

**Prayers, Thoughts and Reflections for the
Staff, Students and Families of
St Patrick's Catholic Primary School**



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Sign of the Cross: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

St Patrick's Primary School

We share in the life of Jesus at St Patrick's Catholic School by:

Growing up – being like Jesus in the way we think and act.

Growing together – active members of our school and parish in prayer and worship.

Reaching out – sharing the love and trust of Jesus with others.

Lifting up – helping those in need in our community and world by our good works.

PRAYER FOR THE NEW YEAR

Lord, in this New Year, may we have enough contentment to keep us agreeable, enough trials to keep us strong, enough sorrow to keep us human, enough failure to keep us humble, enough forgiveness to set us free, enough faith to banish fear, enough hope to keep our spirits up, enough love to share with those around us. When it is over may we offer a year well lived as our offering to you. Amen.

Ever Faithful God in this New Year I pray:

to live deeply with purpose,
to live freely, with detachment,
to live wisely, with humility,
to live justly with compassion,
to live lovingly with fidelity,
to live mindfully with awareness,
to live gratefully with generosity,
to live fully, with enthusiasm.
Help me to hold this vision
and to daily renew it in my heart,
becoming ever more one with you,
my truest Self.

FOR TODAY

Come O Holy Spirit, imbue us with your strength that we may bring the light of faith, the hope of the Gospel and the promise of your kingdom into our school. Through Christ our Lord. Amen

From behind the clouds the morning sun appears and light begins to shine on a new day. Give us your help and guidance. Guide me with your inspiration, benevolence and blessing. Help me to fulfil my duties and achieve my aims. May your light, the divine light, continue to shine upon me. Amen.

God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference. Amen.

We are so busy, Lord, we do not listen. The world is so noisy, Lord we do not hear. We do not hear what your spirit is saying to each one of us. We have been afraid of the silence. Lord, teach us to use your gift of silence. Teach us, Lord. Amen.

O Christ the light, illuminate and cleanse the dark corners of the world where hang the cobwebs of apathy and the dust of neglect; shine on faces made grim; melt the icicles of despair and let your searching rays enclose the whole in one great radiance. Amen.

Teach us, good Lord, to serve you as you deserve; to give and not to count the cost; to fight and not to heed the wounds; to toil and not to seek for rest; to labour and not to ask for any reward, save that of knowing that we do your will. Amen (St Ignatius Loyola)

Look to this day, for it is life, the very life of life. In its brief course lie all the realities and truths of existence. The joys of growth, the splendour of action, the glory of power. For yesterday is but a memory and tomorrow is only a vision. But today well lived makes every yesterday a memory of happiness and every tomorrow a vision of hope. Look well therefore, to this day! "(Sanskrit poem)

Lord, you are closer to me than my own breathing, nearer than my hands and feet. Help me, Lord, to trust in you this day. Amen.

Lord God, creator of light, at the rising of your sun each morning, let the greatest of all lights – your love- rise like the sun within my heart. Amen (**St Teresa of Avila**)

O Christ, our morning star, splendour of light eternal, shining with the glory of the rainbow, come and awaken us from the greyness of our apathy and renew in us your gift of hope. Amen. (**St Bede**)

God has given me this day to use as I will. God I can waste it or use it for good, but what I do today is important because I am exchanging a day of my life for it. When tomorrow comes this day will be gone forever, leaving in its place something I have traded for it. I want it to be gain and not loss, good and not evil, success and not failure, so that I shall not regret the price I have paid for it. This day is all I have. Is there someone to whom an act of kindness, not tomorrow but today, could make a world of difference? Today, whether I spend it well or throw it away, it will be gone tomorrow. Amen.

O God, our Father, deliver us this day from all that would keep from serving thee. Deliver us from coldness of heart; Deliver us from all weakness of will; Deliver us from all failure in endeavour. Grant unto us this day the love which is generous in help; determination which is steadfast in decision; the perseverance which is enduring unto the end; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (**William Barclay**)

Lord, help me this day to do the deed so that at the day's end I can rest in the assurance that I have tried my best. Amen.

Lord, throughout this day untangle my temper: in speaking, unlock my mouth's tightness: when criticising others, jog my memory; in bitterness, whisper life's sweetness; in humour, be unsparing; in hoping, be an example; in trusting. I growing ever closer to you, grant me a hint of your reflection. Amen

I slept and dreamed that life was joy. I woke and saw that life was but service. I served and understood that service was joy." (**Rabindranath Tagore**)

Lord, may I serve you this day and in so doing may I be fulfilled. Amen

Lord, we offer you ourselves this day: for the work you want accomplished; for the people you want us to meet; for the words you want to be uttered; for the silence you want to be kept; for the places you want us to enter. Enable us to realise your presence at all times and in all places. Amen

Lord, Word of God, may we speak well today, with truth and with kindness. Amen

O God, early in the morning I cry to you. Help me to pray and concentrate my thoughts on you: I cannot do this alone. In me there is darkness. But with you there is light; I am lonely but you do not leave me; I am feeble in heart, but with you there is help; I am restless, but with you there is peace. In me there is bitterness but with you there is patience; I do not understand your ways but you know the way for me. Lord, whatever this day may bring, your name be praised. Amen. **(Written by Dietrich Bonhoeffer while awaiting his execution by the Nazis)**

A person who wakes up in the morning is like a new creation. If you begin your day with unkind words, or even trivial matters – even though you may later turn to prayer, you have not been true to your Creation. All of your words each day are related to one another. All of them are rooted in the first words that you speak.” **(Old Hasidic Poem)**

I arise today blessed by all things, wings of breadth, wonder of whisper, intimacy of touch, eternity of soul, urgency of thought, embrace of God. Amen. **(John O’Donoghue)**

A mid-day prayer: God of power and love, look kindly on the tasks we have begun. At this mid-day hour renew your grace within us. Make good our error and bring our work to that fulfilment which accords your will. We make our prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Lord, as we go through this day may the enthusiasm of those we meet rub off on us also. Amen

So live this day that at the end you may be ashamed of nothing and glad of something you have done or tried to-do. So live this day that at the end someone may bless you for what you have done or tried to do. So live this day that at the end you may, with a clear conscience look up to God, who knows all you have done or tried to do. Amen.

Lord, give us today

something of the wisdom
that was in your words,
something of the love
that was in your heart,
something of the help
that was on your hands.

Give us today

something of your patience with people,
something of your ability
to be insulted without resentment,
something of your ability
to always forgive.

Amen.

Lord, we bring our work to your working hands.

We bring our sickness to your healing hands.
We bring our weakness to your strong hands.
We bring our sadness to your tender hands.
We bring our needs to your praying hands.
We bring our suffering to your wounded hands.

Amen.

Lord, we bring before you everything

we will do today;
our work, our rest,
our time with friends and family.
Help us to be patient and kind
with everyone we meet,
not to judge or criticise,
but always to forgive and give generously.

Amen.

Lord, set your blessing on us
as we begin this day together.
We ask not for what we want,
but for what you know we need,
as we offer this day and ourselves
for you and to you,
through Jesus Christ, our Saviour. Amen.

Lord, may the words we use
today and every day
be words of kindness,
words of humour and goodwill;
words that come from
a loving heart.
Amen.

THE END OF THE DAY

Thank you, Lord, for the love and protection
you have shown us throughout this day.
Stretch your hand of blessing over us
that we may end the day as we began it,
by praising your holy name,
through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

I hand over to your care, Lord,
my mind and my thoughts,
my prayers and my hopes,
my health and my work,
my friends and my family,
my neighbours and all who seek your face,
today and always.
Amen.

Inspire, Lord, all our actions and sustain them to the end,
so that all our prayer and work
may begin with you,
and be brought by you to completion,
through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

May the Lord bless us and keep us.
may the Lord let his face shine upon us
and be gracious to us.
May the Lord show us his face
and bring us peace.
Amen.

START OF THE LESSON

Lord, give me a calm mind, a quiet disposition and an attentive ear so that I may learn from this lesson and use my knowledge to follow your path. Amen

Heavenly Father, help us to: rejoice in hope; be patient in suffering; to persevere in prayer. Amen.

I would be true for there are those who trust me; I would be pure for there are those who care; I would be brave for there is much to suffer; I would be strong for there is much to dare; I would be giving and forget the gift; I would be humble for I know my weakness; I would be humble for I know my weakness; I would look up and love and laugh and live.
Amen. (St Ignatius Loyola)

It is not the critic who counts; nor the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat." (Theodore Roosevelt)

FOR STAFF

May your Holy Spirit inspire us in our vocation as teachers. May we think not too much of ourselves and not too little. May we always be honest with ourselves and our students. May we lead them from ignorance to knowledge, from fear to love, from low self-esteem to a

true perception of themselves as special, unique and loved. May you lead us in this way also Amen.

[To touch the heart of your pupils](#) is the greatest miracle you can perform.(St John Baptiste De La Salle) Lord, may we touch and be a positive influence to those we teach today. Amen

[Dear Teacher, I am a survivor of a concentration camp](#). My eyes saw what no man or woman should witness: gas chambers built by engineers; children poisoned by doctors; babies killed by nurses; elderly men and women shot and burned by high school and college graduates. So I am suspicious of education. My request is: help your students to become human. Your efforts must never produce learned monsters, skilled psychopaths, educated Eichmann's. Reading writing and arithmetic are important only if they serve to make our children more human. **(A principal of an American high school would send this letter to the teachers on the first day of school every year)**

[Teachers' Prayer to St Joseph](#). Blessed St Joseph, please be with me this day. Guide me through my lessons. Make every act and word I present to my students blessed through your intercession. Obtain for me patience and understanding in all I do this day. Amen.

[Lord, help us to challenge those we teach this day](#) and demand from them the best they can achieve. Amen.

FOR EXAMINATIONS

[Lord, I need your help](#): I need calm mind; grant me your peace. I need a clear head; grant me your wisdom. I need inspiration; grant me your enthusiasm. Keep me from panic as I put my trust in your power to help me this day. Amen

[Lord, thank you that you are with me right now](#). Your love surpasses all fear. I give you my anxiety. I surrender all my worries to you. Clear my mind. Calm my heart. Still my spirit. Relax my being. When the results come, may I be satisfied that I did my best. May whatever path I choose in life bring me happiness and give me opportunities to better the world. Amen.

O Great St Joseph of Cupertino, who while on earth did obtain from God the grace to be asked at your examination only the questions you knew, obtain for me a like favour in the exams for which I am preparing I return I promise to make you known and cause you to be invoked. Amen.

