

Mercy Book of Prayers

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Caregivers

Faithful God

Faithful God, you have lavished us with love.
Keep us ever mindful that you keep your promises.

All: Keep us mindful, Lord.

On our difficult days, help us to remember
that you are a refuge for those who need shelter,
a comfort for those who feel empty and poor in spirit.

All: Keep us mindful, Lord.

On our joyful days, fill us with a deep sense of thanksgiving
as we experience your everlasting love.

All: Keep us mindful, Lord.

Help us to share your graciousness with all those
who need a touch of generous love. Amen

All: Keep us mindful, Lord.

Enough

O Lord, give us enough tears to keep us human,
 enough humor to keep us wise,
 enough setbacks to keep us humble,
enough accomplishments to keep us confident,
 enough patience to teach us waiting,
 enough hope to teach us trusting,
 enough friends to give us love,
enough memories to give us comfort,
 enough faith to keep us going.

Amen

Hands of a Caregiver

(Invite participants to look at their upturned hands as you pray.)

Gracious God,

Thank you for these hands and the tasks you have given them to do.

They chart, give medicines, start IV's, give tube feedings.

They push wheelchairs, give enemas, and take vitals signs.

The list is endless.

All: Thank you for these hands.

Let them hold a dying hand, touch a bereaved family member in desperate need, calm a frightened child, reach out to friends and patients.

All: Thank you for these hands.

Teach us to lift our hands in prayer to you, in praise for your creation, in sorrow for our shortcomings, in thanksgiving for an endless list of blessings, and in supplication for the needs of others.

All: Thank you for these hands. Amen

Prayer for Nurses

Oh God of the Universe and God of all who care for others,
bless and care for each nurse in this hospital.
Guide each of us that they may work with compassion,
touch with gentleness, speak with tenderness,
and listen with our eyes as well as our ears.

Inspire us to smile from our hearts,
understand with deep feeling,
know the time to be quiet, the time to laugh,
the time to sympathize and the time to encourage.

Help us to know above all that the time to love is now.
God, hear our prayer for our generous and hard working
nursing staff and surround us with your love today and always.

Amen

adapted from Marjorie Gray

A Prayer for Healing

Lord,
You invite all who are burdened to come to you.
Allow your healing hand to heal us.
Touch our souls with your compassion for others.
Touch our hearts with your courage and infinite love for all.

All: Lord, we come to you.

Touch our minds with your wisdom,
that our mouths may always proclaim your praise.
Teach us to reach out to you in our need,
And help us to lead others to you by our example.

All: Lord, we come to you.

Most loving heart of Jesus, bring us health in body and
spirit that we may serve you with all our strength. Amen

All: Lord, we come to you.

Blessing for Healers

Christ Jesus
Source of life,
Spirit of All Healing,
Bless those who
serve the sick.
Direct and guide us.

Remembering
that each of us
will take our turns
in darkness and light,
Let us be light,
for one another
when the darkness falls.

Gentle our hands.
Soften our eyes.
Open a window
in our hearts
so that your grace
and loving kindness
may shine through.

Make of our attention
a safe shelter
for the healing of the sick,
in mind and heart,
spirit and body.

Renew us always
in your love, Amen

-National Association of Catholic Chaplains

Witness to Mercy

Merciful God, you invite us to witness to
your mercy in our world.

Enliven our sensitivity to those persons
and places that cry out for your compassion.

Encourage us to walk boldly on the path
of mercy knowing that you journey with
us as a companion and guide.

We make this prayer in confidence
for we know that your love enfolds us. Amen

Gratitude for Call to Service

Lord God, we thank you for your varied gifts to us.

We thank you for the opportunities we have to serve you.

Bless us as we continue in the spirit of

Mercy to serve your poor, your sick, and

Your little ones who are hungering for truth.

Be at our side as we continue to express

Your mercy in our lives each day.

We praise you—a God rich in mercy and full of compassion. Amen

Gentle Us

Gentle us,
Holy one.
into an unclenched moment,
a deep breath,
a letting go
of heavy expectancies,
of shriveling anxieties,
of dead certainties,
that, softened by the silence,
surrounded by the light,
and open to the mystery,
we may be found by wholeness,
upheld by the unfathomable,
entranced by the simple,
and filled with the joy
that is you.
Amen

Prayer for the Healers

God our Creator,
You are the source of strength and hope.
Bless this place where we find ourselves
that it may be not only a place of sickness and suffering
but also a place of healing and caring.

All: May we find you in this place, Lord.

Bless us whom you have chosen
to become instruments of your healing,
that we may be humble channels of your grace.
Where there is danger, may we protect life.
Where there is weakness and pain
may we provide relief and comfort.
Where there is anxiety and fear,
may we offer gentle reassurance
through our presence.
And where all human efforts fail,
may we be assured that
we can rest secure with you.

All: May we find you in those whom we serve, Lord.

Bless all your workers, O Lord,
with gentle and compassionate hearts,
for this is how we will find the door to peoples'
hearts and treasures.
Bless us, so that through this experience we may strengthen
our faith in you and give a deeper perspective to our lives. Amen

All: May we find you in ourselves, Lord.

Church Seasons

The Desert of Lent

Merciful God,
you call us forth from the dust of the earth;
you claimed us for Christ in the waters of baptism.

Look upon us as we observe these forty days
bearing the mark of ashes,
and bless our journey through the desert of Lent
to the font of rebirth.

May our fasting be hunger for justice;
our alms, a making of peace,
our prayer, the chant of humble and grateful hearts.

All that we do and pray is in the name of Jesus,
for in his cross you proclaim your love for ever and ever.

Amen.

Lenten Psalm of Awakening

Come, O life-giving Creator,
and rattle the door latch
of my slumbering heart.
Awaken me as you breathe upon
a winter-wrapped earth,
gently calling to life virgin Spring.

Awaken in these fortified days
of Lenten prayer and discipline
my youthful dream of holiness.
Call me forth from the prison camp
of my numerous past defeats
and my narrow patterns of being
to make my ordinary life extra-ordinarily alive,
through the passion of my love.

Show tome during these Lenten days
how to take the daily things of life
and by submerging them in the sacred,
to infuse them with a great love
for you, O God, and for others.
Guide me to perform simple acts of love and prayer,
the real works of reform and renewal
of this overture to the spring of the Spirit.

O Father of Jesus, Mother of Christ,
help me not to waste
these precious Lenten days
of my soul's spiritual springtime

Lenten Psalm of Longing

I thank you, O God,
for the warming of the winds
that brings a melting of the snow,
for daylight hours that daily grow longer
and richer in the aroma of hope.
Spring lingers beneath the horizon
as approaching echoes of Easter
ring in my ears.

I lift up my heart to you, Beloved.
in this season of Lent
that gently sweeps across
my sluggish and sleeping heart,
awakening me
to a deeper love for you.

May the wind of the Spirit
that drove Jesus into the desert,
into the furnace of prayer,
also drive me with a passion
during this Lenten season
to enkindle the fire of my devotion
in the desert of Lenten love.

Birds above, on migratory wings,
signal me to an inner migration,
a message that draws me homeward bound
on Spirit's wings
to the heart of my Beloved.
May I earnestly use this Lenten season
to answer the inner urge
to return

On the Eve of Ash Wednesday

Lord our God,
on this eve of Ash Wednesday,
we ask that You bless our celebration
of the feast of Mardi Gras.
Bless our table, our food and wine,
as well all of us
who sit about this feast day table.
Come, Gracious Lord,
and join us at this feast
as we prepare to join Your Son, Jesus,
by prayerfully entering into
these forty days of Lent.
As the food and wine of this feast
give nourishment and strength
to our bodies and spirits,
so may we, during this coming season of Lent,
give strength and support to each other
and to all who accompany us
on this pilgrimage of prayer
from Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday.
As this Lenten roadway causes us to reflect
upon the death of our Lord,
may we also remember His victory
in His resurrection from the dead.
May this dinner
on the eve of the day of ashes
be a joyful foretaste
of the rebirth and new life that is the promise
of the feast of the Resurrection.
Together, for the final time before these forty days,
let us sing the ancient song of joyful victory;
Alleluia!

Blessing for Pentecostal Wine

Lord, Creator of the Good and the Beautiful,
hear our prayer as we celebrate
the great fiery feast of Pentecost.

On this day, nearly two thousand years ago,
the apostles were enflamed by Your Holy Spirit,
and their great zeal was mistaken
for an overindulgence in other spirits.

Send forth, Lord, as we celebrate,
Your Sacred Spirit over these creatures of Yours,
the spirits of wine (and cider)
so that they might be filled to overflowing
with Your joy, healing and magic.

May this blessed wine of Pentecost
be for us a sacred sipping sign
of Your delicious and delightful Presence
among us, Your people.

May this blessed wine
bring friends closer to friends
and transform the stranger into a friend.
May all who share this sacrament – in moderation –
be released from the toil of daily work,
healed of any dullness of heart
and have their feet set a-dancing.

May these spirits o wine (and cider)
be the toast of our celebration
and the taste of the Holy Spirit among us
as we bless them now
in Your name: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Amen

St. Nicholas' Day Blessing of Candy Canes

Good St. Nicholas, we honor you
on this your holy feast day.
We rejoice that you are the patron saint
and the holy symbol of joy
for many peoples of many lands.
Come, great-hearted saint,
and be our patron and companion
as we, once again, prepare our homes and hearts
for the great feast of Christmas,
the birth of the Eternal Blessing, Jesus Christ.
May these sweets, these candy canes,
be a sign of Advent joy for us.
May these candy canes,
shaped just like your Bishop's staff,
be for us a sign of your benevolent care.
We rejoice that you are the holy bringer of gifts
and that so many have been delighted
through your great generosity.
Help us to be as generous of heart.
Wherever these candy canes are hung,
on tree or wall or door,
may they carry with them
the bright blessing of God.
May all who shall taste them
experience the joy of God
upon their tongues and in their hearts.
We ask God, now, to bless
these your brightly striped sweets
in the name of the Father,
and of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen

An Advent Psalm

Awaken, my heart,
God's reign is near;
the Peaceable Kingdom
is in my hands.

If the wolf can be the guest of the lamb,
and the bear and cow be fiends,
then no injury or hate can be a guest
within the kingdom of my heart.
Eden's peace and harmony will only return
when first, in my heart,
there hides no harm or ruin,
for the Peaceable Kingdom is in my hands.

Isaiah's dream became Jesus' vision;
"Come, follow me," Emmanuel's echo rings.
"Reform your life, recover Eden's peace,"
for only then will salvation appear.
For advent's dream is the healing of earth,
When the eagle and bear become friends,
the child and the serpent playmates.
Arise, awaken, my heart,
the Peaceable Kingdom
is in your hands

PSALM OF AN ADVENT EAR

With prayerful pleas
and Advent songs of longing,
I await the birth of God's Anointed One.
Come, O gift of heaven's harmony,
and attune my third ear,
the ear of my heart,
so that I may hear,
just as Mary, faithful woman of Israel, heard.

