

Wednesday 7pm Candlelight Prayer Vigils



Dear League Sisters,

YOU ARE NOT ALONE!

In an effort to stay connected, hopeful and supportive during these difficult days, we turn to each other and remember that we are sisters through Christ.

The meaning of a sisterhood is a **safe** place where you can go and not be afraid to get judged. It's a **home** away from home; knowing that you'll always **have someone** there for you with **open arms**.

We, your Hamilton Diocesan Executive are here for you and our arms are open!

Starting this **Wednesday, April 1, 2020, at 7pm**, and every Wednesday evening thereafter, during this COVID-19 pandemic crisis, **we invite you** to join us for a **Candlelight Prayer Vigil**.

A **prayer vigil** is an opportunity to unite and bring the light of Christ to brokenness in society through prayer and solidarity as daughters of God. As an act of public witness, a prayer vigil offers our sisterhood a space to connect with God so that God's vision for love, compassion, justice and hope, can be carried out through us in our service and support to each other and to all those around us.

Proverbs 31:25 ***“She is clothed with strength and dignity, and laughs at the days to come.”*** Laughs at the days to come: anticipates a future with joy and freedom of fear and anxiety. May you always know your worth of God's grace, love and pray for others, have the strength and courage in God's love to stand up to injustice and seek truth. May you find comfort in God's love, especially in moments of weakness, brokenness, loneliness, or fear.

Teresa DiFalco April 1, 2020

Personal prayer is so important, especially during troubling times like these. It is not only beneficial to us spiritually, it is also beneficial to us physically, as prayer regulates your heartbeat, making it stronger and less stressed.

Prayer draws us closer to our faith and deepens our relationship with God Our Father who has promised to never abandon or forsaken us. Psalm 46:1 *"God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble."*

Prayer comes in many forms, including through song. Songs lift the spirit, so I encourage you to also sing sacred music as part of your prayers. One of my favourite hymns is Shelter Me, O God, which I have included as part of our weekly Prayer Vigils. The text is taken from Psalms 16 & 61 and Luke 13:34. I gravitate to the lyrics in times of sadness, loneliness, abandonment, weakness and fear, and I find God's comfort and strength. It is my hope that you can find comfort and strength in these lyrics too.

God is always listening and although we can't physically visit His House and receive our Lord sacramentally in the physical sense, we can always receive and welcome Him spiritually. His presence and love enters deep within us through prayer. As we pray, we are entering into the "temple" of our soul. Jesus states that "the Kingdom of God is within you" and "the Father and I will make our home with you". Prayer is a means of releasing the power of the Holy Spirit of the Risen Christ within us so that we experience the Way, the Truth and the Life.

I invite you to light a candle on Wednesday evenings at 7pm and join your sisters in prayer. Remembering that Christ is our light and through His light We Will Find A Way, which by the way is the title of a heartfelt song my husband Cal wrote about our current world crisis. Cal recorded the song this past week and asked me to sing it. I have decided to include it as our closing song for our weekly Prayer Vigils. The song speaks of our current state, prayer, love, hope and how "We'll Find A Way" and overcome this COVID-19 pandemic through our faith in the Light of Christ.

With God's Blessings,
Teresa

Teresa DiFalco, Hamilton Diocesan First Vice President & Spiritual Development Chair
and the Diocesan Spiritual Development Committee

The following is the outline for our weekly Candlelight Prayer Vigils:

1. Light a candle, and pray the following:

In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit

Lord Jesus Christ, the Source of all Light, I call on your presence to be with us, to strengthen us, instruct us, inspire us and give us hope that Your light will never burn out as long as we love in faith without a shadow of doubt that darkness will ever defeat us.