Lord, we pray for those sitting exams that they may remain calm and at peace so that they may be able to make the best use of their talents and the study they have done and the education they have been given. Let nothing prevent them from doing as well as they deserve and may they be ready to support and encourage one another. Amen

Since we pass through this world merely as pilgrims let us keep our sights fixed on the end of the road, where our real home lies. (St Columban, Feast Day Nov.23rd)

There is but one road which reaches God and that is prayer, if anyone shows you another you are being deceived. (St Theresa)

If there is light in the soul, there will be beauty in the person.
If there is beauty in the person, there will be harmony in the house.
If there is harmony in the house, there will be order in the nation.
If there is order in the nation, there will be peace in the world. (Chinese proverb)
Lord, with your help, may I instil learning in all those I meet and teach this day. Amen.

The time will come when, after harnessing space, the winds, the tides and gravitation, we shall harness for God the energies of love. And on that day, for the second time in the history of the world, we shall have discovered fire. (Teilhard de Chardin)

We can make our minds so like still water that beings gather about us that they may see, it may be, their own images, and so live for a moment with a clearer, perhaps even a fiercer life because of our quiet. (WB Yeats)

Lord, help us this day to stay calm and patient and in so doing may we spread your love and inspire those we teach. Amen.

Lord, we pray for those about to sit exams,
that they remain calm and at peace
so that they may be able
to make the best use of their talents
and the study they have done
and the education they have been given.
Let nothing prevent them
from doing as well as they deserve,
and may they be ready
to support and encourage one another.
For our own talents
and the education and support we receive, we give thanks.
Amen.

Lord, I ask you to fill my heart and mind with peace.
You have given me many skills,
which are now put to the test.
I pray that you will give me confidence,
in myself and in you,
so that I may think clearly,
use the time wisely,
and do the best I can.
Be with me and fill me with your Spirit.
Amen.

OUR SCHOOL

Lord, we ask you to be with us today,
to bless our work,
our friends,
our families,
and all those we meet.
May we use our time and talents wisely
for your service.
Amen.

Lord Jesus Christ,

you have said that you are the Way,
the Truth and the Life.

Do not allow us to stray from you,
who are the Way,
not to distrust you,
who are the Truth,
nor to rest in anything other than you,
who are the Life.
Amen.

Lord, help me to be a friend

to all who need me.

Show me how to share your love,
teach me to see you in others.

While I'm here in school,
let me see that more important
than any books or exams
are the friends I make,
the friends I'll come to love and cherish and always remember.
Amen.

FAMILY & FRIENDS

A prayer for family and friends: One of your gifts to us, Lord, is the love of our families and friends. Please keep them close to you and give all they need: increase their joys; comfort them if they are unhappy; strengthen them if they find life hard. Teach me to be grateful to them for all they do for me and help me to return their love. Amen.

Pope Francis on the Family: A perfect family does not exist. We should not be fearful of imperfections, weakness or even conflict, but rather learn how to deal with them constructively. The family, where we keep loving one another despite our limits and sins, thus becomes a school of forgiveness. Forgiveness is itself a process of communication.

Prayer for the Feast of the Holy Family

Loving God,
guardian of our homes,
when you entrusted your Son
to the care of Mary and Joseph,
you did not spare them the pains
that touch the life of every family.

Teach us to rely on your word,
that in our trials as in our joys
we may be clothed in gentleness
and patience
and united in love.

Make us ever thankful
for the blessing you give us
through Jesus Christ, your Word made flesh,
who lives and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
in the splendour of eternal light,
God for ever and ever

[No medicine is more efficacious](#), none more valuable, none better suited to the cure of all our temporal ills than a friend to whom we may turn for consolation in time of trouble and with whom we may share our happiness in time of joy. **(St Aelred of Rievaulx)**

[Lord, may we remember our friends](#) and our friendships and share with them our tribulations as well as our celebrations.

[To love a human being means to accept the person](#). It is to love people as they are. Christ's love is like that; it is entirely disinterested and selfless. His love accepts people as they are, with all that is displeasing, disappointing and even painful for him in them. If we wait to love a human being until all faults are gone, then we love only an idea in our head. **(St Julian of Norwich)**

Lord, may I accept people as they are and not as I want them to be and may I see your image in all I meet today. Amen.

Lord, many are tired and lonely; teach us to be their friends. Many are anxious and afraid; help us to calm their fears. Some are drained of faith, cynical, bored or despairing; let our faith shine forth so that through us they may come to know your love. Some live with death in their souls, they may be filled be filled with hate and bitterness; give us the wisdom to save them from the wasteland of the spirit. Teach us to show your love so that all may know they are not alone. Amen.

Letting go is not easy to do, whether it is letting go of old and useless possessions or letting go of old and useless attitudes. Perhaps it must happen by increments, little by little, until finally our hands are no longer cramped in permanent clutch mode. Lord, help me to let go of negative feelings so that I may be free to love others fully and in so doing to love you fully. Amen.

Never cease loving a person and never give up hope for him or her, for even the Prodigal Son who had fallen most low, could still be saved. The bitterest enemy and also he who was your friend could again be your friend. Love that has grown cold can rekindle again. (**Soren Kierkegaard**)

Lord, may we spend time idly with those we love this holiday and come to realise that such time is not wasted but rather time in communion with those we love. Amen.

A Mother's Love: "Someday when my children are old enough to understand, I will tell the: I loved you enough to ask where you were going, with whom and what time you would be home; I loved you enough to buy you trainers that we could afford to give you with your money; I loved you enough to make you a return a bar a of chocolate with a bite out of it and confess "I stole this"; I loved you enough to let you see hurt, disappointment, disgust and tears in my eyes; I loved you enough to admit I was wrong and ask for your forgiveness; I loved you enough to let you stumble fall and fall; But most of all I loved you enough to say "NO" when you hated me for it. That was the hardest part of it all." Lord as the family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph may we always care enough for those in our care to do what is best even though it may be difficult. Amen.

God, you call us to be your friends.

May we open our hearts to you,
that you may fill us with your love.
May we carry your love within us
wherever we go,
for you are with us always,
and may we share that love with others.
Amen.

Lord, as I speak and listen

let me not laugh at another's expense,
or smile at innuendo or gossip or malice.
Let me never misuse my sense of humour.
Let me be loyal to friends even in laughter.
Humour is a gift; let me use it wisely.
Let all my laughing and joking
be open and kind and grateful.
Amen.

We only deliberately waste time with those we love. It is the purest sign that we love someone if we choose to spend time idly in their presence when we could be doing something more productive.

SERVICE & LOVING OTHERS

I've come to a frightening conclusion that I am the decisive element in the classroom. It's my personal approach that creates the climate. It's my daily mood that makes the weather. As a teacher, I possess a tremendous power to make a child's life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or heal. In all situations, it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated and a child humanized or dehumanized. **(between teacher and child)**

It is easier to love humanity as a whole, than to love your neighbour. If you love you will also experience suffering. If you do not love, you will not know the meaning of a Christian life.

God has created me to do Him some definite service; He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another. I have my mission—I never may know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next. Somehow I am necessary for His purposes, as necessary in my place as an Archangel in his—if, indeed, I fail, He can raise another, as He could make the stones children of Abraham. Yet I have a part in this great work; I am a link in a chain, a bond of connexion between persons. He has not created me for naught. I shall do good, I shall do His work; I shall be an angel of peace, a preacher of truth in my own place, while not intending it, if I do but keep His commandments and serve Him in my calling. Amen.
(John Henry Newman)

Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate.

Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure.

It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us.

We ask ourselves, who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous?

Actually, who are you not to be?

You are a child of God.

Your playing small does not serve the world.

There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you.

We are all meant to shine, as children do.

We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us.

It's not just in some of us; it's in everyone.

And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same.

As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others."

May he support us all the day long, while the shades lengthen, and the evening comes, and the busy world is hushed, and the fever of life is over, and our work is done. Then in his mercy, may he give us a safe lodging, a holy rest and peace at last. Amen.

People are often unreasonable, irrational, and self-centred. Forgive them anyway.

If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives. Be kind anyway.

If you are successful, you will win some unfaithful friends and some genuine enemies. Succeed anyway.

If you are honest and sincere people may deceive you. Be honest and sincere anyway.

What you spend years creating, others could destroy overnight. Create anyway.

If you find serenity and happiness, some may be jealous. Be happy anyway.

The good you do today, will often be forgotten. Do good anyway.

Give the best you have, and it will never be enough. Give your best anyway.

In the final analysis, it is between you and God. It was never between you and them anyway.

(The version found written on the wall in Mother Teresa's home for children in Calcutta)

Dear Jesus, help me to spread your fragrance everywhere I go. Flood my soul with your spirit and life. Penetrate and possess my whole being so that my life may only be a radiance of yours. Shine through me so that every soul I come in contact with may feel your presence. Stay with me, and then I shall begin to shine as you shine; So to shine as to be a light to others. Amen (**Prayer said daily by the Missionaries of Charity in Calcutta**)

Oh Lord God, when thou givest to thy servant to endeavour any great matter, grant us to know that it is not the beginning but the continuing of the same, until it be thoroughly finished, which yieldeth the true glory. Amen. ((**Sir Francis Drake**))

Lord, help us to make the same allowances for others
as we would wish them to make for us;
to be as sympathetic and understanding to others
as we would wish them to be to us;
to help others as we would wish them to help us.
Amen.

God our Father, you call each of us by name,
and you treasure each of us individually
as though no-one else exists.
Inspire us to respect and value
each person who comes into our lives this day.
Amen.

Christ has no body now but yours;
no hands on earth but your hands.
Yours are the eyes through which
he looks out with compassion on the world;
yours the feet with which he chooses
to go about doing good.

Lord, teach us to love as you love;
where someone is lonely, may I offer friendship;
where someone is afraid, may I calm their fears;
where someone is sad, may I be there for them;
where someone doubts their ability, may I offer praise;

where someone feels rejected, may I show them acceptance;
where someone has little, may I share what I have;
where someone is happy, may I share their joy.
Lord, I offer all I do today in love.

I was hungry for a word of encouragement, and you praised me.

I was hungry for a greeting, and you smiled on me.

I was hungry for friendship, and you were there.

I was thirsty for acknowledgement, and you affirmed me.

I was thirsty for guidance, and you walked with me.

I was thirsty for a word of appreciation, and you thanked me.

I was a stranger to love, and you welcomed me with affection.

I was a stranger to sympathy and understanding, and you listened to me.

I was a stranger to care and acceptance, and you opened your heart and took me in.

I was naked because I did not appreciate myself, and you clothed me with confidence.

I was naked from the loss of my good name through a story that was untrue, but you stood with me.

I was stripped by betrayal, and you spoke words of support and love.