O God, the time is short,
these days are too few
as I prepare for the feast
of the birth of Mary's son.
Busy days, crowded to the brim,
With long lists of gifts to buy
and things that must be done.

Show to me, also your highly favored child,
how to guard my heart
from noise and hurry's whirl,
so that I might hear your voice
calling my heart to create an empty space
that might be pregnant with heaven's fire.

Quiet me within,
clothe my body in peacefulness,
that your Word
once again may take flesh -
this time, within me -
as once it did in holy Mary,
long Advent days ago.

A Christmas Psalm

O Blessed One,
it is said that Christmas is for children.
Indeed, I agree:
it's only a feast for the young of heart,
a feast for finding beneath the tree
gifts to surprise and delight the eternal child.

Peel back the scabs of cynicism from my eyes
so that this calloused and aging child,
may see holiness blazing at the tip of every branch,
may see every tree as a Christmas tree.

Let me not be ashamed to dance with delight
at hidden gifts wrapped in shimmering paper
with bows of rainbow colored ribbon.
But also grant me the youthful and wide-eyed wonder
to recognize, and even to expect,
life-giving miracles on every street corner,
miracles of kindness and generosity and care.

Gift my all-too-calculating heart
with the excitement of anticipation
to truly receive the gifts of life,
the capacity to feast and rejoice.
Give birth within me to a spaciousness of heart
that can celebrate this feast
of the birth of Christ, the child,
as a child

O, Sing Joyfully!

Leader:

As we come together in this glorious season of resurrection and regeneration, we are thankful for God's love and goodness and are prepared to journey forth in hope and faith, for as scripture says "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

All:

Christ is risen! Christ is truly risen!
The heavens rumble alleluias,
earth dances to the tune
and the wail of the grave itself becomes song.
All are singing with you, savior God,
for you have turned the world around,
inside out and upside down.
After all, let us stand and sing
with the heavens and earth and the graves
and so proclaim that we live now
only in Christ who is Lord
for ever and ever.

-Adrian Baten

Collaboration

BLESSED ARE YOU, LORD OUR GOD,
WHO ENHANCES OUR LIVES WITH WORK

For the gift of work, we are grateful in this prayer.
As the sons and daughters of Adam and Eve,
we follow in the steps of our first parents
who, before their fall,
worked joyfully with their hands
in Your Garden of Eden, Lord and Creator.
We are thankful for the dignity and creative challenge
of our unique tasks.
For the work that enables us,
that lifts up our spirits,
we are grateful.
By means of these labors,
we are able to give flesh to our spiritual dreams
and to work out the salvation of the earth.
We take time to thank You
for those common tasks that we must perform each day,
by which according to Your divine plan,
we are also able to create the Kingdom here in our midst.
We daily follow in the footsteps of Jesus,
the carpenter of Nazareth,
and in the way of Mary, His mother,
who gracefully worked at the tasks of her home,
as we rejoice in the opportunities for work
that form us in Your love.
With St. Paul, the tent-maker,
with St. Peter, the fisherman,
we too labor in love
as we proclaim the mysteries of Your Gospel of good news.
Help us, Lord our God,
to use the work of this day -
to perform it with mindfulness and attention,
with care and devotion -
that it will be holy and healing
for us and for all the earth.

Blessed are You, Lord our God,
who enhances our lives with work.
Amen

A Piece of the Truth

Gentle God, each one of us has a piece of the truth,
a piece of reality not unlike a jigsaw puzzle.

It is only when we collaborate,
struggling to put the pieces into place
that we “wake up” to the whole picture.

All: Lord, that we might see.

Strengthen us in our struggle,
to see truth in another’s piece of reality,
to refrain from thinking we have the answer
before the puzzle is completed, and
to understand that it is only in bending to this truth
that we keep from breaking. Amen

All: Lord, that we might see.

Psalm Before Beginning Work

To you, Creator God,
from whose hands comes the work of creation,
so artfully designed,
we pray that the work we are about to do
may be done in companionship with You.

May the work we will soon begin
be a shimmering mirror of your handiwork
in the joy of doing it together,
in our openness to its outcome,
in our invitation to others to share it,
and in its bearing fruit for the world.

May we be aware that through our work,
we draw near to you.
We come to you, O God, ready.

Be Among Us, God

Be among us God, as we begin our work together.
Strengthen us as a team and help us to be a model
of your compassion and healing.

In times of disagreement, guide us to speak
and listen with integrity.

In times of doubt, grant us faith.

In times of division, give us the courage to seek peace and unity.

At the end of this day, may we give thanks for all
the many ways that you came to our assistance. Amen

For the Gifts of Self-knowledge and Acceptance

O God, our creator,
you formed us as women and men,
equal partners in the stewardship of your world:
joined forever as sisters and brothers,
yet within each of us lives a rich diversity
of different gifts, different hopes,
and different limitations.

In Jesus, your word born fully in our flesh,
you have seen and loved in us
all that you have made us to be.
Though graced, we are limited and often weak.
But our weaknesses themselves
are no obstacle to your passion for us.

Teach us to see in ourselves
what you have seen in each of us from birth.

Teach us to know our gifts and limits.
Keep us confidently on the path of self-knowledge,
fullness of wisdom, and joy in being your children.

We ask this through Christ and the Holy Spirit,
with you, Once God, forever and ever.

Amen.

Commitment to Mission

BLESSED ARE YOU, LORD OUR GOD, WHO HAS GIVEN TO EACH OF US
A PERSONAL DESTINY AND PURPOSE OF LIFE.

We thank You, God of Mysterious Ways,
that You have holy design
for each of us.
We rejoice
that we are, each of us,
special to You,
that our names are written in the palm of Your hand
and our place in history,
our purpose for existing, is known within Your heart,
since endless ages
We are grateful
for that long line of Holy people,
who since ancient times have inspired others
by their faithfulness
to their own special destinies.
They, by their very lives,
shout out to us
no to compromise our destinies,
but to live fully within Your eternal design.
Blessed are You, Inscrutable Lord,
for those events, persons, talents and loves
which have helped us to discover adventure and purpose,
fruitfulness and meaning,
in our sometimes empty
and seemingly insignificant lives.
Blessed are You
for teachers, parents and guides
who call us out
from the cocoon of comfort and contentment
to embark upon that unique path
which You have set forth
for each of Your sons and daughters.
Blessed are You, Lord our God,
who has given to each of us
a personal destiny and purpose in life.
Amen.

Thanks and Praise

God, we thank you and praise you
for the power of your presence in our lives,
for the vitality of your presence here in our midst,
for this opportunity of coming together today
to affirm our identity
and to celebrate our common hopes,
so that by working together in your name,
we may truly heal the sick whom we serve.

We thank you for the quality of achievement
represented here and for the many and
diverse efforts which contribute
to the building of a better world
and a new future of providing for the
wellness and the healthcare needs of those we serve.

Help us to remember and renew our personal and
communal commitment to the mission of mercy
and be guided by prayerful consideration of the needs
of our time, Catherine McAuley's preferential
love for the poor and her special care of women
and children, as we strive to witness to
mercy

- reverencing the dignity of each person
 - creating a spirit of hospitality and
- pursuing integrity of word and deed in our lives.

Bless us God, with your guiding Spirit and vision as
we search together for ways to integrate these
values into our decisions and in our daily ministry service.
Be the hope that sustains us. Amen

Recommitment to Mercy Ministry

In the spirit of Catherine McAuley
who gave herself with tender courage
and compassion to the needs of God's poor,
we recommit ourselves to the mission of Mercy,
asking for Catherine's courage and compassion
to keep our hands and hearts open to persons
who are in need,
to rely on the presence of God in one another
and in all whom we serve,
to be sincere and hospitable in all our interactions,
to balance our work with lightheartedness and joy.

In renewing this commitment,
we choose to make our ministry more life-giving,
and we pray that we might make a difference in our world.

God of Mercy,
may our unity with one another
and all who share this same commitment
be a source of confirmation and inspiration to each of us. Amen

God of Strength

God of heaven and earth,
your strength is coupled with compassion,
your strong arm is clothed in tender love and justice.
When your people cried out to you from slavery,
you did not let their cries go unheard.

You led them forth
and brought them to your promise as a new nation,
a people called to mercy and tender love.
Tonight we remember the poor and the dispossessed.
We remember how often our love and care of them
is weak.

We confess that we shrink from their service
and from nurturing peace upon the earth.
Breathe forth your spirit of fortitude and strength.

In Christ, make us bold witnesses
to stand before the powers of this world,
the forces that devise new forms of slavery.
Give us the strength to be faithful
as Jesus is the faithful witness in our midst.
We ask this through Christ and the Holy Spirit,
with you, Once God, forever and ever.

Amen.

Courage, Risk-taking

God of the Dance

O God of the Dance,
Life-giving Spirit,
Spirit of healing and comfort,
of integrity and truth,
We believe and trust in you.

Warm-winged Spirit, brooding over creation,
Rushing wind within us,
Help us to commit ourselves anew to work
with you to renew our world.

May the God who formed heaven and earth,
whom death cannot contain,
who challenges and consoles us,
bless us with power and courage
to go forth and to proclaim
compassion, mercy and healing
in our daily dance of life.

To this and to the challenges and hopes
that lie within us and before us, we say AMEN.

-Holy Cross Health System

Serenity Prayer

God , grant us serenity
to accept the things we cannot change,
courage to change the things we 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 we would have it;
trusting that you will make all things right
if we surrender to your will;
so that we may be reasonably happy in this life
and supremely happy with you forever in the next.

Amen.

-Adapted from Reinhold Niebuhr

Future

Good and gracious God,
you call us continually into
a future that is unknown and unpredictable.
We trust that you will always be faithful to us.
We know that whatever the future bring,
it will need merciful, compassionate,
peace-making people.

Help us to be men and women who hunger
for truth, goodness and righteousness.
Help us to discover the things
that stand in the way of our transformation.
Send us forth to be courageous
so that all can be transformed
for the sake of your mission.
Amen.

Courage

Lord God,
You have called each of us to ventures
whose ending we cannot see,
by paths as yet untrodden,
through perils unknown.

Give us faith to go out with good courage,
not knowing where we go, but only,
that your hand in leading us,
and your love, supporting us.

Give us courage, patience and vision;
and strengthen us all in our Christian vocation
of witness to the world and of service to others,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

For the Gifts of Inspiration and Strength

O God, on every page of the sacred Scriptures
we find your divine heart overflowing
with unexpected graces and blessings for the world.

You are God, unlimited by our human logic,
unchained by human ways.

