

Slovenian philosopher Slavoj Zizek has said that there is no real hope unless everything is lost.

And indeed, during the past several weeks we have witnessed and mourned loss unspeakable: Earthquakes in Mexico; devastation in Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and the Caribbean; a mass shooting in Las Vegas; and property and lives consumed by fires in California. We have witnessed the heartbreaking loss of irreplaceable human lives –the lives of those known, and those unknown but no less our ‘neighbor’— and the loss of the fruit of peoples’ labor. No less tragic and distressing in our backyard: the opioid crisis; immigrants living in uncertainty and fear; and homelessness pervading our cities.

As Christians, we hurt and mourn with those who suffer. However, we also rejoice because amidst such suffering the Spirit of God makes itself manifest, treading through the dark hour toward the joy and wonder of that which is not yet seen but eagerly awaited: the fullness of life in Christ Jesus, the liberation of creation, and the resurrection of the saints for life eternal.

God of hope,  
we come to you humbled;  
we come to you in weakness,  
looking for consolation, healing,  
and restoration.

You are the God of Creation,  
you are the Lord of the past,  
you are the Lord of what is to come;

our eyes are set on that which is ahead,  
on that which is greater than suffering and decay,  
on that which death cannot disguise.

We come to you with thankful and joyful hearts!

Let your Spirit comfort our souls,  
Let your Spirit infuse your life in us,  
and reveal to us the glory to come.

Let your Spirit empower and bless our hands,  
as we your children, your laborers,  
work in making the assurance of hope  
the living witness of your Church.

Amen