

# ***Occasional Prayers***

## **Teach Me to Listen**

Teach me to listen, O God, to those nearest me,  
my family, my friends, my co-workers.  
Help me to be aware that  
no matter what words I hear, the message is,  
“Accept the person I am. Listen to me.”  
Teach me to listen, my caring God, to those far from me,  
the whisper of the hopeless,  
the plea of the forgotten,  
the cry of the anguished.  
Teach me to listen, O God, my Mother, to myself.  
Help me to be less afraid  
to trust the voice inside,  
in the deepest part of me.  
Teach me to listen, Holy Spirit,  
for your voice,  
in busyness and in boredom,  
in certainty and in doubt,  
in noise and in silence.  
Teach me, Lord, to listen.

Source: John Veltri, S. J. (adapted)

## **Our Mother, Our Father**

Our Mother, our Father  
In heaven and on earth,  
Holy is your name.  
May your justice come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread  
and forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Do not put us to the test  
but deliver us from evil. Amen.

## **The Lord's Prayer**

Our God, I-AM, Adonai, Elijah, Allah in heaven and on earth,  
Holy is your name.

May your justice come,  
your will be done

on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.

Do not put us to the test  
but deliver us from evil.

For Thine is the Kingdom the Power  
and the Glory Forever and Ever – Amen.

## **Gift**

Gifts are meant for giving, so give yourself away.

Many people are lifelong secrets, enamored with the wrappings,  
hesitant to peek inside: it might not measure up!

All their lives they must be content  
to be less than they really are.

Why are we afraid to name our gift except perhaps in private  
and only now and then? Embarrassment, indifference, disdain, or  
disappointment buries some talents soundly  
like treasure hidden in a field, good news whispered  
cautiously instead of whooped aloud.

Why can't we accept and see that everyone is gifted,  
gift, even you and me.

Source: Miriam Therese Winter

## **O God You Called Me**

Oh, God,  
you called me from the sleep of nothingness  
merely because in your tremendous love  
you want to make good and beautiful beings.  
You have called me by my name in my mother's womb.  
You have given me breath and light and movement  
and walked with me every moment of my existence.  
I am amazed, God of the universe,  
that you attend to me and, more, cherish me.  
Create in me the faithfulness that moves you,  
and I will trust you and yearn for you all my days.

Source: Joseph Tetlow, S.J.

## **Prayer of St. Teresa**

Let nothing disturb you.  
Let nothing frighten you.  
All things are changing,  
God alone is changeless.  
Patience attains all things.  
One who has God lacks nothing.  
God alone is enough.

Source: St. Teresa of Avila

## **Serenity Prayer**

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

Living one day at a time, enjoying one moment at a time,  
accepting hardship as a pathway to peace ,  
taking, as Jesus did, this sinful world as it is, not as I would have it,  
trusting that you will make all things right if I surrender to your will  
so that I may be reasonably happy in this life  
and supremely happy with you forever in the next.

Source: Reinhold Niebuhr

## **A Morning Prayer**

O God, this new day opens before me with promise and opportunity.  
It is your gift to me; help me to make it my gift to you.

The day lies before me like a page waiting to be written.

Save me from scribbling over it meaningless marks and idle doodling.

Help me to write somewhere upon it a poem of praise, a prayer of  
compassion, a significant sentence to rescue our time from triviality.

Help me to say less and to mean more, to make gestures of grace and not  
of haste. Give me good words to speak, good thoughts to think, good  
deeds to do. But above all, evoke from me praise, that I may be the best of  
all givers;

A Thanksgiver!

In Jesus' name. Amen

## **Peace and Reconciliation**

Persistent God, gather us around the common table,  
where the poor are included,  
the peacemakers are renewed,  
and the faithful sent to weave songs of peace and deeds of justice.  
Holy God, turn our face toward kindness,  
fill our hearts with your compassion,  
and guide our feet along the paths of peace.  
For you are the Holy One who brings the dawn after the darkest hour,  
and the Freeing One who desires liberation for all the oppressed.  
Work your will and your way in and through us for the sake of your  
creation. Amen.

Source: Larry James Peacock

## **Prayer of St. Francis**

Lord, make me an instrument of thy 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 One,  
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.

Source: St. Francis of Assisi

## **Touch Me With Truth That Burns Like Fire**

God, send the gift of your Spirit to fill this place and myself and the world.  
Touch me with truth that burns like fire, with beauty that moves me like the  
wind; and set me free, God, free to try new ways of living;  
free to forgive myself and others; free to love and laugh and sing;  
free to lay aside my burden of security;  
free to join the battle for justice and peace;  
free to see and listen and wonder again  
at the gracious mystery of things and persons;  
free to be, to give, to receive, to rejoice as a child of your Spirit.  
And, God, teach me how to dance,  
to turn around and come down where I want to be,  
in the arms and heart of your people and in you,  
that I may praise and enjoy you forever.

## **Be With Us**

Good Shepherd...

be with us in our poverty, war and oppression,  
be with us in our weakness and fear, to build faith and trust,  
be with us in our ignorance and prejudice, to listen and understand,  
be with us in our greed and avarice, to share and to be grateful,  
be with us in our selfishness and pride, to love and be reconciled.