You created us in your image.

You fashioned a chosen people
from a band of escaped, wandering slaves.

You brought to birth a savior
from a nation impoverished and small.

In every age, your gift of inspiration
leads artists and scientists and builders
to dream new dreams and imagine fresh visions.

This day, breathe your inspiration into us.
Invade our inert heart with your gentle movements.

In the spirit of Christ among us,
help us to give up our clinging to the past
and become a witness to your voice that proclaims:

“Behold! I make all things new.”

We ask this through Christ and the Holy Spirit,
with you, Once God, forever and ever.

Amen.

Creation

Cosmos

Loving God,
all creation calls you blessed.
Your spirit imprints the whole universe
with life and mystery.
Yes, all creation proclaims your love.
Gather us, God, into this creation
that we are so much a part of
and so much apart from.
We who are often blind to your presence
in the many shades of human skin,
need also to see your loving presence
in the spectrum of the seasons
and the colors of all creatures.
we who are often deaf to your presence
in the many creeds of human hearts,
need also to witness your loving presence
in the faith of the forests
and the creeds of sea and sky.
And we who are often too silent about your presence
in humans needlessly suffering in our world,
need also to cry out
that the compassion and justice
Jesus Christ came to teach us
goes far beyond our human domain.
Loving God, as you lure the whole world into salvation,
guide us with your Spirit
that we might not be only pilgrims on the earth,
but pilgrims with the earth,
journeying home to you

Rose and Thorns

I see His blood upon the rose
And in the stars the glory of His eyes,
His body gleams amid eternal snows,
His tears fall from the skies.

I see His face in every flower;
The thunder and the singing of the birds
Are but His voice - and carved by His power
Rocks are His written words.

All pathways by His feet are worn,
His strong heart stirs the ever-beating sea,
His crown of thorns is twined with every thorn,
His cross is every tree.

Joseph M. Plunkeett

For the Gift of All Creation

Loving Artist of creation,
we rise from sleep to give you praise.

From our hearts and homes
we look upon the array of creation,
and we delight in the beauty of our world,
the magnificence of the whole universe.

In the beginning, your love moved you
to speak the word and bring to birth
the sun and the moon, the stars and planets,
desert and steppe, ocean and river,
birds and beasts, women and men.

How many are the ways in which the richness
of creation
reminds us of the deep and varied mysteries
of your love for us!

As we recall the resurrection of Christ from the dead,
move us to sing your praises all the more.

Give us voices to proclaim your goodness
and to celebrate the gift of life
that you have given us to tend.

We ask this through Christ and the Holy Spirit,
with you, Once God, forever and ever.

Amen.

Blessed are You, Lord our God,
Who Has Filled Creation With Light and Splendor.

Radiant Lord, we rejoice with hearts filled with gratitude that You are not a hidden God for You reveal Yourself daily through the mystery of light. Your majesty and glory shine out from within all of creation, as well as from sun, moon and stars. We walk by their light, and we also feed upon that light as it is transformed daily into our food.

Blessed are You, Illuminator of All Creation,
for the gifts of sunrise, high noon and sunset.
In the splendor of the sun, the sky-wheel of energy and light,
we see Your splendor, O Light of Lights.

Your Son, Jesus, called Himself the light of the world
and invited us to be His luminous brothers and sisters
and Your children of light.

We are grateful for the daily light of insight,
that gift by which we see our way to You.
We are also grateful for shadows and nightfall
which serve as background for this light.
In our lives, we often stand
in the darkness of failings and suffering.
May Your Divine Light penetrate the murky overcast of these times,
and radiate outward from the horizon of our hearts.
May Your Divine Presence be a shining star in the midst of gloom.

Like the plants of the earth, may we lean toward You,
Eternal Source of All Light and Energy.
Help us, this day, to *be* light to all we meet.

Blessed are You, Lord our God,
who has filled creation with light and splendor.

Amen

Blessed are You, Lord Our God,
Who Daily Gifts Us with the Rising Sun.

We sing praises this day, Lord and Creator,
for the day star, our sun, which turns the frozen night of space
into life for all that share this earth.
The light of the sun heats our planet, gives energy to plants and animals
and delights us with yellow waves of light and warmth.

Down through time,
holy men and women have become children of the sun
by warming with love all that was around them,
and thus did they become symbols of Your Light.
We are grateful for these persons of light,
for Moses, Isaiah, Ruth and Rebekah,
for Francis of Assisi (and patron saint),
for Joan of Arc and Teresa of Avila,
as well as for holy Mary, the Mother of our Lord.
For these persons and for all those who, by their lives,
have led us from darkness to the light, we give thanks.

Most of all, we are grateful for Your Son, Jesus,
who continuously calls us to *be* light
to each other and to the world.
He, who challenged the darkness of death upon a cross
and was victorious in the sunrise of His resurrection,
calls us, today, to follow His journey of light.

May the sun dance upon our roof this day;
may we rejoice in the sacrament of sunny splendor
and feel Your divine warmth.

Blessed are You, Lord our God,
who daily gifts us with the rising sun.

Amen

Canticle of Creation

In the beginning, Lord God, You alone existed: eternally one
yet pregnant in the fullness of unity.
Full to overflowing, You, Father of All Life, exploded outward
in a billion bits and pieces.
Your Words became flesh, whirling in shining stars, shimmering suns
and in genesis glimmering galaxies.
You, my God, spoke,
and Your Words became flesh: in sun and moon, earth and seas,
mountains and gentle hills, rolling rivers and silent streams.
You, my God, spoke, and Your Words became flesh:
in winged bird, in deer and elephant,
in grazing cow, racing horse and fish of the deep.
Your Words, so unique and so varied,
filled the earth also with rabbit, squirrel and ant.
And all Your Words were beautiful, and all were good.

From each of these holy Words arose a prayer of praise and adoration
to You, their creator and wondrous womb.
"Praise You," rang out the redwood,
"Blessed be You," chimed in the cedar,
"Holy are You," prayed the prairie grasses.
From all four corners of this earth, rose up a chorus of perpetual adoration.

O Sacred Spirit, O Divine Breath of Life,
unseal my ears that they may ever listen
to Your continuous canticle of creation;
open my heart and my whole self, to sing in harmony with all its many voices.
Teach me to commune with Your first Word made flesh, Your Creation,
that I may be able to unravel the wondrous words
of Your second Word made flesh, Jesus,
through whom, with whom and in whom, I may see myself
as another Word of Yours made flesh, to Your glory and honor.

Amen

Decision-Making

In Time of Conflict

Lord, who transcends reality
in the midst of life's complexity,
keep us centered in you.

When there is crisis,
help us to remain calm.

Where there is too much seriousness,
stir our sense of humor.

Where there is weakness and destruction
remind us of our strengths and gifts.

And when any around us may be negative,
give us the presence of mind to be positive.

You, Lord, are our source and center.

We can accomplish these things
only when we remain grounded in you.

We ask now for your blessing and clarity.

Amen.

Overcoming Obstacles

God of creation,
you who made the rock and the smooth places,
the mountains and the valleys,
help us realize that on our journey
we will encounter many obstacles, barriers, rocks and hard places.

The wind will not always be at our backs
nor will the path be always smooth.
Give us the wisdom to understand
that what is really important is not what happens to us
but how we handle what happens to us.

Grace us, generous God,
with the ability to see obstacles as opportunities for growth
rather than causes for complaint.

Gentle God,
as you guide and direct us through difficulties,
may we see crisis as a catalyst,
providing us with the chance to become stronger and more confident.

Eternal God,
Help us make the most of what we encounter on our
journey to you. Amen

Before an Important Decision

God, source of light, truth and eternal goodness,
transform this present moment
into an hour of vision and information.

Give us the strength to concentrate,
to think objectively,
and to see clearly.

Bless abundantly, God, all who are present
and all the tasks we will accomplish. Amen

For the Sick

Prayer for Healing

O God, in these days of (fill in catastrophe),
Give us patience, understanding, and strength.

Bring healing and peace to us.

Renew our minds and bodies, so that,
restored, we may serve you faithfully.

O God of power and love,
fill our lives in these moments with your healing presence.
Share your power with us so that we may live each new day
by the strength only you can give.

Open our hearts and minds to the way of health,
and set our feet on the path of service to others.

Amen.

For the Poor and Sick

O God, the poor and sick are with us always.
Help us to recognize them in our families,
our communities, and those we serve.
May they know your care and concern
in those who minister to them.
We ask this of you through the Mercy
of Jesus, who died that all may live. Amen

Gratitude for Health

Lord of Life, we are grateful
for the wholesomeness of life
and for the gift of good health.
We are grateful for the marvels of medicine,
for doctors and nurses,
for all those who possess a healing touch
and practice the art of healing.
We are thankful for the way in which
our own bodies work to restore us to the state of health.
As we rejoice in your gift of health,
may we be ever mindful of those
who are steeped in sickness.
We thank you for the presence in our lives
of Your Son, Jesus,
who moved among us as both teacher and healer.
Blessed are You, Creator God,
who heals and restores us to life. Amen

For the Sick

Great Creator,
we thank you for all you have given us
and especially for your presence with us this day.

For those ill in health,
we ask for grace, mercy and wholeness;
for those with troubled minds,
we ask strength and courage
and for those troubled at heart
we ask peace and comfort.

May your abiding love be with each one of us this day. Amen

Prayer for the Sick

Come gentle Spirit,
Be at the bedside of all the world's sick people;
of those who are unconscious and dying;
of those who have begun their agony;
of those who have abandoned all hope of a cure;
of those who weep and cry out in pain;
of those who cannot receive care because
they have no money;
of those who ought to be resting but are
forced by poverty to work;
of those who seek vainly in their beds
for a less painful position;
of those who pass long nights sleepless;
of those who are tormented by the cares
of a family in distress;
of those who must renounce their most
cherished plans for the future;
of those, above all, who do not believe
in a better life;
of those who repel and curse God;
of those who do not know that Christ
suffered like them and for them.

-Rabboni

Guidance

For Guidance

Lord, God,
we are about to begin our meeting
and we do so with the awareness
that without your divine presence
here at the center of our meeting
and also within ourselves,
our work will be empty.

It is never easy, Lord, to balance
all our mutual ideas and visions.

And so we ask for your sacred presence
at this meeting and
for the compass- guidance of the gospel
which holds up for us the clear
idea of self-sacrificing service.

We ask this in the name of our Lord,
Jesus Christ. Amen

Plea for Guidance

We praise you Lord God.
You have created for us a world of beauty
in which the mystery of our being unfolds.
You have blessed us from our very beginning.
You have gifted us with your creative power
and unbounded freedom.

We ask for your guidance for all of us
as we proceed to bring the life and love of our God
to others as we respond to their needs.

May we do so with sincere compassion,
kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.

