

Be present, O merciful God, and protect us through the hours of this night, so that we who are wearied by the changes and chances of this life may rest in your eternal changelessness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

—*The Book of Common Prayer*, p. 133



THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 11

This is a Compline prayer, and yet it applies so well to Lent. For those of us in the North, Lent is a time of darkness. The bright, long days of summer are many months away, and these dark days of winter are often a time for turning inward. A time for staying inside and pausing for reflection. Lent is also a time of change. Sometimes it is change we seek out, and sometimes our Lenten disciplines choose us. The darkness and uncertainty of Lent can be challenging. Where is this path leading? How am I called to engage in transformation in my own life and in my own community?

We are called to heal a hurting world, but the “changes and chances,” the magnitude of the hurts of the world can be overwhelming. Where do we begin?

First and foremost, we can rest in and trust in God’s eternal changelessness. We can trust that even when times are dark, or we feel weighed down by the needs of the world, we are not alone. God is with us. God is steadfast, loving, caring and guiding. God does not change. We can abide in God.

—**Molly F. James**