Some folk grasp at riches. Others share a crust. Some will steal a man's good name, while others give their trust. There's a law of nature, a key to golden stores, take and you will be poorer, give and all is yours. Hold out your hand to the stranger, open your heart for a friend, offer your best even if it is only a smile. Life without giving is never worthwhile. Only the miser is foolish, hoarding his treasure in vain. Give if it is only a handshake; give with all Heaven to gain. **(Giving)**

I was hungry and you formed a discussion group to debate my hunger. I was imprisoned and you quietly crept off to church to pray for me. I was naked and you discussed the morality of my appearance. I was sick and you knelt and thanked God for your health. I was homeless and you spoke to me about the shelter of God's love. I was a stranger and you left me alone while you prayed for me at Mass. You seem so holy, so close to God. But I am still very hungry, lonely and cold. **(The parable of the Sheep and Goats according to a homeless person)**

THANKSGIVING

Lord, I give thanks for those

who look for the best in me

and for all whose love and kindness encourage and support me in my life.

I place in your care those through whom I am made aware of your love. Bless them and fill their lives with your love.

Amen.

Father, we thank you for the gift of faith;

that you have made yourself known to us through your Son, Jesus Christ.

May the faith that we have in you

sustain us in our lives,

and enable us to reach out to others.

May we help others in their search for truth and bring them to the reality of your love.

Amen.

Father, we thank you for the gift of your creation, for creatures and plants
on whom we depend for our existence.

May we learn to respect the environment

you have created so that future generations will see your glory.

Amen.

Father, we thank you for the gift of your Son, Jesus Christ.

Through his sacrifice on the cross,

he has saved us and brought us back to you.

May our lives be guided by his teaching and example and reflect his presence, through the Holy Spirit,

to all we meet.

Amen.

TALENTS AND ABILITIES

Lord, give me the conviction to believe in myself,

to love myself and to give of myself.

I have many good qualities, so help me not to envy the qualities of other people or friends.

Instead, help me to admire and respect those qualities,

as I respect my own.

Lord, give me the confidence I need

to be the best I can be to myself and to others.

Amen.

Lord, sometimes we look at others

and feel a little jealous of their talents and abilities.

We ask you to take away any feelings of bitterness,
and inspire us to be generous and positive,

that we may be more able to see the good in others.

Help us to develop our own talents and abilities more fully, and praise others for the good use of theirs.

Help us to appreciate people more for who they are.

Amen.

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and feel a little jealous of their talents and abilities.

We ask you to take away any feelings of bitterness,
and inspire us to be generous and positive,

that we may be more able to see the good in others.

Help us to develop our own talents and abilities more fully, and praise others for the good use of theirs.

Help us to appreciate people more for who they are.

Amen.

GUIDANCE

My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me. I cannot know for certain where it will end. Nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think that I am following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so. But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you. And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing. I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire. And I know that if I do this you will lead me by the right road though I may know nothing about it. Therefore, will I trust you always though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death. I will not fear, for you are ever with me, and you will never leave me to face my perils alone. (**Thomas Merton**)

Lead, Kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom

Lead Thou me on!

The night is dark, and I am far from home

Lead Thou me on!

Keep Thou my feet; I do not ask to see

The distant scene—one step enough for me.

was not ever thus, nor pray'd that Thou

Shouldst lead me on.

I loved to choose and see my path, but now

Lead Thou me on!

I loved the garish day, and, spite of fears,

Pride ruled my will: remember not past years.

So long Thy power hath blest me, sure it still

Will lead me on,

O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till

The night is gone;

And with the morn those angel faces smile

Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile.

(John Henry Newman – The Pillar of the Cloud)

A Child's Guidance: "Love me, but do not spoil me. Tell me, but don't yell at me. Hold me, but don't keep me tied to you. Mind me, but don't wrap me in cotton wool. Show me how, but don't make a show of me. Correct me, but don't forget to say why. Listen to me, but don't make fun of my fears. Let me explore, but don't let me get lost. Encourage me, but don't bribe me. I am like you, but don't try to make me the same as you."

If children live with criticism, they learn to condemn.

If children live with hostility, they learn to fight.

If children live with fear, they learn to be apprehensive.

If children live with pity, they learn to feel sorry for themselves.

If children live with ridicule, they learn to feel shy.

If children live with jealousy, they learn to feel envy.

If children live with shame, they learn to feel guilty.

If children live with encouragement, they learn confidence.

If children live with tolerance, they learn patience.

If children live with praise, they learn appreciation.

If children live with acceptance, they learn to love.

If children live with approval, they learn to like themselves.

If children live with recognition, they learn it is good to have a goal.

If children live with sharing, they learn generosity.

If children live with honesty, they learn truthfulness.

If children live with fairness, they learn justice.
If children live with kindness and consideration, they learn respect.
If children live with security, they learn to have faith in themselves and in those about them.
If children live with friendliness, they learn the world is a nice place in which to live.

The human body has two hands. With one | can make a fist: I can hit; I can destroy; I can lay waste before me. With the other hand I can create: I can paint a picture; I can play a piece of music; I can greet a friend and shake their hand. But, above all with this hand I can contain the fist.” **(Brian Keenan)**

Lord, help me to control my anger at all times. May I always remind myself of the power of your love so that I can keep my temper in check. Amen.

For me, prayer is an aspiration of the heart, it is a simple glance directed to heaven, it is a cry of gratitude and love in the midst of trial as well as joy. Finally, it is something great and supernatural, which expands my soul and unites me to Jesus. **(St Theresa)**

Lord, teach me to listen to myself; help me to be less afraid, to trust the voice in the deepest part of me. Teach me to listen to your voice; in the busyness and boredom, in certainty and in doubt, in silence and in noise. Teach me, lord, to listen. Amen.

Prayer is not meant to change the world; prayer is meant to change us so that we will change the world.

To wish to pray is a prayer in itself. **(Georges Bernanos)**

Lord, who can grasp all the wealth of one of your words? What we understand is much less than what we leave behind, like thirsty people who drink from a fountain. **(St Ephraem)**

You must stop worrying about success or failure, your business is to work step by step, from day to day, softly-softly, to be prepared for unavoidable mistakes and failures, in a word, follow your line and leave competition to others.” Lord, help me to go softly, softly throughout this day. Amen. **(Anton Chekhov)**

Teach me your ways, O Lord my God, and I will walk in your truth; Give me a totally undivided heart; Cleanse me, Lord, I pray; Remove from me all that is standing in the way of your love. Amen.

Lord, you have enriched our lives in many ways.

Give us each day the wisdom to recognise
which things are important,
and which things are not.
Show us how best to use the time
and talents you have given us.
Help us to use all opportunities wisely
that we may give in service to others
the good gifts we have received from you.
Amen.

Jesus said, ‘Do not worry about your life.’

As we begin today,
help us not to worry about what happened yesterday
or what will happen tomorrow,
but to make the most of today.
We make this prayer through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Dear God, help us to keep our lives in balance,
so we allow enough time for what is important to us.
Help us not to neglect the things and people
that should be appreciated most.
When we are busy, let us leave our frustration
and tiredness behind,
so that we don’t take them out on those closest to us.
We make this prayer through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Lord, give us wisdom before we speak,
understanding while we listen,
sensitivity towards those we meet,
and the perspective of your kingdom
in which to see the things of earth.
Amen.

Lord, when we are thinking and planning
what to do with our lives,
help us to think
not of how much we can get out of life,
but how much we can put into it;
not of how much we can have,
but of how much we can give.
We ask this with faith in your Son, Jesus, who came among us not to be served,
but to serve.
Amen.

God, help us to have peace of mind
and a sense of moral confidence
to know in our heart what is right and wrong.
Give us strength to make wise decisions
and the courage to stand by our convictions - even in the face of adversity or pressure
from the people around us.
Help us to be happy with ourselves
and the path we have taken,
and love us when we stray from what is right,
so that your love may be our guide.
Amen.

Lord, inspire me to live in such a way
that my choices each day
and my commitment to live
in a positive way may transform
the negative into something positive,
and the ordinariness of daily life
into something extraordinary.
Amen.

Lord, guide me in your great love:-

that I may walk in your ways
and bring your kingdom about
on earth as in heaven.
Be with me this day and evermore.
Amen.

Lord, help us to have the courage to follow our dreams.

Help us with the determination to carry them out.
Give us the patience to deal with negativity,
the strength to accept defeat or failure.
Give us the strength to overcome the barriers.
Strengthen the hope that motivates us.
You have given each of us what it takes
to live our lives successfully.
Help us to use that to our best potential.
Amen.

Ask the Lord for a disciple's eyes, that you may look kindly upon others. Pray to the Lord for a disciple's tongue that you may speak ill of no one. Beseech the Lord for a disciple's ear, for the first duty of love is to listen. Request the Lord for a disciple's heart that understands the needs of others. Appeal to the Lord for a disciple's hands that busy themselves in charitable deeds. Amen.

For every pain that we must bear, for every burden, for every care, there is a reason. For every grief, that bows the head, for every teardrop that is shed, there is a reason. For every hurt, for every plight, for every lonely, pain racked night, there is a reason. But if God we trust, as we should, it all will work out for the good, He knows the reason.

MERCY & FORGIVENESS

The quality of mercy is not strain'd, It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath: it is twice blest; It blesseth him that gives and him that takes:
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest: it becomes the throned monarch better than his crown;
His sceptre shows the force of temporal power, the attribute to awe and majesty,
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings; But mercy is above this sceptred sway;
It is enthroned in the hearts of kings, It is an attribute to God himself;
And earthly power doth then show likest God's when mercy seasons justice."

(William Shakespeare - The Merchant of Venice)

Throughout this day may I act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly with God. Amen.

I have always found that mercy bears richer fruits than strict justice **(Abraham Lincoln)**

I asked for strength and God gave me difficulties to make me strong.
I asked for wisdom and God gave me problems to solve.
I asked for prosperity and God gave me brawn and brains to work.
I asked for courage and God gave me dangers to overcome.
I asked for patience and God placed me in situations where I was forced to wait.
I asked for love and God gave me troubled people to help.
I asked for favours and God gave me opportunities.
I received nothing I wanted I received everything I needed.
My prayers have all been answered.

So, while I live I will seek your wisdom, O God;
while I have strength to search, I will follow her ways.
For her words are like rivers in the desert;
she is like rain on parched ground,
like a fountain whose waters fail not.
Then shall my soul spring up like grass,
and my heart recover her greenness;
and from the deepest places of my soul
shall flow streams of living water.

(St. Hilda community)

God won't ask what kind of fancy car you drove. He will ask how many people you took to church that didn't have transportation.

God won't ask the square footage of your house. He will ask how many people you helped who didn't have a house.

God won't ask how many fancy clothes you had in your wardrobe. He will ask how many of those clothes you gave away to those who didn't have any.

God won't ask what social class you were in. He will ask what kindness you displayed.

God won't ask how many material possessions you had. He will ask whether those material possessions dictated your life.

God won't ask what your highest salary was. He will ask if you trampled over any people to obtain that salary.

God won't ask what your job title was. He will ask did you perform your job to the best of your ability.

God won't ask how many degrees you had. He will ask how many people you thanked for helping you get those degrees.

