



Fr. Richard Lamoureux, a.a.

**A** good friend called not long ago to say that his mother was seriously ill and would probably not live for more than a few days. Not surprisingly, he travelled a great distance to be by her side. Thinking about death is one thing. Accompanying a dying parent or friend is quite another. Martha was really upset that Jesus wasn't there when her brother Lazarus was sick and then died. Didn't he understand just how painful that was for her and for Mary, her sister? Jesus assured them that those who believed in him, even if they died, would live. But as he approached Lazarus' tomb, even he broke down and

cried when the reality of death hit him. We can only suspect that in Lazarus' death he could see his own quickly approaching.

Death is one big moment of letting go. As my mother said, shortly before my father's death: "We'll take what comes." We will not hold on to what we have, though it was really wonderful. What is to come will be new and radically different. We are told it will be so much richer and that it will last forever. As we weep at the death of a loved one, this is what we believe. We are free to mourn and give thanks because the Lord of life mourns with us and remains by our side.

## “Don’t cry!”

**A**rriving at the tomb of his friend Lazarus, Jesus wept... Seeing the widow who had just buried her only son, Jesus went up to her and, filled with compassion, told her, “Don’t cry.”

Friends whose hearts are pierced by the sword of bereavement – Jesus weeps with you and, at the same time, tells you in all friendship, “Don’t cry!”

As Christians, we know that the one we love who has left us has only gone ahead of us. They are living in the heart of God, as they live in our hearts. But amid the ache of separation, this hope cannot always dry our tears, and our lips do not find the words to pray. Jesus hears our silence. He approaches us with gentleness to dry our tears.

As always, as he said to Lazarus and the widow’s son, Jesus says to the person we love who has gone from us, “Friend, get up. Come outside. Come with me.”

Henri Caro

# In You, Lord, We Trust

**F**rom you, Lord,  
comes our hope  
when our days are dark  
and our lives are torn apart.

From you, Lord,  
comes our light  
when we pass through shadow-filled valleys  
where love is taken from us.

From you, Lord,  
comes our hope  
when grief weighs us down  
with its burden of tears and absence.

In you, Lord, we trust!  
You see our despair and our pain  
and take them upon yourself.  
In you, Lord, we trust;  
you never abandon us  
to darkness and separation.

