

100 Prayers

from the prayer web-site
of the De La Salle Brothers
www.prayingeachday.org

1

Praying with others across the world

Lord, you said that when two or three
would gather together in your name,
then you would be present with them.
I am praying by myself (*or 'on the Internet'*)
but I am uniting myself
with many individual Christians
throughout the world
who, though separate,
are gathered together in another sense
to pray to you,
and I trust that you are with me now.



(NH)

2

When the thought of you awakens in us

God our heavenly Father,
when the thought of you
wakes in our hearts,
let its awakening
not be like a startled bird
that flies about in fear.
Instead, let it be like a child
waking from sleep
with a heavenly smile.

(Søren Kierkegaard)

3

Christ our Morning Star

O Christ, our Morning Star,
Splendour of Light Eternal,
shining with the glory of the rainbow,
come and waken us
from the greyness of our apathy,
and renew in us your gift of hope. Amen.

(Bede the Venerable)

4

Come, Holy Spirit

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful,
and 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.

O God, who has taught the hearts of the faithful
by the light of the Holy Spirit,
grant that by the gift of the same Spirit
we may be always truly wise
and ever rejoice in his consolation.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

5

At the rising of your sun

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.

6

Prayer of St Columba

Be, Lord Jesus, a bright flame before me,
a guiding star above me,
a smooth path below me,
a kindly shepherd behind me:
today, tonight, and forever.

7

I will be busy

O Lord,
you know how busy I must be this day.
If I forget you,
do not forget me.

(Sir Jacob Astley, before the Battle of Edgehill, 1642)

8

Prayer of a Breton fisherman

Lord, the sea is so wide
and my boat is so small.
Be with me.

9

Close to me

Lord, you are closer to me
than my own breathing,
nearer than my hands and feet.

(St Teresa of Avila)

10

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.

11

Praying the offering of self

Lord Jesus,
you told your friends
not to worry about the future.
You showed them
how to have the attitude of simple trust
that young children have,
so that they could place themselves
into the caring hands of your Father.
And so I ask for the power of your Spirit
that I may remain positive
throughout all that is ordinary in my daily life.

I know that your touch
can change people and situations,
and so I ask you
to join me in offering to our Father
not only the good things of this day
but also the suffering and sacrifices
that I want to offer cheerfully and lovingly,
and in a quiet and hidden way.
And so may any difficulties
and frustration and pain of this day
be transformed in your presence
for the benefit of other people. Amen.

(NH)

12

Knowing me better

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.

(Abu Bekr)

13

from 'St Patrick's Breastplate'

I bind unto myself today
The power of God to hold and lead,
His eye to watch, his might to stay,
His ear to hearken 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,
His heavenly host to be my guard.

Christ be with me, Christ within me,
Christ behind me, Christ before me,
Christ beside me, Christ to win me,
Christ to comfort and restore me.
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ in quiet, Christ in danger,
Christ in hearts of all that love me,
Christ in mouth of friend and stranger.

14

Seeing and loving in others what you see and love in them

God our Father,
the qualities I see lived out so well in some people
are a reflection of your own goodness,
and I know
that I have much to learn from other people
who reflect your image and likeness
in different ways.
Inspire me
to respect others fully as my equals,
seeing and loving in them
what you see and love in them.

Gen 1²⁶

(NH)

15

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.

16

Burn up the dross

O God,
may the fire of the Holy Spirit
burn up the dross in our hearts,
warm them with love,
and set them on fire
with zeal for your service. Amen.

17

Ablaze with the fire of your Spirit

O Lord,
you have mercy on all,
take away from me my sins,
and mercifully set me ablaze
with the fire of your Holy Spirit.
Take away from me the heart of stone,
and give me a human heart,
a heart to love and adore you,
a heart to delight in you,
to follow and enjoy you. Amen.

18

That the Gospel may be 'written' in me

God our Father,
until the time of the printing press,
people copied the Gospel,
writing it by hand.

Slowly the Gospel took shape
- both on the page
and deep within themselves.

I ask that the Gospel
- the Good News of your love -
may be written in me
not with ink
but with the Spirit of God.

2 Cor 3³

Only then will I grow as a credible witness
of the wealth of your love.

Day by day,
as the pages of my own life turn over,
remind me
that you write my name
on the palm of your hand.

Is 49¹⁶

I ask this prayer through Jesus,
who is your Word,
living amongst us. Amen.

(NH)

19

The living heritage of our faith

God our Father,
if I could trace back
through the last two thousand years,
marking out routes
from Jesus himself
and then through people
whose faith has touched others
and so reached me,
I would be astounded
by the individuals I would encounter.