God won't ask what your parents did to help you. He will ask what you did to help your parents.

God won't ask what you did to help yourself. He will ask what you did to help others.

God won't ask how many friends you had. He will ask how many people you were a friend to.

Lord help me to think less about myself and more about all I meet this day. Amen.

I am but one, but I am one. I cannot do everything, but I can do something, what I can do, I should do, and with the help of God I will do. Amen.

I am not what I ought to be, I am not what I would like to be, I am not what I hope to be, But I am not what I once was, and by the grace of God I am what I am. Amen.

A prayer for kindness: Keep us O God, from pettiness; let us be large in thought, word and deed. Let us be done with fault finding and leave off self-seeking. May we never be hasty in judgement and always generous. Teach us to put into action our impulses, straightforward and unafraid. Grant that we may realise that it is the little things that create differences, that in the big things we areas one. Amen.

Holiness is not something that comes from doing good; we do good because we are holy. Holiness is not something we acquire by avoiding evil; we pray because we are holy. Holiness is not something that blossoms when we are courageous; we are courageous

because we are holy. Holiness is not the result of character building; we build character because we are holy. Our holiness is God with us – Emmanuel. Amen.

Charitable Speech: Set a watch, Lord, upon my tongue, that I may never speak the cruel word which is not true, is not the whole truth; or being wholly true, is merciless; for the love of Jesus Christ our Lord and our God. Amen.

A Prayer to be more Christian: Keep me, O God, from all pettiness. Let me be large in thought, in word and deed. Let me be done with fault finding and leave off all self-seeking. May I put away all pretence and meet people face to face, without self-pity and without prejudice. May I never be hasty in judgement and always be generous. Let me always take time for all things, make me grow calm, serene and gentle. Teach me to put into action my better impulses, to be straightforward and unafraid. Amen.

God, please help me to deal with people

who do not understand me,
and forgive me for the times
that I do not understand others.
You understand everything and everyone. Amen.

For the times we are too eager

to be better than others,
when we are too rushed to care,
when we are too tired to bother,
when we don't really listen,
when we are too quick to act
from motives other than love.
God, forgive us.
Amen.

Lord, I commit my failures

as well as my successes into your hands,
and I bring for your healing
the people and the situations,
the wrongs and the hurts of the past.
Give me courage, strength and generosity
to let go and move on,
leaving the past behind me,
and living the present to the full.
Lead me always to be positive
as I entrust the past to your mercy,
the present to your love,
and the future to your providence.
Amen.

JUSTICE & PEACE

Lord Jesus, we pray a blessing for all those actively engaged in the struggle for racial justice. Grant that they may: Hear the voices crying for justice; Engage in developing a better understanding; Act to bring about change; Lead and inspire others by their good example. Amen. **(Racial Justice Prayer)**

Advent should admonish us to discover – in each brother and sister we greet, in each friend whose hand we shake, in each beggar who asks for bread, in each peasant who looks for work – the face of Christ. Then it would not be possible to cheat them, to deny them their rights. They are Christ and whatever is done to them, Christ will take as done to himself. This is what Advent is: Christ lived among us. **(Oscar Romero)**

Hope looks for the good in people instead of finding fault. Hope opens doors when despair closes them. Hope draws its power from a deep trust in God. Hope lights a candle instead of cursing the darkness. Hope pushes ahead when it would be easier to quit. Hope accepts modest gains, realising that the longest journey begins with a step. Hope acknowledges misunderstandings as the price for serving the greater good of others. Hope is a good loser as it has the divine assurance of final victory.

May I see Christ in all I meet and speak to this day. Amen

Give us, Lord, a vision of our world

as your love would make it:
a world where the weak are protected,
and none goes hungry or poor;
a world where the benefits of culture are shared,
and everyone can enjoy them;
a world where different races and nations
live in mutual respect;
a world where peace is built with justice,
and justice is fired with love,
and give us the inspiration
and courage of your Spirit to build it.
Amen.

Lord, when I am hungry, give me someone in need of food;

when I am thirsty, send me someone needing a drink;
when I am cold, send me someone to warm;
when I am grieved, offer me someone to console;
when my cross grows heavy, let me share another's cross;
when I am poor, lead me to someone in need;
when I have no time, give me someone I can help a little while;
when I am humiliated, let me have someone to praise;
when I am disheartened, send me someone to cheer;
when I need understanding, give me someone who needs mine;
when I need to be looked after, send me someone to care for;
when I think only of myself, draw my thoughts to another.
Amen.

Lead us from death to life

from falsehood to truth.
Lead us from despair to hope,
from fear to trust.
Lead us from hate to love,
from war to peace.
Let peace fill our hearts,
our world, our universe.
Let us dream together,
pray together,
work together,
to build one world
of peace and justice for all.
Amen.

Lord, we remember before you all our brothers and sisters
who are weighed down with suffering.
Bless and guide us
that your love may be reflected in our concern
for the hungry, the oppressed and the unloved.
Help us to acknowledge and grow in appreciation
that all people are made in your image and likeness.
Amen.

CREATION & THE ENVIRONMENT

Canticle to the Sun

Most High, all-powerful, all-good Lord, All praise is Yours, all glory, all honour and all blessings.

To you alone, Most High, do they belong, and no mortal lips are worthy to pronounce Your Name.

Praised be You my Lord with all Your creatures,
especially Sir Brother Sun,

Who is the day through whom You give us light.

And he is beautiful and radiant with great splendour,

Of You Most High, he bears the likeness.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars,

In the heavens you have made them bright, precious and fair.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Brothers Wind and Air,

And fair and stormy, all weather's moods,

by which You cherish all that You have made.

Praised be You my Lord through Sister Water,

So useful, humble, precious and pure.

Praised be You my Lord through Brother Fire,

through whom You light the night and he is beautiful and playful and robust and strong.

Praised be You my Lord through our Sister,

Mother Earth

who sustains and governs us,

producing varied fruits with coloured flowers and herbs.

Praise be You my Lord through those who grant pardon for love of You and bear sickness and trial.

Blessed are those who endure in peace, By You Most High, they will be crowned.

Praised be You, my Lord through Sister Death,

from whom no-one living can escape. Woe to those who die in mortal sin! Blessed are they

She finds doing Your Will.

No second death can do them harm. Praise and bless my Lord and give Him thanks,

And serve Him with great humility. **(St Francis of Assisi)**

A Native American Prayer

Oh, Great Spirit,
whose voice I hear in the winds
and whose breath gives life to all the world, hear me.
I am small and weak.
I need your strength and wisdom.
Let me walk in beauty and make my eyes
ever behold the red and purple sunset.
Make my hands respect the things you have made
and my ears sharp to hear your voice.
Make me wise so that I may understand
the things you have taught my people.
Let me learn the lessons you have hidden
in every leaf and rock.
I seek strength, not to be superior to my brother,
but to fight my greatest enemy - myself.
Make me always ready to come to you
with clean hands and straight eyes,
so when life fades, as the fading sunset,
my spirit will come to you
without shame.

(Chief Yellow Lark – 1887)

Only when the last tree has died and the last river poisoned and the last fish been caught
will you realise we cannot eat money. **(Cree Indian saying)**

You Teacher gave me half a loaf

“Once upon a time there was a class and the students expressed disapproval of their teacher. Why should we be concerned with global warming and climate change? Why should we care about what others in the world are thinking, feeling or doing? The teacher said she had a dream in which she saw one of her students fifty years from today. The student was angry and said, “Why did I learn so much detail about the past and the laws of this country and so little about the world?”. He was angry because no one told him that as an adult he would be faced almost daily with problems of a global interdependent nature, be they problems of peace, security, quality of life, food, inflation, disease or scarcity of natural resources. The angry student found he was the victim as well as the beneficiary. “Why was I not warned? Why was I not better educated? Why did my teachers not tell me about the problems and help me understand that I was a member of an interdependent human race?” With even greater anger the student shouted, “You helped me extend my hands with incredible technology: my eyes with telescopes and microscopes; my ears with mobile phones, digital radios and sonar; my brain with computers and the internet but you did not help me extend my heart, concern, love for the entire human family. You teacher, gave me half a loaf.” **(John Rye Kingthorn)**

If the Earth were only a few feet in diameter, floating a few feet above a field somewhere, people would come from everywhere to marvel at it. People would walk around it marvelling at its big pools of water, its little pools, and the water flowing between the pools. People would marvel at the bumps on it, and the holes in it, and they would marvel at the very thin layer of gas surrounding it and the water suspended in the gas. The people would marvel at all the creatures walking around the surface of the ball and at the creatures in the water. The people would declare it sacred because it was the only one, and they would protect it so that it would not be hurt. The ball would be the greatest wonder known, and people would come to pray to it, to be healed, to gain knowledge, to know beauty, and to wonder how it could be. People would love it and defend it with their lives because they would somehow know that their lives, their own roundness, could be nothing without it. If the Earth were only a few feet in diameter...- **(Joe Miller)**

Enjoy the earth gently, enjoy the earth gently. For if the earth is spoiled it cannot be repaired. Enjoy the earth gently. **(Yoruba poem)**

Two families moved into a semi-detached house with a rather thin dividing wall, which permitted them to hear but not understand everything that went on in the other's abode. Both families became convinced that the other was attempting to break through the wall and murder them in their beds. So they each built security systems and booby trap devices which would enable them to utterly destroy their neighbours if they attempted to break through. The cost of the security system meant that neither family had money left over for repairs to the house. The basement was damp and a number of refugees had moved in as tenants. In the winter the cellar became so cold that the tenants had to cut down the ceiling joists for firewood so that they did not freeze to death. A message from the flat above informed the tenants not to interfere with the structure of the building as it may set off the security system. As a concession the people upstairs would turn up the heating so that some would trickle down to the basement. However, heat does not trickle downwards. So the refugees carefully and secretly sawed the wood. After a time, the joists gave way and the ceiling fell in. The dividing wall fell and this caused the booby traps to explode, thus resulting in the death of everyone in the building." **(A Parable of Our Times)**

Lord, may we always remember to treat your creation with respect and to offer help to our fellow human beings wherever they may live on Earth. Amen.

In Korea, there is a legend about a native warrior who died and went to heaven. "Before I enter," he said to the gatekeeper, "I would like you to take me on a tour of hell." The gatekeeper found a guide to take the warrior to hell.

When they got there, the warrior was astonished to see a great table piled high with every tasty food he could imagine - anything one could possibly want to eat or drink. The warrior then looked at the people. They were all starving. "How could this be?" he asked the guide. "Are they not allowed to eat?" "Oh yes, they can eat," said the guide "but they must use the chopsticks they are given. They are five feet long and they must hold them at the end. Just look at them. They miss their mouths every time!" "Enough," said the warrior, "This is hell, indeed! Please take me back to heaven."

