



BOOK ONE

Accumulated Prayers



“My only objective is to paint a Christ so moving that those who see him will be converted.”

Georges Rouault
Head of Christ

FOREWORD

Traversing life's path is never a snap, unless of course, you are a hedonist. Still, even for hedonists, I would imagine there are some days when there are many more questions than there are answers, regardless of the ignorance for which they may or may not be held responsible. Not our call.

The consternation we are all surrounded by sometimes exceeds our comprehension. Why does evil exist in the world? Why is there so much anger in this one or that one? Why is this person so cruel? For what good reason do some harbor hate, and why do others choke on anxieties they do not understand, unknown fear forcing them to violence, crime, lies or deceit?

As we all get a little older and experience continues to teach it's difficult lessons, there are very few who have not felt the need to transcend themselves into the realm of the eternal Spirit, answering the gentle but unmistakable call from the powers of heaven living within the "heartfelt;" similar to the tendency of aestheticism at the observation or sensation of the beautiful and the good. Feeling the influx of a distinct power to rise above the mundane.

It is possible that we may recall the shock and clarity of the following: "Now judgement is upon this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. And if I am lifted up from the earth will draw all men to myself." Indeed, he has been lifted up, and many are drawn! Why not all?

While some are busy removing the icon of the Crucified One from our spaces, the voice of the Good Shepherd still resonates profoundly: "Come to me all who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble of heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my

burden is light." This is not hubris, it is a solemn promise from the Risen One of God from whom saving-grace obtains.

The marvel of the computer allows you to capture and save bits of what has been discovered across the years which is presented here in three little booklets. Dipping in to these pages of what may be called prayers, can be wonderfully comforting and humbling, a welcome escape from the always and everywhere available profane. I have no doubt that a continuation of clicking-and-saving would fill thousands more pages, yet sometimes it takes only a word or two to strike the right chord and ease a few of the "thousand natural shocks the flesh is heir to," as Love, not fear, triumphs.

"The love of God is not founded on a discipline imposed on us from the outside, but is constitutively established in us as the capacity and necessity of our rational nature."

St. Basil, from On Conscience p 31, Benedict XVI

THE SEVEN CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY

- To feed the hungry.
- To give drink to the thirsty.
- To clothe the naked.
- To harbor the harborless.
- To visit the sick.
- To visit the captive.
- To bury the dead.

THE SEVEN SPIRITUAL WORKS OF MERCY

- To counsel the doubtful.
- To instruct the ignorant.
- To admonish the sinner.
- To comfort the sorrowful.
- To forgive all injuries.
- To bear wrongs patiently.
- To pray for the living and the dead.

PER CHRISTUM DOMINUM NOSTRUM
AMEN

Prayer to St. Joseph

O MOST BLESSED JOSEPH, such great grace has been granted to you by God. For not only did you see His only-begotten Son in the flesh, but you also embraced Him in your arms with paternal affection. Oh that we, so inflamed with your example, and aided by your help, might embrace this same Jesus in the most Holy Sacrament of the Altar with similar love and reverence, and that we may be worthy afterwards to come to embrace Him in heaven for all eternity. Amen.

The Light has come

*The light has come and has shone upon a
world enveloped in shadows.*

BLESSED BE THE LORD

Blessed be the Lord,

for he has shown me his wonderful kindness

within the fortified city.

In my terror, I said

“I am cut off from your sight”;

but you heard the voice of my prayer

when I called to you.

Love the Lord, all his chosen ones.

The Lord keeps his faithful ones safe,

heaps punishment on the arrogant.

Be brave, let your hearts be strong,

all who trust in the Lord. O God, you tell us to mortify our
bodies to cure our sick souls.

Grant us the ability to abstain from all sin

and the power to obey wholeheartedly all your holy
commandments

Lord, answer your
people!

In your love, Lord, answer
the prayers of your people:
make us see what we have
to do and give us the
strength to do it.

BE CLOSE

LORD, BE CLOSE TO THOSE WHO
PRAY TO YOU

AND PROTECT THOSE WHO TRUST
IN YOUR COMPASSION.