I give thanks, Father,
for all those people
over two thousand years
who have inspired others
and played their part
in passing on
to generation after generation
the living heritage of their faith.

Especially I give thanks
for those who lived their faith
through difficulties
and hardship and persecution.

I pray, Father, that I may grow
in your faith and love
through good times and bad. Amen.

(NH)

20

Respecting one another

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.

(NH)

21

May our 'way of looking' become more like yours

Lord, we come before you as we are.
We ask you to take away from us
all that makes us less than human.
Strengthen us with the power of your Spirit
that our attitude and outlook may develop,
and our "way of looking"
may become more like yours.
Help us to remain positive -
encouraging and appreciating one another,
looking upon people in the same way that you do. Amen.

(NH)

22

Open my eyes and ears

Lord Jesus,
I ask you to open my eyes
as you did with the blind man,
so that I may really see.
Tune my ears
as you did with the man who was deaf and dumb,
so that I may really hear
what you are saying to me.
May the many experiences of my senses
remind me to be aware of others
and of all that is around me.
May all that I experience
lead me closer to you.

Jn 9

Mk 7³¹⁻³⁷

23

To recognise in others

Grant me to recognise in others, Lord God,
the radiance of your own face.

(Teilhard de Chardin, SJ)

24

Together as brothers and sisters

God our Father,
extend our horizons,
widen our vision,
and remind us how inter-connected we are
as your sons and daughters.
Breathe your Spirit into us
that we may live more truly
as brothers and sisters
of one another. Amen.

(NH)

25

Appreciating what we have in common with others

Lord, we ask you to open our eyes
that we may value and appreciate all people,
recognising what we have in common
rather than focusing
on what our differences might be.
Inspire us to distinguish
between what is important
and what is not,
and open our minds and hearts
that we may always be people of good will
who bring life and joy to others. Amen.

(NH)

26

You are beside me

Lead me, Lord,
to recognise you
in the person beside me.

(NH)

27

Sarum Prayer

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 at my departing.

(Sarum Book of Hours, 1514)

28

God in my daily life

God to enfold me,
God to surround me,
God in my speaking,
God in my thinking.

God in my sleeping,
God in my waking,
God in my watching,
God in my hoping.

God in my life,
God in my lips,
God in my soul,
God in my heart.

God in my sufficing,
God in my slumber,
God in my ever-living soul,
God in mine eternity.

(Carmina Gadelica)

29

Judging or valuing others

Lord, inspire me to give of my best
and make good use
of the talents you have given me.

Show me how to be positive in attitude,
appreciating and valuing others,
always being ready to encourage
and give praise.

Sometimes I draw conclusions about people
in terms of what I think
is meant by "success" and "failure",
but the "failure" of one person
might count as a great "success"
of someone with other talents.

Lead me never to judge people
but to accept others as they are,
knowing that it is together,
each with our differences,
that we build up your Kingdom. Amen.

(NH)

30

Christ be behind me

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'*.

St Augustine

(NH)

31

Breathing deeply in faith

O God,
teach me
to breathe deeply
in faith.

(Søren Kierkegaard)

32

The Jesus Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ,
Son of God,
have mercy on me,
a sinner.

33

Healing our memories

Penetrate these murky corners
where we hide our memories
and tendencies on which we do not care to look,
but which we will not yield freely up to you,
that you may purify and transmute them.
The persistent buried grudge,
the half-acknowledged enmity
which is still smouldering,
the bitterness of that loss
we have not turned into sacrifice,

the private comfort we cling to,
the secret fear of failure
which saps our initiative
and is really inverted pride,
the pessimism which is an insult to your joy.
Lord, we bring all these to you,
and we review them
with shame and penitence
in your steadfast light.

(Evelyn Underhill)

34

Choosing life rather than death

Lord, I acknowledge my sinfulness.
I ask you to empower me
with your Holy Spirit,
that I may resist temptation
and "choose life
rather than death",
- good rather than evil -
in the ordinary circumstances
of my daily life. Amen.

Deut 30¹⁹

(NH)

35

Acceptance and forgiveness in the scriptures

Loving Lord,
you tell us in the Bible
that whatever wrong we have done
you tread down our faults
to the bottom of the sea.
We know there is no need
to keep thinking
about what we have done in the past,
because you pardon
the wrongs we have done,
and you delight in showing mercy.
You bind up all our wounds
and you renew us by your love.
Lord, you love all that you have made,
and it is your very nature
to love and forgive.
Lead us to be generous
in accepting and forgiving others
in the same way
as you accept and forgive us. Amen.

