



Prayers and Devotions

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1. The Lord's Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Gospel of St. Matthew 6:9-13

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

2. Early Church / Church Fathers

Basil the Great, 330-379

O God and Lord of the Powers, and Maker of all creation, Who, because of Thy clemency and incomparable mercy, didst send Thine Only-Begotten Son and our Lord Jesus Christ for the salvation of mankind, and with His venerable Cross didst tear asunder the record of our sins, and thereby didst conquer the rulers and powers of darkness; receive from us sinful people, O merciful Master, these prayers of gratitude and supplication, and deliver us from every destructive and gloomy transgression, and from all visible and invisible enemies who seek to injure us. Nail down our flesh with fear of Thee, and let not our hearts be inclined to words or thoughts of evil, but pierce our souls with Thy love, that ever contemplating Thee, being enlightened by Thee, and discerning Thee, the unapproachable and everlasting Light, we may unceasingly render confession and gratitude to Thee: The eternal Father, with Thine Only-Begotten Son, and with Thine All-Holy, Gracious, and Life-Giving Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Amen.

Ambrose of Milan, 339-397

O Lord, Who hast mercy on us all, take away from me my sins, and mercifully kindle in me the fire of thy Holy Spirit. Take away from me the heart of stone, and give me a heart of flesh, a heart to love and adore thee, a heart to delight in thee, to follow and enjoy thee, for Christ's sake.

Amen.

Jerome, 342-420

O good shepherd, seek me out, and bring me home to thy fold again. Deal favorably with me according to thy good pleasure, till I may dwell in thy house all the days of my life, and praise thee for ever and ever with them that are there.

Amen.

Lord, thou hast given us thy Word for a light to shine upon our path; grant us so to meditate on that Word, and to follow its teaching, that we may find in it the light shines more and more until the perfect day; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Augustine, 354-430

Look upon us, O Lord,

and let all the darkness of our souls vanish
 before the beams of thy brightness.
 Fill us with holy love,
 and open to us the treasures of thy wisdom.
 All our desire is known unto thee,
 therefore perfect what thou hast begun,
 and what thy Spirit has awakened us to ask in prayer.
 We seek thy face,
 turn thy face unto us and show us thy glory.
 Then shall our longing be satisfied,
 and our peace shall be perfect.
 Amen.

Almighty God, who knowest our necessities before we ask, and our ignorance in asking: set free thy servants from all anxious thoughts for the morrow; give us contentment with thy good gifts; and confirm our faith that according as we seek thy kingdom, thou wilt not suffer us to lack any good thing; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Almighty God, in whom we live and move and have our being, thou hast made us for thyself, so that our hearts are restless until they find rest in thee; grant us purity of heart and strength of purpose, that no selfish passion may hinder us from knowing thy will, no weakness from doing it; but that in thy light we may see light, and in thy service find perfect freedom; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Can any praise be worthy of the Lord's majesty? How magnificent is his strength! How inscrutable his wisdom! Man is one of your creatures, Lord, and his instinct is to praise you. He bears about him the mark of death the sign of his own sin, to remind him that you thwart the proud. But still, since he is a part of your creation, he wishes to praise you. The thought of you stirs him so deeply that he cannot be content unless he praises you, because you made us for yourself and our hearts find no peace until they rest in you.
 --*Opening Paragraph to the Confessions.*

Saint John Chrysostom, 347-407

According to the Hours of the Day and Night

1. O Lord, deprive me not of Thy heavenly blessings;
2. O Lord, deliver me from eternal torment;
3. O Lord, if I have sinned in my mind or thought, in word deed, forgive me.
4. O Lord, deliver me from every ignorance and heedlessness, from pettiness of the soul and stony hardness of heart;
5. O Lord, deliver me from every temptation;

