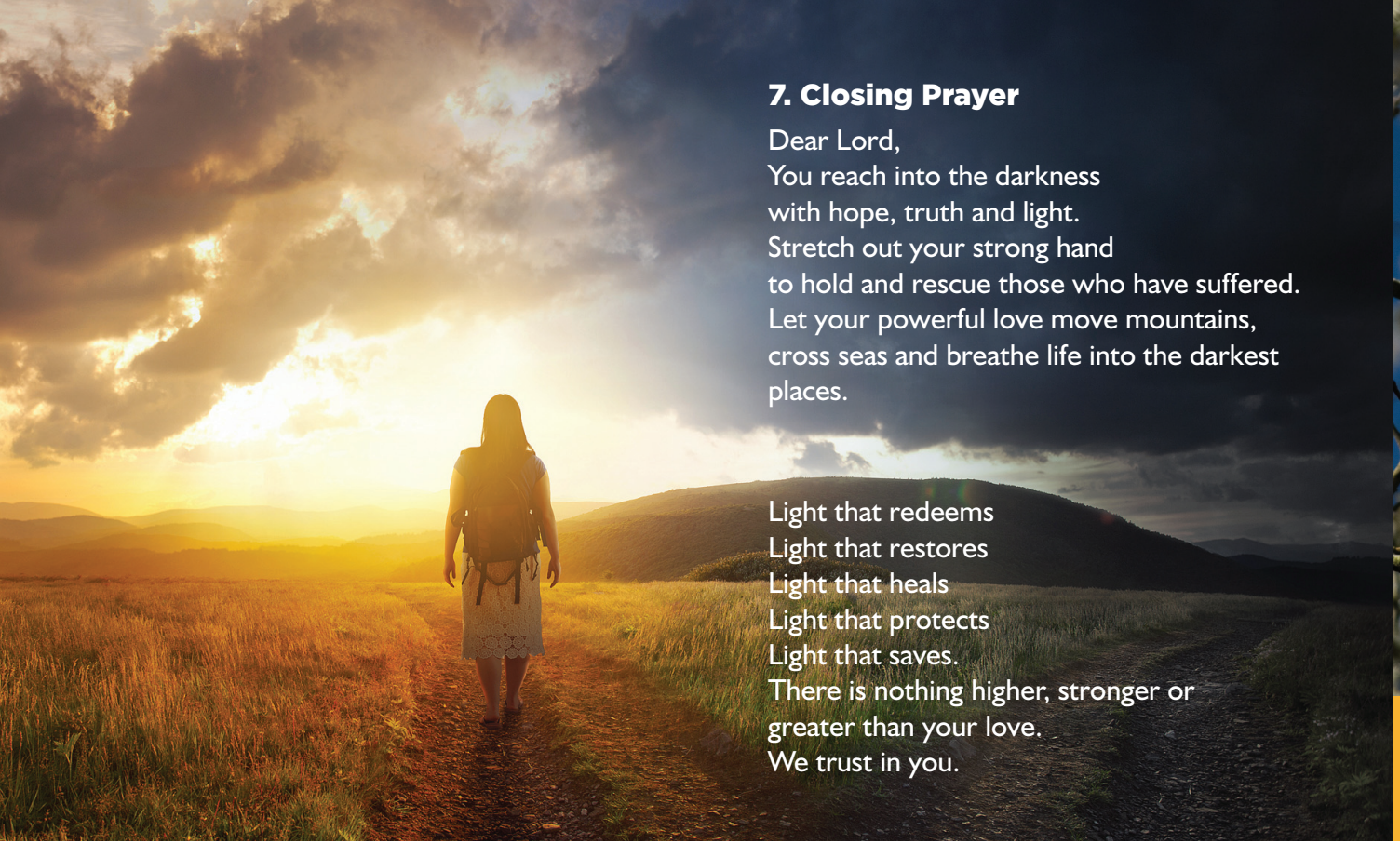
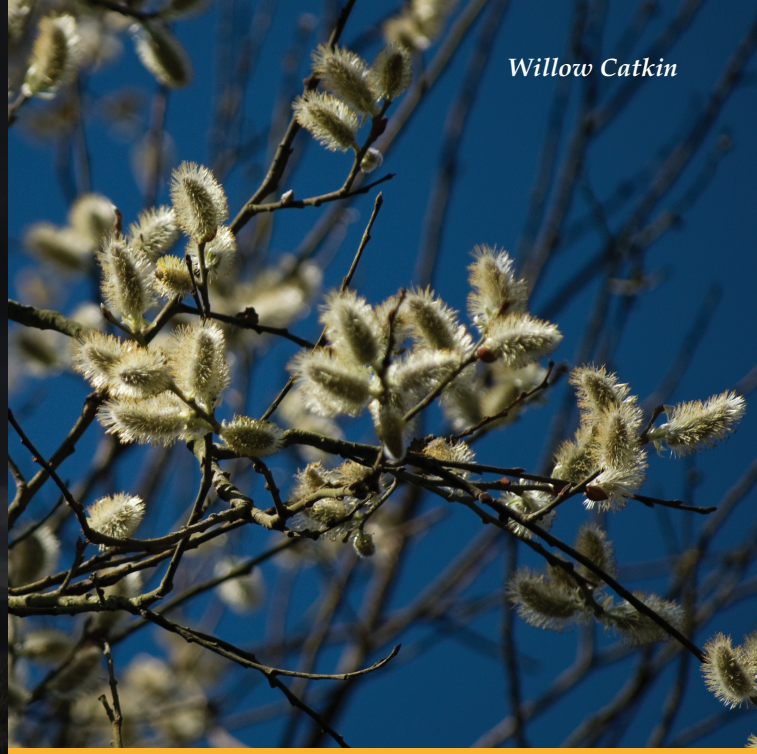