Mic 7¹⁹

Is 43¹⁸

Mic 7¹⁸

Ps 147³

Zeph 3¹⁷

Wis 11²⁴

(NH)

36

Growing closer to you who are love

Father,

perhaps you have best been described as "love"
and, as "love keeps no record of wrongs",

1 Jn 4⁸
1 Cor 13⁵

I rejoice in the completeness
of your personal love and acceptance
of each one of us.

Lead me each day to be faithful
and grow closer to Jesus
who calls me his friend.

Jn 15¹⁴

It is through him and in him, Father,
that I am enabled to see you most fully:
you who call me by name.

Col 1¹⁵
Is 43¹

(NH)

37

Psalm 23

Lord, you are like a shepherd to me,
and so I have all that I need.

You give me rest
in meadows of green grass,
and you lead me to water
where I gain new life and strength.

You guide me
along the way that is best for me.

Even when I walk in darkness
and everything around seems like death,
you are there, walking with me,
and the promise
of your love and faithfulness
helps to conquer my fear.

In the sight of those who do me down,
you invite me
to sit at table with you.

There you offer me
even more than I need,
and you remind me
that I am significant and special.

You call me to goodness and kindness
every day of my life,
and your house will be my home
my whole life long.

38

My choices and commitment

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.

(NH)

39

Negativity, forgiveness, and resisting evil

God our Father,
may no-one's negative actions
ever overpower my determination
to choose to live in a positive way.
I know that to forgive someone
can be far from being an easy option,
and I know that forgiveness
isn't somehow pretending
that something wrong hasn't happened.
Instead it is being generous, Father
- as your Son showed in his dying words -
in being willing to release the other person
from what natural justice demands
should be 'punishment' for wrong-doing.

I sn't this, Father,
what is meant by "your mercy"
and what we are to do
in being called
to "be merciful" ourselves? *Mt 5⁷*
For what I have done wrong, Father,
forgive me
to the extent that I am generous and gracious
in forgiving - or truly hoping to forgive -
those who have done wrong to me. *Lk 11⁴*
Empower me
to break the cycle
of any hatred, resentment or bitterness,
always resisting evil *Rom 12²¹*
and conquering it with goodness.
Bring your healing and peace and wholeness
into the lives of those I pray for,
and into mine. Amen.

(NH)

40

"Do not kill" - and attention to the small things in life

Loving Lord,

I often see on the TV news
examples of inhumanity to others
- people being tortured, abused,
injured or killed.

I need to remind myself
that the commandment "*do not kill*"
also refers to my attitude
and what I do each day,
because it is in smaller ways
that I can destroy people
if I ignore them
or cut them off
or do them down.

Loving Lord, inspire me

to take care of the smaller things of life
as well as the bigger issues. Amen.

(NH)

41

Respect for all life

God our Father,

inspire us with a great respect
for all human life
from the time of the child
growing in the womb
to the point of death.

May that respect lead us

to grow in a sense of responsibility
for all our brothers and sisters
throughout the world,
knowing that, where one person suffers
and is degraded,
all of humanity is belittled and abused.

May we grow in a sense of love and care
for those less fortunate than ourselves,
and lead us to do something
about the troubles in our world.

Amen.

(NH)

42

Psalm 139

Father and lover of life,
you know the depths of my innermost self,
and you understand me.
You protect me on every side,
shielding me from all harm.
When you put me together
in my mother's womb,
you knew all about me.
I thank you for the wonder of myself,
and I stand in awe
at all that you have made.
As you know and love me,
so may I come to know and love you.
Guide me in your ways.

(NH: based on Ps 139)

43

Growing in wonder

God our Father,
may the vastness of your creation
that we can begin to see through a telescope,
remind us of the abundance of your love.
May the lowliness
of the smallest creatures and cells
that we can see through a microscope,
remind us of how insignificant - yet special -
we appear to be.
May our vision each day
of the world around us
remind us that you so loved the world
that you sent Jesus, your Son,
to be one of us.
In all that we observe,
open our eyes
so that we may really see
and grow in wonder and appreciation. Amen.

(NH)

The Cantic of Creation

O Most High, all-powerful, good Lord God,
to you belong praise, glory,
honour and all blessing.

Be praised, my Lord, for all your creation
and especially for our Brother Sun,
who brings us the day and the light;
he is strong and shines magnificently.
O Lord, we think of you when we look at him.

Be praised, my Lord, for Sister Moon,
and for the stars
which you have set shining and lovely
in the heavens.

