

# Remaining in lament and hope

A pastoral response for  
a Voluntary Assisted  
Dying pathway



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... and the leaves of the tree are  
for the healing of the nations.

*Revelation 22:2*



The seven Words that will be our companions are;

***Grace, Mercy, Community, Abandonment, Love, Legacy and Reconcile.***

together they offer a completeness of the divine/human history.

You may be familiar with them as:

***"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do"***

**Grace:** The companion for Grace is forgive, which is healing presence

***"Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise."***

**Mercy:** Always mercy before confession

***"Woman, behold your son. Son, behold your mother."***

**Community:** ... is born and rises from the rawness of shared life together

***"My God, my God, why did you abandon me?"***

**Abandonment:** ... in the howl of lament is the turning toward hope

***"I am thirsty."***

**Love:** Jesus emptied himself of all but love ...

***"It is finished."***

**Legacy:** This is my bequest to you, love one another as I have loved you

***"Father, into your hands I commit my spirit."***

**Reconcile:** Faith into death

Each section offers a pattern through the words;

**invitation to companion**

**introduction to the word theme**

**sacred reading**

**Reflection**

**practice**

**prayers**

# Grace

**The companion for Grace is forgive,  
which is healing presence**

And the Word became flesh and lived among us,  
and we have seen his glory, the glory as of  
a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

*John 1:14*

We have intentionally chosen “companioning”  
to describe a way of being with.  
Companioning suggests movement,  
commitment, trust, together.

The shape of the resource is intentionally  
liturgical and contemplative and in this way  
invites and offers opportunities to engage  
with, and remain pastorally attentive, in what  
may be a challenging, even disquieting choice  
being made by people facing what is for them  
intolerable and terminal illness.

*the focus of this resource is about the companioning,  
not the decision.*

*The decision belongs to the person whose  
journey we may companion.*

A legal, voluntary safe medically assisted way of dying is no longer speculative or theoretical. It is now a legislated reality.

For some, this is welcome and long waited for; for others, it is not supported - indeed it is opposed.

## **A prayer**

May (your) God sustain you in your dying  
embrace you in reconciling grace  
receive you in the abundance of  
mercy.

May the thoughts of your mind  
the instincts of your body  
and the longings of your spirit be  
embraced in peace

May (your) God accompany you in the  
time of your parting  
and comfort your loved ones as you  
leave.

**Amen.**

# Epilogue

“Take my hand and lead me  
to salvation  
Take my love, for love is everlasting  
And remember the truth that  
once was spoken:  
To love another person is to  
see the face of God.”

*Victor Hugo*  
“**Les Miserable**”