

Great Thanksgiving  
(Blue Christmas)

Cry out to the Lord for they are near.

**My God, my God why have you forsaken me?**

Our God never leaves us, nor do they ever forsake us.

**Why do you feel so far from my groaning?**

There is nothing that can separate you from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

**Come Lord, come and wipe the tears from my eyes.**

You are the God who never hides from our pain.

You are the God who does not flee when our troubles come.

You are the God who never slumbers and never sleeps,  
the God who is always near.

You know that we are mortal,

and we cannot imagine why you would even pay attention to the struggles of our fleeting lives.

Yet you are the only one who can take our mortal, perishable bodies,  
and transform them into that which is immortal and imperishable.

You are the God of the living and not the dead,  
not because you do not care about those who die,  
but because you are the source of all life, even life eternal.

**Even if no figs bloom,  
If no grapes are on the vine,  
Olives fail to fruit,**

**Even if my flocks die,  
And no cattle in my stall,  
I will still rejoice!**

**I will still rejoice!  
Because God always saves me.**

**The Lord is my strength!** (Habakkuk 3:17-19a)

You sent Jesus, a man of sorrows, well acquainted with grief.

The same Jesus who wept over the death of a friend,  
even knowing there is a power greater than death.

The Jesus who was asked over and over again, "Where were you?"  
If only you had been here!"

Jesus knew mortality as real and painful,  
but Jesus was preparing a place for us,  
in your house there is lots of room,  
and what is yet to come is beyond our human imagination.

All because, You, O God, loved this world so much that you sent Jesus  
to let us know that there is more to life

and no need to fear any condemnation.

When Jesus knew he had reached the very end of this mortal life,  
Christ took and blessed bread to give us hope, saying:

“Take eat, this is my body given for you.”

Grief is a time to remember what is important.

When Jesus knew he had reached the very end of this mortal life,  
Christ took the blessed cup to give us hope, saying:

“Drink from this all of you for this is the cup of my blood, poured out  
trusting in God’s eternal covenant of forgiveness with you and the world.”

Grief is a time to remember what is important.

Christ’s mortality is important,  
but death was not the end.

Christ’s death was the beginning of something new.

It is this hope we seek to embrace as we proclaim the greatest mysteries of our faith.

**As with all flesh, Christ has died.**

**And as promised, Christ arose.**

**And because life is eternal, Christ will come again.**

Tears of Christ, Touch of God  
fall upon these gifts of bread and wine  
so that they may be for us the body and blood of Christ  
healing for the soul.

Tears of Christ, Touch of God  
fall upon the gift of our brokenness  
so that we may be for others, your church,  
the present body and beloved bride of Christ  
healing for the soul.

Tears of Christ, Touch of God  
fall upon all who grieve this day.  
Use their sweet memories to bring them comfort.  
Use their experiences and trauma to inspire their compassion.  
Use their community to give them support so all may know the closeness of your love.

From Christ, through Christ, with Christ  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
we worship You, the wondrous lover of our souls,  
now and one day at a time.

**Amen.**

Now let us find solace in praying together the Lord's prayer: