

## Prayer in the Easter Season

*Suggestion for atmosphere: Easter lilies, a cross draped in white cloth, paper and pencils for participants.*

**Opening Song:** "Alleluia! Alleluia! Let the Holy Anthem Rise" (Anonymous)

**Opening Prayer:** To you, Risen Lord, we offer our tears turned to laughter, our pain turned to joy, our fear turned to glad confidence. Your victory over death puts hope in our hearts. Your disciples didn't lose you forever, nor have we lost those we love. By your Resurrection, you show us that life is eternal. We praise and bless you. Amen.

**Reading:** Luke 24:36–48

**Response:** Psalm 47

**Side 1:** Clap your hands, all you peoples;  
shout to God with loud songs of joy.  
For the LORD, the Most High, is awesome,  
a great king over all the earth.

**All:** The Lord, the Most High, is awesome.

**Side 2:** He subdued peoples under us,  
and nations under our feet.  
He chose our heritage for us,  
the pride of Jacob whom he loves.

**All:** The Lord, the Most High, is awesome.

**Side 1:** God has gone up with a shout,  
the LORD with the sound of a trumpet.  
Sing praises to God, sing praises;  
sing praises to our King, sing praises.

**All:** The Lord, the Most High, is awesome.

**Side 2:** For God is the king of all the earth;  
sing praises with a psalm.  
God is king over the nations;  
God sits on his holy throne.

**All:** The Lord, the Most High, is awesome.

**Side 1:** The princes of the peoples gather  
as the people of the God of Abraham.  
For the shields of the earth belong to God;  
he is highly exalted.

**All:** The Lord, the Most High, is awesome.

### Reading:

It is significant that the Risen Christ identified himself to troubled and doubting followers not by brilliant persuasion nor by miracles, but by his scars. It was his suffering, transformed by God, that made him credible. Likewise we, too, need not despair because of the scars that identify us. It is precisely these scars that God transforms into ultimate good for ourselves and compassionate ministry to others.

When the worst that life might deal us can be so transformed, we encounter a "resurrection psychology." Our confidence lies not in preventing anything bad from happening to us, nor in seeking perfect healing of our psychological wounds, but rather our confidence lies in the transforming power of God promised us through the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.<sup>1</sup>

*Pause for silent reflection.*

**Leader:** Margaret Alter, the author of the reading we just heard, said that God transforms our scars into "ultimate good for ourselves and compassionate ministry to others." On the paper you have received, list examples from your own life where you have found this to be true.

*Pause for writing. After a suitable time has passed, invite participants to share whatever they feel comfortable sharing. Depending on the size of the group, this could be done in small groups or with the whole.*

### CLOSING PRAYER

**All:** Jesus, take our scars and transform them into something good. Take away any bitterness that may still be attached to our wounds. While we do not take joy in the pain that caused those scars, we do rejoice in the potential for growth and the direction for new life that those painful incidents from our past have given us. We believe that you rose to new life after all the pain inflicted on you. We believe we can rise too, with your help. Please show us the way. Amen.