We offer You our prayers and we ask all the saints in heaven to join their prayers with ours as we pray to you Lord for protection and strength. Heavenly Father, embrace us and take away our fears. Give us hope and shelter us from fear, helplessness and loneliness. Nurture our hearts and spirits and we hunger to once again receive the Your most Holy and Blessed Sacrament. Comfort our hearts in knowing Your ever presence as we long for the companionship of our brothers and sisters. Help us to be patient during these troubling times and recognize that social distancing is not to separate us but unite us as one in Spirit in You and in Your love for each of us.

Amen

2. Click on the following link and join in singing Shelter Me, O God.

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PpPFoSr_OXsxcCB9VBGKTpilg2autr4o/view?usp=sharing

Lyrics: Shelter Me, O God *(Text Psalms 16 & 61. Music by Bob Hurd)*

Refrain: ***Shelter me, O God, Hide me in the shadow of your wings.
You alone are my hope.***

1. When my foes surround me, set me high above their reach.
 Hear me when I call your name.

Refrain

2. As a mother gathers her young beneath her care,
 Gather me into your arms.

Refrain

3. Though I walk in darkness, through the needle's eye of death,
 You will never leave my side.

Refrain

3. Pray the following prayer of Pope Francis

Prayer of Pope Francis During the Coronavirus Pandemic

O Mary,
you always shine on our path
as a sign of salvation and of hope.
We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick,
who at the cross took part in Jesus' pain, keeping your faith firm.
You, Salvation of the Roman People,
know what we need,
and we are sure you will provide
so that, as in Cana of Galilee,
we may return to joy and to feasting
after this time of trial.
Help us, Mother of Divine Love,
to conform to the will of the Father
and to do as we are told by Jesus,
who has taken upon himself our sufferings
and carried our sorrows
to lead us, through the cross,
to the joy of the resurrection. Amen.

Under your protection, we seek refuge, Holy Mother of God. Do not disdain the
entreaties of we who are in trial, but deliver us from every danger,
O glorious and blessed Virgin.

4. Petitions - After reading each petition, pray the following response:

Lord in your mercy hear our prayer

- For all who have fallen victim to the COVID-19 virus, may they rest in peace.
- That those infected by the virus make a full recovery.
- For the health and safety of our spiritual leaders, that they can continue to provide spiritual care and comfort to the faithful during this crisis.
- For the homeless, the lonely and those most at risk of this virus, that they find hope and refuge in knowing God's love.

- For those laid off, unemployed, impoverished, and struggling financially and mentally, may they find peace and riches in God's compassion and mercy.
- That the Holy Spirit fill us with light, love and strength during this time of turbulence, fear, uncertainty, isolation and social distancing.
- For all essential service workers in healthcare, first responders, pharmacies, grocery stores, government and banks. That they be protected so that they can continue caring for others, and that they know how appreciated they are.
- For the safety and health of our family, friends and ourselves.
- For our earth and all living creatures on it, that we heed the call to be better stewards of God's creation.

5. Let us close our prayer service in the words Our Father gave to us.

The Lord's Prayer

*Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.*

*Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us.*

*And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.*

Amen

In the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
Amen

6. **Closing Song - Please click the following link and join in singing:**

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1sN3LBUE68T4K8dAJXLX4khMZRR_x5miY/view?usp=sharing

We'll Find a Way

What have we learned, What have we done
How have we failed, Everyone

We had it all, But we were blind
We built a wall, We couldn't climb

So when the lights go out, And the sun goes down
And all the world, Seems upside down
What did you think would be
We failed to see, The warning signs
I know that I

Can't make it right, Not overnight
We need to all, Heed the call

And there is pain, But there is love
And I remain, Hopeful of

We'll find a way, We'll be okay
I'm not afraid, To kneel and pray

Cause there's a light, That won't go out
It's in our hearts, It shines throughout

We have learned, Through what's been done
There's nothing we can't overcome
You can't kill hope, You can't kill love
It's ours to share, With everyone

Cause there is a light, That won't go out
It's in our hearts, It shines throughout

This world

Music and Lyrics by Cal DiFalco (Sung by Teresa DiFalco) © 2020, All rights reserved.