

## **A Prayer for the Church in These Times**

O God, whose mercy is ever faithful and ever sure, who art our refuge and our strength in time of trouble, visit us, we beseech thee—for we are in trouble.

We need a hope that is made wise by experience and is undaunted by disappointment. We need an anxiety about the future that shows us new ways to look at new things but does not unnerve us. As a people, we need to remember that our influence was greatest when our power was weakest. Most of all, we need to turn to thee, O God, and our crucified Lord, for only his humility and his strength can heal and free us.

O God, be thou our sole strength in time of trouble. In the midst of anxiety, grant us the grace to count our blessings—the simple ones: health, food, sleep, one another, a spring that is bursting out all over, a nation which, despite all, has so much to offer so many.

And, grant us to count our more complicated blessings: our failures, which teach us so much more than success; our lack of money, which points to the only truly renewable resources, the resources of our spirit; our lack of health, yea, even the knowledge of death, for until we learn that life is limitation, we are surely as formless and as shallow as a stream without its banks.

Send us forth into a new week with a gladsome mind, free and joyful in the spirit of Jesus Christ. Amen.

—William Sloan Coffin, Riverside Church