



*Day 19*

*“How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? How long must I bear pain in my soul and have sorrow in my heart all day long? How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?”*

—PSALM 13:1-2 (NRSVUE)

## Reflect

I'd like to make a strong case for complaint as a spiritual virtue. There is something cathartic when you don't have to eat it. When, instead, you can say, "This did not go well. I am decidedly not pleased. Everyone needs to do better." Complaining allows us to see that the world is not as it should be. Complaining to God allows us to locate ourselves and God in a situation. When we say to God, "I am tired of being sick, I am tired of people not listening to me, I am angry that this is happening. Where are you?" Then, we might find that God shows up in surprising ways—when a friend knows a friend, when someone brings you dinner, when the doctor finally understands. Your complaints might help you figure out the next right step or just help you get it all out. Either way, God can handle your complaints. God will listen.

## Respond

Let. It. Out. Pull out a piece of paper and vent every complaint on your mind. I know the people around you may not be able to hear it right now. That's okay. See how you feel after you lay it all on the page. Better? Worse? Notice any patterns?

# Blessing for when you feel forgotten

For when you may not know how else to say this:

*This is too much.*

*You have a body that needs healing,*

*in relationships that need restoring,*

*in a whole world*

*that needs mending.*

*You are in over your head.*

*And maybe you feel jealous when others*

*seem to have it all together,*

*when their lives seem to work out.*

*What about you?*

*So may it start now:*

*the healing, the restoration,*

*the renewal.*

*We can't wait much longer.*

*Blessed are we, wanting to feel better.*

*May you find relief from pain*

*and see good days again.*

*May capable hands—skilled professionals,*

*whose training has prepared them,*

*and whose disposition propels them*

*to seek out the answers to make*

*A difference for you and for others.*

*May the brokenness between you*

*and the people you struggle to love*

*begin to mend:*

*When caring for others feels overwhelming,*

*when family frustrates,*

*colleagues challenge,*

*kids test every last nerve,*

*or friends let you down.*

*When mentors disappoint,*

*when loneliness sets in,*

*and you find yourself wishing*

*you had what others do.*

*May the whole world be restored,*

*and may you help in its redemption:*

*the old and the young,*

*the sorry and sad,*

*the angry, the vengeful, the snide,*

*the mindless, the innocent, the misguided,*

*the cruel and powerful,*

*the weak and frail,*

*the prisoners and the protestors,*

*the politicians and the police,*

*the scientists and the engineers,*

*the nurses and the doctors,*

*the workers and the unemployed,*

*the sick, the hungry, the poor.*

*Those experiencing homelessness,*

*the lonely, and the dying—*

*every soul in all creation.*

*May goodness prevail.*

*Blessed are you when you're drowning,*

*doing what you can:*

*lamenting honestly,*

*celebrating others' relief when it comes—*

*when relationships are restored,*

*when they find a measure of peace.*

*We are not less from their good fortune.*

*But rather, emboldened to say:*

*"Me too!"*

*Receive this blessing. It is for you.*

*And then offer it to someone else too.<sup>19</sup>*

---

<sup>19</sup> Kate Bowler and Jessica Richie. Adapted from "A Blessing for When You Feel Forgotten" in *The Lives We Actually Have: 100 Blessings for Imperfect Days*. (New York: Convergent Books, 2023). 106-107.