



# Prayers Through the Ages

*Daily prayers for spiritual renewal*



Diocese of Toronto  
Anglican Church of Canada

1. Grant to me, O Lord, to know what is worth knowing,  
To love what is worth loving,  
To praise what delights you most,  
To value what is precious to you,  
And to reject whatever is evil in your eyes.  
Give me true discernment,  
So that I may judge rightly between things that differ.  
Above all, may I search out and do what is pleasing to you;  
Through Jesus Christ my Lord. Amen.

[Thomas A Kempis, c. 1389-1471]<sup>1</sup>

2. My dearest Lord,  
be a bright flame before me,  
be my guiding star above me,  
be the smooth path beneath me,  
be a kindly shepherd behind me,  
today and evermore.

[St. Columba, c.521-597]<sup>2</sup>

3. Lord, we offer you all we are,  
All we have,  
All we do,  
And all whom we shall meet this day  
That you will be given glory.  
We offer you our homes and work,  
our schools and leisure,  
and everyone in our community today; 'may all be done as unto  
you.  
We offer you the broken and hungry . . .  
May the wealth and work of the world be available to all and for the  
exploitation of none,  
May your presence be known to all.

[Morning Prayer, the community of St. Aidan and St. Hilda, Lindisfarne, UK]

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<sup>1</sup> The Little Book of Lent, compiled by Arthur Howells, (London, UK: Harper Collins, 2014) p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, p. 12

4. Give me grace, O my Father, to be utterly ashamed of my own reluctance.  
Rouse me from sloth and coldness, and make me desire you with my whole heart.  
Teach me to love meditation, sacred reading, and prayer.  
Teach me to love that which must engage my mind for all eternity.

[John Henry Newman, 1801-1890]<sup>3</sup>

5. O thou who camest from above,  
The pure celestial fire to impart,  
Kindle a flame of sacred love  
On the mean altar of my heart.  
There let it for thy glory burn  
With inextinguishable blaze,  
And trembling to its source return  
In humble prayer and fervent praise.

[Charles Wesley, c. 1707-1788]<sup>4</sup>

6. Creator, we give you thanks for all you are and all you bring to us for our visit within your creation.  
In Jesus, you place the Gospel in the center of this Sacred Circle through which all of creation is related.  
You show us the way to live a generous and compassionate life.  
Give us your strength to live together with respect and commitment as we grow in your Spirit, for you are God, now and forever. Amen.

[Taken from a liturgy for the National Indigenous Day of Prayer]

7. Christ, you have gone before me  
to prepare a place for me,  
that where you are  
there I may be also.  
Teach me to wait with patience,  
to watch with alertness,  
to trust that you are with me  
in the unknown future  
and to know your presence.

[Jane Williams, professor St. Mellitus College]<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> The Communion of Saints, edited by Horton Davies, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990) p. 142

<sup>4</sup> The Little Book of Lent, compiled by Arthur Howells, (London, UK: Harper Collins, 2014) p. 71

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid* p. 152



8. Take, Lord, and receive  
my liberty,  
my memory,  
my understanding,  
my entire will,  
everything I have and call my own.  
You gave me all these gifts,  
And to you I return them.  
Dispose of them entirely according to your will.  
Give me only your love and your grace.  
This is all I ask.

[Margaret Silf, leader in Ignatian spirituality]

9. Teach us, O God, that silent language which says all things.  
Teach our souls to remain silent in Your presence; that we may adore You in  
the depths of our being, and await all things from You, while asking of You  
nothing but the accomplishment of Your will.  
Teach us to remain quiet under Your action and produce in our souls that  
deep and simple prayer which says nothing and experiences everything,  
which specifies nothing and includes everything.  
Do pray in us, that our prayer may ever tend to Your glory, and our desires  
and intentions may not be fixed on ourselves, but wholly directed to You.

[Evelyn Underhill, c. 1875-1941]

10. For all that separates our hearts from God and from all that closes our eyes  
to God's love...  
(silence)  
For what we have done, left undone, and what has been done on our  
behalf...  
(silence)  
For the pride that prevents us from forgiving others, as we have been  
forgiven...  
(silence)  
Jesus, forgive us. Create in us clean hearts, O God, and renew a right spirit  
within us.

