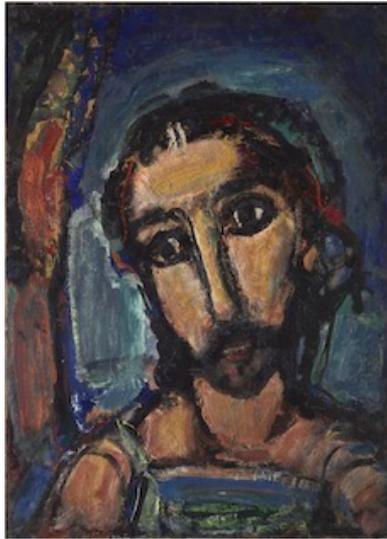


BOOK THREE

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

A Good and Beautiful World

Almighty God, creator of a good and
beautiful world,
may we joyfully set out on this day in your
name,
and fill it with acts of love for you and our
neighbors.

Give Us Peace

O Lord our God, give us peace, for you have given us
everything. Once a man has been found worthy of
Christ's peace, he can easily save his soul and guide
his mind to carry out exactly the demands of virtue.

Haggai, therefore, declares that peace will be given to
all who build. One builds the Church either as a
teacher of the sacred mysteries, as one set over the
house of God, or as one who works for his own good by

setting himself forth as a living and spiritual stone in the holy temple, God's dwelling place in the Spirit. The results of these efforts will profit such men so that each will be able to gain his own salvation without difficulty.

Inspiration

Let us pray for the Holy Spirit to inspire us, like St Thomas, to love God with our minds as well as our hearts; and if we come across a fact or a teaching that seems to us to contradict our faith, let us not reject it but investigate it: for the truth that it contains can never contradict the truth that is God.

Show forth your power

Show forth your power, O Lord,
and bring your great strength to our aid.

Although our sins impede our steps,
let your grace help us to go forward.

God is spirit

“God is spirit,
and those who worship must
worship
in spirit and truth.”

ANIMA CHRISTI

SOUL of Christ, sanctify me.
Body of Christ, save me.
Blood of Christ, inebriate me.
Water from the side of Christ, wash me.
Passion of Christ, strengthen me.
O good Jesus, hear me.
Within Thy wounds, hide me.
Let me never be separated from Thee.
From the malignant enemy, defend me.
At the hour of my death, call me
And bid me to come to thee
That I may praise Thee in the company
Of Thy Saints, for all eternity.
Amen

The Confessions of St Augustine

All my hope lies in your great mercy

Where did I find you in order to make your acquaintance in the first place? You could not have been in my memory before I learned to know you. Where then could I have found you in order to learn of you, if not in yourself, far above me? "Place" has here no meaning: further away from you or toward you we may travel, but place there is none. O Truth, you hold sovereign sway over all who turn to you for counsel, and to all of them you respond at the same time, however diverse their pleas.

Clear is your response, but not all hear it clearly. They all appeal to you about what they want, but do not always hear what they want to hear. Your best servant is the one who is less intent on hearing from you what accords with his own will, and more on embracing with his will what he has heard from you.

Late have I loved you, Beauty so ancient and so new, late have I loved you!

*Lo, you were within, but I outside, seeking there for you,
and upon the shapely things you have made*

I rushed headlong – I, misshapen.

You were with me, but I was not with you.

They held me back far from you,

those things which would have no being, were they not in you.

You called, shouted, broke through my deafness;

you flared, blazed, banished my blindness;

you lavished your fragrance, I gasped; and now I pant for you;

I tasted you, and now I hunger and thirst;

you touched me, and I burned for your peace...

On your exceedingly great mercy, and on that alone, rests all my hope.

Called to Liberty

You were called, as you know, to liberty; but be careful, or this liberty will provide an opening for self-indulgence. Serve one another, rather, in works of love, since the whole of the Law is summarized in a single command: *Love your neighbor as yourself.*

Let me put it like this: if you are guided by the Spirit you will be in no danger of yielding to self-indulgence, since self-indulgence is the opposite of the Spirit, the Spirit is totally against such a thing, and it is precisely because the two are so opposed that you do not always carry out your good intentions.