6. O Lord, enlighten my heart darkened by evil desires;
 7. O Lord, I, being a human being, have sinned; do Thou, being God, forgive me in Thy lovingkindness, for Thou knowest the weakness of my soul.
 8. O Lord, send down Thy grace to help me, that I may glorify Thy holy Name;
 9. O Lord Jesus Christ, inscribe me, Thy servant, in the Book of Life, and grant me a blessed end;
 10. O Lord my God, even if I have done nothing good in Thy sight, yet grant me, according to Thy grace, that I may make a start in doing good.
 11. O Lord, sprinkle on my heart the dew of Thy grace;
 12. O Lord of heaven and earth, remember me, Thy sinful servant, cold of heart and impure, in Thy Kingdom.
 13. O Lord, receive me in repentance;
 14. O Lord, leave me not;
 15. O Lord, save me from temptation;
 16. O Lord, grant me pure thoughts;
 17. O Lord, grant me tears of repentance, remembrance of death, and the sense of peace;
 18. O Lord, grant me mindfulness to confess my sins;
 19. O Lord, grant me humility, charity, and obedience;
 20. O Lord, grant me tolerance, magnanimity, and gentleness;
 21. O Lord, implant in me the root of all blessings: the fear of Thee in my heart;
 22. O Lord, vouchsafe that I may love Thee with all my heart and soul, and that I may obey in all things Thy will;
 23. O Lord, shield me from evil persons and devils and passions and all other lawless matters;
 24. O Lord, Who knowest Thy creation and that which Thou hast willed for it; may Thy will also be fulfilled in me, a sinner, for Thou art blessed forevermore.
- Amen.*

3. Early Creeds of the Church

Nicene Creed

We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.

Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Apostles Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,

the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

4. Middle Ages

Anima Christi

Soul of Christ, sanctify me
Body of Christ, save me
Blood of Christ, refresh me
Water from Christ's side, wash me
Passion of Christ, strengthen me
O good Jesus, hear me
Within Thy wounds hide me
Suffer me not to be separated from Thee
From the malicious enemy defend me
In the hour of my death call me
And bid me come unto Thee
That with thy saints I may praise Thee
Forever and ever
Amen.

Benedict of Nursia, 480-543

Almighty God, give us wisdom to perceive you, intellect to understand you, diligence to seek you, patience to wait for you, eyes to behold you, a heart to meditate upon you, and life to proclaim you, through the power of the Spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Pope Gregory I, 540-604

Lo, fainter now lie spread the shades of night,
And upward spread the trembling gleams of morn,
Suppliant we bend before the Lord of Light,
And pray at early dawn,
That this sweet charity may all our sin
Forgive, and make our miseries to cease;
May grant us health, grant us the gift divine
Of everlasting peace.
Father Supreme, this grace on us confer;
And thou, O Son by an eternal birth!

With thee, coequal Spirit, comforter!
 Whose glory fills the earth.
Amen.

O God, who for our redemption did give your only begotten Son to the death on the cross, and by his glorious resurrection has delivered us from the power of the enemy, grant us to die daily to sin, that we may evermore live with him, in the joy of his resurrection; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Anselm, 1033-1109

O merciful God, fill our hearts, we pray, with the graces of thy Holy Spirit; with love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, humility, and self-control. Teach us to love those who hate us; to pray for those who spitefully use us; that we may be the children of thy love, our Father, who makes the sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the just and the unjust. In adversity grant us grace to be patient; in prosperity keep us humble; may we guard the door of our lips; may we lightly esteem the pleasures of this world, and thirst for heavenly things; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

O Lord my God,
 teach my heart where and how to seek you,
 where and how to find you.
 Lord, if you are not here but absent,
 Where shall I seek you?
 But you are everywhere, so you must be here,
 Why then do I not seek you?
 Lord, I am not trying to make my way to your height,
 For my understanding is in no way equal to that,
 But I do desire to understand little of your truth
 Which my heart already believes and loves.
 I do not seek to understand so that I may believe,
 But I believe so that I may understand;
 And what is more,
 I believe that unless I do believe I shall not understand.
Amen.

Hildegard of Bingen, 1098-1179

O eternal God,
 Now let it please you

To burn in that love
 So that we become those limbs
 Which you made in that same love
 When you gave birth to your Son
 In the first dawn before all creatures,
 And look on this need
 Which falls upon us
 For the sake of you Son
 And lead us into the bliss of salvation.
 Amen.

Francis of Assisi, 1181-1226

Most High and glorious God, enlighten the darkness of our hearts and give us a true faith, a certain hope, and a perfect love. Give us a sense of the divine and knowledge of yourself, so that we may do everything in fulfillment of your holy will; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
 Amen.

