to during this tremendous time of need? What is He stripping away? Will we trust Him? Never forget ... there is hope.

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

## April Prayer Calendar

- April 1 – We praise God for being the constant we can truly count on in the midst of all the change that is taking place around us. Lord, use this time to speak to us and to draw us closer to you.
- April 2 – During the pandemic, some hospitals have canceled organ transplants. We pray for the individuals and families who have been impacted by these difficult decisions and ask for protection for those whose time of waiting has been extended.
- April 3 – Pray that God would use mightily Skip McDonald's Lifeguide Bible study on anxiety. It is being released sooner than originally planned by InterVarsity Press. Pray this study will be an encouragement for those who are experiencing anxiety especially in these uncertain times.
- April 4 – Prayers for Kathy Schoonover-Shoffner, the Director of NCF, as she continues her sabbatical under difficult situations. Pray for her continuing healing and for renewed energy, vision, and purpose as she returns to Nurses Christian Fellowship-USA in June.
- April 5 – We pray and lift up each person around the world and ask for their health and healing. May God use these circumstances to draw us to Him and to increase our trust. We ask God to intervene in this situation and to keep our health care workers safe as they care for those affected.

- April 6 – Pray for our professional nurse groups as they find new ways to support and encourage each other. We ask God for leading as these groups transition to more of a virtual presence.
- April 7 – We thank God for our faculty advisors who have worked endlessly to transition their courses to online platforms and to support students in their learning. We ask for wisdom and protection for them.
- April 8 – We ask God for wisdom and discernment for our faith community nurses. May God provide deep wisdom and discernment as they support and advocate for the members and families of their parish, church, and community.
- April 9 – We remember the example Jesus Christ set for us as He washed the feet of His disciples and His words to “do as I have done for you” (John 13:15b, NIV). Lord, give us your eyes to see the needs of others.
- April 10 – On this Good Friday, may we remember His tremendous sacrifice for each of us and His life and love that was poured out for our sins. We are precious to Him. Lord, help us to live each day wherever we find ourselves as your chosen, adopted sons and daughters.
- April 11 – We pray for families around the world who are mourning the loss of loved ones and not able to grieve because of physical distancing and shelter in place/safer at home requirements. Pray for new opportunities to connect and support each other.
- April 12 – Today is resurrection day! Mary Magdalene recognized Jesus’ voice when He called her by name. Lord, make us aware of the things that hold us back in truly following you. May we hear your voice through the fear, uncertainty, and the waiting. You are our Lord!
- April 13 – Pray for success with our spring mailing as we celebrate the many good things that are happening through Nurses Christian Fellowship and the *Journal of Christian Nursing*. Pray for giving to remain strong for us as a ministry.
- April 14 – We pray for our students who didn't see their school year ending this way. We ask for God to use this season of loss to make Himself known. Pray as we lament the missed opportunities, socialization, and activities that are a part of learning. We lift up children who rely heavily on their local school systems for emotional support and physical needs like meals.
- April 15 – We are grateful for the authors and reviewers who provide support for the *Journal of Christian Nursing*. We ask God to continue to provide manuscripts and insights that make a difference in our practice and in the lives of others.
- April 16 – We ask God to be present tonight as members gather together for our quarterly Journal Club. We are grateful for authors who are willing to share their time and expertise on topics that impact our practice and those we care for. We ask God to guard against any technical difficulties as we meet and gather together.
- April 17 – We lift up Christy Secor, Interim Director and Professional Ministries Director for NCF, and ask for God to provide strength, wisdom, discernment, and leadership during Kathy’s sabbatical. May she give from an overflowing cup!
- April 18 – We pray for students, faculty, and nurses across the country and that they would be able to take advantage of helpful resources to strengthen their faith and outreach during this time of crisis and opportunity.
- April 19 – Pray for the Marketing and Communications team of NCF as we prepare materials to celebrate nurses during the entire month of May. Pray also for those who are preparing devotionals to share each week. May this be a time to celebrate and remember those in nursing who have made a difference in our lives both personally and professionally.
- April 20 – Pray for a successful virtual conference for faith community nurses as they meet and discuss current issues in the Caring for the Human Spirit conference today through the 22nd.
- April 21 – God, hear our cries as we lift up individuals and families who are economically impacted by this pandemic. Financial strain is hard enough, but we face additional struggles as well. It has been stressful for many.
- April 22 – Lord, we are grateful for the ways You love us and make your presence known to us. Give us eyes to see You and the blessings we have. Remind us that our identity rests in You alone. Give us grace. Give us compassion. Give us strength.

- April 23 – Teach us how to lament, Lord, and to use these prayers to draw us to a place of deeper trust in You.
- April 24 – We pray for our student groups who find themselves in the midst of campus closures. Pray for groups to be able to continue to keep meeting and providing a digital space for encouragement and connection. Pray for nursing students to take risks and to share the love of Jesus with their classmates at this time when people are looking for hope.
- April 25 – Pray for wisdom for Skip McDonald, who works with faculty and nursing students in southeast, in reaching students at Chamberlain College of Nursing and Georgia Perimeter College.
- April 26 – We pray for protection from the virus for vulnerable family members and for all who work in healthcare. We ask for wisdom for our local, state, and national leaders as they make decisions and secure needed resources.
- April 27 – Lord, we know you are sovereign. We ask that You make something beautiful out of this mess and bring people to know you more deeply.
- April 28 – We praise God for the Bible studies that have been released and the willingness of members to write and share how God is leading them in the Word! Pray that many will be encouraged by these studies.
- April 29 – We pray for nursing faculty and our faculty advisors as they continue to navigate teaching online and balancing full home schedules.
- April 30 – We praise God for the incredible team that makes up Nurses Christian Fellowship and the *Journal of Christian Nursing*. They support and encourage each other with grace and understanding. They also have a deep commitment to their faith and to this ministry. We are grateful for each of their gifts.