

Leader:

Christ Our King,
Our world is overtaken by unexpected
calamity, and by a host of attending fears,
worries, and insecurities.

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We witness suffering, confusion, and
hardship multiplied around us, and we find
ourselves swept up in these same anxieties and
troubles, dismayed by so many uncertainties.

People:

**Now we turn to you, O God,
in this season of our common distress.**

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Be merciful, O Christ, to those who suffer,
to those who worry, to those who grieve, to
those who are threatened or harmed in any
way by this upheaval.

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Let your holy compassion
be active throughout the world even now—
tending the afflicted, comforting the
brokenhearted, and bringing hope to
many who are hopeless.

**Use even these hardships to woo our hearts
nearer to you, O God.**

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Indeed, O Father, may these days
of disquiet become a catalyst
for conviction and repentance,
for the tendering of our affections,
for the stirring of our sympathies,
for the refining of our love.

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**We are your people, who are called by you,
We need not be troubled or alarmed.**

Indeed, O Lord, let us love now more fearlessly,
remembering that you created us,
and appointed us
to live in these very places,
in the midst of these unsettled times.

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It is no surprise to you that we are here now,
sharing in this turmoil along with the rest of
our society, for you have called your children
to live as salt and light among the nations,

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praying and laboring for the flourishing of the communities where we dwell, acting as agents of your forgiveness, salvation, healing, reconciliation, and hope, in the very midst of an often-troubled world.

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And in these holy vocations you have not left us helpless, O Lord, because you have not left us at all. Your Spirit remains among us.

**Inhabit now your church,
O Spirit of the Risen Christ.
Unite and equip your people
for the work before them.**

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Father, empower your children to live as your children. In times of distress let us respond, not as those who would instinctively entrench for our own self-preservation, but rather as those who—in imitation of their Lord—would move in humble obedience toward the needs and hurts of their neighborhoods and communities.

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**You were not ashamed to
share in our sufferings, Jesus.**

**Let us now be willing to share in yours,
serving as your visible witnesses
in this broken world.**

Hear now these words, you children of God, and be greatly encouraged:

The Lord's throne in heaven is yet occupied, his rule is eternal, and his good purposes on earth will be forever accomplished. So we need never be swayed by the brief and passing panics of this age.

**You are the King of the Ages, O Christ,
and history is held in your Father's hands.**

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We, your people, know the good and glorious end of this story.

Our heavenly hope is secure.

In this time of widespread suffering then,
let us rest afresh in the surpassing peace of that
vision, that your whole church on earth might be
liberated to love more generously and sacrificially.

**Now labor in and through us, O Lord,
extending and multiplying the many expressions
of your mercy.
Amen.**