You are holy
 You are holy, Lord, the only God and your deeds are wonderful.
 You are strong, you are great.
 You are the most high, you are almighty.
 You, holy Father, are King of heaven and earth.
 You are three and one, Lord God, all good.
 You are good, all good, supreme good, Lord God, living and true.
 You are love, you are wisdom
 You are humility, you are endurance.
 You are rest, you are peace.
 You are joy and gladness, you are justice and moderation.
 You are all riches, and you suffice for us.
 You are beauty, you are gentleness.
 You are our protector, you are our guardian and defender.
 You are courage, you are our haven and our hope.
 You are our faith, our great consolation.
 You are our eternal life, great and wonderful Lord.
 God almighty, merciful Saviour.
 Amen

Clare of Assisi, 1194-1253

I pray you, O most gentle Jesus, having redeemed me by baptism from original sin, so now by your precious blood, which is offered and received throughout the world, deliver me from all evils, past, present, and to come. By your most cruel death give me lively faith, a firm hope and perfect charity, so that I may love you with all my heart and all my soul and all my strength. Make me firm and steadfast in good works and grant me perseverance in your service so that I may be able to please you always.
Amen.

*Thomas Aquinas, 1225-1274**For Ordering a Life Wisely*

St. Thomas recited this daily before the image of Christ.

O merciful God, grant that I may
desire ardently,
search prudently,
recognize truly,
and bring to perfect completion
whatever is pleasing to You
for the praise and glory of Your name.

Put my life in good order, O my God.

Grant that I may know
what You require me to do.

Bestow upon me
the power to accomplish Your will,
as is necessary and fitting
for the salvation of my soul.

Grant to me, O Lord my God,
that I may not falter in times
of prosperity or adversity,
so that I may not be exalted in the former,
nor dejected in the latter.

May I not rejoice in anything
unless it leads me to You;
may I not be saddened by anything
unless it turns me from You.

May I desire to please no one,
nor fear to displease anyone,
but You.

May all transitory things, O Lord,
be worthless to me
and may all things eternal
be ever cherished by me.

May any joy without You
be burdensome for me
and may I not desire anything else
beside You.

May all work, O Lord,
delight me when done for Your sake
and may all repose not centered in You
be wearisome for me.

Grant unto me, my God,
that I may direct my heart to You
and that in my failures
I may ever feel remorse for my sins
and never lose the resolve to change.

O Lord my God, make me
submissive without protest,
poor without discouragement,
chaste without regret,
patient without complaint,
humble without posturing,
cheerful without frivolity,
mature without gloom,
and quick-witted without flippancy.

O Lord my God, let me
fear You without losing hope,
be truthful without guile,
do good works without presumption,
rebuke my neighbor without haughtiness,
and –without hypocrisy–
strengthen him by word and example.

Give to me, O Lord God,
a watchful heart,

which no capricious thought
can lure away from You.

Give to me
a noble heart,
which no unworthy desire can debase.

Give to me
a resolute heart,
which no evil intention can divert.

Give to me
a stalwart heart,
which no tribulation can overcome.

Give to me
a temperate heart,
which no violent passion can enslave.

Give to me, O Lord my God,
understanding of You,
diligence in seeking You,
wisdom in finding You,
discourse ever pleasing to You,
perseverance in waiting for you,
and confidence in finally embracing You.

Grant
that with Your hardships
I may be burdened in reparation here,
that Your benefits
I may use in gratitude upon the way,
that in Your joys
I may delight by glorifying You
in the Kingdom of Heaven.

You Who live and reign,
God, world without end.

Amen.

For God's Blessing

I praise, glorify, and bless You, my God
for the immeasurable blessings
shown to me who am unworthy of them.

I praise
Your compassion
extended to me for so long a time
and Your gentleness
appearing in the guise of correction.

I praise
your tenderness
calling out to me,
Your kindness
welcoming me,
and Your mercy
forgiving my sins.

I praise
your goodness
given to me beyond what I deserve
and Your forbearance
that does not remember grievances.

I praise
Your humility
that consoles me,
Your patience
that shelters me,
Your eternity
that preserves me,
and Your truth
that rewards me.

What can I proclaim, my God,
about Your ineffable generosity?

For You call the fugitive back.
You welcome the one who returns.
You sustain the faltering.
You gladden the despondent.
You prod the negligent.

You arm the warrior.
 You crown the victor.
 You spurn not the repentant sinner.
 You do not remember his wrongdoing.
 You free him from many perils.
 You soften his heart for penitence.
 You frighten him with chastisement.
 You entice him with promises.
 You castigate him with rods.
 You guard him with ministering angels.

For You supply us with all temporal goods.
 You reserve for us an eternal good.
 You inspire us with the beauty of creation.
 You appeal to us with the mercy of redemption.
 You promise us blessings in reward.