WASHED CLEAN OF THE STAINS OF
SIN,

MAY THEY LIVE ON IN HOLINESS

AND BECOME WORTHY OF YOUR
PROMISED INHERITANCE.

Be Still

Be still for once. Don't try to think of so many complex and varied things. Give these deeper realities of the spirit a chance now to rise to the surface: silence, fear, the ineffable longing for truth, for love, for fellowship, for God. Face loneliness, fear, imminent death! Allow such ultimate, basic human experiences to come first. Don't go talking about them, making up theories about them, but simply endure these basic experiences. Then in fact something like a primitive awareness of God may emerge.

Be Merciful to Your Servants

O Lord, be merciful to your servants
and give them yet more of the gifts of
your grace.

On fire with faith, hope and love,
may they keep your commandments
with unceasing watchfulness.

Acknowledgement

“Whoever acknowledges me before men,
I too will acknowledge him before my Father who is
in heaven.”

The Treasures of Wisdom

To this end Christ died for all, that they who are alive might live – not for themselves but for him who died for them.

See, then, Lord: I cast my care upon you so that I may live, and I will contemplate the wonders you have revealed. You know how stupid and weak I am: teach me and heal me. Your only Son, in whom are hidden all treasures of wisdom and knowledge, has redeemed me with his blood. Let not the proud disparage me, for I am mindful of my ransom. I eat it, I drink it, I dispense it to others, and as a poor man I long to be filled with it among those who are fed and feasted. And then, let those who seek him praise the Lord.

St. Augustine

Within the Light

God's Word is our Lord Jesus Christ, who in these last times was made a man among men, that he might join the end to the beginning: that is, join man to God.

Just as those who see light are within the light and share in its splendor, so those who see God are in God and share his splendor also. But God's splendor gives life: and so those who see God receive life.

Amos 6:1,4-7

The almighty Lord says this:

Woe to those ensconced so snugly in Zion and to those who feel so safe on the mountain of Samaria, those famous men of this first of nations to whom the House of Israel goes as client. Lying on ivory beds and sprawling on their divans, they dine on lambs from the flock, and stall-fattened veal; they bawl to the sound of the harp, they invent new instruments of music like David, they drink wine by the bowlful, and use the finest oil for anointing themselves, but about the ruin of Joseph they do not care at all. That is why they will be the first to be exiled; the sprawlers' revelry is over.

RETURN

Ecclesiasticus 17:20-28

To those who repent, God permits return,
and he encourages those who were losing hope.

Return to the Lord and leave offense behind,
plead before his face and lessen your perversions.

Come back to the Most High and turn away from iniquity,
and hold in abhorrence all that is foul.

Who will praise the Most High in Sheol,
if the living do not do so by giving glory to him?
To the dead, as to those who do not exist, praise is
unknown,
only those with life and health can praise the Lord.

How great is the mercy of the Lord,
his pardon on all those who turn towards him!

“Never Enough” Pope Benedict XVI, Feast of St Therese of the Child Jesus

"We must never present ourselves before God as one who believes he has provided a service and merits a great reward. This is an illusion that can afflict anyone, even people who work much in the service of the Lord, in the Church. On the contrary, we must be aware that we never do enough for God. Do not be ashamed, then, of the testimony about our Lord. We must be ashamed of evil, of what offends God, of what offends man; we must be ashamed of the evil brought to the civil and religious community by actions that do not like to see the light of day."

"The word of faith has need of great inner silence in order to listen and obey a voice which lies beyond the visible and tangible world. This voice speaks through natural phenomena, because it is the power that created and governs the universe. But to recognize it we need a humble and obedient heart, something also taught us by the saint whose feast day falls today: St. Therese of the Child Jesus".

Psalm 49 (50)

I desire loving kindness, not sacrifice; knowledge of God,
not burnt offerings.

To the sinner, God has said this:

Why do you recite my statutes?

Why do you dare to speak my covenant?

For you hate what I teach you,

and reject what I tell you.

The moment you saw a thief, you joined him;

you threw in your lot with adulterers.

You spoke evil with your mouth,

and your tongue made plans to deceive.

