

December 10, 2019

Dear Franca,

In these days following the death of your sister, I want to share a couple of prayers with you that I have found meaningful in times of grief.

The first is a prayer of gratitude for the variety of gifts you and others have received, and for the ways in which you have been blessed.

A Thanksgiving Prayer for a Beloved who has died

We thank thee, O God, for all the goodness and courage which have passed from the life of this thy servant into the lives of others, and have left the world richer for her presence—for a life's task faithfully and honorably discharged; for good humor and gracious affection and kindly generosity; for sadness met without surrender, and weakness endured without defeat; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

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This second prayer acknowledges that God is able to care for our beloved in ways better than we can ask or imagine. So, we entrust those we love to God's grace. I find it comforting to acknowledge that death is but a horizon, and a horizon is merely the limit of our sight. God's love transcends these human horizons and limits, and continues to bind us together.

A Prayer of Entrustment

We seem to give her back to thee, dear God, who gavest her to us. Yet, as thou didst not lose her in giving, so we have not lost her by her return.

Not as the world giveth, givest thou, O lover of souls! What thou givest, thou takest not away. For what is thine is ours always, if we are thine. And life is eternal; and love is immortal; and death is only a horizon; and a horizon is nothing save the limit of our sight.

Lift us up, O God, that we may see further; cleanse our eyes that we may see more clearly; draw us closer to thyself, that we may know ourselves nearer to our beloved who are with thee.

And while thy Son prepareth a place for us, prepare us for that happy place, that, where they are and thou art, we too may be; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

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I do not know who composed these prayers, but I wanted to share them with you in hopes that they may be a source of comfort and peace.

God bless you,