In heaven, to his surprise, he saw a similar room, with a similar table loaded with all the same food. But, the people were in radiant health, happy and well-nourished. The warrior turned to the guide and said, "I see - no chopsticks here." The guide replied that yes, the people were still issued chopsticks and yes, they were still five feet long and that they still must be held at the end - but, the difference was that in heaven the people learned to feed each other.

Lord, may we help each other this day and in so doing help to do your work on Earth. Amen.

Creator God,

we look in wonder
at all you have made;
remind us that the earth
does not belong to us,
we belong to the earth;
remind us that the earth,
and all that is in it,
belongs to you.
Teach us, Creator God,
to respect this planet
which is our home,
to live within the web of life
and to give you the glory.
Amen.

HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY

God of our fathers, you chose Abraham and his descendants to bring your name to the nations: we are deeply saddened by the behaviour of those who in the course of history have caused these children of yours to suffer, and asking your forgiveness we wish to commit ourselves to genuine brotherhood with the people of the Covenant. Amen.

From tomorrow on I shall be sad, from tomorrow no, not today. Today I will be glad and every day no matter how bitter it may be. From tomorrow on I shall be sad, not today.”

(written by an unknown child in a Nazi death camp)

Prayer written on a cellar wall in Cologne by Jews hiding from the Nazis: I believe in the sun even when it is not shining. I believe in love even when I do not feel it. I believe in God even when he is silent. Amen

First they came for the Socialists, and I did not speak out—

Because I was not a Socialist.

Then they came for the Trade Unionists, and I did not speak out—

Because I was not a Trade Unionist.

Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out—

Because I was not a Jew.

Then they came for me—and there was no one left to speak for me.

Jewish prayer for Peace: We pray for all humanity, though divided into nations and races, yet all people are your children, drawing from you their life and being, commanded by you to obey your laws. Cause hatred and strife to vanish, that abiding peace may fill the Earth: And humanity everywhere be blessed with the fruit of peace. Amen.

DISABILITY & SICKNESS

Blessed are you who take time to listen to difficult speech:

For you help us to know that if we persevere,

We can be understood.

Blessed are you who walk with us in public places,

And ignore the stares of strangers,

For in your companionship,

We find havens of peace.

Blessed are you who never bid us to "hurry up",

And more blessed are you

Who do not snatch tasks from our hands to do them for us,

For often we need time rather than help.

Blessed are you who stand beside us

As we enter new and untried ventures,

For our failures will be outweighed

By the times we surprise ourselves and you.

Blessed are you who ask for our help,

For our greatest need is to be needed.

Blessed are you when you assure us,

That the one thing that makes us individuals

Is not in our peculiar muscles,

Nor in our wounded nervous systems,

Nor in our difficulties in learning,

Nor any exterior difference.

But is in our inner, personal, individual self

Which no infirmity can diminish or erase.

(Beatitudes for friends of exceptional young people (HCPT))

If you fail to see the person but only see the disability, then who is blind? If you cannot hear your brothers cry for justice, who is deaf? If you do not communicate with your sister, who is disabled? If your heart and mind do not reach out to your neighbour, who has the social need? If you do not stand up for the rights of all, who is the cripple? Your attitude towards persons with disabilities may be our biggest handicap and yours too.

The successful are always tempted to regard their success as a sort of blessing or reward for righteousness. This can lead to judgements being made about the unsuccessful, the unemployed, the poor and the less intelligent which are both uncharitable and untrue.

(Archbishop Runcie)

Lord, may I recognise the gifts and talents of all I meet today. Amen.

Prayer for the sick: Lord Jesus, we ask you to bring your healing touch to those whom we know to be sick, afraid or worried. To those who have lost loved ones and those who are victims of hatred. Bring them to your healing. Amen.

Lord, we ask you to bring your healing touch to all those we know who are ill at this time. Bring them your healing and peace.
Amen.

Lord, we pray for those who are ill.

We ask that you will comfort
and strengthen them
and be with them in their suffering.

We remember also those who care for them, asking that you will bless them
for the work they do.
Amen.

Father, we bring before you all those who are suffering. Let them know your presence
and may your healing love touch their lives
and fill them with strength and hope.
Amen.

No, I shall never believe in a God who loves pain, a God who makes himself feared, A God who has no forgiveness for some sins, a God who does not save those who have not known him but have desired and searched for him, a God who does not go out to meet him who has abandoned him, A God who has never wept, A God who cannot find himself in the eyes of a child, a God who is not love and incapable of transforming into love everything he touches, a god who would not have become a man with all that that implies, a God in whom I cannot hope against all hope. Yes, my God is the other God.

THE ELDERLY

Beatitudes for the Friends of the Aged

Blessed are they who understand
My faltering step and palsied hand.
Blessed are they who know that my ears today
Must strain to catch the things they say.
Blessed are they who seem to know that my eyes are dim
and my wits are slow.
Blessed are they who looked away
When my coffee spilled at table today.
Blessed are they with a cherry smile
Who stop to chat for a little while.
Blessed are they who never say,
"You've told that story twice today."
Blessed are they who know the ways
To bring back memories of yesterday.
Blessed are they who make it known,
That I'm loved, respected and not alone.
Blessed are they who know I'm at a loss
To find the strength to carry the Cross.

Blessed are they who ease the days
On my journey home in loving ways.

Do not look forward in fear to the changes in life;
rather, look to them with full hope that as they arise,
God, whose very own you are,
will lead you safely through all things;
and when you cannot stand it,
God will carry you in His arms.
Do not fear what may happen tomorrow;
the same understanding Father who cares for
you today will take care of you then and every day.
He will either shield you from suffering
or will give you unfailing strength to bear it.
Be at peace,
and put aside all anxious thoughts and imaginations . **(Prayer of St Francis de Sales)**

Crabbit Old Woman

What do you see, what do you see?
Are you thinking, when you look at me-
A crabbit old woman, not very wise,
Uncertain of habit, with far-away eyes,
Who dribbles her food and makes no reply
When you say in a loud voice,
I do wish you'd try.
Who seems not to notice the things that you do
And forever is loosing a stocking or shoe.
Who, unresisting or not; lets you do as you will
With bathing and feeding the long day is fill.
Is that what you're thinking,
Is that what you see?
Then open your eyes,
nurse, you're looking at me.
I'll tell you who I am as I sit here so still!
As I rise at your bidding, as I eat at your will.
I'm a small child of 10 with a father and mother,
Brothers and sisters, who loved one another-
A young girl of 16 with wings on her feet,
Dreaming that soon now a lover she'll meet,
A bride soon at 20- my heart gives a leap,
Remembering the vows that I promised to keep.
At 25 now I have young of my own
Who need me to build a secure happy home;
A woman of 30, my young now grow fast,
Bound to each other with ties that should last;
At 40, my young sons have grown and are gone,
But my man's beside me to see I don't mourn;
At 50 once more babies play around my knee,
Again we know children, my loved one and me.
Dark days are upon me, my husband is dead,
I look at the future, I shudder with dread,
For my young are all rearing young of their own.
And I think of the years and the love that I've known;

I'm an old woman now and nature is cruel-
Tis her jest to make old age look like a fool.
The body is crumbled, grace and vigor depart,
There is now a stone where I once had a heart,
But inside this old carcass, a young girl still dwells,
And now and again my battered heart swells,
I remember the joy, I remember the pain,
And I'm loving and living life over again.
I think of the years all too few- gone too fast.
And accept the stark fact that nothing can last-
So open your eyes, nurse, open and see,
Not a crabbit old woman, look closer-
See Me.

By Phyliss McCormick

A Nurse's reply to the Crabbit Old Woman

What do we see, you ask, what do we see?
Yes, we are thinking when looking at thee!
We may seem to be hard when we hurry and fuss,
But there's many of you, and too few of us.
We would like far more time to sit by you and talk,
To bath you and feed you and help you to walk.
To hear of your lives and the things you have done;
Your childhood, your husband, your daughter, your son.
But time is against us,
there's too much to do -Patients too many, and nurses too few.
We grieve when we see you so sad and alone
With nobody near you, no friends of your own.
We feel all your pain,
and know of your fear That nobody cares now your end is so near
But nurses are people with feelings as well,
And when we're together you'll often hear tell Of the dearest old Gran in the very end bed,
And the lovely old Dad, and the things that he said,
We speak with compassion and love,
and feel sad When we think of your lives and the joy that you've had,
When the time has arrived for you to depart,
You leave us behind with an ache in our heart.
When you sleep the long sleep, no more worry or care,
There are other old people, and we must be there.
So please understand if we hurry and fuss –
There are many of you, And so few of us.

STRENGTH & COURAGE

[Prayer for those suffering abuse](#): Dear God, we ask you to help all those who suffer from abuse. Help them find healing and peace in their lives. May Maria Goretti, who was strengthened by your grace, join with us in prayer for healing victims of abuse. Grant us your love that we might reach out to them in your name with hope in times of trouble. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our lord. Amen.

You are blessed if you woke up this morning with more health than illness, more blessed than the million who won't survive the week. If you can go to Mass without fear of harassment or arrest you are more blessed than almost 3 billion people in the world. If you have food in the fridge, clothes to wear and a roof over your head you are richer than 75% of the world. If you can smile and are truly thankful you are blessed because most can but choose not to. If you can hold someone's hand, hug them or even touch them on the shoulder you are blessed because you can offer God's healing touch. If you can read this, you are more blessed than over 2 billion people in the world who cannot read anything at all. You are blessed in ways you may never even know. Amen.

Guidance from parent to child: I gave you life but cannot live it for you. I can teach you things but I cannot make you learn. I can give you directions but cannot lead you. I can teach you right from wrong but cannot always decide for you. I can teach you to share but cannot make you caring. I can teach you respect but cannot force you to show honour. I can warn you about sins but cannot make your morals. I can pray for you but cannot make you walk with God. I can tell you how to live but cannot give you eternal life. Amen

O Lord, support us all the day long,
until the shadows lengthen,
and the evening comes,
and the busy world is hushed,
and the fever of life is over,
and our work is done.
Then in your mercy,
grant us a safe lodging and a holy rest,
and peace at the last. **(John Henry Newman)**

I expect to pass through this world but once; any good thing therefore that I can do, any kindness I can show to any fellow creature, let me do it now; let me not defer or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again. Amen. **(Stephen Grellet)**

For those we love: Lord I pray for those I love. Keep them safe. Give them your peace. Help them to love you more and to know that in every danger they remain in your safe-keeping. Amen.

I asked God to take away my pride, and God said "NO".

He said it was not for Him to take away, but for me to give up.

I asked God to make my handicapped child whole, and God said "NO".

He said her spirit is whole, her body is only temporary.

I asked God to grant me patience, and God said "NO".

He said that patience is a by-product of tribulation,
it isn't granted, it's earned.

I asked God to give me happiness, and God said "NO".