Solemnly seated, you denounced your own brother;
you poured forth hatred against your own mother's son.

All this you did, and I was silent;

so you thought that I was just like you.

But I will reprove you –

I will confront you with all you have done.

Understand this, you who forget God;

lest I tear you apart, with no-one there to save you.

Whoever offers up a sacrifice of praise gives me true
honor;

whoever follows a sinless path in life will be shown the
salvation of God.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,

as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end.

Amen.

I desire loving kindness, not sacrifice; knowledge of God,
not burnt offerings.

Maxwell's Prayer

Almighty God, Who hast created man in Thine own image, and made him a living soul that he might seek after Thee, and have dominion over Thy creatures, teach us to study the works of Thy hands, that we may subdue the earth to our use, and strengthen the reason for Thy service; so to receive Thy blessed Word, that we may believe on Him Whom Thou hast sent, to give us the knowledge of salvation and the remission of our sins. All of which we ask in the name of the same Jesus Christ, our Lord.

James Clerk Maxwell (1831-1879)

The marriage of Christ and the Church

A sermon by Faustus of Riez, The Hours, Saturday after Epiphany Sunday.

On the third day there was a wedding. What wedding can this be but the joyful marriage of man's salvation, a marriage celebrated by confessing the Trinity or by faith in the resurrection. That is why the marriage took place "on the third day," a reference to the sacred mysteries which this number symbolizes.

Hence, too, we read elsewhere in the Gospel that the return of the younger son, that is, the conversion of the pagans, is marked by song, and music and wedding garments.

Like a bridegroom coming from his marriage chamber our God descended to earth in his incarnation, in order to be united to his Church which was to be formed of the pagan nations. To her he gave a pledge and a dowry: a pledge when God was united to man; a dowry when he was sacrificed for man's salvation. The pledge is our present redemption; the dowry, eternal life.

To those who see only with the outward eye, all these events at Cana are strange and wonderful; to those who understand, they are also signs. For, if we look closely, the very water tells us of our rebirth in baptism. One thing is turned into another from within, and in a hidden way a lesser creature is changed into a greater. All this points to the hidden reality of our second birth. There water was suddenly changed; later it will cause a change in man.

By Christ's action in Galilee, then, wine is made, that is, the law withdraws and grace takes its place; the shadows fade and truth becomes present; fleshly realities are coupled with spiritual, and the old covenant with its outward discipline is transformed into the new. For, as the Apostle says: The old order has passed away; now all is new! The water in the jars is not less than it was before, but now begins to be what it had not been; so too the law is not destroyed by Christ's coming, but is made better than it was.

When the wine fails, new wine is served: the wine of the old covenant was good' but the wine of the new is better. The old covenant, which Jews follow, is exhausted by its letter; the new covenant, which belongs to us, has the savor of life and is filled with grace.

The good wine, that is, good precepts, refers to the law; thus we read: You shall love your neighbor but hate your enemy. But the Gospel is a better and a stronger wine: My command to you is: love your enemies, pray for your persecutors.

Almighty and eternal God, by the birth of your only-begotten Son you created us anew. In him our human nature is united to you: grant, then, that by your grace we may come to share his form. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen.

Your Adopted Children

Almighty and eternal God, we presumptuously call you our father. Make us in our hearts truly your adopted children, so that we deserve the inheritance you have promised us.

Judged by the Law of Freedom

Talk and behave like people who are going to be judged by the law of freedom, because there will be judgement without mercy for those who have not been merciful themselves; but the merciful need have no fear of judgement.

Faith is the body of the Lord and love is his blood.

Take on meekness. Be renewed in faith, which is the flesh of the Lord, and in love, which is the blood of Jesus Christ. Let none of you have a grudge against his neighbor. Give no occasion to the unbeliever: do not let the congregation of God be blasphemed because of the behavior of a few foolish persons. For Woe to him who makes anyone blaspheme my name without a cause.

