

# *Prayer for those with Mental Illness*

Lord, we pray for those who have a mental illness and those who love and care for them.

So often people who have a mental illness are known as their illness. People say that "she is bipolar" or "he is schizophrenic." When we talk about people who have a mental illness, we should not use that phrase. People who have cancer are not cancer; those with diabetes are not diabetes. People with a mental illness are not illness - they are beautiful creations of God.

The way we talk about people and their illnesses affects the people themselves and how we treat the illness. In the case of mental illness there is so much fear, ignorance and hurtful attitudes that the people who suffer from mental illness needlessly suffer further.

Our society does not provide the resources that are needed to adequately understand and treat mental illness. Even with the best medical care available, always taking the cocktail of medicines that are prescribed and doing their best to be healthy and manage this illness - for too many - that is not enough. Someday a cure will be found, but until then, we need to support and be compassionate to those with mental illness, every bit as much as we support those who suffer from cancer, heart disease or any other illness.

All too often our loved ones who had a mental illness died from suicide. They were sweet, wonderful people who loved life, the people around them- and had faith in you. Eternal rest grant unto them O Lord and may perpetual light shine upon them.

Amen.