Be praised, my Lord,
for our Brothers Wind and Air
and every kind of weather
by which you, Lord,
uphold life in all your creatures.

Be praised, my Lord, for Sister Water,
who is very useful to us,
and humble and precious and pure.

Be praised, my Lord, for Brother Fire,
through whom you give us light in the darkness:
he is bright and lively and strong.

Be praised, my Lord,
for Sister Earth, our Mother,
who nourishes us and sustains us,
bringing forth
fruits and vegetables of many kinds
and flowers of many colours.

Be praised, my Lord,
for those who forgive for love of you;
and for those
who bear sickness and weakness
in peace and patience
- you will grant them a crown.

Be praised, my Lord, for our Sister Death,
whom we must all face.
I praise and bless you, Lord,
and I give thanks to you,
and I will serve you in all humility.

(St Francis of Assisi)

45

Psalm 8

Lord, our God and King,
your greatness is seen
throughout the earth.
When I gaze at the heavens
which your fingers have formed,
and look at the moon and the stars
which you have set there,
I realise how small we are
in the magnificence of your creation.

Yet you treasure us
above all that you have made,
and you give us control
over all the works of your hand
- animals both wild and tame,
birds in the air,
and the creatures of the sea.

Lord, our God and King,
your greatness is seen
throughout the earth.

(NH)

46

Psalm 104

Lord our God, how great you are,
and I give thanks to you.
You stretch out the heavens like a tent,
with the sun to mark our days of work
and the moon for our nights of rest.
Your fingers created the earth
and wrapped it with the ocean like a cloak.
There the ships sail,
and beneath them glide the great sea creatures
that you made to play with.
You pour down rain
which the ground takes up.
You set springs gushing forth in the valleys,
and streams that flow
between the mountains,
giving water to all that lives.

You make grass grow for the cattle
and crops in abundance for our needs.
You bring goodness to the trees,
and in their branches
the birds build their nests.
Swarms of all living creatures
are so many
that they could never be counted.
What variety you have created, Lord,
arranging everything so wisely!

You send your Spirit, and all things have life.
Fill us with your Spirit, Lord,
and give us new life,
and renew the earth that you love.

(NH)

Justice and Peace and the care of creation

God our Father,
we give you thanks
for the talents you have given to mankind,
and for the blessings received
through those who use their gifts well.

We think of the beauty of the world
which you proclaimed to be good,
but we are also conscious of our misuse
of what you have given to us:
- from the ore in the ground
we fashion bullets and weapons;
- from the oil under the sea
we derive explosives;
- we damage and pollute
our own environment
for short-term gains;
- from the atoms of existence
we produce bombs of mass destruction.

Our governments spend money in our name
maintaining "butter mountains" and "wine lakes",
and we subsidise farmers
to "set aside" land
so that less food is produced,
even though our brothers and sisters
die each day from hunger.

On our paper money
we print the images of famous people,
yet often do not treasure and uphold
the dignity of all who are made
in your image and likeness.

Open our hearts
to be influenced for good,
and inspire us
to touch the hearts of others.

Enable us to change
the things that contradict your love,
and may all your people
work and grow together
as brothers and sisters,
building up your kingdom on earth. Amen.

48

Injustice and my own attitude

Lord, it's good
to be actively concerned
about the abuses of human rights
in other countries,
but I must not lose sight
of the mis-treatment of others closer to me.

Most particularly, Lord,
point out to me my own failings
in lacking respect
for those who come into my daily life.

I readily condemn slavery,
but help me to liberate those I know
who are overburdened.

I condemn torture,
but lead me to discourage the use
of cruel words and actions.

Remind me
that those who degrade others
are themselves diminished.

Enlighten me
so that I do not
jump to conclusions about people,
or be judgmental.

Lead me always to respect individuals
for who they are,
realising that their experiences
may be different from my own,
as each follows paths in life
that are individual to them.

May I grow in appreciation
that those who think differently from me
can hold equally valid views.

In these and other ways, Lord,
may I grow in respect for all people.
This day, may others respect me
as much as I respect them.

Amen.

(NH)

49

God's love and our concern

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.

(NH)

50

A prayer of Pope Paul VI

Make us worthy, Lord,
to serve our brothers and sisters
throughout the world
who live and die in poverty and hunger.
Give them by our hands
this day their daily bread,
and by our understanding love
give peace and joy. Amen.