St Ignatius of Antioch

Galatians 5:18-25

If you are led by the Spirit, no law can touch you. When self-indulgence is at work the results are obvious: fornication, gross indecency and sexual irresponsibility; idolatry and sorcery; feuds and wrangling, jealousy, bad temper and quarrels; disagreements, factions, envy; drunkenness,

orgies and similar things. I warn you now, as I warned you before: those who behave like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

What the Spirit brings is very different: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, trustfulness, gentleness and self-control.

There can be no law against things like that, of course. You cannot belong to Christ Jesus unless you crucify all self-indulgent passions and desires.

Since the Spirit is our life, let us be directed by the Spirit.

Psalm 51

Have mercy on us, O Lord, for we have sinned.

Have mercy on me, God, in your kindness.

In your compassion blot out my offence.

Wash me more and more from my guilt
and cleanse me from my sin.

Have mercy on us, O Lord, for we have sinned.

My offenses truly I know them;
my sin is always before me.

Against you, you alone, have I sinned;
what is evil in your sight I have done.

Have mercy on us, O Lord, for we have sinned.

That you may be justified when you give
sentence
and be without reproach when you judge,
A pure heart create for me, O God,
put a steadfast spirit within me.

Do not cast me away from your presence,
nor deprive me of your Holy Spirit.

Have mercy on us, O Lord, for we have sinned.

Give me again the joy of your help;
with a spirit of fervor sustain me,
O Lord, open my lips
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.
***Have mercy on us, O Lord, for we have
sinned.***

ORA PRO NOBIS

V. Ora pro nobis, sancta Dei Genetrix.

R. Ut digni efficiamur promissionibus
Christi.

V. Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God.

R. That we may be made worthy of
the promises of Christ.

ROMANS 12

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.

The Word Made Flesh

O God, creator and redeemer of human nature, you willed that your Word should take on flesh in the ever-virgin womb. Graciously hear our prayer: may your only-begotten Son, who took on our humanity, deign to have us near him in his divinity.

TO DO

In your love, Lord, answer the prayers of your people: make us see what we have to do and give us the strength to do it.

The Wise Man

The wise man sees ahead,
the fool walks in the dark.

Judged by the Law of Freedom

Talk and behave like people who are going to be judged by the law of freedom, because there will be judgement without mercy for those who have not been merciful themselves; but the merciful need have no fear of judgement.

9th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Matthew 7:21-27
“The Will of My Father”

Jesus said to his disciples, ‘It is not those who say to me, “Lord, Lord,” who will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the person who does the will of my Father in heaven. When the day comes many will say to me, “Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, cast out demons in your name, work many miracles in your name?” Then I shall tell them to their faces: I have never known you; away from me, you evil men!

‘Therefore, everyone who listens to these words of mine and acts on them will be like a sensible man who built his house on rock. Rain came down, floods rose, gales blew and hurled themselves against that house, and it did not fall: it was founded on rock. But everyone who listens to these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a stupid man who built his house on sand. Rain came down, floods rose, gales blew and struck that house, and it fell; and what a fall it had!’

THE GLORY OF MAN

This is the glory of man:
to persevere and remain in the service of
God.

For this reason the Lord told his disciples:
You did not choose me but I chose you.

Three Readings

Mid-morning reading (Terce)

1 John 3:17-18

If a man who was rich enough in this world's goods saw that one of his brothers was in need, but closed his heart to him, how could the love of God be living in him? My children, our love is not to be just words or mere talk, but something real and active.

Noon reading (Sext)
Deuteronomy 30:11,14

This Law that I enjoin on you today is not beyond your strength or beyond your reach. No, the Word is very near to you, it is in your mouth and in your heart for your observance.

Afternoon reading (None)
Isaiah 55:10-11

Thus says the Lord: ‘As the rain and the snow come down from the heavens and do not return without watering the earth, making it yield and giving growth to provide seed for the sower and bread for the eating, so the word that goes from my mouth does not return to me empty, without carrying out my will and succeeding in what it was sent to do.’

The Right Path

O God, your light guides those who have strayed and helps them back to the right path.
Grant to all who are called Christians that they may reject whatever contradicts that name but hold fast to whatever is right for it.