We ask this in your name. Amen

Beginnings

O God of beginnings,
as your Spirit moved over the face of the deep
on the first day of creation,
move with all of us now.

Our community and our world
seem fresh and full of possibilities.

We are ready to move forward together
at this time of new beginnings.

We tremble on the edge of a "maybe,"
a new idea,
a new plan,
a tentative start.

And we are filled with wonder.
Together, we share our eagerness.

In our uneasiness about this something different
that we would BE or
that we would DO,
we listen for your leading.

Help us to separate the light from the darkness
in the changes that we seek to shape—
which in turn are shaping all of us.

Help us to BELI EVE in beginnings.
Breathe into us the courage to make
something new.

Help us to MAKE new beginnings.
Be with us in our reaching and our stretching.
Help all of us to BE new beginnings. Amen

-adapted from Ted Loder, *Guerillas of Grace*

Meditation

Father, hear the prayer we offer:
Not for ease that prayer shall be,
But for strength that we may ever
Live our lives courageously.

Not for ever in green pastures
Do we ask our way to be;
But the steep and rugged pathway
May we tread rejoicingly.

Not for ever by still waters
Would we idly rest and stay;
But would smite the living fountains
From the rocks along the way

Be our strength in hours of weakness,
In our wanderings be our guide;
Through endeavor, failure, danger,
Father, be thou at our side.

Love Maria Willis (1824-1908)

Leadership

Beatitudes of a Leader

Blessed are the leaders who have not sought the high places, but who have been drafted into service because of his/her ability and willingness to serve.

Blessed are the leaders who know where they are going, why he/she is going, and how to get there.

Blessed are the leaders who knows no discouragement, who presents no alibi.

Blessed are the leaders who know how to lead without being dictatorial; true leaders are humble.

Blessed are the leaders who seek for the best for those he/she serves.

Blessed are the leaders who leads for the good of the most concerned and not for the personal gratification of his/her own ideas.

Blessed are the leaders who develop leaders while leading.

Blessed are the leaders who march with the group, interpreting correctly the signs on the pathway that lead to success.

Blessed are the leaders who have his/her head in the clouds but his/her feet on the ground.

Blessed are the leaders who consider leadership an opportunity for service.

Spiritual Works of Mercy

Comfort the sorrowing

Be someone to lean on in times of sadness.

Counsel the doubtful

Be a good listener, and let others know how good they are.

Instruct the ignorant

Share your advice and experience, gently.

Warn the sinner

Challenge the things you know are wrong and let others know there are better choices.

Forgive all injuries

Don't carry a grudge, and don't go easy on yourself.

Bear wrongs patiently

Give others and yourself the room to make mistakes.

Pray for the living and the dead

When you talk to God, don't be selfish - include the whole human family in your prayer.

A Prayer for Zeal

Implant within my heart, O God,
the fiery zeal of a Jeremiah,
the conviction of a Ruth or Rebecca
and the zest of a Francis of Assisi.

Stir my slumbering soul,
that it might sing a song of passion and devotion,
drunk with dancing joy and desire for you,
my divine and loving friend.

May my heart be as hot as the heart of Moses
for all your children burdened by slavery,
for all who feel oppression's steely heel
or suffer rejection in an alien land.

May I, like your son Jesus,
be consumed with zeal for you, Divine Beloved,
for life, for justice and for peace;
for all that I know in faith.

Fill me with zeal, O God.

A Litany for Leaders

The spiritual leader shapes an achievable, clear and compelling vision which conveys where the organization is going, where the employees are heading, and why they should be proud of the direction. Central to the vision is the organization's mission.

All: Inspire us with the vision, Lord.

An effective mission should be right for the times, right for the organization, and right for the people who are working in it. The genius of a leader in articulating that mission is to make it simple enough to evoke commitment and credible enough to be accepted as realistic and attainable.

All: Inspire us with the mission, Lord.

Mission, values and determination add soul to the organization. Without them, organizations react but do not create; they forecast, but do not imagine; they analyze, but do not question; they act, but do not strive.

All: Inspire us with the spirit, Lord.

Leader: God, bless us now, in all things good and human. For now and what is yet to come, we pray.

All: Amen

-adapted from *Setting Hearts on Fire: A Spirituality for Leaders*

Prayer for Administration, Finance and Secretaries

We who serve in administrative
and financial areas look to you,
the God of Creation
who did from the beginning of time
labor to bring order out of chaos,
for help and direction.

May those employees who serve
in positions of leadership and supervision
be blessed with understanding and patience,
with a passion for service and a vision for the future.
May those whose gifts equip them for
ministry in financial areas
be blessed with insight and wisdom
as well as an awareness of,
and a sensitivity for the people
who are represented by numbers on a page.

May those who minister
by keeping the paper work flowing smoothly
be blessed with patience
and the assurance that their work too
is a vital part of healing the sick. Amen

A Leader's Prayer

Lord, please help me
to accept human beings as they are, not to expect perfection;
to recognize ability and encourage it;
to recognize, respect and value diversity in each other;
to work patiently for improvement
and not expect too much too quickly;
to appreciate and acknowledge what people do right,
not just criticize what they do wrong;
to be slow to anger and hard to discourage;
to demonstrate Mercy values and be a positive role model. Amen

Servant Leadership

Oh God, Great Spirit, Divine Healer, Source of all Life,
may your spirit flow through us as we live out your
call to be of service as those who lead. We desire
to serve with grace, with dignity, but also
with great humility.

Help us to always realize that you may choose anyone or anything
to be your vessel of grace.

We are humbled by your choice of us and strive to be worthy
of this ministry of leadership.

We also realize that pride can get in the way of your divine grace;
so, while we fully appreciate the dignity of our roles, help us to
always be respectful, never arrogant or impressed with our
own power.

With your gracious assistance, may all that we are and all that we do
be a reflection of your human presence in our world.

May our lives be a reflection of service and healing.

May this holy work of leadership call forth from within us greater
and greater personal holiness and wholeness.

May your blessing fill our being. Amen

We are God's Presence

God, we thank you for calling us to the journey of your healing ministry
to be your presence in our world today.

Be with us as we stand together striving to touch the lives of others,
a community in the act of building,
a body in the act of transforming
the reality of healthcare today.

We ask you, God, for the strength to give of ourselves: our time,
our ideas, our vision, our dreams, our hope in your promises.
Help us to be leaders who discern and respond with compassion to the needs
of your people as we move into the future.

Give us the courage to be open to change,
remaining faithful stewards of our resources.

God help us to recognize you in the face of those we serve so that our lives
make visible what is hidden,
make touchable what has been unreachable,
so that we can be a sign of hope.

Then we will know that the healing Jesus
is present in our midst today because we are!

Amen

Trust in God

Oh God, throughout the ages,
we see your overflowing blessings and graces for the world.
You are God, loving us through all our worries and concerns,
our hopes and dreams.

All: We place our hope in you.

You created us in your image.
Age after age, your gift of inspiration invites men and women
to dream new dreams, imagine new possibilities.

All: We place our hope in you.

This day rekindle your inspiration in each of us.
Warm our hearts with your gentle spirit,
as we embrace our call to leadership.

All: We place our hope in you.

In the presence of Christ among us
help us to offer you our worries and concerns
and give witness to the blessings with which
you have graced us.

All: We place our hope in you.

We ask this through the example of Jesus
your Son, through the love of your Spirit
and through the wisdom that is yours,
one God, forever and ever. Amen

All: We place our hope in you.

Help Us

Dear Lord,

Help us as we gather here in your name to be mindful of
our responsibilities.

Help us to bring forth to this table the strengths that you have
so generously given us.

Help us to be kind and gentle with each other when
we disagree.

Guide us and make our spirits soar with your love.

In your name we pray. Amen

-adapted from Beth Balka

Loss and Grief

Death

To everything there is a season,
a time for every purpose under the sun:
a time to be born and a time to die;
a time to plant and a time to pluck up that which is planted.
(Ecclesiastes 3:1-2)

We give thanks for the life of (name),
We pray that God would comfort all friends,
family members, and coworkers.
May the memories that we share,
warm our hearts in the cold night of grief,
until once again our spirits bloom.

(Name of Deceased)
May the angel lead you into paradise,
may the martyrs welcome you at the gates
of the holy city, the new Jerusalem.
May you have eternal peace.
Amen.

Endurance

God of our lives,
there are days when the burdens we carry
chafe our shoulders and weigh us down;
when the road seems dreary and endless,
the skies gray and threatening;
when our lives have no music in them,
our hearts are lonely,
and our souls have lost their courage.

Flood the path with light,
run our eyes to where the skies are full of promise;
run our hearts to brave music;
give us the sense of comradeship
with heroes and saints of every age;
and so quicken our spirits
that we may be able to encourage
the souls of all who journey with us
on the road of life.

-St. Augustine

Meal Prayer

God in Heaven,
We give thanks for the pleasure
of gathering together for this occasion.
We give thanks for this food
prepared by loving hands.
We give thanks for life, the freedom
to enjoy it and all other blessings.
As we partake of this food,
we pray for health and strength to carry on
and to live as you would have us live.

-adapted from Harry Jewell

Blessed are you,
O Lord our God,
who feeds the whole world
with your goodness,--
with grace, with loving kindness,
and with tender mercy.
You give food to all,
for your loving kindness endures forever.
You nourish and sustain all living things
and do good to all
and provide food for all your creatures
whom you have created.
Blessed are You, O Lord,
who gives food to all.

-adapted from an Ancient Jewish Blessing

Blessed are you, Lord God,
who gives us these gifts---
of food and drink,
of laughter and song,
of pleasure in the company of friends and colleagues.
We are grateful for the myriad ways you nourish
our bodies, our minds, and our spirits.
We are grateful for the splendid variety of food—
for fruits and vegetables,
for bread and wine,
for fish and fowl and game.
We are grateful that you show us in this meal
Together, the secret of life:
to become nourishment and life for others. Amen

Autumn Thanks

Gracious God, we place ourselves
in your presence remembering that
you are the divine source and destiny of all creation.

In this season of harvest, we celebrate
your bounty as we delight in the rich
fruits and grains of the earth that are
everywhere around us.

May we be ever mindful that these - - and
all gifts with which you nurture our lives- -
are to be used by us for the building up
of our world in your name.

We ask you to bless this food and our
meal together: to keep us a community
deeply rooted in you, and to sensitize
us to the promptings of your spirit in all we do.
We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen

Mercy Prayers

Mercy and Compassion

O God of tender mercies,
When Jesus lifted up from the earth
You drew every wounded heart to yourself.
Though you have called us in Christ
To be instruments of your justice and peace,
We ourselves need your compassion and loving memory

Mercy Day
September 24

God of Mercy,
we remember the opening of the House of Mercy
and celebrate the joy and courage of Catherine McAuley
and her first co-workers.