51

Hear my voice, Lord - a Prayer of Pope John Paul II for Justice and Peace

To you, Creator of nature and humanity,
of truth and beauty, I pray:
Hear my voice,
for it is the voice
of the victims of all wars and violence
among individuals and nations.
Hear my voice,
for it is the voice
of all children who suffer and who will suffer
when people put their faith in weapons and war.
Hear my voice
when I beg you to instil
into the hearts of all human beings
the vision of peace,
the strength of justice
and the joy of fellowship.

Hear my voice,
for I speak for the multitudes
in every country and in every period of history
who do not want war
and are ready to walk the road of peace.
Hear my voice
and grant insight and strength
so that we may always respond
to hatred with love,
to injustice with total dedication to justice,
to need with the sharing of self,
to war with peace.
O God, hear my voice,
and grant to the world your everlasting peace.

*(Pope John Paul II at
Hiroshima, Japan, 1981)*

52

Giving praise because they do what they were created to do

God our Father,
you made the great lights in our sky:
the sun to rule in the day,
and the moon and the stars in the night
- all because your great love lasts for ever.
Our sun and moon
and the stars that you call by name
all give you praise,
because they do what they were created to do.
Lead me, Father,
to reflect the light of Christ your Son
and so live fully
as, in your love, you created me to do. Amen.

*(Psalms 136⁷⁻⁹, 147⁴, 148³)
(NH)*

53

Living simply

Lord, may we who have plenty
live simply
so that others may simply live.
Amen.

(NH)

54

Hunger and justice

O God,
to those who have hunger, give bread,
and to us who have bread,
give the hunger for justice.

(World Council of Churches)

55

Deep compassion

Father,
fill our hearts with deep compassion
for those who suffer,
and may the day come quickly
of your kingdom of justice and truth. Amen.

(Eugène Bersier)

56

My small sacrifice

Lord, as many human hands
transform many grains of wheat
into a loaf of bread,
so may our small sacrifices
help towards the building up
of our human family.
We ask this through Jesus,
who is our brother,
and who fed the hungry. Amen.

(NH)

57

A prayer of St Augustine

Lord, you were rich
yet, for our sakes, you became poor.
You promised in your Gospel
that whatever is done
for the least of your brothers and sisters
is done for you.
Give us grace to be always willing and ready
to provide for the needs
of those whose parents have died
or whose homes are broken,
that your kingdom of service and love
may extend throughout the world,
to your unending glory.

58

A prayer of St Thomas More

The things that we pray for, good Lord,
give us your grace to work for.

59

A prayer of Mother Teresa

Lord, increase my faith,
bless my efforts and work,
now and for evermore. Amen.

60

Prayer of Peace

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,
and 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.

(attributed to St Francis of Assisi)

61

The Clown's Prayer

As I stumble through this life,
help me to create more laughter than tears,
dispense more happiness than gloom,
spread more cheer than despair.
Never let me become so indifferent
that I will fail to see the wonder
in the eyes of a child
or the twinkle in the eyes of the aged.
Never let me forget that my total effort
is to cheer people, make them happy
and forget - at least momentarily -
all the unpleasantness in their lives.
And, in my final moment,
may I hear You whisper:
*'When you made My people smile,
you made Me smile'.*

(Author unknown)

62

Choices in good times and in difficult times

God our Father,
in good times
may I live in such a way
that I will be strengthened
for the difficult times
that all of us face in our lives.
Lead me now
to make positive choices
to value friendship and loyalty,
and develop attitudes and values,
treasuring all that is lasting and important.

Throughout difficult times
may I build on
the positive choices of my past,
looking outward in the service of others
and avoiding self-pity.
May I grow in the faith
that, whatever my circumstances,
I need have no regrets
but may entrust
my past to your mercy,
my present to your love,
and my future to your Providence.
Amen.

(NH)

63

Doing the little and the great things

Teach us, Lord,
to do the little things
as though they were great
because of the majesty of Christ
who does them in us
and who lives our life.
Teach us to do the greatest things
as though they were little and easy
because of his omnipotence.

(Blaise Pascal)

64

Balance in my life

God our Father,
lead me to grow in faith
and keep a healthy balance in my life.
Remind me that I need to
give time and space for myself
as well as for others.
Inspire me
to remaining committed in my work,
sharing quality time with my family,
and enjoying
sufficient rest and recreation. Amen.

(NH)

65

In busy days of noise and action

We read in the Gospel, Lord,
that you went away to lonely places to pray.
In my busy days of noise and action,
remind me of my need
for time alone
and for peace and quiet
and silence within.
Be with me now
as I pause for a few moments in quietness.