St Hippolytus against the Noetic heresy

The hidden sacrament is revealed

There is, brethren, one God, the knowledge of whom we gain from the Holy Scriptures and from no other source. Whatever things the Holy Scriptures declare, at these let us look; and whatever they teach, let us learn it; and as the Father wills our belief to be, let us believe; and as he wills the Son to be glorified, let us glorify him; and as he wills the Holy Spirit to be bestowed, let us receive him. Not according to our own will, nor according to our own mind, nor yet storming by force the things which are given by God, but even as he has chosen to teach them by the Holy Scriptures, so let us discern them.

God, subsisting alone, and having nothing coeval with himself, chose to create the world. And conceiving the world in mind, and willing and uttering the Word, he made it; and at once it appeared, formed it in the way he desired. For us it is sufficient simply to know that nothing was coeval with God. Outside him there was nothing; but he, while existing alone, yet existed in plurality. For he did not lack reason, or wisdom, or power, or counsel. All things were in him, and he was the All. At a time and in a manner chosen by him he made his Word manifest, and through his Word he made all things.

He bears this Word in himself, as yet invisible to the created world. He makes him visible, uttering the voice first, and begetting him as Light of Light. He presents him to the world as its Lord; and whereas the Word was visible formerly to God alone, and invisible to the world which is made, God makes the Word visible in order that the world might see him and be able to be saved.

This is the mind which came forth into the world and was manifested as the Son of God. All things came into being through him, and he alone comes from the Father.

He gave us the Law and the prophets; and in giving them, he made them speak by the Holy Spirit, in order that, receiving the inspiration of the Father's power, they might declare the Father's counsel and will.

Thus, then, was the Word made manifest, even as the blessed John says. For he sums up the things that were said by the prophets, and shows that this is the Word, by whom all things were made. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by him, and without him nothing was made. And later, The world was made by him, and the world did not know him; he came to his own, and his own did not receive him.

The Beatitudes

When Jesus saw the crowds, He went up on the mountain; and after He sat down, His disciples came to Him.

He opened His mouth and began to teach them, saying,

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me.

Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Teresa's Prayer

Whenever we think of Christ we should recall the love that led him to bestow on us so many graces and favors, and also the great love God showed in giving us in Christ a pledge of his love; for love calls for love in return. Let us strive to keep this always before our eyes and to rouse ourselves to love him. For if at some time the Lord should grant us the grace of impressing his love on our hearts, all will become easy for us and we shall accomplish great things quickly and without effort.

St Teresa of Avila:

Symeon

"Symeon The New Theologian focused his reflections on the presence of the Holy Spirit in the baptised and on the awareness they must have of this spiritual truth. Christian life, he insists, is intimate and personal communion with God. ... True knowledge of God ... stems from a journey of inner purification". This journey must pass through "profound penitence and sincere suffering for ones sins in order to achieve union with Christ, the source of joy and peace."

Benedict XVI

Take Shelter

Take shelter in your rooms for a little while, says Scripture, until my wrath subsides. Then I will remember the good days, and will raise you from your graves.

Happy are we, beloved, if love enables us to live in harmony and in the observance of God's commandments, for then it will also gain for us the remission of our sins. Scripture pronounces happy those whose transgressions are pardoned, whose sins are forgiven. Happy the man, it says, to whom the Lord imputes no fault, on whose lips there is no guile. This is the blessing given those whom God has chosen through Jesus Christ our Lord. To him be glory for ever and ever.
Amen.

Te Deum

God, we praise you; Lord, we proclaim you!

You, the Father, the eternal –

all the earth venerates you.

All the angels, all the heavens, every power –

The cherubim, the seraphim –

unceasingly, they cry:

“Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts:

heaven and earth are full of the majesty of your glory!”

Vengeance is mine says the Lord

Never repay evil with evil. As scripture says:
*Vengeance is mine – I will pay them back, says
the Lord. But there is more: If your enemy is
hungry, you should give him food, and if he is
thirsty, let him drink. Resist evil and conquer it
with good.*

Your Faith

Your faith should not depend on human
philosophy
but on the power of God

Sacrifice of Praise

Understand this, you who forget God;
lest I tear you apart, with no-one there to save
you.