In her time, Catherine prayed
"My God, look down with love
and mercy on your afflicted poor
and grant us grace to do all that we can
for their relief and comfort."

May we see the signs of poverty in our own time
and continue the work of Mercy today.
Be our hope and our strength in whatever lies ahead.
Amen.

For the Gifts of Mercy and Compassion

O God of tender mercies,
when Jesus was lifted up from the earth
you drew every wounded heart to yourself.

Though you have called us in Christ
to be instruments of your justice and peace,
we ourselves need your compassion and loving mercy.

Fears and doubts invade our mind and heart.
Our lack of love for ourselves keeps us afraid.
Yet each day you send us the gift of healing
that we need so much.

On this day of our salvation,
we give you the gift of our sincere praise.
You are mercy and compassion for our hearts.
And these gifts you give to us in earthly loves,
in the success of our labors,
and in the quiet and dazzling beauty of creation.

Help us to sing your praise for what your love does in our midst.

We ask this through Christ and the Holy Spirit,
with you, One God, forever and ever.

Amen.

Mercy is Our Name

"Mercy is committed to the possibility
of people working together
in mutual respect
mutual openness
and mutual service
for the greater good of all.

"Mercy is singular:
special:
It says who we are,
sums us up
asks only that we live up to it.

"Mercy" is plural,
social:
it is loving kindness concern
a shared respect for God,
things
and each other.

But "Mercy" is also a name
a word like a seed,
rendering life eternal worth
what it demands of us:
and we want to be no less than our name.

Carol Wheeler, RSM

Creator God,
We celebrate the many gifts
that you have given us.
May you bless us
keep us in your care,
and may we always remember
that your faithfulness endures from age to age.
God, look down with love and mercy
on the poor and sick in our area
and grant us grace to do all that we can
for their relief and comfort.
May we see the signs of poverty in our own time
and continue the work of Mercy today.
Be our hope and our strength in all that lies ahead. Amen

The Lowly

Companion to the poor
and God of the lowly,
you extend compassion
to the powerless and to the forgotten.
Mercy is your name.

Help us minister with your concern and justice.
Extend your compassion to the poor people of our land.

Strengthen the unemployed people
and those hungering for respect and dignity.

Give courage
to victims of discrimination by race, creed, or sex,
and to those who labor long hours for less pay.

Be a companion to our homeless persons
and to those who live in the shadows of our culture.

Be near the sick among us
who experience the daily loss of health and hope.

Especially be with those
who suffer from the isolation of AIDS,
who experience the fear, ignorance, and distance
of family and friends.

Creation

My God, when your love spilled over
into creation
you thought of me.

I am

from love, of love, for love,

Let my heart, O God, always

recognize,

cherish,

and enjoy your goodness in all of creation.

Direct all that I am toward your praise.

Teach me reverence for every person, all things.

Energize me in your service.

Living God,

may nothing ever distract me from your

love.....

neither health nor sickness

wealth nor poverty

honor nor dishonor

long life nor short life.

May I never seek nor choose to be other
than you intend or wish. Amen.

Ministry

N

Beatitudes for Our Time

Blessed are you,
when you remain available,
sharing in simplicity what you possess.

Blessed are you,
when you weep over the absence
of happiness around you
and throughout the world.

Blessed are you,
when you opt for gentleness and dialogue
even when this seems long and difficult.

Blessed are you,
when you creatively devise new ways
of donating your time,
your tenderness and gems of hope.

Blessed are you,
when you listen with your heart to detect
what is gift in others.

Blessed are you,
when you strive to take the first step,
the necessary one to attain peace
with brothers and sisters throughout the world.

Blessed are you,
when you keep in your heart wonderment,
openness and a free questioning of life.

-adapted from Louise-Helene Renou

Witness

Merciful God, you invite us to witness
to your mercy in our world.
Enliven our sensitivity to those persons and places
that cry out for your compassion.
Encourage us to walk boldly on the path of mercy
knowing that you journey with us
as a companion and guide.
We make this prayer in confidence
for we know that your love enfolds us. Amen

Community

O God of infinite love and patience
You call us not to work in isolation
but in community.

Help us to support one another
in all our endeavors.

Help all of us
to build on the common concerns we share and
to work together as partners in healing.

Bless us and all those who serve in our health care ministry.

Compassion

God of love,
We seek a heart that is attuned to listen
to the sounds of human life-
the murmurings of pain and struggle,
the babble of confusion and doubt,
the whisperings of yearning,
the ecstatic outburst of joy and delight!

We seek a heart with an interior vision
that can penetrate closed walls-
walls that shut out closeness,
walls that prohibit friendship,
walls that choke out life.

We seek a heart that can open new avenues to life
by a recognition of goodness,
a freeing of humanness,
and an appreciation of God's wonders.

We seek a heart that is other-centered,
motivated by love of God and others,
freely giving till it hurts,
joyfully surrendering selfish whims,
peacefully touching life with beauty,
gently walking in God's ways.

-adapted from *Sensitivity of Heart* Stells Magers OSF

In the Spirit of Catherine McAuley

Loving God,
We know that you desire healing and wholeness
for all of creation.
In the long tradition of healthcare sponsored by
the Sisters of Mercy
we recognize your compassion and care.

In the midst of today's challenges
grace us to believe with Catherine
that you can bend and change, form and reform
any of your creatures
to fit them for the purpose of your design.
Give us the spirit of Catherine McAuley
to continually offer ourselves
as useful instruments in your hands
for the sake of the healing ministry.
Amen.

A Litany of Being God's Instrument of Goodness

(Repeat response after each . . .)

Response: God who sings through us, we thank you.

For the talents and the abundance of gifts that are ours...

For the faith that stirs and grows in our hearts...

For the many people who have been your instruments of goodness in our
lives...

For the moments when we have known the song of your presence in a special
way...

For the times when your goodness has made music through us...

Response: God of goodness, help us to trust in you.

When fear rises up in us and we doubt in our ability to be your instrument...

When the busyness and schedules of our lives press upon us and create
questions about your song within us...

When we doubt your presence in the difficult aspects of our days...

When we lose sight of the truth.

When emptiness, loneliness, and other struggles keep us from hearing your
melody of love...

Response: God of love, sing your song through us.

As we grow in believing in our goodness...

As we allow more and more of who we are to be influenced by your
presence...

As the song of your love grows in us and the call to be your instrument
becomes clearer to us...

As we strive to share our gifts and goodness with others...

As we go forth from here with the desire to be your instruments of love...

"Glory be to God whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we
can ask or imagine." (Eph 3:21) Amen

CREATOR GOD,
Come, ignite within us
the spark of divine life.
Out of the embers of treasures of the past lovingly
sacrificed, recreate us into a people
after your own heart.

WORD OF GOD,
Come, illumine our minds,
quicken our hearts.
Empower us to witness more faithfully
your saving presence in our world.

SPIRIT OF GOD,
Come, energize us.
Fan into flame the fire of your love.
Heal our woundedness.
Transform us and all whose lives we touch
into your new creation.
Until that day, in joy-filled hope,
we pray

All glory, praise , and thanks to you,
CREATOR GOD
WORD OF LIFE
SPIRIT OF LOVE.

-Sister M. Gertrude Anne, CSC

Be With Us, God

As the light of your love touches all things,
The trees, the hills, the earth and
each one of us your people, let us see your light shining in one another.

As we work together may we affirm
the many gifts within our organization and be generous in sharing our own.

As we begin anew, gift us with your Holy Spirit
that we may focus on concerns and issues
most relevant to our health care ministry.

As we experience the harmony of the earth, all creatures great and small,
fill us with your peace, enable us to do justice, to love tenderly and
to walk humbly before you. Amen

The Fruits of the Spirit

Lord, may we bear the fruits of your Spirit.

Give us love,

that boundless, healing energy which transforms the world.

Give us joy,

because no darkness or evil can overcome you.

Give us peace,

to quiet our hearts, and to free us from bitterness.

Give us patience,

to go on following you even when it is hard.

Give us kindness,

to reach out to our neighbor and to the person who needs to be loved.

Give us goodness,

to give with a generous heart and without ulterior motive.

Give us faithfulness,

to stay at your side, come what may.

Give us gentleness,

to respect the freedom and integrity of others.

Give us self-control,

to see our weaknesses and overcome them in your strength.

Lord may we bear the fruits of your Spirit. Amen

You Call Us by Name

O God, our Creator and Sustainer,
you breathe life into clay
and fashion the plants and
trees and flowers,
and all living things,
with your loving hands.

You are the source of the beauty that
surrounds us in earth and sky.

You are the joy in the rising sun.

You have called us by name out of nothing
and dignified us as your children,
with the vocation to serve our brothers and sisters
generously as we live and work together in our world.

Give us humble and open hearts so
that we know our place in the world.

Help us to listen to your voice
and watch for your presence in people we serve,
so that we might love you,
not just with our words,
but with actions of mercy and justice.

Give us the courage to do your will,
and the strength to respond wholeheartedly
no matter what you ask.

Lord of life, we pray especially for
those you call to the service of Mercy.

Accept the work of their hands so freely given,
and in return, bless them and us
with your consoling presence, now and forever. Amen

O Ingenious God,
we rejoice in your creation
and pray that your spirit touch us so deeply
that we will find a sense of self
which makes us glad to be who we are
and yet restless
at being anything less
than we can become.

Make us simple enough
not to be confuse by disappointments,
clear enough
not to mistake busyness for freedom,
honest enough
not to expect truth to be painless,
brave enough
not to sing all our songs in private,
compassionate enough
to be in trouble,
humble enough
to admit trouble and to seek help,
joyful enough
to celebrate all of it,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen

National Holidays

New Year's Blessing Prayer For Clocks and Calendars

Watches and calendars may be placed on the table.

Lord, You who live outside of time,
and reside in the imperishable moment,
we ask Your blessing this New Year's Day (Eve)
upon Your gift to us of time.

Bless our clocks and watches, You who kindly direct us
to observe the passing of minutes and hours.
May they make us aware of the miracle
of each second of life we experience.
May these our ticking servants help us not to miss
that which is important, while You keep us from machine-like routine.
May we ever be free from being clock watchers
and instead become time lovers.

Bless our calendars,
these ordered lists of days, weeks and months,
of holidays, holydays, fasts and feasts —
all of our special days of remembering.
May these servants, our calendars,
once reserved for the royal few, for magi and pyramid priests,
now grace our homes and our lives.
May they remind us of birthdays and other gift-days,
as they teach us the secret that all life
is meant for celebration and contemplation.

Bless, Lord, this new year,
each of its 365 (366) days and nights.
Bless us with new moons and full moons.
Bless us with happy seasons and a long life.
Grant to us, Lord, the new year's gift of a year of love.