For all these I am incapable of sufficient praise.

I thank Your majesty
 for the abundance of Your immense goodness.
 May You always increase Your grace in me,
 preserve that increase,
 and reward what You have preserved.

Amen.

To Acquire the Virtues

O God,
 all-powerful and all-knowing,
 without beginning and without end,
 You Who are
 the source,
 the sustainer,
 and the rewarder of all virtues,

Grant that I may
 abide on the firm ground of faith,
 be sheltered by an impregnable shield of hope,
 and be adorned in the bridal garment of charity.

Grant that I may

through justice
be subject to You,
through prudence
avoid the beguilements of the devil,
through temperance
exercise restraint,
and through fortitude
endure adversity with patience.

Grant that
whatever good things I have,
I may share generously
with those who have not
and that
whatever good things I do not have,
I may request humbly
from those who do.

Grant that I may
judge rightly
the evil of wrongs I have done
and bear calmly
the punishments
I have brought upon myself,

and that I may
never envy my neighbor's possessions
and ever give thanks for Your good things.

Grant that I may ever observe modesty
in the way I dress,
the way I walk,
and the gestures I use,
restrain my tongue from frivolous talk,
prevent my feet from leading me astray,
keep my eyes from wandering glances,
shelter my ears from rumors,
lower my gaze in humility,
lift my mind to thoughts of heaven,
contemn all that will pass away,
and love You only.

Grant that I may subdue my flesh
and cleanse my conscience,

honor the saints and praise You worthily,
advance in goodness,
and end a life of good works with a holy death.

Plant deep in me, Lord, all the virtues,
that I might be
devout in divine matters,
discerning in human affairs,
and burdensome to no one
in fulfilling my own bodily needs.

Grant to me, Lord,
fervent contrition,
pure confession,
and complete reparation.

Order me inwardly through a good life,
that I might do
what is right
and what will be
meritorious for me
and a good example for others.

Grant that I may
never crave to do things impulsively,
nor disdain to do what is burdensome,

Lest I begin things before I should
or abandon them before finishing.

Amen.

Before Study

St. Thomas frequently recited this before he dictated, wrote, or preached.

Ineffable Creator,
Who from the treasures of Your wisdom,
have established three hierarchies of angels,
have arrayed them in marvelous order
above the fiery heavens,
and have marshaled the regions
of the universe with such artful skill,

You are proclaimed
the true font of light and wisdom,
and the primal origin
raised high beyond all things.

Pour forth a ray of Your brightness
into the darkened places of my mind;
disperse from my soul
the twofold darkness
into which I was born:
sin and ignorance.

You make eloquent the tongues of infants.
Refine my speech
and pour forth upon my lips
the goodness of Your blessing.

Grant to me
keenness of mind,
capacity to remember,
skill in learning,
subtlety to interpret,
and eloquence in speech.

May You
guide the beginning of my work,
direct its progress,
and bring it to completion.

You Who are true God and true Man,
Who live and reign, world without end.

Amen.

For the Attainment of Heaven

St. Thomas often prayed these lines while contemplating.

God of all consolation,
You Who see nothing in us
but what You have given us,
I invoke Your help:
after this life has run its course,
grant me

Knowledge of You, the first Truth,
and enjoyment of Your divine majesty.

O most bountiful Rewarder, endow my body
with beauty of splendor,
with swift responsiveness to all commands,
with complete subservience to the spirit,
and with freedom from all vulnerability.

Add to these
an abundance of Your riches,
a river of delights,
and a flood of other goods

So that I may enjoy
You solace above me,
a delightful garden beneath my feet,
the glorification of body and soul within me,
and the sweet companionship
of men and angels around me.

With You, most merciful Father,
may my mind attain
the enlightenment of wisdom,
my desire
what is truly desirable,
and my courage
that praise of triumph.

There, with You, is
refuge from all dangers,
multitude of dwelling places,
and harmony of wills.

There, with You, resides
the cheerfulness of spring,
the brilliance of summer,
the fruitfulness of autumn,
and the gentle repose of winter.

Give me, O Lord my God,
that life without death
and that joy without sorrow
where there is

the greatest freedom,
 unconfined security,
 secure tranquility,
 delightful happiness,
 happy eternity,
 eternal blessedness,
 the vision of truth,
 and praise, O God.

Amen.

Dante Alighieri, 1265-1321

For now my sight, clear and yet clearer grown,
 Pierced through the ray of that exalted light,
 Wherein, as in itself, the truth is known.