Whoever offers up a sacrifice of praise gives me
true honor;

whoever follows a sinless path in life will be
shown the salvation of God.

Control

Lord, grant that we gain enough control over
ourselves

to wholeheartedly devote ourselves to you,
and become forever one in prayer to you.

Sanctified by Penance

O God of mercy and compassion,
your children have been sanctified by penance:
now enlighten their hearts.

Give them the desire to worship you,
and listen with kindness to their petitions.

ROYAL PRIESTHOOD

You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood,
a consecrated nation, a people set apart
to sing the praises of God who called you
out of the darkness into his wonderful
light.

Once you were not a people at all and
now you are the People of God; once you
were outside the mercy and now you have
been given mercy.

Amen

The Living Will Proclaim You

You have pulled my soul out of the pit of
destruction,
you have put all my sins behind you.
For after all, the underworld will not
proclaim you nor death praise you;

those who go down there
do not wait in hope for your faithfulness.
*It is the living, the living who will proclaim you,
as I do today.*
Fathers will pass on to their children
the truth of your faithfulness.

REJOICE

Psalm 31:1-2,5-7

Rejoice, rejoice in the Lord, exult, you just!
Happy the man whose offense is forgiven,
whose sin is remitted.
O happy the man to whom the Lord
imputes no guilt,
in whose spirit is no guile.
Rejoice, rejoice in the Lord, exult, you just!
But now I have acknowledged my sins;
my guilt I did not hide.
I said: 'I will confess
my offense to the Lord.'
And you, Lord, have forgiven
the guilt of my sin.
Rejoice, rejoice in the Lord, exult, you just!

So let every good man pray to you
in the time of need.

The floods of water may reach high
but him they shall not reach.

Rejoice, rejoice in the Lord, exult, you just!

You are my hiding place, O Lord;
you save me from distress.

You surround me with cries of deliverance.

Rejoice, rejoice in the Lord, exult, you just!

Understanding

Give me understanding, and I will follow your law.

- I will keep it wholeheartedly.

*“Blessed are they who have not seen and have
believed”*

Take Your Rest in the Lord

Take your rest in the Lord, and hope in him:
do not envy the one who thrives in his own way,
the man who weaves plots.

Abstain from wrath, abandon anger:

do not envy him who turns to evil,
for those who do evil will be destroyed,
but those on the side of the Lord
will inherit the earth

Zion will be redeemed by justice.

Zion will be redeemed by justice,
and her penitents by integrity.

In the days to come
the mountain of the Temple of the Lord
shall tower above the mountains
and be lifted higher than the hills.

All the nations will stream to it,
peoples without number will come to it; and they will say:

‘Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,
to the Temple of the God of Jacob
that he may teach us his ways
so that we may walk in his paths;
since the Law will go out from Zion,
and the oracle of the Lord from Jerusalem.’

He will wield authority over the nations
and adjudicate between many peoples;
these will hammer their swords into plough shares,
their spears into sickles.

Nation will not lift sword against nation,
there will be no more training for war.

O House of Jacob, come,
let us walk in the light of the Lord.

The Works of Your Hands

When I see the heavens, the work of your
fingers,
the moon and stars, which you set in their
place -
what is man, that you should take thought
for him?
what is the son of man, that you should
look after him?
You have made him but one step lower
than the angels;
you have crowned him with glory and
honour;
you have set him over the works of your
hands.

Your Gift

It is by your gift that we have life:
may the whole act of living be our gift to you.

Psalm 102 (103) **Praise of the compassionate Lord**

*My soul, bless the Lord. Never forget all he has done
for you.*

My soul, bless the Lord!
All that is in me, bless his holy name.
My soul, bless the Lord!
Never forget all he has done for you.
The Lord, who forgives your wrongdoing,
who heals all your weaknesses.
The Lord, who redeems your life from destruction,
who crowns you with kindness and compassion.
The Lord, who fills your age with good things,
who renews your youth like an eagle's.
The Lord, who gives fair judgements,
who gives judgement in favour of the oppressed.
Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy
Spirit,
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end.
Amen.