[Taken from a liturgy for the National Indigenous Day of Prayer, Anglican Church of Canada]



**11.** The cross is the hope of Christians  
The cross is the resurrection of the dead  
The cross is the way of the lost  
The cross is the saviour of the lost  
The cross is the staff of the lame  
The cross is the strength of the weak  
The cross is the doctor of the sick  
The cross is the aim of the priests  
the cross is the hope of the hopeless  
the cross is the freedom of the slaves  
the cross is the power of the kings  
the cross is the water of the weeds  
the cross is the consolation of the bondmen  
the cross is the source of those who seek water  
the cross is the cloth of the naked  
We thank you, Father, for the cross

[African prayer, 10<sup>th</sup> century]<sup>6</sup>

**12.** Lord Jesus Christ  
Son of God  
Have mercy on me,  
a sinner.

[The Jesus Prayer, Orthodox Church]<sup>7</sup>

**13.** Creator God, so draw our hearts to you,  
so guide our minds,  
so fill our imaginations,  
so control our wills,  
that we might be wholly yours,  
utterly dedicated to you;  
and then use us, we pray, as you will, and always to your glory and welfare of  
your people; through our Redeemer, Jesus Christ.  
Amen.

[A Disciple's Prayer Book, Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples]

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid, p. 169

<sup>7</sup> Unbinding the Gospel, by Martha Grace Reece, (St. Louis, Missouri: Chalice Press, 2008) p. 187

14. 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 defeat me  
In the hour of my death call me  
And bid me come unto thee  
That I may praise thee with thy saints  
and with the angels  
Forever and ever. Amen.

[The Anima Christi, early 14<sup>th</sup> century, a favorite prayer of St. Ignatius Loyola]

15. Take my life and let it be consecrated, Lord, to thee.  
Take my moments and my days;  
Let them flow in ceaseless praise,  
let them flow in ceaseless praise.

[Francis R. Havergal, poet and hymn writer, c. 1836-1879]

16. Oh God, early in the morning I cry to you.  
Help me to pray and to concentrate my thoughts on you:  
I cannot do this alone,  
In me there is darkness, but with you there is light,  
I am lonely, but you do not leave me;  
I am feeble in heart, but in you there is help;  
I am restless, but with you there is peace.  
In me there is bitterness, but with you there is patience;  
I do not understand your ways, but you know the way for me . . .  
Restore me to liberty, and enable me to live now  
That I may answer before you and before me.  
Lord, whatever this day may bring, your name be praised.

[Dietrich Bonhoeffer, martyred German theologian, c. 1904-1945]



17. But all shall be well,  
And all shall be well,  
And all manner of thing shall be well.

[Julian of Norwich, c. 1343 – after 1416]<sup>8</sup>

18. GOVERN EVERYTHING by your wisdom, o Lord,  
So that my soul may always be serving you  
In the way you will  
And not as I choose.  
Let me die to myself so that I may serve you;  
Let me live to you who are life itself. Amen.

[Teresa of Avila c. 1515-1582]<sup>9</sup>

19. O Lord, my God.  
Form me more fully in your likeness.  
Use the circumstance and interactions of this day to form your will in me.  
From the frustrations of this day form peace.  
From the joy of this day form strength.  
From the struggles of this day form courage.  
From the beauties of this day form love.  
In the name of Jesus Christ, who is all peace and strength  
and courage and love. Amen.

[Richard Foster, theologian and author in the Quaker tradition]<sup>10</sup>

20. Come! Spirit of Love!  
Penetrate and transform us by the action of Your purifying life.  
May your constant, brooding love bring forth in us more love and all the  
grace and works of love.  
Give us grace to remain still under its action,  
and may that humble stillness be our prayer. Amen.

[Evelyn Underhill, c. 1875-1941]<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> "Prayers for the Journey Inward", in Prayer Treasury, by Richard Foster, (New York: HarperCollins, 1994) p.19

<sup>9</sup> Ibid p. 25

<sup>10</sup> Ibid p. 32

<sup>11</sup> "Prayers for the Journey Inward", in Prayer Treasury, by Richard Foster, (New York: HarperCollins, 1994) p. 34



21. Abba, I adore you.  
Abba, I adore you.  
Abba, I adore you.  
Abba, my Abba.

[Abba, the Hebrew word meaning father]<sup>12</sup>

22. God, of your goodness give me yourself,  
For you are enough for me. I cannot properly ask anything less, to be worthy  
of you. If I were to ask less, I should always be in want.  
In you alone do I have everything.  
Amen.

[Julian of Norwich, c. 1343 – after 1416]<sup>13</sup>

23. Christ, be with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me,  
Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me,  
Christ on my right, Christ on my left,  
Christ where I lie, Christ where I sit, Christ where I arise,  
Christ in the heart of everyone who think of me,  
Christ in every eye that sees me,  
Christ in every ear that hears me,  
Salvation is of the Lord,  
Salvation is of the Christ,  
May our salvation, O Lord, be ever with us.

