

PRAYERS

God, go with us. Help us to be an honor to the Church.
Give us the grace to follow Christ's word,
to be clear in our task and careful in our speech.
Give us open hands and joyful hearts.
Let Christ be on our lips.
May our lives reflect a love of truth and compassion.
Let no one come to us and go away sad.
May we offer hope to the poor,
and solace to the disheartened.
Let us so walk before God's people,
that those who follow us might come into his kingdom.
Let us sow living seeds, words that are quick with life,
that faith may be the harvest in people's hearts.
In word and in example let your light shine
in the dark like the morning star.
Do not allow the wealth of the world or its enchantment
flatter us into silence as to your truth.
Do not permit the powerful, or judges,
or our dearest friends
to keep us from professing what is right.

Alcuin of York

Take away the heart of stone,
and give me a heart of flesh,
a heart to love and adore thee,
a heart to delight in thee,
to follow and to enjoy thee,
for Christ's sake. Amen.

St. Ambrose

Heavenly Father, in whom we live
and move and have our being,
we humbly pray thee
so to guide and govern us by thy Holy Spirit
that in all the cares and occupations of our daily life
we may never forget thee, but remember
that we are ever walking in thy sight.

Ancient Collect

Lord, Jesus Christ, let me seek you by desiring you,
and let me desire you by seeking you.
Let me find you by loving you,
and love you by finding you.
I confess, Lord, with thanksgiving,
that I am made in your image,
so that I can remember you,
think of you, and love you.
But that image is so worn and blotted out by faults,
and darkened by the smoke of sin,
that it cannot do that for which it was made,
unless you renew and refashion it.

Lord, I am not trying to make my way to your height,
for my understanding is in no way equal to that,
but I do desire to understand a little of your truth
which my heart already believes and loves.
I do not seek to understand so that I can believe,
but believe so that I may understand;
and what is more, I believe that unless I do believe,
I shall not understand.

St. Anselm

O watch, dear Lord,
with those who wake, or watch, or weep tonight.
Give your angels charge over those who sleep.
Tend your sick ones, O Lord Jesus Christ.
Rest your weary ones. Bless your dying ones.
Soothe your suffering ones. Pity your afflicted ones.
Shield your joyous ones. And all for your love's sake.

St. Augustine

Bless us, and all that we use and do,
with the blessing of your love and mercy.
Awaken in us our true image. Place our bodies
within the noon of your wonders.
Water with your rain the dry places
of our hearts and souls. Let your Holy Spirit govern us
from our beginnings until our final days,
and be our will, work and completion.

Jacob Boehme

O Thou, who kindly dost provide
For every creature's want!
We bless Thee, God of nature wide,
For all Thy goodness lent!
And, if it please Thee, heavenly Guide,
May never worse be sent;
But, whether granted or denied,
Lord bless us with content!

Robert Burns

We beseech thee, Lord,
to become our helper and protector.
Save those of us in affliction, have mercy on the humble,
raise the fallen, show thyself to those who are in need,
heal the sick, turn back the wanderers of thy people,
feed the hungry, ransom our prisoners,
raise up the weak, comfort the feeble hearted.
Cleanse us with the cleansing of thy truth,
and make our steps straight that we may walk
in holiness, righteousness and simplicity of heart,
and may do what things are good
and well pleasing before thee.

Clement of Rome

Come my Light and illumine my darkness.
Come my Life and revive me from death.
Come my Physician and heal my wounds.
Come Flame of divine love and consume my sins,
kindling my heart with the flame of your love.
Come my King, enter my heart and reign there.
For you alone are my salvation.

St. Dimitri of Rostov

May I be no one's enemy, and may I be the friend
of that which is eternal and abides.
May I never quarrel with those nearest me.
And if I do, may I be reconciled quickly.
May I never devise evil against another.
If any devise evil against me,
may I escape uninjured and without inflicting harm.
May I love, seek and attain only that which is good.

Eusebius

All-powerful and ever-living God,
we praise and thank you
through Jesus Christ our Lord
for your presence and action in the world.
In the midst of conflict and division,
we know it is you
who turns our minds to thoughts of peace.
Your Spirit changes our hearts:
enemies begin to speak to one another,
those who were estranged join hands in friendship,
and nations seek the way of peace together.
Your Spirit is at work
when understanding puts an end to strife,
when hatred is quenched by mercy,
and vengeance gives way to forgiveness.
For this we should never cease to thank and praise you.

*Eucharistic Prayer/Mass of Reconciliation II,
Preface*

Lord, make us instruments of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let us sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
and where there is sadness, joy.
O Divine Master,
grant that we 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.

St. Francis of Assisi {attributed}
Almighty and everlasting God,
be thou present with us in all our duties,
and grant the protection of thy presence
to all that dwell in this house,
that thou mayest be known to be
the Defender of this household
and the Inhabitant of this dwelling.

Gelasian Sacramentary

O Word, firmly uttered by God
to be the support of all things
and to bind them together, hear my cry.
Do not forsake me, my Strength,
I beseech you. When the storm beat hard
I may have betrayed you,
but let me return to you now.

St. Gregory of Nazianzus

Thou hast given so much to me,
give one thing more—a grateful heart;
not thankful when it pleaseth me,
as if Thy blessings had spare days,
but such a heart whose pulse
may be Thy praise.

George Herbert

Come, my Way, my Truth, my Life:
Such a way as gives us breath;
Such a truth as ends all strife;
Such a life as killeth death.
Come, my Light, my Feast, my Strength:
Such a light as shows a feast;
Such a feast as mends in length;
Such a strength as makes his guest.
Come, my Joy, my Love, my Heart:
Such a joy as none can move;
Such a love as none can part;
Such a heart as joys in love.