O light supreme, by mortal thought unscanned...

Make strong my tongue that in its words may burn
 One single spark of all Thy glory's light
 For future generations to discern.

Catherine of Siena, 1347-1380

Dear Lord, it seems you are so madly in love with your creatures that you could not live without us. So you created us; and then, when we turned away from you, you redeemed us. Yet you are God, and so you have no need of us. Your greatness is made no greater by our creation; your power is made no stronger by our redemption. You have no duty to care for us, no debt to repay us. It is love, and love alone, which moves you.

Amen.

Erasmus, 1467-1536

O Lord Jesus Christ, who hast said that thou art the way, the truth, and the life: suffer us not at any time to stray from thee, who art the way; nor to distrust thy promises, who art the truth; nor to rest in any other thing than thee, who art the life; beyond which there is nothing to be desired, neither in heaven, nor in earth; for thy name's sake.

Amen.

Ignatius Loyola, 1491-1556

Grant, O Lord, that your love may so fill our lives that we may count nothing too small to do for you, nothing too much to give, and nothing too hard to bear, for Jesus Christ's sake.

Amen.

Take, Lord, all my liberty. Receive my memory, my understanding, and my whole will. Whatever I have and possess thou hast given to me; to thee I restore it wholly, and to thy will I utterly surrender it for thy direction. Give me the love of thee only, with thy grace, and I am rich enough; not ask I anything beside.

Amen.

Teresa of Avila, 1515-1582

Trust in God
 Let nothing disturb you,
 Let nothing frighten you;
 All things pass;
 God never changes.
 Patience achieves
 All it strives for.
 He who has God
 Finds he lacks nothing,
 God alone suffices.

5. Eastern Orthodox

The Jesus Prayer
Prayed Repetitively

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

Prayer of Saint Ephraim

O Lord and Master of my life, grant not unto me a spirit of idleness, of discouragement, of lust for power, and of vain speaking.
 But bestow upon me, Thy servant, the spirit of chastity, of meekness, of patience, and of love.
 Yea, O Lord and King, grant that I may perceive my own transgressions, and judge not my brother, for blessed art Thou unto ages of ages. *Amen.*

Set our hearts on fire with love of thee, O Christ our God, that in that flame we may love thee with all our heart, with all our mind, with all our soul, and with all our strength, and our neighbors as ourselves; so that, keeping thy commandments, we may glorify thee, the giver of all good gifts.

Amen.

*Prayer for the Acceptance of God's Will
Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow*

O Lord, I know not what to ask of thee. Thou alone knowest my true needs. Thou lovest me more than I myself know how to love. Help me to see my real needs which are concealed from me. I dare not ask either a cross or consolation. I can only wait on thee. My heart is open to thee. Visit and help me, for thy great mercy's sake. Strike me and heal me, cast me down and raise me up. I worship in silence thy holy will and thine inscrutable ways. I offer myself as a sacrifice to thee. I put all my trust in thee. I have no other desire than to fulfill thy will. Teach me how to pray. Pray thou thyself in me.

Amen.

Evening Prayer Orthodox

And now as we lay down to sleep, O Master, grant us repose both of body and of soul, and keep us from the dark passions of the night. Subdue Thou the assaults of passions. Quench the fiery darts of the Wicked One which are thrown insidiously at us; calm the commotions of our flesh and put away all thoughts about worldly and material things as we go to sleep. Grant us, O God, a watchful mind, chaste thoughts, a sober heart, and a gentle sleep, free from all the fantasies of Satan. And raise us up again at the hour of prayer, established in Thy commandments and holding steadfast within ourselves the remembrance of Thy judgments. Give us the words of Thy glorification all night long, that we may praise, bless, and glorify Thy most honorable and magnificent name, O Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Amen.

Prayer of a Student (Orthodox)

Christ my Lord, the Giver of light and wisdom, who opened the eyes of the blind man and transformed the fishermen into wise heralds and teachers of the gospel through the coming of the Holy Spirit, shine also in my mind the light of the grace of the Holy Spirit. Grant me discernment, understanding and wisdom in learning. Enable me to complete my assignments and to abound in every good work, for to You I give honor and glory.

Amen.