(NH)

66

Amidst difficulties; breaking the cycle of hatred and bitterness

We know, Lord,
that throughout our lives
each of us will experience
problems and difficulties.
Give us courage and strength at those times
and prevent us then
from looking only at ourselves.
Keep our vision wide
so that, even in times of difficulty,
we may still be of help to others.

Help us not to be bitter
towards people or situations,
but empower us to take the initiative
and break the cycle
of hatred, bitterness, and evil actions.
Help us to transform
the difficulties that come our way
into opportunities for personal growth
and service of others. Amen.

(NH)

67

Christ be below me

Lord, I rejoice
that nothing
can come between me and your love,
even when I feel alone or in difficulty,
when in sickness or am troubled.
Even if attacked or afraid,
*'no abyss of mine is so deep
that your love is not deeper still'.*

Rom 8³¹⁻³⁹

Corrie Ten Boom

Lord,
you have experienced many hells of this world
but descended so that you can lift us up.
Be always near.

(NH)

68

My own difficulties to lead me to be sensitive to others

Lord our God,
you have made me in your own likeness
and you love all that you have made.
I thank you
for all that has been positive in my life.
I ask that I may live in such a way
that I may learn
from whatever I may find
is negative or hurtful in my life.
May my disabilities and weaknesses
teach me how to be sensitive to individuals,
that I may grow more caring and compassionate
for others who experience difficulties.
May I grow in strength of character
through all that happens to me,
living fully each day. Amen.

(NH)

69

A prayer of William Penn

Lord,
help me not to despise or oppose
what I do not understand.

70

The Serenity Prayer

God grant me
the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,
the courage to change the things I can,
and the wisdom
to distinguish the one from the other.

(Reinhold Niebuhr)

71

To give and not to count the cost

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)

72

A prayer of the Kikuyu, Kenya

O Father,
your power is greater than all powers.
O Son,
under your leadership we cannot fear anything.
O Spirit,
under your protection there is nothing we cannot overcome.

73

The Way, the Truth and the Life

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.

(Erasmus)

74

Courage to accompany you, Lord

Lord, give us all the courage we need
to go the way you shepherd us,
that when you call
we may go unfrightened.
If you bid us come to you across the waters,
that we may not be frightened as we go.
And if you bid us climb the hill,
may we not notice that it is a hill,
mindful only of the happiness of your company.
You made us for yourself,
that we should travel with you
and see you at last in your unveiled beauty
in the abiding city,
where you are light and happiness
and endless home.

(Bede Jarrett, OP - adapted)

75

Signing with the cross

Lord Jesus,
I sign my heart with the sign of the cross,
reminding myself
of your love for each person.
I ask that I may grow in faithfulness
as your friend.

I sign my lips with the sign of the cross,
that I may speak as you would speak.

I sign my hands with the sign of the cross
asking that you enable me
to do your work,
and be your hands
in our world which you love so much.

I sign my eyes with the sign of your cross
that I may really see, Lord,
and be aware
of all that is around me.

I sign my ears with the sign of your cross
that I may listen and really hear
the communication that comes to me
in different ways
- from you
and from the people
you place into my life.

I sign my shoulders, Lord, with your cross,
knowing that you call me
to carry my own cross each day
and support others
in the burdens and difficulties
that they have.

All that I do today
I set out to do
in the name of the Father (+)
and of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

(NH)

76

Day by day

Thanks be to you, my Lord Jesus Christ,
for all the benefits which you have given me,
for all the pains and insults
which you have borne for me.
O most merciful Redeemer, Friend and Brother,
may I know you more clearly,
love you more dearly,
and follow you more nearly,
day by day.

(St Richard of Chichester)

77

Prayer of Charles de Foucauld

Father,
I abandon myself into your hands;
do with me what you will.
Whatever you may do, I thank you:
I am ready for all, I accept all.

Let only your will be done in me
and in all your creatures.
I wish no more than this, O Lord.

Into your hands I commend my soul:
I offer it to you
with all the love of my heart,
for I love you, Lord,
and so need to give myself,
to surrender myself into your hands
without reserve,
and with boundless confidence,
for you are my Father.

78

Transform, Lord, my weakness and poverty

Look, Lord,
on an empty vessel that needs to be filled.
In faith I am weak - strengthen me.
In love I am cold - warm me and make me fervent
so that my love may go out to my neighbour.
I doubt and am unable to trust you completely.
Lord, strengthen my faith and trust in you.
You are all the treasure I possess.
I am poor, you are rich,
and you came to have mercy on the poor.
I am a sinner, you are goodness.
From you I can receive goodness,
but I can give you nothing.
Therefore I shall stay with you.