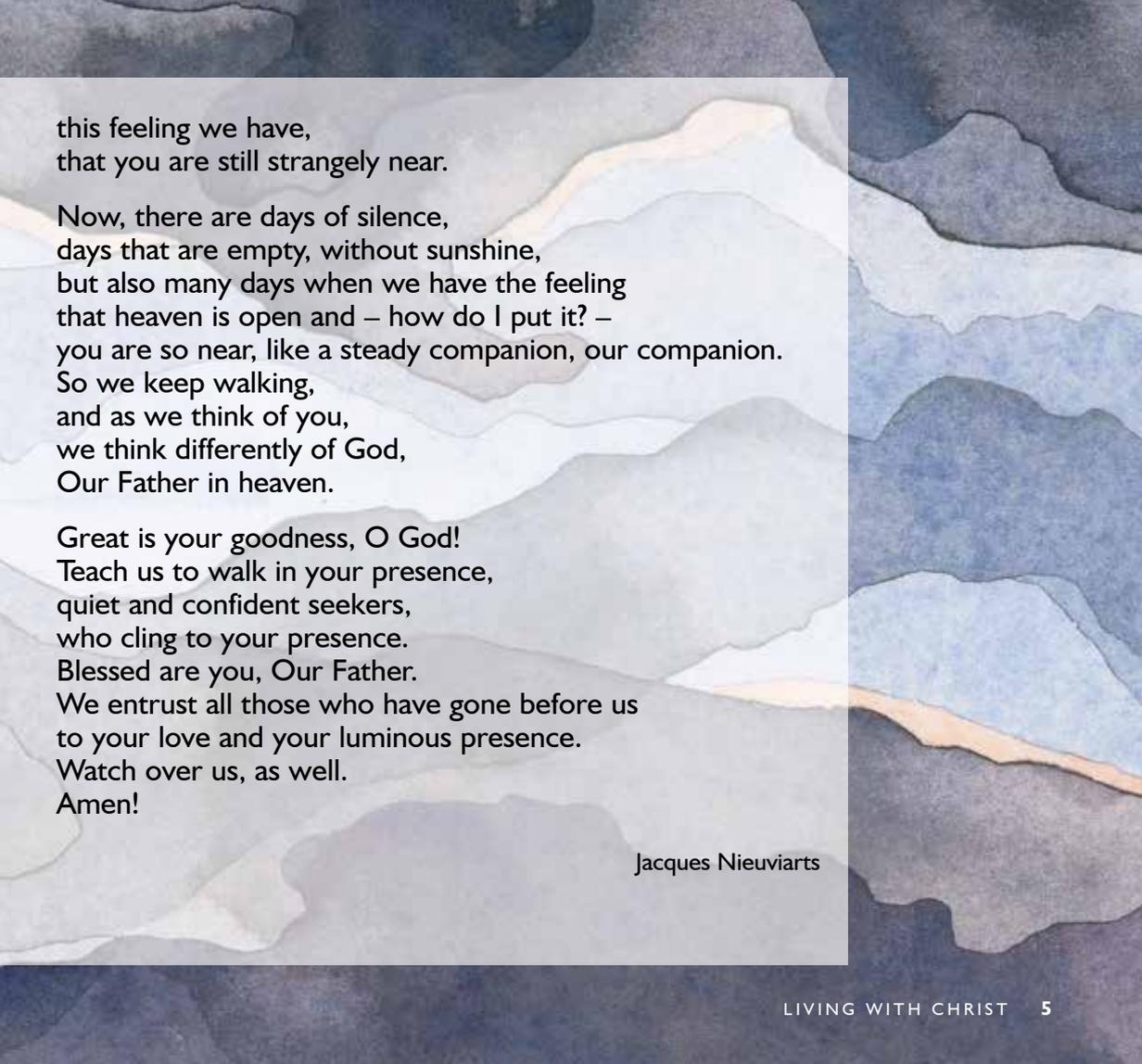
## You Are so Near

**F**rom the moment you left us,  
we felt an emptiness before our eyes and in our hearts,  
but at the same time immense awareness,  
immense gratitude,  
for your life.

Your life did more than intersect with ours;  
your life informed and shed light on ours.  
Over time it brought humour, happiness,  
sometimes silence, a touch of mystery;  
it brought to our lives laughter and joy.

Your life was interwoven with ours,  
and you are somehow us.  
It's strange – deeper than the sadness,  
it gives us joy to think of you  
and gather, like we gather honey,  
this collection of days  
that you illuminated for us.

And what was, remains.  
We can't cross out with the stroke of a pen  
what we have created in this way.  
You are gone, but it's strange,



this feeling we have,  
that you are still strangely near.

Now, there are days of silence,  
days that are empty, without sunshine,  
but also many days when we have the feeling  
that heaven is open and – how do I put it? –  
you are so near, like a steady companion, our companion.  
So we keep walking,  
and as we think of you,  
we think differently of God,  
Our Father in heaven.

Great is your goodness, O God!  
Teach us to walk in your presence,  
quiet and confident seekers,  
who cling to your presence.  
Blessed are you, Our Father.  
We entrust all those who have gone before us  
to your love and your luminous presence.  
Watch over us, as well.  
Amen!

Jacques Nieuviarts

## Psalm 4

**A**nswer me when I call, O God of my right!  
You gave me room when I was in distress.  
Be gracious to me, and hear my prayer.

How long, you people, shall my honor suffer shame?  
How long will you love vain words, and seek after lies?  
But know that the Lord has set apart the faithful for himself;  
the Lord hears when I call to him.

When you are disturbed, do not sin;  
ponder it on your beds, and be silent.  
Offer right sacrifices,  
and put your trust in the Lord.

There are many who say, 'O that we might see some good!  
Let the light of your face shine on us, O Lord!'  
You have put gladness in my heart  
more than when their grain and wine abound.

I will both lie down and sleep in peace;  
for you alone, O Lord, make me lie down in safety.

# A Wonderful Birth

## Death

is the ultimate grace  
and the culmination of our Christian life.  
it is not the end,  
as too many still think,  
but the beginning of a wonderful birth.

It marks not the end of a creature,  
but their true development,  
their full realization in love.  
It fulfills our belonging in God's life,  
removing the barriers that, here on Earth,  
prevent us from enjoying life in God completely.

Death allows us to attend freely  
to Love Eternal, to be aware  
that Love gives itself to us and to live in God forever...  
When I think about my approaching death,  
I say to myself,  
"Good – soon I will see God!"

Marthe Robin

## Hail Mary

**H**ail Mary, full of grace,  
the Lord is with you.  
Blessed are you among women  
and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus.  
Holy Mary, Mother of God,  
pray for us sinners,  
now and at the hour of our death.  
Amen.