[St. Patrick of Ireland, c. 387-461]<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid, p. 59

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, p. 62

<sup>14</sup> The Communion of Saints: Prayers of the Famous, edited by Horton Davies, (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1990) p. 17



24. Love bade me welcome; yet my soul drew back,  
    Guilty of dust and sin.  
But quick-eyed Love, observing me grow slack  
    From my first entrance in,  
Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning  
    If I lacked anything.  
“A guest,” I answered, “worthy to be here”:  
    Love said, “You shall be he.”  
“I, the unkind, ungrateful? Ah, my dear,  
    I cannot look on Thee.”  
Love took my hand and smiling did reply,  
    “Who made the eyes but I?”  
“Truth, Lord, but I have marred them: let my shame  
    Go where it doth deserve.”  
“And know you not,” says Love, “Who bore the blame?”  
    “My dear, then I will serve.”  
“You must sit down,” says Love, “and taste my meat.”  
    So I did sit and eat.

[George Herbert, c. 1593–1633, Simone Weil was converted after reading this poem, which she learned by heart.]<sup>15</sup>

25. I rise and pledge myself to God  
To do no deed at all of dark.  
This day shall be his sacrifice  
And I, unmoved, my passions' lord.  
I blush to be so old and foul  
And yet to stand before his table.  
You know what I would do, O Christ;  
O then, to do it make me able.

[Gregory of Nazianzus, c. 329-390]<sup>16</sup>

26. Open wide the window of our spirits, O lord,  
    and fill us full of light;  
Open wide the door of our hearts,  
that we may receive and entertain thee with all our power  
    of adoration and love. Amen.

[Christina G. Rossetti, c. 1830-1894]<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> The Communion of Saints, p. 23

<sup>16</sup> The Communion of Saints, p.127

<sup>17</sup> Ibid p. 81

27. Fire  
God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob,  
Not of philosophers and scholars.  
Certitude.  
    Certitude.  
        Feeling.  
            Joy.  
                Peace.

God of Jesus Christ.  
Forgetfulness of the world and of everything, except God.  
Greatness of the Human Soul.  
Joy, joy, joy, tears of joy.

[Blaise Pascal, c. 1623-1662, noting an experience that happened to him on the evening of Nov. 23, 1654. He sewed this prayer into his coat lining so it would always be with him.]<sup>18</sup>

28. Late have I loved you, O beauty so ancient and so new.  
Late have I loved you!  
You were within me while I have gone outside to seek you.  
Unlovely myself, I rushed toward all those lovely things you had made.  
And always you were with me, I was not with you.  
All these beauties kept me far from you – although they would not have  
existed at all unless they had their being in you.  
You called,  
    You cried,  
        You shattered my deafness.  
You sparked,  
    You blazed,  
        You drove away my blindness.  
You shed your fragrance, and I drew in my breath, and I pant for you.  
I tasted, and now I hunger and thirst.  
You touched me, and now I burn with longing for your peace.

[Augustine of Hippo, c. 354-430]<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> "Prayers for the Journey Inward", in Prayer Treasury, by Richard Foster, (New York: HarperCollins, 1994) p.70

<sup>19</sup> "Prayers for the Journey Inward", in Prayer Treasury, by Richard Foster, (New York: HarperCollins, 1994) p. 50



29. You, O ETERNAL TRINITY, are a deep sea into which,  
the more I enter, the more I find.  
And the more I find, the more I seek.  
O Abyss,  
O eternal Godhead,  
O sea profound,  
What more could you give me than yourself?  
Amen.

[Catherine of Siena, c. 1347-1380]<sup>20</sup>

30. Dearest Lord, may I see you today and every day in the person of your sick,  
and, while nursing them, minister unto you.  
Though you hid yourself behind the unattractive disguise of the irritable, the  
exacting, the unreasonable,  
may I still recognize you, and say:  
“Jesus, my patient, how sweet it is to serve you.”

[Mother Teresa of Calcutta, c. 1910-1997]<sup>21</sup>

31. My DEAR FRIEND, I am here.  
See, I have come to you because you have invited me.  
Your tears and your soul's longing, your humility and  
your grief-stricken heart  
Have moved me and brought me to you.

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O Lord, I called you and longed to enjoy you, and I am prepared to give up  
everything for you.  
Let my mouth, my soul, and all creation praise and bless you.  
Amen.

[Thomas a Kempis, c. 1389-1471]<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid p.69

<sup>21</sup> Ibid p. 83

<sup>22</sup> “Prayers for the Journey Inward”, in *Prayer Treasury*, by Richard Foster, (New York: HarperCollins, 1994) p. 78