He said He gives blessings, happiness is up to me.

I asked God to spare me pain, and God said "NO".

He said suffering draws you apart from worldly cares
and brings you closer to me.

I asked God to make my spirit grow, and He said "NO".

He said I must grow on my own, but He will prune me to make me fruitful.

I asked God to help me love others as much as He loves me,

And God said "Ah, finally you have the idea"!

Jesus, many times you dared to be different.

When you were ridiculed,
you did not fight;
when you were persecuted,
you endured pain;
when you were laughed at,
you remained quiet.

Jesus, help us not to conform
to the standards of others.

Give each of us the strength to be original,
and guide us through the times
when we are tempted to do what is wrong.

Amen.

God, help us to be strong when we feel weak.

Help us to love when we feel as if we can't love anymore.

Help us to be humble when we are arrogant.

Help us to find the right way to go
when we come to a fork in the road.

We know life is a puzzle;

help us to put the pieces together.

Help us to remember that you give us the strength
to carry out your will in our lives.

Amen.

Lord, give us the courage to do right

in the face of wrong.

Instill in our hearts a set of values
that prompts us to think of others,
instead of just ourselves.

Give us the willingness
to stand up for what we believe in
instead of following the crowd.

Give us the strength to withstand evil,
because we know that with you,
all things are possible.

Amen.

HOPE

Love without risk is ultimately love-less. Life without risk is ultimately life-less. Faith without risk is ultimately faith-less and Christianity without risk is ultimately Christ-less.

May we be prepared to take risks those we work with and play with this day. Amen.

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS

May the birth of Christ and the spirit of Christmas bring us peace. May the feast of Christmas help us to experience the warmth and love of Christ present with us. Amen

Give us hope to look forward to a happy tomorrow, give us courage to face the hardships without losing hope, give us faith that the joy of receiving Christ will lead us to serve others. Give us appreciation for the gifts we have received and may we use them responsibly, dare to give friendship, service and love. Give us Christmas throughout the year. Amen. (**Korean prayer for Christmas**)

O God, our loving Father, help us rightly to remember the birth of Jesus that we may share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds and the worship of the wise men. Close the door to hate and open the door of love all over the world. Deliver us from evil by the blessing that Christmas brings. Teach us to be merry with clear hearts. Amen. (**Robert Louis Stevenson**)

Where have they hidden you Child of the manger, child of my childhood and seal of my soul? They have wrapped me in tinsel and sold me at counters. Tuning my song to the ring of their till. At home with the homeless, I dine with the outcast and if you receive them then there I shall be.

An old man sat on a bus holding a bouquet of flowers. Across the aisle was a young girl whose eyes came back again and again to the man's flowers. The time came for the man to get off and impulsively he thrust the flowers into the girl's lap. "I can see you love the flowers and I think my wife would like for you to have them. I will tell her I gave them to you." The girl accepted the flowers and then watched the old man get off the bus and walk through the gate of a small cemetery. (**The Gift**)

Lord, help me this day to look out for others and offer them what I can. Amen

Holidays Blessing: May the Lord bless all at Holy Family and keep you safe over the holiday. May his face shine on you. May he be gracious to you. May he look upon you with kindness. May you know his peace. Amen.

Holidays Prayer: Lord, keep us safe over the holiday break. May we find rest and relaxation. May those friends we say goodbye to today keep us and our school in their prayers and may we also keep them in ours. Amen

LENT

Fast from judging others, feast on Christ dwelling in them. Fast from emphasis on differences, feast on the unity of life. Fast from discontent, feast on gratitude. Fast from anger, feast on patience. Fast from negatives, feast on affirmatives. Fast from bitterness, feast on forgiveness. Fast from lethargy, feast on enthusiasm. Fast from self-concern, feast on compassion for others. Amen.

Lent is about change. A reflection on Change: "I was a revolutionary when I was young and all my prayers to God were "Lord, give me energy to change the world". As I approached middle age and realised that half my life was gone without changing a single soul, I changed my prayer to "Lord, give me the grace to change those I am come in contact with including family and friends and I will be satisfied". Now that I am old man and my days are numbered, I have begun to see how foolish I was. My one prayer now is "Lord, give me the grace to change myself".

Slow me down, Lord, ease my pounding heart, quieten my racing mind, and steady my hurried steps. Amidst the confusion of my days help me to know the restoring power of sleep. Remind me each day that there is more to life than increasing its speed. Slow me down, Lord, teach me to be gentle and humble of heart. Amen.

O my God, give me strength never to disown the poor, never before the insolent might to bow the head. Give me strength to raise my spirit above daily trifles. Lightly to bear my joys and sorrows. In love to surrender all my strength to your will. Amen.

St George's Day: Almighty God, who gave to your servant George boldness to confess the Name of our Saviour Jesus Christ before the rulers of this world, and courage to die for this faith: Grant that we may always be ready to give a reason for the hope that is in us, and to suffer gladly for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

O that today I would listen to your voice; Lord, give me the patience to find it, the knowledge to know it, the strength to hear it, the faith to believe it, the charity to share it, the hope to trust it, the wisdom to understand it and give me the courage to fulfil it. Amen.

TIME

To realise the value of a year, ask a student who failed an exam. To realise the value of a month, ask the mother of a premature baby. To realise the value of a week, ask the editor of a newspaper. To realise the value of an hour, ask a lover who is waiting to meet. To realise the value of a minute, ask a person who misses a train. To realise the value of a second, ask a person who has narrowly avoided an accident. To realise the value of a millisecond, ask the person who won a silver medal in the 100 metres at the Olympics.

Lord, help me to use my time constructively and with love this day. Amen.

Today we have no time to look at each other, to talk to each other, to enjoy each other, and still less to be what our children expect from us, what a husband expects from his wife, what a wife expects from her husband. We become in less in touch with each other. The world is lost for want of kindness. People are starving for love because everybody is in such a hurry. (**Mother Teresa**)

Youth is not a time of life – it is a state of mind. Worry, self-doubt, distrust, fear and despair – these are the long years that bow the head and turn the growing spirit back to dust. There is in every being's heart the love of wonder; the sweet amazement at the stars; the undaunted challenge of events; the unfailing appetite for what next; the joy of the game. You are as young as your faith, as old as your doubt; as young as your self-confidence, as old as your fear; as young as your hope, as old as your despair.

Lord, help me to slow down and appreciate everyone around me. Amen.

Lord, make my words gracious and tender, for tomorrow I may have to eat them. Amen.

The older I grow, the more clearly I perceive the dignity and winning beauty of simplicity in thought, conduct and speech; a desire to simplify all that is complicated and to treat everything with the greatest naturalness and clarity. (**Pope John 23rd**)

Lord, may I too be able to simplify all that is complicated so that I may learn more fully this day. Amen

DEATH & RESURRECTION

Open your hearts to God the creator. May God transform and mould you in his image so that all the good which has fallen asleep in your hearts, may awaken to a new life in the risen Lord. Amen.

Morning sun dance, day of praise, an empty tomb, Jesus raised. New life at this victory, eggs given away. Season of joy, let all the world say "The stone rolled back, look in and see – He is not here, we have been set free!"

We all experience moments of dying in our lives: We get a foretaste of death when we live in bitterness; when prejudice blinds us; when loneliness enfolds us; when fear oppresses us and when we give in to despair. But we also experience moments of resurrection in our lives: when we know true love; when we are accepted; when we are forgiven; when we open our hearts and when hope returns. Lord Jesus, may the power of your resurrection touch whatever is dead in us and bring it back to life. Amen.

Remember me when I am gone away, gone far away into the silent land; When you can no more hold me by the hand nor I half turn to go yet turning stay. Remember me when no more day by day; You tell me of our future that you planned: Only remember me; you understand; It will be late to counsel then or pray. Yet if you should forget me for a while and afterwards remember, do not grieve: For if the darkness and corruption leave a vestige of the thoughts that once I had, better by far you should forget and smile than that you should remember and be sad. (**Christina Rossetti**)

Do not stand at my grave and weep

I am not there; I do not sleep.
I am a thousand winds that blow,
I am the diamond glints on snow,
I am the sun on ripened grain,
I am the gentle autumn rain.
When you awaken in the morning's hush,
I am the swift uplifting rush
Of quiet birds in circled flight.
I am the soft stars that shine at night.
Do not stand at my grave and cry,
I am not there; I did not die.

(Mary Elizabeth Frye – 1932)

I am standing upon the seashore. A ship, at my side,
spreads her white sails to the moving breeze and starts
for the blue ocean. She is an object of beauty and strength.
I stand and watch her until, at length, she hangs like a speck
of white cloud just where the sea and sky come to mingle with each other.
Then, someone at my side says, "There, she is gone "Gone where?"
Gone from my sight. That is all. She is just as large in mast,
hull and spar as she was when she left my side.
And, she is just as able to bear her load of living freight to her destined port.

Her diminished size is in me -- not in her.
And, just at the moment when someone says, "There, she is gone,"
there are other eyes watching her coming, and other voices
ready to take up the glad shout, "Here she comes!"
And that is dying...
Death comes in its own time, in its own way.
Death is as unique as the individual experiencing it.

Death is nothing at all

Death is nothing.
It is just having moved to the other side.
I am still what I am and you are still what you are.
What we used to be for each other is still the same.
Call me by the name you used to.
And talk to me as you have done before.
Do not use a different tone.
Do not be rigid or sad.
Continue to laugh about what used to make us laugh.
Pray for me.
Smile.
Think of me and pray with me.
Let my name be mentioned at home as before.
Without any exaggeration or distress.
Life continues to mean what it always did.
And it is still the same
The thread did not break.
Do you feel I have become outside of your thoughts
Because I am far from your sight?
No.
I am not far from you.
I am just on the other side of the road,
And everything is fine.
You will find my heart and my love pure.
Wipe your tears and do not cry.
If you love me.
(St Augustine)

We seem to give them back to Thee,

O God who gavest them to us.
Yet as Thou didst not lose them in giving,
So do we not lose them by their return.
Not as the world giveth, givest Thou O Lover of souls.
What Thou givest Thou takest not away,
For what is Thine is ours also if we are thine.
And life is eternal and love is immortal,
And death is only an horizon,
And an horizon is nothing save the limit of our sight.
Lift us up, strong Son of God that we may see further;
Cleanse our eyes that we may see more clearly;
Draw us closer to Thyself
That we may know ourselves to be nearer to our loved ones who are with Thee.
And while Thou dost prepare a place for us, prepare us also for that happy place,
That where Thou art we may be also for evermore. **(Fr Bede Jarrett)**

I am home in heaven dear ones

Oh, so peaceful and so bright
There is perfect joy and beauty
In this everlasting light

All the pain and grief is over,
Every restless tossing passed
I am now at peace forever
Safely home in heaven at last

Did you wonder I so calmly
Trod the valley of the shade
Oh but Jesus' love illumined
Every dark and fearful glade

And he came himself to meet me
In that way so hard to tread
And with Jesus arm to lean on
Could I have one doubt or dread

Then you must not grieve so sorely
For I love you dearly still
Try to look beyond earth's shadows
Pray to trust our Father's will

There is work still waiting for you
So you must not idly stand
Do it now while life remaineth
You shall rest in Jesus' land

When the work is all completed
He will gently call you home
Oh the rapture of that meeting
Oh the joy to see you come

Lord, make me more aware of the magnificence of memory, of the value of returning, of the joy in recollection. I thank you, Lord, for all those who have walked with me, for all those I remember. May my heart be filled with joy when I think of them and when I pray for them. Amen.

