

LEADER: O Christ Who Gathered
Children in Your Arms,

You know our ache. You know this void
no human words can fill.

You understand this grief for our little one,
lost while in the womb.

You were witness to our rising joy.
You saw our crumbling hope.
Now you behold our sinking sorrow.

**PEOPLE: Christ, be merciful, for we are frail.
And in our frailty we have suffered such loss.**

Heavenly Father, see what room our love had already
carved out—in our home and in our hearts—for
the welcome and the wonder of
this child, whose face we had not kissed,
and whose tiny hands we had not held,
but who had already grown so precious to us.

Were we not radiant with anticipation, O Lord,
building forward to the day when we would
finally meet and cradle our sweet child?

Only to be met instead with this cratering
heartache of sudden loss, this unexpected
death of our little one before birth; and with it
this dying of dreams for all that might have been.
**Christ, be merciful, for we are frail.
And in our frailty we have suffered such loss.**

For here we have entered a communion, O Lord,
a fellowship none have ever wished to join, of all
mothers and fathers and families across time
who have wept for their lost children.

We lament so much that now will never be.
This child we lost will be for us in this life like
a song unsung, and a story untold.

A LITURGY FOR
THOSE WHO HAVE
SUFFERED A

Miscarriage *or* Stillbirth

FROM THE BOOK
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& HOPE*
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**Christ, be merciful, for we are frail.
And in our frailty we have suffered such loss.**

THE PETITIONERS SIT A MOMENT IN
THE SILENCE OF THIS GRIEF.

And yet, even in our deep loss, O Lord,
you have not abandoned us
or left us without light and hope.

For we remember how you, Jesus, loved and
welcomed little ones, touching their heads and
blessing them, declaring that the
kingdom of heaven belonged to these.

And you have told us that your promises
are for us *and* for our children.

And this one whom we lost, was this not
also our child, O God?

Our hearts ache even to ponder such things,
but is it possible that when all creation is
made new, we will find fellowship there with one
we could not hold in this life?

Could the redemption of this world's harms
run so deep? So beyond all imagining?

Your word says little of such mysteries.
And yet, in what *is* revealed
we find good reason to take heart.

**Christ, be merciful, for we are frail.
And in our frailty we have suffered such loss.**

For even amidst uncertainty, this we know
to be true of your works, O Father, and this
we will cling to:

**Your grace, your mercy, your redemption, and
your love will extend further and will be more
wondrous in their perfection
than we have ever imagined.**

However we might try to conceive of such joys,
that conception will be either errant or
incomplete, because we, in our finite knowledge
and capacity for hope, will limit the picture we
paint in ways that you, in your limitless joy and
relentless grace, will never be bounded by. However
we might envision the redemption
of this loss, the actual redemption that you
effect will be still more glorious.

So let us learn to steward well this holy sorrow,
assured that it is in some way the buried seed
of a flower that will blossom into eternity.

**O Christ, be merciful, for we are frail.
And in our frailty we have suffered such loss.**

Indeed, this future hope will not end
the pain we feel today. It does not negate
the emptiness of the womb where new life
stirred. It does not fill the empty cradle.

But it does declare that the empty cradle
and the empty womb will not have power
to grieve us forever, for one day our eternal
joys will flow backward in time, even to this
broken place. And then those joys will fill every
emptiness and every heartbreak the children
of God have ever endured.

Now, O Lord,
**we remember your past faithfulness.
We receive your present comforts.
We await your future redemptions.**

Let us, in this and in all sorrows,
be met by your lovingkindness

and consoled by your hope.

For yours, O Father,
is the kingdom,
and the power,
and the glorious redemption
of all our losses.

Even of this one.

Amen.