Prayer Before Studying (Orthodox)

Master who loves us, shine Your eternal light in our hearts that we may better know you. Help us to fully understand Your gospel message. Instill in us respect for Your holy commandments, that by overcoming our worldly desires we might live a spiritual life of thoughts and deeds which pleases You. We ask this of You, O Christ our God, for You are the light of our souls and bodies and You we glorify with Your eternal Father and Your all-holy good and life-giving Spirit now and forever. Amen.

Shine within my heart, loving Master, the pure light of Your divine knowledge, and open the eyes of my mind that I may understand Your teachings. Instill in me also reverence for Your blessed commandments, so that having conquered sinful desires I may pursue a spiritual way of life, thinking and doing all those things that are pleasing to You. For You, Christ my God, are my light, and to You I give glory together with Your Father and Your Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.

6. Reformation Heritage

Martin Luther, 1483-1546

We thank thee, O God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that thou hast revealed thy Son to us, on whom we have believed, whom we have loved, and whom we worship. O Lord Jesus Christ, we commend our souls to thee. O heavenly Father, we know that although we shall in thine own good time be taken away from this life, we shall live forever with thee. 'God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' Father into thy hands we commend our spirits; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

A Mighty Fortress is Our God (Hymn)

A mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing; Our helper He, amid the flood of mortal ills prevailing; For still our ancient foe doth seek to work us woe; His craft and power are great, and, armed with cruel hate, On earth is not his equal.

Did we in our own strength confide, our striving would be losing; Were not the right Man on our side, the Man of God's own choosing; Dost ask who that may be? Christ Jesus, it is He; Lord Sabaoth, His Name, from age to age the same, And He must win the battle.

And though this world, with devils filled, should threaten to undo us, We will not fear, for God hath willed His truth to triumph through us: The Prince of Darkness grim, we tremble not for him; His rage we can endure, for lo, his doom is sure, One little word shall

fell him.

That word above all earthly powers, no thanks to them, abideth; The Spirit and the gifts are ours through Him Who with us sideth: Let goods and kindred go, this mortal life also; The body they may kill: God's truth abideth still, His kingdom is forever.

Philip Melancthon, 1497-1560

Almighty and Holy Spirit, the comforter, pure, living, true, -illuminate, govern, sanctify me, and confirm my heart and mind in the faith, and in all genuine consolation; preserve and rule over me that, dwelling in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and praise him with a joyful Spirit, and in union with all the heavenly Church.

Amen.

O thou, who art the author of all good things in thy holy Church, work mightily in all thy servants, that they may be profitable to all men, and vessels of thy mercy and grace. Control us all, and so govern our thoughts and deeds, that we may serve thee in righteousness and true holiness; and sanctify us all unto that eternal life, which we, with all thy creatures, groaning and travailing together, wait for an expect; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

John Calvin, 1509-1564

O Lord, heavenly Father, in whom is the fullness of light and wisdom, enlighten our minds but the Holy Spirit, and give us grace to receive thy word with reverence and humility, without which no man can understand thy truth, for Christ's sake.

Amen.

Heidelberg Catechism

Question 1. What is thy only comfort in life and death?

Answer: That I with body and soul, both in life and death, am not my own, but belong unto my faithful Saviour Jesus Christ; who, with his precious blood, has fully satisfied for all my sins, and delivered me from all the power of the devil; and so preserves me that without the will of my heavenly Father, not a hair can fall from my head; yea, that all things must be subservient to my salvation, and therefore, by his Holy Spirit, He also assures me of eternal life, and makes me sincerely willing and ready, henceforth, to live unto him.

Question 2. How many things are necessary for thee to know, that thou, enjoying this comfort, mayest live and die happily?

Answer: Three; the first, how great my sins and miseries are; the second, how I may be delivered from all my sins and miseries; the third, how I shall express my gratitude to God for such deliverance.

Westminster Catechism

Question 1: What is the chief and highest end of man?

Answer: Man's chief and highest end is to glorify God, and fully to enjoy him forever.

Question 2: How does it appear that there is a God?

Answer: The very light of nature in man, and the works of God, declare plainly that there is a God; but his Word and Spirit only do sufficiently and effectually reveal him unto men for their salvation.

