

9<sup>th</sup> September 22022

## Death

**"And, as she looked around, she saw how Death, the consoler,  
Laying his hand upon many a heart, had healed it forever."**

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, *Evangeline: A Tale of Acadie*

I'm writing this on the evening when news has broken of the death of Queen Elizabeth, and I'm finding it hard. Much has been said, and more will undoubtedly follow, paying tribute to a remarkable human being, and expressing sympathies for a grieving family of different generations and relationships. It doesn't need me to add to that. So I'll simply share a prayer from my book, *New Journeys Now Begin*, which I wrote when I got news of a tragic death many years ago, and as I prepared for a difficult funeral. I offer it as my small contribution to many other prayers at this time.

God bless you all. God save the king.

### **A prayer on hearing of a death**

*Dear God ... no words can say what's right,  
no flowers can show what's true,  
no black can offer light,  
no tears, no churchy pew  
can make what's bad come good again.*

*Dear God ... make silent thoughts my prayer,  
make wreaths the song I sing,  
make black a sign of care,  
make tears an offering  
when all seems bad, and grief brings pain.*

*Dear God ... there are no words you use,  
there are no flowers you give,  
no black, no church, no pews,  
no tears, to make us live  
and make what's bad come good again.*

*So, God ... speak in this silent time,  
speak in my holy place,  
banish the black with Light,  
hold me in Love's embrace  
when good breaks through the bad. Amen.*

### **A prayer for today**

*God of my sorrow, you cried my tears when Christ had lost a friend. Cry with me now in my sadness. Let us weep together, and in our mingled tears, let me be at one with you. God of my sorrow, today I share my grief with a God who understands. Amen*