You can shed tears that she is gone

Or you can smile because she has lived

You can close your eyes and pray that she will come back

Or you can open your eyes and see all that she has left

Your heart can be empty because you can't see her

Or you can be full of the love that you shared

You can turn your back on tomorrow and live yesterday

Or you can be happy for tomorrow because of yesterday

You can remember her and only that she is gone

Or you can cherish her memory and let it live on

You can cry and close your mind, be empty and turn your back

Or you can do what she would want: smile, open your eyes, love and go on living.

In Memory of my Father

Every old man I see

Reminds me of my father

When he had fallen in love with death

One time when sheaves were gathered.

That man I saw in Gardiner Street

Stumble on the kerb was one,

He stared at me half-eyed,

I might have been his son.

And I remember the musician

Faltering over his fiddle

In Bayswater, London.

He too set me the riddle.

Every old man I see

In October-coloured weather

Seems to say to me "I was once your father." (**Patrick Kavanagh**)

In Memory of My Mother: “I do not think of you lying in the wet clay of a Monaghan graveyard; I see You walking down a lane among the poplars On your way to the station, or happily Going to second Mass on a summer Sunday-- You meet me and you say: 'Don't forget to see about the cattle--' Among your earthiest words the angels stray. And I think of you walking along a headland of green oats in June, so full of repose, so rich with life-- And I see us meeting at the end of a town On a fair day by accident, after The bargains are all made and we can walk Together through the shops and stalls and markets Free in the oriental streets of thought. O you are not lying in the wet clay, for it is harvest evening now and we are piling up the ricks against the moonlight and you smile up at us - eternally.”
(Patrick Kavanagh)

Beannacht (Blessing) – For Josie my mother

On the day when
The weight deadens
On your shoulders
And you stumble,
May the clay dance
To balance you.
And when your eyes
Freeze behind
The grey window
And the ghost of loss
Gets into you,
May a flock of colours,
Indigo, red, green
And azure blue,
Come to awaken in you
A meadow of delight.
When the canvas frays
In the currach of thought
And a stain of ocean
Blackens beneath you,
May there come across the waters
A path of yellow moonlight
To bring you safely home.
May the nourishment of the earth be yours,
May the clarity of light be yours,
May the fluency of the ocean be yours,
May the protection of the ancestors be yours.
And so may a slow
Wind work these words
Of love around you,
An invisible cloak
To mind your life. **(John O'Donoghue)**

Thoughts ran in me that words and writing were nothing and must die, for action is the essence of all and if thou dost not act thou dost nothing. (Gerard Winstanley circa 1649)

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen

May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen

Lord, we pray today for those who have died.

We ask that you will comfort
all those who miss them,
especially their friends and family.
Help us to care for those who mourn,
so that they may know that you are present
with them at this time.
Amen.

Father, to you the dead do not die

and, in death, our life is changed - not ended.
We believe that all that binds us together
in love and friendship
does not end with death.
Hear our prayers for those who have died.
As you have made each of us
in your image and likeness
and have called us by name,
Hold them safely in your love
in your kingdom of light, happiness and peace.
Amen.

Where were you when the planes struck? Where were you when the buildings shook?
Where were you when the fire ball burst? Where were you when the pain was worst? I was
on every floor; I was there when they cried no more; I was there to love and embrace; I was
there on each tear stained face. Where were you when the buildings fell? Where were you
when we knew this hell? Where were you when the victims cried? Where you when the
children died? I was there in the horror and pain; I was there in both those planes; I was
there in the scorching flame; I was there to take the blame.

TO OUR LADY

We fly to thy patronage, O holy Mother of God; despise not our petitions in our necessities, but deliver us always from all dangers, O glorious and blessed Virgin. Amen.

(Sub Tuum Praesidium) (Said to be the oldest known prayer to Our Lady)

The Hail, Holy Queen: Hail, holy Queen, Mother of Mercy! our life, our sweetness, and our hope! To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve; to thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley, of tears. Turn, then, most gracious Advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us; and after this our exile show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus; O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thine intercession was left unaided.

Inspired by this confidence, I fly unto thee, O Virgin of virgins, my mother; to thee do I come, before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in thy mercy hear and answer me. Amen.

Lord think through me, feel through me, speak through me, act through me, love through me. I surrender, trust and accept whatever comes today like it or not. Amen

“Risk more than others think is safe. Care more than others think is wise. Dream more than others think is practical. Expect more than others think is possible.”

Lord, help me to keep these words in mind with all I meet this day. Amen.

(Memorare of St. Bernard)

PRAYERS OF THE SAINTS

O Lord Jesus, give us a measure of your Spirit so that we may be enabled to: pacify our anger; moderate our desires; increase our love; put away our sorrow; to cast off our vanity; not to be vindictive; not to fear death; ever entrusting our spirit to you who lives and reigns world without end. Amen **(St Apollonius)**

O God, of your goodness, give us yourself, for only in you do we have all. Amen **(St Julian of Norwich)**

Prayer to the Trinity: Father, all powerful, give us strength in our weakness and be our guide and leader in every difficult situation. Lord Jesus, our way, our truth and our life, direct our way forward in your steps, keep our hearts fixed on what is true and noble. Holy Spirit, comforter of the weak and distressed, fill our homes with your presence and remove anxiety and distress from our minds. Amen.

O God, of your goodness, give us yourself, eternally risen and never going down; in your mercy shine into our hearts, that the night of sin and the mists of error being banished, we may, this day and all our life, walk without stumbling along the way which you have set before us. Amen. (St Erasmus)

May thy Son grant us, that imitating thy most holy manners, we also, by the grace of the Holy Ghost, may deserve spiritually to conceive the Lord Jesus in our inmost soul, and once conceived never to lose Him. Amen. (St Erasmus' prayer at Our Lady of Walsingham)

O Lord, you have given us your world for a light to shine upon our path: grant us to mediate on that word, and follow its teaching, that we may find in it the light that shines more and more until the perfect day. Amen. (St Jerome)

Bestow upon me, O Lord my God; an understanding that knows thee, wisdom in finding thee, a way of life that is pleasing to thee, perseverance that faithfully waits for thee, and confidence that I shall embrace thee at the last. Amen. (St Thomas Aquinas)

The mind should teach the heart to feel; the heart should teach the mind to see." (St Thomas Aquinas)

Lord, may I use my heart and mind to truly feel and see this day. Amen.

Lord Jesus, our saviour, let us come to you. Our hearts are cold; warm them with your selfless love. Our hearts are sinful; cleanse them with your precious blood. Our hearts are weak; strengthen them with your joyous Spirit. Our hearts are empty; fill them with your divine presence. Lord Jesus, our hearts are yours; possess them always. Amen (St Augustine)

Prayer to the Holy Spirit: Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful, enkindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your spirit and they shall be created, and you shall renew the face of the Earth. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Be a bright star before me, O God; a guiding star above me. Be a smooth path below me, a kindly shepherd behind me today, tonight and forever. Alone with none but you, my God I journey on my way; what need I fear when you are near, O Lord of night and day? More secure am I within your hand than if a multitude did around me stand. Amen. (St Columba)

I thank you, Lord, for knowing me better than I know myself, and for letting me know myself better than others know me. Make me, I pray you, better than they suppose and forgive me for what they do not know. Amen

The Father is my hope, the Son my refuge, the Holy Spirit my protection. Holy Trinity, glory to you. Amen. (St Ioannicius)

Prayer of St Anselm

O Lord my God.
Teach my heart this day
where and how to find you.
You have made me and re-made me,
and you have bestowed on me
all the good things I possess,
and still I do not know you.
I have not yet done
that for which I was made.
Teach me to seek you,
for I cannot seek you
unless you teach me,
or find you unless you show yourself to me.
Let me seek you in my desire;
let me desire you in my seeking.
Let me find you by loving you;
Let me love you when I find you. Amen.

Christ be with me,
Christ within me,
Christ beside me,
Christ before me, Christ to win me
Christ to comfort and restore me.
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ in hearts of all that love me
Christ in mouth of friend and stranger **(St Patrick)**

I bind unto myself today the power of God to hold and lead, his eye to watch, his might to stay, and his ear to harken to my need. The wisdom of my god to teach, his hand to guide, his shield to ward; The word of god to give me speech and his heavenly host to be my guard. Amen. **(St Patrick)**

God be in my head and in my understanding, God be in my eyes and in my looking, God be in my mouth and in my speaking, God be in my heart and in my thinking, God be at my end and in my departing. Amen **(St Patrick)**

Give me thy grace, good Lord, to set the world at nought. To set my mind fast upon thee. And not to hang on the blast of men's mouths; To be content to be solitary; Not to long for worldly company; Little by little to cast off the world and rid my mind of business thereof. Not too long to hear of any worldly things. Gladly to be thinking of God, to lean unto the comfort of God. Amen. **(St Thomas More)**

Thanks be to you, our Lord Jesus Christ,
for all the benefits which you have given us,
for all the pains and insults which you have borne for us.
Most merciful Redeemer, Friend and Brother,
may we know you more clearly,
love you more dearly,
and follow you more nearly,
day by day.
Amen.
(Prayer of St Richard of Chichester)

Saint Michael's Prayer

Saint Michael, the Archangel, defend us in battle.
Be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil.
May God rebuke him, we humbly pray;
and do thou, O Prince of the heavenly host,
by the power of God
cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits
who prowl throughout the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace,

Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy;
O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console;
to be understood as to understand;
to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive;
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. **(Prayer of St. Francis)**

DAILY THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS

Each day and night I feel your presence. You may not be near to touch, but you are in my mind and heart. You meet my needs so silently; I am never alone because of you. **(Kahlil Gibran)**

When you are joyous, look deep into your heart and you shall find it is only that which gives you sorrow that is giving you joy. When you are sorrowful, look again in your heart, and you shall see that in truth you are weeping for that which has been your delight. **(Kahlil Gibran)**

Lord, help me throughout this day to recall joys in moments of sorrow and my happiness in times of sadness. Amen

Please think through me, feel through me, speak through me, act through me, love through me. I surrender, trust and accept whatever comes today, like it or not. Amen

I bring this prayer to you, Lord, for you alone can give what one cannot demand but from oneself. Give me, Lord, what you have left over, give me what no one asks you for. I want insecurity, anxiety, I want storm and strife. Give me, Lord, what you have left over, Give me what the others want nothing to do with. But give me courage too and strength and faith. For you alone can give what one cannot demand but from oneself. Amen. **(Andre Zirnheld, French Free Army)**

Keep me in thy love, as thou woudst that all should be kept in mine. May everything in my being be directed to thy glory. May I never despair for I am under thy hand and in thee is all power and goodness. Amen. **(Dag Hammarskjold)**

An Irish blessing: May the roads rise to meet you, may the wind be always at your back, may the sunshine warm upon your face, the rains fall soft upon your fields and until we meet again may God hold you the hollow of His hand.