Good Shepherd...

let your wisdom guide us, freeing our faith to walk along unpaved and  
unmarked roads,  
let your wisdom guide us, freeing our hope to imagine a world without war,  
let your wisdom guide us, freeing our hearts to approach each other  
gratefully, as equals,  
let your wisdom guide us, freeing our hands to build houses of peace,  
let your wisdom guide us, freeing our lips to speak words of justice.  
Take us into your care. Give us your heart and journey with us.  
Teach us to love, to walk in hope and to share the abundance of our life in  
joy.

Source: Rev. John Giuliani

## **Anyway**

People are often unreasonable, illogical and self-centered;

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 false friends and some true enemies;

Succeed anyway.

If you are honest and frank, people may cheat you;

Be honest and frank anyway.

What you spend years building, someone could destroy overnight;

Build anyway.

If you find serenity and happiness, others may be jealous;

Be happy anyway.

The good you do today, people will forget tomorrow;

Do good anyway.

Give the world the best you have, and it may never be enough;

Give the world your best anyway.

For you see, in the final analysis, it is between you and God;

it was never between you and them anyway.

Source: Found on the wall of Mother Teresa's room

## **A Penitent's Blessing**

May the God who knows you better than you know yourself, grant you the gift of courage to face the known and the unknown without fear.

May the God who loves you better than you love yourself, grant you the gift of understanding and acceptance.

May the God who forgives you more fully than you can forgive yourself, more freely than you think you deserve, grant you the gift of peace.



## **I Am Peace**

I am peace  
surrounded by peace  
secure in peace.  
Peace protects me,  
peace supports me,  
peace is in me,  
peace is mine.  
All is well.  
Peace to all beings,  
peace among all beings,  
peace from all beings,  
I am steeped in peace  
absorbed in peace.  
In the streets, at our work,  
having peaceful thoughts,  
peaceful words, peaceful acts.

Source: A Buddhist Meditation

## **To Lead As I Am?**

When I turn to you, God, you ask me to go, and do.  
How can I when I am without your loving touch?  
In my giftedness, use me.  
In my hesitancy, encourage me.  
In my successes, humble me.  
In my weakness, strengthen me.  
In my foolishness, forgive me.  
In my failures, direct me.  
In my dreaming, fulfill me.  
In my emptiness, fill me.  
In my woundedness, heal me.  
God, help me to be open to your surrounding love  
as you send me, as I am becoming,  
You can use me as I am.

Source: Tom Lane

## **Have No Fear**

Have no fear for what tomorrow may bring.  
The same loving God who cares for you today  
will take care of you tomorrow and every day.  
God will either shield you from suffering  
or give you unfailing strength to bear it.  
Be at peace, then, and put aside  
all anxious thoughts and imaginings.

Source: Francis de Sales

## **Peace**

Lead me from death to life,  
from falsehood to truth.  
Lead me from despair to hope,  
from fear to trust.  
Lead me from hate to love,  
from war to peace.  
Let peace fill my heart, my world, my universe.

## **Oh, God**

Oh, God, when I have food,  
help me to remember the hungry.  
When I have work,  
help me to remember the jobless.  
When I have a warm home,  
help me to remember the homeless.  
When I am without pain,  
help me to remember those who suffer.  
And remembering, help me  
to destroy my complacency  
and bestir my compassion.  
Make me concerned enough  
to help, by word and deed  
those who cry out  
for what we take for granted.

## **We Did Not Want It Easy, God**

We did not want it easy, God,  
but we did not contemplate  
that it would be quite this hard,  
this long, this lonely.  
So, if we are to be turned inside out  
and upside down,  
with even our pockets shaken  
just to check what's rattling  
and left behind,  
we pray that you will keep faith with us  
and we with you,  
holding our hands as we weep,  
giving us strength to continue,  
and showing us beacons  
along the way  
to becoming new.

## **Prayer for World Peace**

Great God, who has told us “Vengeance is mine,”  
save us from ourselves, save us from the vengeance  
in our hearts and the acid in our souls.

Save us from our desire to hurt as we have been hurt,  
to punish as we have been punished, to terrorize  
as we have been terrorized.

Give us the strength it takes to listen rather than to judge,  
to trust rather than to fear, to try again and again  
to make peace even when peace eludes us.

We ask, O God, for the grace to be our best selves.

We ask for the vision to be builders of the human community  
rather than its destroyers.

We ask for the humility as a people to understand  
the fears and hopes of other peoples.

We ask for the love it takes to bequeath  
to the children of the world to become more  
than the failure of our own making.

We ask for the heart it takes to care for all the peoples  
of Afghanistan and Iraq, of Palestine and Israel  
as well as for ourselves.

Give us the depth of soul, O God,  
to constrain our might, to resist the temptations of power,  
to refuse to attack the attackable, to understand  
that vengeance begets violence, and to bring peace –  
not war – wherever we go.

For you, O God have been merciful to us.

For you, O God have been patient with us.

For you, O God have been gracious to us.

And so may we be merciful and patient  
and gracious and trusting with these others  
whom you also love.

This we ask through Jesus, the one without vengeance in his heart.

This we ask forever and ever.

Source: Joan D. Chittister, OSB