Made Free

Almighty God, grant us this:
that we who are crushed by the yoke of ancient
servitude
may be made free by the coming birth of your
only begotten Son.

Personal Service

A charitable mind is not displayed simply in giving money; it is manifested still more by personal service as well as by the communication of God's word to others: In fact, if a man's service toward his brothers is genuine and if he really renounces worldly concerns, he is freed from selfish desires. For he now shares in God's own knowledge and love. Since he does possess God's love, he does not experience weariness as he follows the Lord his God. Rather, following the prophet Jeremiah, he withstands every type of reproach and hardship without even harboring an evil thought toward any man.

For Jeremiah warns us: Do not say: “We are the Lord’s temple.” Neither should you say: “Faith alone in our Lord Jesus Christ can save me.” By itself faith accomplishes nothing. For even the devils believe and shudder.

Of One Will

O God, through you your faithful are united and of one will.

Grant to your people that they may love what you have taught and desire what you have promised: in this changeable world may our hearts be fixed on where true joy comes from.

Colossians 3:23-24

Whatever your work is, put your heart into it as if it were for the Lord and not for men, knowing that the Lord will repay you by making you his heirs. It is Christ the Lord that you are serving.

Proclaim What We Revere

If the sacrament of the Lord's passion is to work its effect in us, we must imitate what we receive and proclaim to mankind what we revere.

The cry of the Lord finds a hiding place in us if our lips fail to speak of this, though our hearts believe in it. So that his cry may not lie concealed in us it remains for us all, each in his own measure, to make known to those around us the mystery of our life in Christ.

Sermon by St. Charles Boromeo

Practice what you preach

I admit that we are all weak, but if we want help, the Lord God has given us the means to find it easily. One priest may wish to lead a good, holy life, as he knows he should. He may wish to be chaste and to reflect heavenly virtues in the way he lives. Yet he does not resolve to use suitable means, such as penance, prayer, the avoidance of evil discussions and harmful and dangerous friendships. Another priest complains that as soon as he comes into church to pray the office or to celebrate Mass, a thousand thoughts fill his mind and distract him from God. But what was he doing in the sacristy before he came out for the office or for Mass?

How did he prepare? What means did he use to collect his thoughts and to remain recollected?

Would you like me to teach you how to grow from virtue to virtue and how, if you are already recollected at prayer, you can be even more attentive next time, and so give God more pleasing worship? Listen, and I will tell you. If a tiny spark of God's love already burns within you, do not expose it to the wind, for it may get blown out. Keep the stove tightly shut so that it will not lose its heat and grow cold. In other words, avoid distractions as well as you can. Stay quiet with God. Do not spend your time in useless chatter.

If teaching and preaching is your job, then study diligently and apply yourself to whatever is necessary for doing the job well. Be sure that you first preach by the way you live. If you do not, people will notice that you say one thing, but live otherwise, and your words will bring only cynical laughter and a derisive shake of the head.

Are you in charge of a parish? If so, do not neglect the parish of your own soul, do not give yourself to others so completely that you have nothing left for yourself. You have to be mindful of your people without becoming forgetful of yourself.

My brothers, you must realise that for us churchmen nothing is more necessary than meditation. We must meditate before, during and after everything we do. The prophet says: *I will pray, and then I will understand*. When you administer the sacraments, meditate on what you are doing. When you celebrate Mass, reflect on the sacrifice you are offering. When you pray the office, think about the words you are saying and the Lord to whom you are speaking. When you take care of your people, meditate on how the Lord's blood that has washed them clean so that *all that you do becomes a work of love*.

This is the way we can easily overcome the countless difficulties we have to face day after day, which, after all, are part of our work: in meditation we find the strength to bring Christ to birth in ourselves and in other men.

God's Mercy

May the divine assistance remain
with us always,
and may the souls of the faithful
Departed, through the mercy of God,
rest in peace. Amen

Peter 2

What we are waiting for is what he promised: the new heavens and new earth, the place where righteousness will be at home. So then, my friends, while you are waiting, do your best to live lives without spot or stain so that he will find you at peace. Think of our Lord's patience as your opportunity to be saved.