John Milton, 1608-1674

(based on psalm 9)

Lord, in thine anger do not reprehend me,
 Nor in thy hot displeasure me correct;
 Pity me, Lord, for I am much deject,
 Am very weak and faint; heal and amend me,
 For all my bones, that even with anguish ache,
 Are troubled, yea, my soul is troubled sore.
 And thou, O Lord, how long? Turn, Lord, restore
 My soul, O save me for thy goodness sake,
 For in death no remembrance is of thee;
 Who in the grave can celebrate thy praise?
 Wearied I am with sighing out my days,
 Nightly my couch I make a kind of sea;
 My bed I water with my tears; mine eye
 Through grief consumes, is waxen old an dark
 I' th' midst of all mine enemies that mark.
 Depart, all ye that work iniquity.
 Depart from me, for the voice of my weeping
 The Lord hath heard; the Lord hath heard my prayer;
 My supplication with acceptance fair
 The Lord will own, and have me in his keeping.
 Mine enemies shall all be blank and dashed

With much confusion; then grow red with shame;
 They shall return in haste the way they came
 And in a moment shall be quite abashed.

John Bunyan, 1628-1688

He that is down needs fear no fall,
 He that is low, no pride:
 He that is humble ever shall
 Have God to be his guide.

I am content with what I have,
 Little be it or much:
 And, Lord, contentment still I crave;
 Because thou savest such.

Susanna Wesley, 1669-1742

Enable me, O God, to collect and compose my thoughts before an immediate approach to you in prayer. My I be careful to have my mind in order when I take upon myself the honor to the Sovereign Lord of the universe, remembering that upon the temper of my soul depends, in very great measure, my success.
 You are infinitely too great to be trifled with, too wise to be imposed on by a mock devotion, and abhor a sacrifice without a heart. Help me to entertain an habitual sense of your perfections, as an admirable help against cold and formal performances.
 Save me from engaging in rash and precipitate prayers and from abrupt breaking away to follow business or pleasure as though I had never prayed.
 Amen.

John Wesley, 1703-1791

Deliver me, O God, from a slothful mind, from all lukewarmness, and all dejection of spirit. I know these cannot but deaden my love to thee; mercifully free my heart from them, and give me a lively, zealous, active, and cheerful spirit; that I may vigorously perform whatever thou commandest, thankfully suffer whatever thou chooseth for me, and be ever ardent to obey in all things thy holy love.
 Amen.

O Jesus, poor and abject, unknown and despised, have mercy upon me, and let me not be ashamed to follow thee.

O Jesus, hated, calumniated, and persecuted, have mercy upon me, and make me content

to be as my master.

○ Jesus, blasphemed, accused, and wrongfully condemned, have mercy upon me, and teach me to endure the contradiction of sinners.

○ Jesus, clothed with a habit of reproach and shame, have mercy upon me, and let me not seek my own glory.

○ Jesus, insulted, mocked, and spit upon, have mercy upon me, and let me not faint in the fiery trial.

○ Jesus, crowned with thorns and hailed in derision;

○ Jesus, burdened with our sins and the curses of the people,

○ Jesus, affronted, outraged, buffeted, overwhelmed with injuries, griefs and humiliations;

○ Jesus, hanging on the accursed tree, bowing the head, giving up the ghost, have mercy upon me, and conform my whole soul to thy holy, humble, suffering Spirit.

Amen.

Søren Kierkegaard, 1813-1855

○ Lord, calm the waves of this heart; calm its tempests. Calm thyself, O my soul, so that the divine can act in thee. Calm thyself, o my soul, so that God is able to repose in thee, so that his peace may cover thee. Yes, Father in heaven, often have we found that the world cannot give us peace, O but make us feel that thou art able to give peace; let us know the truth of thy promise: that the whole world may not be able to take away thy peace.

Amen.

Martin Luther King Jr., 1929-1968

And now to Him who is able to keep us from falling, and lift us from the dark valley of despair to the bright mountain of hope, from the midnight of desperation to the daybreak of joy; to Him be the power and authority for ever and ever.

Amen.

7. Anglican

(From The Book of Common Prayer)

14. For the Unity of the Church

○ God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, our only Savior, the Prince of Peace: Give us grace seriously to lay to heart the great dangers we are in by our unhappy divisions; take away all hatred and prejudice, and whatever else may hinder us from godly union and concord; that, as there is but one Body and one Spirit, one hope of our calling, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of us all, so we may be aloof one heart and of one soul, united in one holy bond of truth and peace, of faith and charity, and may with

one mind anode mouth glorify thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

27. For Social Justice

Grant, O God, that your holy and life-giving Spirit may so move every human heart [and especially the hearts of the people of this land], that barriers which divide us may crumble, suspicions disappear, and hatreds cease; that our divisions being healed, we may live in justice and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

58. For Guidance

O God, by whom the meek are guided in judgment, and light riseth up in darkness for the godly: Grant us, in all our doubts and uncertainties, the grace to ask what thou wouldst have us to do, that the Spirit of wisdom may save us from all false choices, and that in thy light we may see light, and in thy straight path may not stumble; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

62. A Prayer attributed to St. Francis

Lord, make us instruments of your peace. Where there is hatred, let us sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is discord, union; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy. Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Amen.