Amen

Blessing Prayer for the Feast
Of St. Patrick (March 17) *

Lord of All Nations and All Peoples,
we rejoice today in a special servant of Yours,
St. Patrick.

Irish or not, Catholic or not, we all dance a gleeful jig
on this his joyous feast day.

Lord of bishops, bakers and bartenders,
we thank You for sprinkling saints among us
like holy Patrick, Bishop of Ireland.

His green feast day gives us all a chance
to wear the green of spring and life.

Four days from now our old friend winter will loose his lease on life.
Packing up his ice and snow, his chilly winds and frosty breath,
he'll soon be gone.

The green of this day
foretells of rich vegetation soon to grace our countryside;
proclaims the fresh and new to the tired and weary;
announces to one and all that spring is on her way!

Glory for spring and saintly Patrick
whose feast of songs and jokes, of dancing feet and faerie folks,
will be for us the eve of springtime.

As Patrick sent snakes slithering out of Ireland by Your blessed touch,
may we, each, through his pastoral intercession,
be freed of any evil in our lives.

Lord of All Seasons,
winter is on his deathbed,
but song and mirth are greening all around us.
Blessed be St. Patrick, bishop and man of prayer.
Blessed be all saints, and the wee folk as well.
Amen.

*This blessing could be used at the main meal of the day on March 17.

Peace

All Shall Be Well

Our good Lord answered
to all the questions and doubts
which I could raise, saying:
I may make all things well,
and I can make all things well,
and I shall make all things well,
and I will make all things well;
and you will see yourself
that every kind of thing will be well.

And in these....words
God wishes us to be enclosed
in rest and in peace.
Let us leave in silence,
savoring within our hearts
the sacred touch of our time together.

Julian of Norwich

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 heart, our world, our universe.

Go in peace: the wisdom of the Wonderful Counsellor guide you, the strength of the
Mighty God defend you, the love of the Everlasting Father enfold you,
the peace of the Prince of Peace be upon you. And the blessing of God
Almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be upon you all this night and for
evermore.

Prayer for 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 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;
in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and in dying that we are born to eternal life.

- Saint Francis of Assisi

A Prayer for Social Justice and Peace

All: Creator of all, make us men and women of your peace
and your justice.

Where there is oppression, let us bring equality.
Where there is abuse, dignity.
Where there is fragmentation, unity.
Where there is exploitation, justice.

All: Creator of all, make us men and women of your peace
and your justice.

Where there is conflict, resolution.
Where there is discrimination, mutuality.
Where there is violence, vision.
Where there is powerlessness, power.

All: Creator of all, make us men and women of your peace
and your justice.

O strengthening Spirit,
Grant that we may not so much seek,
To compete as to collaborate,
To exclude as to include,
To dominate as to complement.
For it is in healing that we are healed.
It is in reconciling, that we are reconciled,
It is in our common bond, that we become whole.

All: Creator of all, make us men and women of your peace
and your justice.

-adapted from S. Ingrid Peterson

May Peace Prevail on Earth

God is our refuge and strength;
An ever-present help in trouble.
Psalm 46:1

Be generous in prosperity,
and thankful in adversity.
Be fair in judgment,
and guarded in your speech.
Be a lamp unto those who walk in darkness,
and a home to the stranger.
Be eyes to the blind,
and a guiding light unto the feet of the erring.
Be a breath of life to the body of humankind,
a dew to the soil of the human heart,
and a fruit upon the tree of humility.

Prayer for Peace

O God, you are the source
of life and peace.

Praised be your name forever.

We know it is you who turn
our minds to thoughts of peace.

Hear our prayer in this time of war.

Your power changes hearts.

Muslims, Christians, Jews remember,
and profoundly affirm,

that they are followers of the one God,
children of Abraham, brothers and sisters;

enemies begin to speak to one another;

those who were estranged

join hands in friendship;

nations seek the way of peace together.

Strengthen our resolve to give witness
to these truths by the way we live.

Give to us:

Understanding that puts an end to strife;

Mercy that quenches hatred, and

Forgiveness that overcomes vengeance.

Empower all people to live in your law of love. Amen.

O God, you are the inspiration of our every action
and the spring from which we draw wisdom
and strength.

Without you we can do nothing.

Without your aid we can never build cities
of justice and peace.

Our intentions are prone to shifting,
and sometimes we lack vision.

To point out to us the path of true righteousness,
you sent Jesus to show your mercy.

This day we give you heartfelt thanks
for even the small ways that your peace breaks out.
Though our laws and efforts do not yet match your will,
we are grateful for the Spirit of your wisdom
who has helped us to measure our life by your loving.

Fill us with gratitude

for the gifts of ingenuity and wisdom
that inspire people to make progress
toward justice and peace.

Accept our thanksgiving and build us up
each day and night

into the people that you call your own.

We ask this through Christ and the Holy Spirit,
with you, Once God, forever and ever.

Amen.

Praise of God

Praise for the Gift of Time

You who are Lord and Creator of Space and Time
yet who lives beyond them,
we praise you and honor you
for the gift of minutes, hours, days, and years.
Each second of life that you give
is precious and profound.

We pause now so as not to take these gifts for granted-
so that we may remember in a holy way
that all time is holy,
a gift which calls forth
songs of gratitude from our hearts.
We pause to gratefully remember
those holy persons of ages past
who call us to measure time in a godly way.

We call to mind:

Noah, counting forty rainy days and nights,
Job, waiting with longing in prayerful patience,
And Mary of Nazareth, numbering her nine months.
For those persons today who call us
to take time for work and for play
to make time for love and praise,
to create time for rest
and the leisure necessary for creation,
we lift up our hearts in thanks.

-Ed Hayes

Prayers of Catherine McAuley

NOVENA FOR THE FEAST OF OUR LADY OF MERCY

God of Mercy, lover of those who are poor, pour out your Spirit upon all creation. You sent Jesus to us that we might know the depths of your love and mercy for us. May we who have received mercy be mercy for others. Animated by Catherine McAuley's passion to serve your suffering people, we have committed ourselves to follow her example. For the sake of your reign, we have embraced the Mercy way of life.

As we prepare to celebrate the feast of Mary, the Mother of Mercy, we ask that you continue to give us hands to heal and soothe, and ears to hear the longing and anguish of those who cry out for your justice. Let our hearts be filled with compassion for the stranger and the outcast. May we be sisters and brothers to one another and to all your sons and daughters. May what we profess with our lips be proclaimed in our lives. We ask this in the name of Jesus and through the intercession of Mary, our Mother of Mercy. Amen.

Prayer for Guidance

Come, O life-giving Spirit, transform us. Stir up in us the flame of love which is your gift. Give us wisdom to see as you see. Give us understanding to hear as you hear. Give us courage and strength to walk the way of justice and integrity. Kindle in us wonder and awe, that we may have grateful spirits. You who dwell within us, praying unceasingly, fill us with love and devotion. Holy Wisdom, guide us in the choices we must make. Give us discerning hearts that we may choose what is good, in accord with your desire. Loving God of mercy, finish in us the work you have begun. Amen.

Prayer of Catherine McAuley

My God, I am yours for time and eternity.

Teach me to cast myself entirely
into the arms of your loving providence
with the most lively
, unlimited confidence in your compassionate,
tender pity.

Grant me, O most merciful Redeemer,
that whatever you ordain or permit
may be acceptable to me.

Take from my heart all painful anxiety;
suffer nothing to sadden me but sin;
nothing to delight me
but the hope of coming to the possession of you,
my God and my all,
in your everlasting kingdom.

Amen

Confidence in God

Nothing can happen to you which God does not appoint.
You desire nothing but the accomplishment of God's will.

Everything, however trivial, comes from that source.

You must be cheerful, animating all around you.

Our sanctification consists in the exact and
cheerful performance of duties.

Have real faith in the divine promise; ask and you shall receive.

God will never let you want for means to do God's work.

Our confidence in God must be unshaken, but we must let ourselves
be guided by God and not resist the means God takes....

Catherine Mc Auley

Prayer for Union and Charity

Grant us peace and harmony, O God, and assist us always to preserve union and charity in the midst of our diversity, differences and difficulties. May the sun never set on our anger; rather, may a spirit of reconciliation dwell among us. Through our experience of your forgiving love may we have the grace both to forgive those who have hurt us and to seek pardon from those whom we have offended. Be with us as we come and go, so that our hearts may always be centered in you. We ask this through Jesus, the gracious sign of your love and forgiveness. Amen.

Seasonal Prayer

A New Year Prayer

God of this new year, we are walking into mystery.
We face the future,
not knowing what the days and months will bring to us
or how we will respond.
Be with us as we journey.
May we welcome all who come our way.
Deepen our faith to see all of life through your eyes.
Fill us with hope and an abiding trust
that you dwell in us amidst all our joys and sorrows.
Thank you for the treasure of our faith life.
Thank you for the gift of being able to rise each day
with the assurance of your presence
through the day with us.
God of this new year, we praise you. Amen.

A New Year's Blessing

May our inner vision be transformed so that we can see more clearly our own journey with all humankind as a journey of peace, hope and bondedness (Nm24:15-17; Jn 20:20).

May our God be someone we can lean on in our weak or painful moments. May we know God as our rock, our shelter, our strength, our wing of comfort and support (Ps 94:18).

May we be aware of all the places our feet carry us in the new year. May we know " How beautiful are the feet of the messenger of good news" (Rom (10:15).

May we not be afraid of the questions that press upon our minds and hearts. May we welcome the questions and wait patiently for the day when they will have their answers (Mt 11:3).

May we be the ones with welcome in our smiles and hello etched upon our hands, the hands we extend to everyone who blesses us with presence (Lk 7:36-50).

May ours be the gift of reverence for all created things. May we face bravely and enthusiastically the responsibility to preserve and care for the beauty of the earth (Sir 42:15 - 43:33).

May the wellsprings of compassion flow deep within us until we can taste the tears of our brothers and sisters (2 Cor 1:3-7).

May we awake each morning with thank you on our lips and in our heart, recognizing that all is gift, that all is blessing (Ps 138:1).

- adapted from *May I Have This Dance* by Joyce Rupp
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Summer

Thank you, Lord,
for this season
of sun and slow motion,
of games and porch sitting,
of picnics and light green fireflies
on heavy purple evenings;
and praises for slight breezes.
It's good, God,
as the first long days of your creation.

Let this season be for us
a time of gathering together the pieces
into which our busyness has broken us.

O God, enable us now
to grow wise through reflection,
peaceful through the song of the cricket,
recreated through the laughter of play.

Most of all, Lord,
let us live easily and grace-fully for a spell,
so that we may see other's souls deeply,
share in a silence unhurried,
listen to the sound of sunlight and shadows,
explore barefoot the land of forgotten dreams
and shy hopes, and find the right words to
to tell another who we are.