A blessing form Iona: Deep peace of running wave to you, deep peace of flowing air to you, deep peace of the quiet earth to you, deep peace of the shining stars to you, deep peace of the Son of Peace to you.

Almighty God, the fountain of all wisdom who knowest our necessities before we ask and our in asking: We beseech thee to have compassion upon our infirmities; and those things, which for our blindness we cannot ask, vouch safe to give us for the worthiness of thy son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. **(Book of Common Prayer)**

Gracious and Holy Father, please give me: intellect to understand you; reason to discern you; diligence to seek you; wisdom to find you; a spirit to know you; a heart to meditate upon you; ears to hear you; eyes to see you; a tongue to proclaim you; a way of life pleasing to you; patience to wait for you; and perseverance to look for you. Grant me: a perfect end, your holy presence. A blessed resurrection, And life everlasting. Amen. **(Prayer of St Benedict)**

The day returns and brings us the petty round of irritating concerns and duties.

Help us to play the man,

Help us to perform them with laughter and kind faces,

Let cheerfulness abound with industry.

Give us to go blithely on our business all this day,

Bring us to our resting beds weary and content and undishonoured,

And grant us in the end the gift of sleep. **(R.L. Stevenson)**

Prayer for Consecrated Life: God our creator and guide, you call us out of darkness into your light, making us a royal priesthood, a holy people, set apart to sing your praises. May our families and parishes continue to nourish the seeds of vocation to the consecrated life and the priesthood. May all who have responded to this call, like Mary, live with openness of heart, to treasure your presence, to ponder your actions so that all may joyfully proclaim your goodness now and always. Amen.

TRADITIONAL PRAYERS

The Magnificat: My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,

my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour

for he has looked with favour on his lowly servant.

From this day all generations will call me blessed:

the Almighty has done great things for me,

and holy is his Name.

He has mercy on those who fear him

in every generation.

He has shown the strength of his arm,

he has scattered the proud in their conceit.

He has cast down the mighty from their thrones,

and has lifted up the lowly.

He has filled the hungry with good things,

and the rich he has sent away empty.

He has come to the help of his servant Israel

for he remembered his promise of mercy,

the promise he made to our fathers,

to Abraham and his children forever.

The Confiteor: I confess to almighty God and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have greatly sinned in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done, and in what I have failed to do; through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault; therefore I ask blessed Mary Ever-Virgin, all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God. Amen.

The Angelus

V. The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary.

R. And she conceived by the Holy Ghost. Hail Mary...

V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord.

R. Be it done to me according to thy word. Hail Mary...

V. And the Word was made flesh.

R. And dwelt among us. Hail Mary...

V. Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray. Pour forth, we beseech thee, O Lord, thy grace into our hearts, that we to whom the Incarnation of Christ, Thy Son, was made known by the message of an angel, may by His passion and cross be brought to the glory of his resurrection, through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen

May the divine assistance remain always with us.

And may the souls of the faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace. Amen

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God,
the Father Almighty,
Creator of Heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried.

He descended to the dead.

On the third day, He rose again.

He ascended to Heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Holy Catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting. Amen

Act of sorrow: O my God because you are so good, I am very sorry that I have sinned against you and with the help of your grace I will not sin again. Amen.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Hail Mary full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Grace before Meals

Bless us, O Lord, and these Thy gifts, which we are about to receive from Thy bounty, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Grace After Meals

We give Thee thanks for all Thy benefits, O Almighty God, who livest and reignest world without end. Amen. May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

[The Grail Prayer](#); Lord Jesus

I give you my hands to do your work
I give you my feet to go your way
I give you my eyes to see as you do
I give you my tongue to speak your words
I give you my mind that you may think in me
I give you my spirit that you may pray in me
Above all, I give you my heart
that you may love in me
your Father and all mankind
I give you my whole self that you may grow in me
so that it is you Lord Jesus
who live and work and pray in me. Amen.

[Soul of Christ, sanctify me](#);

Body of Christ, save me;
Blood of Christ, inebriate me;
Water from the side of Christ, wash me;
Passion of Christ, strengthen me;
O good Jesus hear me;
Within your wounds hide me;
separated from you, let me never be,
From the evil one protect me;
At the hour of my death, call me;
And close to you bid me; That with your saints,
I may be praising you forever and ever. Amen.

[Glory to God in the highest](#), and peace to His people on earth. Lord God heavenly King, almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory. Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father; receive our prayer. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

[O Jesus through the most pure heart of Mary](#), I offer you all my prayers, works, sufferings and joys of this day for all the intentions of your divine heart and particularly for the intentions of Our Holy Father, Pope Francis. Amen.

SPIRITUAL THOUGHTS & REFLECTIONS

There is a difference between silence and emptiness. Silence is a very busy thing. It opens us to the exploration of the self. Emptiness is the vacuum we find when something is missing from our lives and needs to be replaced.

Everyone is struck down by something in life. It is the detour that determines the definition of the journey. We can lose our way then and there, stay stuck in unfamiliar territory, stall and give up. Or we can take the new direction confident that in the end we will end up exactly where we were meant to be whether we can see how that is possible right now or not.

"All sins," Simone Weil wrote, "are attempts to fill voids." When something important - love, dignity, respect - is missing in life, we find something to replace it. Young people find the gangs that will include them. Adults find the drugs that will numb them. When I find myself grappling with any kind of excess, the question must be, for what emptiness in me am I trying to compensate.

The Self

There is a revealing story of a monk living in the Egyptian desert who was so tormented by temptation that he could bear it no longer. So he decided to abandon his cell and go somewhere else. As he was putting on his sandals to carry out his resolve he saw another monk not far from where he stood who was also putting his sandals on.

"Who are you?" he asked the stranger.

"I am yourself," was the reply. "If it is on my account that you are leaving this place. I would have you know that no matter where you go I shall go with you."

Said a despairing client to the psychiatrist, "No matter where I go I have to take myself along - and that spoils everything."

Both what you run away from - and what you yearn for - is within you.

We have taller buildings but shorter tempers; wider freeways but narrower viewpoints; we spend more but have less; we buy more but enjoy it less; we have bigger houses and smaller families; more conveniences, yet less time; we have more degrees but less sense; more knowledge but less judgement; more experts, yet more problems; we have more gadgets but less satisfaction; more medicine, yet less wellness; we take more vitamins but see fewer results. We drink too much; smoke too much; spend too recklessly; laugh too little; drive too fast; get too angry quickly; stay up too late; get up too tired; read too seldom; watch TV too much and pray too seldom.

We have multiplied our possessions, but reduced our values; we fly in faster planes to arrive there quicker, to do less and return sooner; we sign more contracts only to realize fewer

profits; we talk too much; love too seldom and lie too often. We've learned how to make a living, but not a life; we've added years to life, not life to years. We've been all the way to the moon and back, but have trouble crossing the street to meet the new neighbour. We've conquered outer space, but not inner space; we've done larger things, but not better things; we've cleaned up the air, but polluted the soul; we've split the atom, but not our prejudice; we write more, but learn less; plan more, but accomplish less; we make faster planes, but longer lines; we learned to rush, but not to wait; we have more weapons, but less peace; higher incomes, but lower morals; more parties, but less fun; more food, but less appeasement; more acquaintances, but fewer friends; more effort, but less success. We build more computers to hold more information, to produce more copies than ever, but have less communication; drive smaller cars that have bigger problems; build larger factories that produce less. We've become long on quantity, but short on quality.

These are the times of fast foods and slow digestion; tall men, but short character; steep in profits, but shallow relationships. These are times of world peace, but domestic warfare; more leisure and less fun; higher postage, but slower mail; more kinds of food, but less nutrition. These are days of two incomes, but more divorces; these are times of fancier houses, but broken homes. These are days of quick trips, disposable diapers, cartridge living, throw-away morality, one-night stands, overweight bodies and pills that do everything from cheer, to prevent, quiet or kill. It is a time when there is much in the show window and nothing in the stock room. Indeed, these are the times!

[Jesus, where are you taking me?](#) Into joy? Into pain? I am afraid, but to do anything other than go with you would be to die inwardly; and to look for wholeness apart from you would be to lose my true self. So I come to you, protesting and confused, but loving you all the same. You will have to hold on to me as we walk together through this compelling and frightening landscape of the kingdom of God. (Angela Ashwin)

[I dreamed I was walking along the beach with the Lord](#), and across the sky flashed scenes from my life. For each scene I noticed two sets of footprints in the sand; One belonged to me, and the other to the Lord. When the last scene of my life flashed before us, I looked back at the footprints in the sand. I noticed that many times along the path of my life, there was only one set of footprints. I also noticed that it happened at the very lowest and saddest times in my life This really bothered me, and I questioned the Lord about it. "Lord, you said that once I decided to follow you, you would walk with me all the way; But I have noticed that during the most troublesome times in my life, there is only one set of footprints. I don't understand why in times when I needed you the most, you should leave me. The Lord replied, "My precious, precious child. I love you, and I would never, never leave you during your times of trial and suffering. When you saw only one set of footprints, it was then that I carried you. (**Footprints**)

A Church that does not provoke any crisis, preach a gospel that does not unsettle, proclaim a word of God that does not get under anyone's skin or a word of God that does not touch the real sin of the society in which it is being proclaimed: what kind of gospel is that? (**Oscar Romero**)

A Future not our own

The kingdom is not only beyond our efforts; it is even beyond our vision.

We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work. Nothing we do is complete, which is a way of saying that the Kingdom always lies beyond us.

No statement says all that could be said. No prayer fully expresses our faith. No confession brings perfection.

No pastoral visit brings wholeness. No program accomplishes the Church's mission. No set of goals and objectives includes everything. This is what we are about. We plant the seeds that one day will grow.

We water seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise. We lay foundations that will need further development. We provide yeast that produces far beyond our capabilities. We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that. This enables us to do something, and to do it very well. It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way, an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest. We may never see the end results, but that is the difference between the master builder and the worker.

We are workers, not master builders; ministers, not messiahs. We are prophets of a future not our own. (**Oscar Romero**)