William Shakespeare, 1564-1616

O Lord, that lends me life,
Lend me a heart replete with thankfulness.

T.S. Eliot, 1888-1965

Because I do not hope to turn again
Let these words answer
For what is done, not to be done again
May the judgement not be too heavy upon us

Because these wings are no longer wings to fly
But merely vans to beat the air
The air which is now thoroughly small and dry

Smaller and dryer than the will
 Teach us to care and not to care
 Teach us to sit still.

Pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death
 Pray for us now and at the hour of our death.

8. Modern Catholic

Roman Missal

O Lord Jesus Christ, who didst say to thine apostles, 'Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you': regard not our sins, but the faith of thy Church, and grant it that peace and unity which is agreeable to thy will; who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end.
 Amen.

Blaise Pascal, 1623-1662

O Lord, Let me not henceforth desire health or life except to spend them for thee and with thee. Thou alone knowest what is good for me; do therefore what seemeth thee best. Give to me or take from me; conform my will to thine; and grant that with humble and perfect submission, and in holy confidence, I may receive the orders of thine eternal providence; and may equally adore all that comes to me from thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
 Amen.

Mother Teresa of Calcutta, 1910-1997

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

O God the Father of all, you ask every one of us to spread love where the poor are humiliated, joy where the Church is brought low, and reconciliation where people are divided, father against son, mother against daughter, husband against wife, believers against those who cannot believe, Christians against their unloved fellow Christians. You
 * open this way for us, so that the wounded body of Jesus Christ, your Church, may be the leaven of communion for the poor of the earth, and in the whole human family. Amen.

Thomas Merton, 1915-1968

My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me. I cannot know for certain where it will end. Nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think I am following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so.

But I believe that the desire to please you does actually please you, and I hope that I have that desire in all that I am doing. I hope that I never do anything apart from that desire. And I know that if I do this you will lead me by the right road though I may know nothing about it.

Therefore I will trust you always. Though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death I will not fear, for you are ever with me and you will never leave me to face my peril alone.

Amen.

Pope John Paul II, 1920-2005

To you, Creator of nature and humanity, of truth and beauty, I pray:

Hear my voice, for it is the voice of the victims of all wars and violence among individuals and nations.

Hear my voice, for it is the voice of all Children who suffer and will suffer when people put their faith in weapons and war.

Hear my voice when I beg you to instill into the hearts of all human beings the wisdom of peace, the strength of justice, and the joy of fellowship.

Hear my voice, for I speak for the multitudes in every country and in every period of history who do not want war and are ready to walk the road of peace.

Hear my voice and grant insight and strength so that we may always respond to hatred with love, to injustice with total dedication to justice, to need with the sharing of self, to war with peace.

O God, hear my voice, and grant unto the world your everlasting peace.

Amen.

Prayer before Study: Catholic

Incomprehensible Creator, the true Fountain of light and only Author of all knowledge: deign, we beseech Thee, to enlighten our understanding, and to remove from us all darkness of sin and ignorance. Thou, who makest eloquent the tongues of those who lack utterance, direct our tongues, and pour on our lips the grace of thy blessing. Give us a diligent and obedient spirit, quickness of apprehension, capacity of retaining, and the powerful assistance of Thy holy grace; that what we hear or learn we may apply to Thy honor and the eternal salvation of our own souls.

Amen.

Taizé Community

Risen Jesus, sometimes our heart calls out to you: I am not worthy to receive you, but only say the word and I will be healed. At the core of our life your Gospel is light within us, your Eucharist is a presence within us.

Risen Jesus, you breathe your Holy Spirit upon us. And we would like to say to you: you have the words that give life to our soul; to whom else would we go but to you, the Risen Lord?

Risen Christ, though the Gospel your voice makes itself heard softly. You tell us: 'Do not worry. Only one thing is necessary, a heart attentive to my words and to the Holy Spirit.'

Risen Jesus, Love of all loving, your compassion is without limit. We are thirsting for you, the one who tells us; 'Do not be afraid. Have no fear, I am here.'