Autumn

God of love you enter into our autumn seasons,
into our deepest places of inner dwelling,
into the heart of our transformation.

You give us glimpses of the truth.

May we allow our experience of autumn
to speak to us of necessary change and growth.

May we accept the invitation to reflect upon our own death.

Grant us an openness to the continuous process
of letting go and moving on
that is part of the human condition.

We are grateful that you are
our faithful companion on this journey. Amen

Autumn

God of the seasons, there is a time for everything. There is a time for dying and a time for rising. We need courage to enter into the transformation process.

God of autumn, the trees are saying good-bye to their green, letting go of what has been. We, too, have our moments of surrender, with all their insecurity and risk. Help us to let go when we need to do so.

God of fallen leaves lying in colored patterns on the ground, our lives have their own patterns. As we see the patterns of our own growth, may we learn from them.

God of misty days and harvest moon nights, there is always the dimension of mystery and wonder in our lives. We need to recognize your power-filled presence. May we gain strength from this.

God of harvest wagons and fields of ripened grain, many gifts of growth lie within the season of our surrender. We must wait for harvest in faith and hope. Grant us patience when we do not see the blessings.

God of flowers touched with frost and windows wearing white designs, may your love keep our hearts from growing cold in the empty season.

God of life, you believe in us, you enrich us, you entrust us with the freedom to choose life. For all this, we are grateful. Amen

A Winter Prayer

We greet You, God of the Seasons, as we begin our meeting on this wintry day. The weather weaves a chilly spell around us as we seek to keep warm and dry. May this experience awaken us to the needs of others, to all the needs that we encounter this day.

While our bodies respond to the winter wind with a shiver, may our hearts respond to others with a warm wave of compassion. May we not fear the challenges of this day but rather see them as opportunities to live out our beliefs in justice, in service, and in mission. We lift up to you all who begin this day frozen, without hope, or empty of purpose and meaning.

The winter earth leans away from the sun and we miss its light and warmth. Sometimes we even feel the cold of winter on our words and actions. Let us be mindful of those who suffer because of the winter weather, those who suffer the winter of war, those who know the cold winds of oppression and violence. We pray that all who suffer this day experience your love through the concern of their brothers and sisters.

Amen.

A Preface For Winter

We give you thanks, O Lord, for times and seasons
and now for winter nights
when stars shine coldly bright
and dust is turned to diamond underfoot.

For winter days
when trees are stronger than the icy death
and hold in blackened limbs
the promise of resurrection.

For opposites be praised: for heat and cold,
for stillness and the now
that sculptures every house and tree, and falls
like some great absolution
to heal the wounded earth.

We give you thanks for him
whose birth we celebrate in winter
so all may know, may wildly know,
that love is stronger than the coldest flesh
and mercy blankets all the land
more surely than the snow.

We give you thanks for him
who makes more than children joyful
and does not cheat our laughter in the end.

Joyous Lord,
beyond imagining, but beyond desire,
we give you glory and our song of praise.

-Joseph Thomas Nelson

A Prayer in Spring

O God, who are the sower of all seeds,
accept our praise and thankfulness
for the seeds you have sown in our hearts this day.
May they bear fruit in the gardens of our lives.
We praise you for the Spirit of life
we experience in the green of Spring
and in the green of our own heart.
We thank you for always seeing our inner beauty,
for calling us and encouraging us to grow.
May your Spirit remain strong in our hearts
as we go forth from this place today.
Lead us to others who await your good news
of comfort, healing and peace,
so the seed within them can also awake, grow and bear good fruit.
Amen! Alleluia!

-Joyce Rupp

Spring

O Lord,

May we today be touched by grace,
fascinated and moved by this your creation,
energized by the power of new growth
at work in you world.

May we move beyond viewing this life
only through a frame,
but touch it and be touched by it,
know it and be known by it,
love it and be loved by it.

May our bodies, our minds, our spirits,
learn a new rhythm paced by the rhythmic pulse
of the whole created order.

May spring come to us, be in us, and recreate life in us.

-Chinook Psalter

Thanksgiving, Gratitude

God of Challenge

God of challenge, God of our hope,
God who empowers us and calls us forth:
we stand in gratitude for all that you have fulfilled;
we stand in expectation of your dreams yet to bear fruit;
and we stand in promise to bear with love and with justice
those gifts and those challenges you have entrusted to us. Amen

God of Mysterious Ways

We thank you, God of Mysterious Ways,
that you have a holy design for each of us.

We rejoice that we are special to you,
that our names are written in the palm of your hand
and our place in history, our purpose for existing,
is known within your heart, since endless ages.

We are grateful for that long line of holy people,
who since ancient times have inspired others
by their faithfulness to their own special destinies.

They, by their very lives, shout out to us
not to compromise our destinies,
but to live fully within your eternal design.

Blessed are you, inscrutable Lord,
for those events, persons, talents and loves
which have helped us to discover adventure and purpose,
fruitfulness and meaning, in our sometimes empty
and seemingly insignificant lives.

-adapted from Ed Hayes

For All Good Things

We give thanks to our God for all the earth
and all creation
that we are wonderfully made
and held dear in the heart of our God.

We give thanks for our friends
and for our families; for those we love,
those who love us and for those without love,
because we can love them.

We give thanks for the food we eat
and for the ability to feed those without food.

We give thanks for our life:
that we have it;
that it goes beyond our death.

We give thanks for our freedoms
and the freedom to choose our own attitude
no matter what our circumstances.

We are thankful for our health
and pray for those without health
that they might be strong
in mind and soul if not in body, and we pray
that they might share their strength of spirit with us
as we share our strength of body with them.

We give thanks for the ability to serve
and to reap the benefits of our service.
For all good things, we give you thanks, O God.

Litany of Praise and Gratitude

(I invite everyone to pray: Lord hear our prayer)

We praise and thank you, Lord, for those who receive energy from being with others, who can think on their feet, who can be at ease in a group, and who like action.

For these persons, we pray...LORD HEAR OUR PRAYER.

We praise and thank you, Lord, for those who find energy from their inner world, who teach us the value of space and quiet, who gift us with concentration and solitude.

For these persons, we pray...LORD HEAR OUR PRAYER.

We praise and thank you, Lord, for those who know you through all their senses, for their gifts of realism and practicality, for their patience with details and routine.

For these persons, we pray...LORD HEAR OUR PRAYER.

We praise and thank you, Lord, for those who can make decisions, who help us get tasks done, whose structure and schedules bring us some completion.

For these persons, we pray...LORD HEAR OUR PRAYER.

We praise and thank you, Lord, for those who help us see alternatives, who are open to new possibilities, who gift us with open-endedness.

For these persons, we pray...LORD HEAR OUR PRAYER.

We praise and thank You, Lord, for the variety of persons whose lives have touched ours.

For all of these persons, we pray...LORD HEAR OUR PRAYER.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Let us give thanks for this moment:

for the constancy of your love, O God,
for Your mercy that surrounds us,
for those free gifts which you give so often.

Let us give thanks:

for pleasures which comfort,
for pains which force our growth,
for the capacity to learn and to praise,
for your image, O God, within us.

Let us give thanks for one another:

for being together,
for celebrating healing and life together,
for differences which complement and complete,
for gifts which enrich and disagreements which challenge,
for our oneness in Christ.

Let us give thanks:

for dreams and freedom,
for forgiveness we have experienced because of Jesus Christ,
for the Spirit's energizing presence in our lives.

Let us give thanks for our call and commitment:

for the gift to hear your Word addressed to us,
for the gift of commitment to follow what is proclaimed,
for the call to free people who are poor and oppressed,
for the grace to learn to trust you more,
for oneness in our brokenness,
for your steadfast love that makes us whole and holy.

We give thanks to You, O God. Amen

New Day

God and Creator of us all, a new day has come to our door, fresh and full of expectation. With gratitude and a sense of wonder, we greet this day and you. The blessing of sleep has refreshed us and granted us renewed strength.

We rise to meet the challenges of this day. We rise to greet the unexpected hidden in the hours of this new day. The light of this day touches all things, all of the created world. All around us, the world is waking and preparing to begin the work of this day. The sun fills the east with light and with it a sense of hope and opportunity. Let us prepare to make of this day, all that we can.

(Pause to reflect on what this day may mean for you....)

We ask for a renewed spirit.

We ask for the energy to go about our work, whatever that may be, wherever that may take us. In harmony with your creation and with one another, we begin. We thank you for another opportunity for growth and fulfillment in the hours given us.

Amen.

A New Day

Dear God,

Thank you for this new day,
its beauty and its light.

Thank you for our chance to begin again.
Free us from the limitations of yesterday.

Today may we be reborn.

May we become more fully a
reflection of your radiance.

Give us strength and compassion,
courage and wisdom.

Show us the light in ourselves and others.

May we recognize the good
that is available everywhere.

May we be, this day, instruments
of love and healing.

Lead us into gentle pastures.

Give us deep peace that
we might serve you most deeply. Amen

-adapted from *Illuminata: A Return to Prayer*, Marianne Williamson

Trust

U

My Beloved One,
how easily do I allow fear
to be the soil of my life.
Ten thousand fears cluster at my door:
fears of death and of life,
fears of thieves and evil,
fears of sickness and old age,
fears of unemployment and war,
fears of being shamed and injured.

How easily do politicians and preachers,
merchants, militants and advertisers
feed off my countless hidden fears,
promising protection and salvation.
Yet in you and you alone
do I find sufficient strength
to live with a watchful eye,
and liberate me from all fear.

O Blessed One, you are my insurance and my pledge,
you are my defense and security, my ground,
in your love is my sole safety;
of whom shall I be afraid?

Trust in Divine Providence

The work we do is God's work.
God will always provide.
Let us commend all to divine mercy
so that God may assist us in all things.

All: The work we do is God's work.

Do not fear. The work we do is God's.
In the face of tribulation, anxieties, and
misfortunes place all in the hands of the Lord
and you will see miracles.

All: The work we do is God's work.

Be courageous and place great trust
in the providence of God.
Jesus will never abandon you.
Place yourself in God's hands and
go forward with fortitude and generosity.

All: The work we do is God's work.

Do not fret. God will always provide
if we trust. Ask God to give you
the faith and courage that you need.

All: The work we do is God's work.

-adapted from Maria De Mattias

Reliance on God

Loving God, we feel privileged to meet together today
as leaders within this organization.

Direct our thoughts so that
we are enriched by divine ideas
and help us to use those ideas
to enhance the lives of those around us.

All: Guide us by your loving Spirit.

Everyone here has complex job responsibilities.
Sometimes they weigh heavy and we wonder how
we are going to accomplish more.

Sometimes we need to be reminded
that the best way to plan ahead for any project
is to turn to you in prayer.

We can trust that the your guidance
is the firm foundation on which we can base our decisions.