## 7. Closing Prayer

Dear Lord,
You reach into the darkness
with hope, truth and light.
Stretch out your strong hand
to hold and rescue those who have suffered.
Let your powerful love move mountains,
cross seas and breathe life into the darkest
places.

Light that redeems
Light that restores
Light that heals
Light that protects
Light that saves.
There is nothing higher, stronger or
greater than your love.
We trust in you.



*Willow Catkin*

# *Fresh Dreams for Lent*

## Second Sunday of Lent 2017

spills around Jesus: he is again affirmed as the beloved of God, living and acting as Abba wants, breaking through the forces of evil and oppression that appear to be winning.

The transfiguring light sets the seal on his way of living, despite the impending threat of his death. The victory will be with God and through Jesus we will swept up in the radiance and joy of God's company.

This story calls us to walk away from death-dealing activities; to walk in the direction of the new beckoning light that started to shine on the mountain.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LOVE TENDERLY
ACT JUSTLY
WALK HUMBLY


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## 1. Welcome and Opening Prayer

God, for your love for us, warm and brooding, which has brought us to birth and opened our eyes to the wonder and beauty of creation, We give you thanks.

Lord, for your love for us, wild and freeing which has awakened us to the energy of creation, to the sap which flows, the blood that pulses and the heart that sings, we give you thanks.

Lord, for your love for us, compassionate and patient, which has carried us through our pain, wept beside us in our sorrow and waited with us in our confusion, we give you thanks.

***Iona Abbey Worship Book***

## 2. Gospel text: Matthew 17:1-9

After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James and John the brother of James and led them up a high mountain by themselves. There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as the light. Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus. Peter said to Jesus, 'Lord, it is good for us to be here. If You wish, I will put up three shelters, one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.'

While he was still speaking, a bright cloud covered them and a voice from the cloud said, 'This is my Son, whom I love, with him I am well pleased. Listen to him.'

When the disciples heard this, they fell face down to the ground terrified. But Jesus came and touched them. 'Get up', he said, 'Don't be afraid.' When they looked up they saw no one except Jesus.

As they were coming down the mountain Jesus instructed them, 'Don't tell anyone what you have seen, until the son of man has been raised from the dead.'

## 3. Quiet Moment

*People can read over the text for themselves and pick out words or short phrases that strike them and say them out loud. When everyone has had a chance to say their word/phrase, they can then reflect silently for a moment or two and then briefly say why such a word/phrase struck them- in relation to themselves, or their community or the world.*

## 4. Questions

*Some of these questions may be helpful*

1. 'We are always surrounded by light' (St. John of the Cross) Comment.
2. Think of a mountain you know. What part does it play in your life?
3. 'Every human being reveals something of God' Pope Francis. How has God shone through to you today?

## 5. Prayers

*Mentioning people and situations we want to pray for.*

## 6. Background Notes to Matthew 17:1-9

This story records a unique event which Matthew places 6 days after Peter has expressed belief in Jesus as Son of God and Messiah (Mt 16:13-20). John the Baptist had been caught and beheaded. The net is tightening around Jesus; he knows he will not escape the clutches of his enemies, the Jewish priests and elders.

Matthew, echoing Moses' ascent of Mount Sinai, has Jesus lead Peter, James and John up and away from the darkening, fore-boding atmosphere enveloping them; away from busy transactions of temple sacrifices, from quarrels, competition, jealousy and an upside-down list of priorities. It symbolises a move away from the old way of life to the new.

Moses led people towards economic, political, social and political freedom. Elijah called people away from the old gods they had started to fear again. For a few moments the truth radiates and