(Martin Luther)

79

An evening prayer

O Lord my God,
thank you for bringing this day to a close.
Thank you for giving me rest
in body and soul.
Your hand has been over me
and has guarded and preserved me.
Forgive my lack of faith
and any wrong that I have done today,
and help me to forgive all who have wronged us.
Let me sleep in peace under your protection,
and keep me from all the temptations of darkness.
Into your hands I commend my loved ones.
I commend to you my body and soul.
O God, your holy name be praised.

(Dietrich Bonhoeffer)

80

Christ in my sleeping

Lord, you mark when I walk or lie down;
all my ways lie open to you.
When I cease activity,
calm my mind.
When I am by myself,
be my companion and friend.
When I am weary and heavily laden,
may your Spirit renew me.
When I lie down, may it be in peace
for sleep to heal and refresh me,
for you alone, Lord,
make me dwell in safety.
Watch my sleeping,
guard my waking,
be always near.

Ps 139¹⁻³

Ps 4⁹

81

Till the shades lengthen

May the Lord support us all the day long
till 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 and a holy rest
and peace at the last.

(John Henry Newman)

82

The constancy of your faithfulness

Lord, the day is far gone
and the night is at hand.
May the constancy
of the setting of the sun,
and its rising
on those who need it elsewhere,
remind me of your faithfulness and your promise
to be with us always:
ready to help us to transform
darkness into light,
hatred into love,
and bitterness into joy. Amen.

Lk 24²⁹

83

Knowing, loving and serving you

Eternal God,
who are the light of the minds that know you,
the joy of the hearts that love you,
and the strength of the wills that serve you;
grant us so to know you
that we may truly love you,
and so to love you
that we may fully serve you,
whom to serve is perfect freedom,
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

(St Augustine)

84

Emptying into eternal life

You who are love itself,
give me the grace of love,
give me yourself,
so that all my days may finally empty
into the one day of your eternal life.

(Karl Rahner)

85

Take, Lord

Take, Lord, all my liberty.
Receive my memory, my understanding,
and my whole will.
Whatever I have and possess,
you have given to me;
to you I will restore it wholly,
and to your will
I utterly surrender it for my direction.
Give me the love of you only, with your grace,
and I shall be rich enough;
nor do I ask anything besides,

(St Ignatius Loyola)

86

The grasp of your hand in my failure

Let me not pray to be sheltered from dangers
but to be fearless in facing them.
Let me not beg for the stilling of my pain,
but for the heart to conquer it.
Let me not crave in anxious fear to be saved,
but hope for the patience to win my freedom.
Grant me that I may not be a coward,
feeling your mercy in my success alone,
but let me find the grasp of your hand
in my failure.

(Rabindranath Tagore)

87

Reflecting on growing older as a new year begins

Almighty God,
by whose mercy
my life has continued for another year,
I pray that, as my years increase,
my sins may not increase.
As age advances,
let me become more open,
more faithful and more trusting in you.
Let me not be distracted by lesser things
from what is truly important.

And if I become infirm as I grow old,
may I not be overwhelmed
by self-pity or bitterness.
Continue and increase
your loving kindness towards me
so that, when you finally call me to yourself,
I may enter into eternal happiness with you,
through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

(Dr Samuel Johnson, 1709-1784)

88

Those who are sick, afraid, worried

Lord Jesus,
we ask you to bring your healing touch
to those whom we know
to be sick, afraid, or worried.
Bring them your peace and healing. Amen.

89

The one you love is ill

Lord, as your friend Lazarus lay ill,
others remarked to you
that "*the one you love is ill.*"
People said: "*See his love for him.*"
Today, Lord Jesus,
we pray for _____
because he - the one you love - is ill.
We ask you to bring
your healing and peace
to him and his family. Amen.

(re 'Lazarus', see John 11)
(NH)

90

Sick, hungry, thirsty and needy

Trusting in your goodness
and great mercy, Lord, I come:
sick - I come to my Saviour;
hungry and thirsty - to the well of Life;
needy - to the King of Heaven.

(Thomas à Kempis)

91

Patience and strength in sickness and in health

Lord,
teach me the art of patience whilst I am well,
and give me the use of it when I am sick.
In that day,
either lighten my burden
or strengthen my back.
Make me
(who so often in my health
have discovered my weakness,
presuming on my own strength)
be strong in my sickness
when I solely rely on your assistance.

(Thomas Fuller)

Those very ill

God our Father,
 we bring before you today
 those who suffer
 from chronic illness or disability
 - those for whom sickness or disability
 profoundly affects their lives.

When they feel diminished,
 remind them that you call them by name
 and hold them
 in the palm of your hand.