All: Guide us by your loving Spirit.

When we are open to you, we meet any challenge
with faith, which allows us to clear our thoughts
and focus on the task at hand.

All: Guide us by your loving Spirit.

When we are faced with difficult situations
and tasks that seem overwhelming,
help us rely on you who are the power
that sparks our imaginations and recharges our wills.
Bless us that we may be a blessing to you.

All: Guide us by your loving Spirit.

-adapted from Louanne Kennedy

Psalm 23

O God, you are my pace setter: I shall not rush.
You make me stop and rest for quiet intervals.
You provide me with images of stillness,
which restore my serenity.

All: I will not fret: for you are here.

You lead me in the ways of efficiency
through calmness of mind,
And your guidance is peace.

All: I will not fret: for you are here.

Even though I have a great many things to accomplish each day;
I will not fret: for you are here.
Your timelessness, your all-importance,
Will keep me in balance.

All: I will not fret: for you are here.

You prepare refreshment and renewal
in the midst of my activity
by anointing my mind with your oils of tranquility.
My cup of joyous energy overflows.

All: I will not fret: for you are here.

Surely harmony and effectiveness
shall be the fruits of my hours!
For I shall walk in the pace of my Lord,
and dwell in your house forever.

All: I will not fret: for you are here.

-version by Toki Miyashino, translated from Japanese

Confidence in God

Dear God our Creator,
We gather this day with challenges and crises to face;
with opportunities to care for our families,
our community and one another.

Help us to remember:

We do not ask to have our life's load lightened,
but for courage to endure.

We do not ask for fulfillment in all our life,
but for patience to accept frustration.

We do not ask for perfection in all we do,
but for wisdom not to repeat mistakes.

Finally, we do not ask for more, before saying
"thank you" for what we have already received.

Thank you for sustaining us and supporting us
through all the paths of our lives. Amen

Be With Us, Lord

Loving God,
history and faith remind us
that you are a God who calls people to wholeness.
We believe you desire what is good for us
and what will give us life. You call us to our own wholeness
and to the development of the wholeness of others.

In all times and all places
you have called people to cure the sick
to heal the broken
to enhance and celebrate the health and goodness of people.

Today, in this time unlike any other,
you call us to do what you will for us.

Let us hear the call.

Let us respond with courage and steadfastness.
Show us how, in the daily business that surrounds us,
you are present, you are healing, you are making whole.

Be with us during this meeting.

Be with us at its completion.

Be with us always.

You have promised your presence.

Be true to your promise and so enable us to be true to ours.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Eternal Spirit, Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,
Source of all that is and that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all,
loving God, in whom is heaven:

The hallowing of your name echo through the universe!
May the way of your justice be followed by all peoples of the world!
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom
sustain our hope and come on earth.

With the bread we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
In time of temptation and test, strengthen us.
From trials too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.
For you reign in the glory of the power that is love now and forever.
Amen

Unity

Help Us

Lord,
Help us to walk in unity.
Help us to overcome selfishness,
anger and violence in our hearts,
our homes, our church, our world.

Help us to knock down, pull down,
shout down the walls of racism,
sexism, classism, materialism, and
militarism that divide and separate us.

Help us to live as your united people,
proclaiming one voice,
one faith, one hope,
one love, one joy.

from *Songs of My People* Sister Thea Bowman

That All May Be One

God of compassion,
we place our trust in you.
We pray that all may be one.

Give bread to the poor
and ease the burden of those in need.

All: That all may be one.

Help us to open our hearts to
every race and every need.

All: That all may be one.

May we recognize the spirit
that binds all hearts together.

All: That all may be one.

Enable us to work for justice and peace.

All: That all may be one.

And may the God of love,
find us rich in mercy and compassion. Amen

All: That all may be one.

O God, on that night before Jesus suffered for us,
Christ gathered those first disciples at a table of unity.
There Jesus took up the customary bread of friendship.

Bread was blessed, broken, and shared
by all those present.

And in that sharing they heard new words,
new possibilities:

“Take and eat. This is my body to be given up for you.”

Likewise at the end of the meal,

Jesus took the customary cup of blessing.

Cup blessed and shared. Cup given new depth and color.

“Take and drink. This is the cup of my blood
to be poured out for the salvation of the many.”

This day we are filled with deep thanksgiving
for the presence of Jesus in our midst

who takes the bread of our life and the wine of our spirit
and offers us new insights and new horizons of faith.

This day we have met the challenges of Gospel-living.

Not perfectly but with eager hearts
we have tried to do your will

and bring your peace and justice to our world.

Make us always grateful

and give us courage to meet your invitations of grace.

We ask this through Christ and the Holy Spirit,
with you, One God, forever and ever.

Amen.

For Love Among Christians

O God, from the dawn of creation
you formed a people to be your own.
In every age, the gentle call of your voice
gathers diverse believers
to form one people to give you praise.

Today we remember that Jesus,
God-with-us, created a new people,
the communion of hearts
we have called church.

Hardly perfect in our life together,
we often forget the command of Christ
to love one another without discrimination
and to be witnesses of love to every race and nation.

By the strong power of your Spirit
bind us in compassion for each other.
Teach us again the meaning of your love
that we may proclaim to every age
the salvation of the whole world in Christ.
We ask this through Christ and the Holy Spirit,
with you, One God, forever and ever.

Amen.

Wisdom

W

Prayer of Discernment

Strengthen us, O Lord,
in the task we are now beginning.

Clear our vision
that we may see the outline of the future.

Strengthen our will
that we may not falter when the work grows heavy.

Make us discerning,
that we may not be misled.

Let us walk in the light of your presence
so that success will add to our spiritual strength,
and our achievement be a source of encouragement and blessing.

Wisdom

Gracious God, we ask for your creative spirit—
Intelligent, holy, unique, firm, secure, tranquil.

All: Come now, Wisdom, dwell within.

We ask for you light—
Reflecting God, mirroring goodness, widening vision.

All: Come now, Wisdom, dwell within.

We ask for your strength—
To renew the ancient truths, to honor God's design,
To govern all thing well.

All: Come now, Wisdom, dwell within.

COLLECT

O Gracious and Holy Father,
give us Wisdom to perceive thee,
Diligence to seek thee,
Patience to wait for thee,
Eyes to behold thee,
A heart to meditate upon thee,
And a life to proclaim thee,
Through the power of the Spirit of
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

St. Benedict

Prayer for Wisdom

(Alternate sides of the room with each verse)

Creator God, we stand in your presence
on the threshold of a whole new world.

For us, in Catholic healthcare,
that world is complex, rapidly changing,
and often a difficult place to live and work.

We are challenged by all that we encounter
in our daily labors;
sometimes we don't understand what it's
all about or where it will take us.

Today we pray for wisdom, for a deeper
understanding that mission is our identity.

Help us to see our personal mission
so that in all we do, at work, at home,
and elsewhere, we experience you,
our Creator and Sustainer, as we continue
our journey into the mystery of meaning.

Give us grateful hearts for work that is
satisfying because it meets human need.

Help us to see that the mission of Catholic
healthcare is its identity.

Travel with us on the journey;
stand over us and enliven our faith,
strengthen our hope,
and nurture our love
as we experience
the "breath of God in our face." Amen.

Wisdom and Courage

Creator God, you made us in your image.
Help us to be all you have created us to be.

You breathed your spirit into us.
Help us to bring peace and comfort to all people we encounter.

As you guided us from the beginning, continue to guide us now.
As you have loved us, help us to love others.

Grant us the wisdom and courage we need
to make the decision you deem best for all concerned.
In the name of the living God, Amen.

Come, Holy Spirit

Replace the tension within us with a holy relaxation.
Replace the turbulence within us with a sacred calm.
Replace the anxiety within us with a quiet confidence.

Replace the fear within us with a strong faith.
Replace the bitterness within us with the sweetness of grace.
Replace the darkness within us with a gentle light.

Replace the coldness within us with a loving warmth.
Replace the night within us with your day.
Replace the winter within us with your spring.

Straighten our crookedness.
Fill our emptiness.
Dull the edge of our pride.
Sharpen the edge of our humility.
Light the fires of our love.

Let us see ourselves as you see us,
That we may see you as you have promised
and become fortunate according to your word:
"Blessed are the whole-hearted, for they shall see God."

-adapted from Longwood Cenacle, Chicago, Illinois

An Indian Prayer

O, Great Spirit,
whose voice we 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 greater than others,
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.

-adapted from Red Cloud Indian School

Prayer for Wisdom

God, grant us wisdom;
not just cleverness or shrewd common sense,
or the saleable skills of the marketplace.

But rather
discerning minds and well-directed hearts
to put first things first,
to seek what is worth having,
to fight for what is worth fighting for,
to let go what we cannot sustain
and to rise above daily trifles.

God, may your light fill our minds and hearts
that we may see rightly,
judge wisely,
and act effectively.

Save us from arrogance
and hardness of heart.
Protect us from hidden dangers,
from scheming enemies
and most of all from our own blindness.

God, may your infinite wisdom fill us,
and make us wise and strong. Amen.

For Wisdom and Courage

Good and gracious God,
you call us continually into
a future that is unknown and unpredictable.

We trust that you will always be faithful to us.
We know that whatever the future brings,
it will need merciful, compassionate, peace-making people.

Help us to be men and women who hunger
for truth, goodness and righteousness.
Help us to discover the things
that stand in the way of our transformation.

Grant us wisdom, insight, understanding and love.

Send us forth to be courageous
so that all can be transformed
for the sake of your mission.

Amen.

Prayer for Strength

Spirit of power,
time and again through history,
you have anointed your servants and sent them on mission:

to speak your word to the poor,
to heal the sick,
to free captives

always renewing the face of the earth
in such a variety of ways
that creation itself sings of your glory
and the human family reflects your beauty
in a thousand different ways.

We pray now that our minds, hands and hearts may be strengthened
for the work that lies ahead,

that we might be compassionate to human need,
tender and strong in our care for one another,

genuine in our friendship,
and faithful to the commitments we have made.

We pray that through the power of this compelling Spirit,
we will know the unity that is ours:

sisters and brothers of a common family,
sharing a single home on this earth, our earth,
as children of one God. Amen.

-Adapted from *More Than Words* by Janet Schaffran and Pat Kozak.

For Understanding

Lord God, you have called us together
to serve you in the midst of your people.

We pray that we may serve
with understanding hearts,
that we may know what is right...

Trusting in your guidance,
we reach out to you with
our talents and our inadequacies.
Strengthen us so that we may do your will.

Lord, you are a generous God.
Gift us with wisdom and understanding
so that our ministries may accomplish
the work of Jesus Christ.
Let your spirit fill our lives;
let your love make us compassionate servants.
We ask this in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,
who taught us to be servants of all. Amen