George Herbert

Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe,
who opens the eyes of the blind.
Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe,
who clothes the naked.
Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe,
who raises up those who are bowed down.
Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe,
who gives strength to the weary.

Jewish Prayer

Where is the crowd and its clamor?
Where is the lust for the world?
Where is the ephemeral dream?
All is dust, all ashes, all shadow.
What glory does not fade?
What endures unmingled with grief?
Substance is less than a shadow,
more deluding than a dream.
In a moment, all is struck down.
Now I know wisdom: I am dust and ashes.
I search among the graves, see the bones laid bare.
Which is the king and which his warrior?
Which is the martyr and which his executioner?
What mystery befell us?
We wail and grieve at our beauty marred in the tomb.
Who surrendered us to this corruption?
We stand over the graves of our lost,
our bodies entwined by a mysterious wind—
Christ murmuring: “trust, trust.”

A Burial Chant by St. John Damascene

O God, of thy goodness, give me thyself,
for only in thee have I all.

Julian of Norwich

O God, make the door of this house wide enough
to receive all who need human love and fellowship,
and a heavenly Father’s care; and narrow enough
to shut out all envy, pride and hate.
Make its threshold smooth enough
to be no stumbling-block to children,
nor to straying feet, but rugged enough
to turn back the tempter’s power.
Make it a gateway to your eternal kingdom.

Thomas Ken

From the cowardice that dare not face new truth,
from the laziness that is contented with half truth,
from the arrogance that thinks it knows all truth,
good Lord, deliver us.

Kenyan Prayer

I will meditate daily
on the life and teachings of Christ;
remember always to seek justice
and reconciliation, not victory;
walk and talk in the manner of love—
for our God is love;
pray daily to be used by God
in order that all might be free—
not just those who agree with me,

but that *all* might be free;
observe with both friend and foe
the ordinary rules of courtesy;
seek to perform regular service
for others and for the world;
refrain from the violence
of the fist, tongue or heart.

The Pledge of Martin Luther King Jr.

O burning mountain, O chosen sun,
O perfect moon, O fathomless well,
O unattainable height, O clearness beyond measure,
O wisdom without end, O mercy without limit,
O strength beyond resistance, O crown of all majesty,
the humblest you created sings your praise.

Mechtild of Magdeburg

O God, 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,
give us safe lodging, holy rest,
and peace at last.

John Cardinal Henry Newman

O God, give us grace to walk humbly
and save us from pretension and every arrogant folly.
You have made us, and not we ourselves.
Help us to remember the limits
of our power and our wisdom,
but help us, also, to do our duty within the limits
of our power and our wisdom.

Reinhold Niebuhr

Lord, have mercy on us,
for the deafness of our ears to the cries of the needy,
and for the vain glory to which our power tempts us.

Reinhold Niebuhr

Lord, grant us to believe in the heart,
to confess with the mouth,
to confirm with works
that the covenant of God is in our flesh,
so that others, seeing our good works,
might magnify our Father who is in heaven,
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
to whom is glory for ever and ever.

Origen

Lord, broaden our thoughts,
make them clearer,
and bring them nearer to the truth.

Origen

O merciful Redeemer,
friend and brother,
may we know thee more clearly,
love thee more dearly,
and follow thee more nearly.

St. Richard of Chichester

We beseech you, O Lord:
keep our tongues from evil,
and our lips from speaking guile,
that as your holy angels
ever sing your praises in heaven
so with our tongues we may at all times
glorify you on earth.

Roman Breviary

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.

Sarum Primer, England

Holy Spirit, conscious of our sinfulness,
we have gathered in your name.
Remain with us. Enlighten our hearts.
Give us light and strength
to know your will, to make it our own,
and to live it in our lives.
Guide us by your wisdom;
support us by your power; for you are God,
sharing the glory of Father and Son.
You desire justice for all:
enable us to uphold the rights of others;
do not allow us to be misled by ignorance
or corrupted by favor.
Unite us to yourself in the bond of love
and keep us faithful to all that is true.
Help us to temper justice with love,
so that all our decisions
may be pleasing to you,
and bring us the inheritance
promised to good and faithful servants.
You live and reign with the Father
and the Son, one God, for ever and ever.

*Adapted from a prayer said before every
session of the Second Vatican Council*

Christ has no body now on earth but ours;
no hands, no feet, but ours.
Ours are the eyes through which he looks
with compassion on the world;
ours are the feet with which he walks to do good;
ours are the hands with which he blesses all the world.
Christ has no body now on earth but ours.

Teresa of Avila

Lord, open our eyes
that we may see you in our brothers and sisters.
Lord, open our ears
that we may hear the cries of the hungry,
the cold, the frightened, the oppressed.
Lord, open our hearts
that we may love each other as you love us.
Renew in us your spirit.
Lord, free us and make us one.

Teresa of Calcutta

Give us, O Lord, steadfast hearts,
which no unworthy affection
may drag downwards.
Give us unconquered hearts,
which no tribulations can wear out.
Give us upright hearts,
which no unworthy purpose
may tempt aside.
Bestow upon us also, O Lord our God,
understanding to know thee,
diligence to seek thee,
wisdom to find thee,
and a faithfulness
that may finally embrace thee.

St. Thomas Aquinas

God of justice,
open our eyes
to see you in the face of the poor.
Open our ears
to hear you in the cries of the exploited.
Open our mouths
to defend you in the public squares
as well as in private deeds.
Remind us that what we do to the least ones,
we do to you. Amen.

U. S. Catholic Bishops

Peace be to this house and to all who dwell in it.
Peace be to them that enter and to them that depart.

York Psalter