**Prayer Service - St. Richard’s School, Indianapolis, IN**

Loving God, in Jesus you gathered the children in your arms and blessed them. We come before you as your beloved children, aching with grief and sorrow and seeking your healing, for those directly affected, for us and all who mourn, and for our all too violent world.

Hear our prayers for all victims of this tragedy.

* For the children and adults who died
* For children and adults who survived
* For parents, grandparents, children, siblings
* For teachers and school workers
* For the gunman and for his family
* For first responders
* For all in Newtown
* For all who share in this community’s grief

*Silence*

O God, whose mercies cannot be numbered: Accept our prayers for your servants. Give us grace to entrust them to your never-failing care and love for this life and the life to come, knowing that you are doing better things for them than we can ask or pray for.

Loving God, in the Word made flesh, you bring light to the darkness, and the darkness does not overcome it. Thank you for ways your light was shining even in this darkness.

We give thanks

* For teachers who maintained calm and protected children from further trauma
* For neighbors and friends who continue to surround the grieving
* For police officers, medical staff, fire fighters, emergency responders who set aside their own fear and led with calm amid chaos
* For churches and houses of worship who offer care to bereaved individuals and communities
* For those who will be working in days ahead to heal the brokenhearted and bind up their wounds

*Silence*

Almighty God, Father of mercies and giver of comfort: Deal graciously, we pray, with all who mourn and care for the mourning, that casting every care on you, they may know the consolation of your love.

God of all nations and people, whose beloved Son taught us that even a sparrow does not fall to the earth without your awareness: you see and know the suffering of all your children, though it is often hidden from us.

We pray for those who suffer similar tragedies day after day

* For all victims of war and gun violence
* For those who suffer from mental distress
* For children who are afraid to go to school
* For those whose daily work puts them in harm’s way
* For all who grieve

*Silence*

O God, you made us in your image and redeemed us through Jesus your Son: Look with compassion on the whole human family; take away the arrogance and hatred which infect our hearts; break down the walls that separate us; unite us in bonds of love; and work through our struggle and confusion to accomplish your purposes on earth.

Loving God, your Spirit enlivened the prophets to hope for a better world. Give us that same Spirit, that we may see and claim the vision of your kingdom come and your will done on earth as in heaven.

We pray for a world

* Where children play in safety
* Where weapons do not threaten the innocent
* Where help is available for all who are troubled
* Where there is no sorrow or sighing

*Silence*

O God, by whom the meek are guided in judgment and, light rises up in darkness for the godly: Grant us, in all our doubts and uncertainties, the grace to ask what you would have us to do, that the Spirit of wisdom may save us from all false choices, and that in your light we may see light, and in your straight path may not stumble.

Let us gather our prayers and our hopes in the words Jesus taught us to pray, saying . . .