Is 43¹

When they feel fragile and broken,
 mould them and heal them,
 that they may more closely resemble
 the image of Jesus,
 your Son and our Brother.

When they are reminded
 of different times in the past,
 lead them to grow in the faith
 that you love them today, as they are,
 in the reality of their lives this day.

When they feel uncertain about the future,
 lead them to that perfect love
 which casts out all fear.

1 John 4¹⁸

When situations remind them
 - not of what they *can* do,
 but of what they *cannot* do -
 remind them
 that "love never fails",
 and that, living in your love,
 they will bear your fruit in plenty.

1 Cor 13⁸

Jn 15^{5,9}

May all of us
 - whatever our circumstances -
 never be so taken up with our own concerns
 that we do not see or respond to
 the needs of others.
 May we live with courage
 the different challenges
 that each of us faces.
 Amen.

(NH)

93

Watch, Lord, with those in need

Watch, dear Lord,
with those who cannot sleep
and those who weep this night.
Tend the sick,
give rest to the weary
and bless the dying.
Relieve those who are suffering,
have pity on those in great distress,
and shield those who are happy.
Amen.

(St Augustine)

94

The Last Words of St Teresa of Avila

My Lord, it is time to move on.
Well then, may your will be done.
O my Lord and my Spouse,
the hour that I have longed for has come.
It is time for us to meet one another.

95

A Song of Farewell

*(for accompanying the dying,
or for one who has just died)*

Go forth, DEAR BROTHER,
upon your final journey.
Go from this world and rest in peace
in the presence of God the Father,
who created you;
in the love of Jesus our Lord,
who calls you his friend,
and in the warmth of the Holy Spirit,
who has made his home in you.

(or 'sister', or the person's name)

In death
your life is now changed, not ended,
and we give you back to our faithful God
who first gave you to us.
On our common pilgrimage
we have accompanied you
as far as we can go together.

Our ways part for now
but, beyond our horizon,
you will be met by Jesus
who is himself the Way.

May the angels lead you into paradise,
and the saints take you by the hand
and walk with you
into the presence of God.

There, face-to-face,
you will meet our loving Father.
His hands will be swift to welcome,
and he will hold you close:
his tender love is that of a mother for her child,
and he has written your name
on the palm of his hands.

You will find rest
in Christ, the Good Shepherd,
who carries you and says: "Do not be afraid."
His peace will be yours
in a place where pain and sorrow will be no more.

There in God's kingdom
of light, happiness and peace
the Holy Spirit will heal and renew
and strengthen you.
The end of your pilgrimage
will be a new beginning
in the bright dawn of eternal day.

Go forth, DEAR BROTHER,
upon your final journey.
Go from this world, and be with God.

(NH)

96

For someone who has died

Loving 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 _____
who has died.
As you have made each of us
in your image and likeness
and have called us by name,
hold him/her safely in your love
in your kingdom
of light, happiness and peace. Amen.

97

Lord, welcome those who have died

Lord,
welcome into your calm and peaceful kingdom
those who have departed out of this present life
to be with you.
Grant them rest
and a place with the spirits of the just;
and give them the life that knows no age,
the reward that passes not away,
through Christ our Lord. Amen.

(St Ignatius Loyola)

98

For the deceased and those who mourn

Father,
your Son declared "blessed"
all those who mourn,
knowing that no-one can mourn
unless they love very much.
Bring courage and strength
to those who now mourn
because they have loved greatly.
In your loving kindness
bring them healing and inner peace,
and lead the one they mourn
into your kingdom
of light, happiness, and peace. Amen.

(NH)

99

For those who mourn

Lord Jesus, you tell us
that those who mourn are "blessed",
knowing that only those who love greatly
can mourn.

We know, too,
that it is better
to have loved and lost someone
than never to have loved at all.

Be with _____
and may the members of *his/her* family
be strengthened,
knowing that others care for them
and hold them in prayer. Amen.

(NH)

100

The Angelus

The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary
And she conceived by the Holy Spirit.
*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.*

Behold the handmaid of the Lord.
Be it done to me according to your word.
Hail Mary...

And the Word was made flesh
And dwelt among us.
Hail Mary...

Pray for us, O holy Mother of God
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.

Most of these prayers appear in *'Walk In My Presence'*,
a book of prayer services of themed readings and prayers,
by Nicholas Hutchinson FSC

- Matthew James Publishing (Autumn 2000):

<http://www.matthew-james.co.uk/>

The remaining prayers are to be found in
'Lord, Teach us to Pray'
by the same author and publisher.