What the Spirit brings is very different: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, trustfulness, gentleness and self-control. Since the Spirit is our life, let us be directed by the Spirit.

Gifts

O God, no-one has ever seen gifts like those you have prepared for your loving servants.

Fill our hearts with your love; may we love and serve you in all things and above all things, and receive from you gifts that surpass all our desires.

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 favor 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.

Lord, Make Us Perfect in Love

Let us celebrate Christ's goodness and wisdom. We can see him in every one of our brethren, and love him; especially in those who are suffering. Let us pray to him urgently:

This morning we honor your resurrection once more and wish for everyone the effects of your Redemption.

Lord, grant that we may bear witness to you today and through you offer a holy sacrifice acceptable to the Father.

Make us see your image in everyone we meet, and serve you by tending to their needs.

Christ, you are the true vine and we are your branches: grant that we may remain with you, bearing abundant fruit and giving glory to God the Father.

No One Can Hurt You

No one can hurt you if you are determined to do only what is right; if you do have to suffer for being good, you will count it a blessing.

There is no need to be afraid or to worry about them.

Simply reverence the Lord Christ in your hearts, and always have your answer ready for people who ask you the reason for the hope that you all have. But give it with courtesy and respect and with a clear conscience, so that those who slander you when you are living a good life in Christ may be proved wrong in the accusations that they bring.

And if it is the will of God that you should suffer, it is better to suffer for doing right than for doing wrong.

NIGHT PRAYER

Lord, fill the night with your radiance. May we sleep in peace and rise with joy to welcome the light of a new day in your name.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen

Loving mother of the Redeemer, gate of heaven, star of the sea, assist your people who have fallen and strive to rise again. To the wonderment of nature you bore your Creator, yet remained a virgin after as before. You who have received Gabriel's joyful greeting, have pity on us poor sinners.

Amen

Lord it is your desire

*Lord, it is your desire
to dwell in humble and sincere hearts.*

*Give us your grace
and make us a fit habitation for you.*

Mid-morning reading (Terce)
1 Corinthians 12:4 - 6

There is a variety of gifts but always the same Spirit; there are all sorts of service to be done, but always to the same Lord; working in all sorts of different ways in different people, it is the same God who is working in all of them.

Angelus

V. The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary

R. And she conceived by the Holy Spirit.

Hail Mary

V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord

R. Be it done unto me according to your word.

Hail Mary

V. And the Word was made flesh

R. And dwelt among us.

Hail Mary

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

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

Pour forth, we beseech you, O Lord Your grace into our hearts that we to whom the Incarnation of Christ was made known by the message of angel, may by his passion and cross be brought to the glory of his resurrection, through Christ our Lord, AMEN.

UNIMPEDED

ALMIGHTY AND EVER-LIVING GOD, REMOVE THE
OBSTACLES THAT STAND IN OUR WAY, SO THAT
UNIMPEDED IN BODY AND SOUL WE MAY FREELY DEVOTE
OURSELVES TO YOUR SERVICE.

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.

Mid-morning reading (Terce)

1 Peter 1: 13-14

Free your minds, then, of encumbrances; control them, and put your trust in nothing but the grace that will be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed. Do not behave in the way that you liked to before you learnt the truth, but make a habit of obedience.

Noon reading (Sext)

1 Peter 1:15-16

Be holy in all you do, since it is the Holy One who has called you, and scripture says: Be holy, for I am holy.

Afternoon reading (None)

James 4:7-8,10

Give in to God: resist evil, and it will run away from you. The nearer you go to God, the nearer he will come to you. Humble yourselves before the Lord and he will lift you up.

Feast of Ignatius Loyola, July 31

Mid-morning reading (Terce)
Philippians 2:2-4

Be united in your convictions and united in your love, with a common purpose and a common mind. There must be no competition among you, no conceit; but everybody is to be self-effacing. Always consider the other person to be better than yourself, so that nobody thinks of his own interests first but everybody thinks of other people's interests instead.

Noon reading (Sext)
2 Corinthians 13:4

He was crucified through weakness, but still he lives now through the power of God. So then, we are weak, as he was, but we shall live with him, through the power of God, for your benefit.

Afternoon reading (None)
Colossians 3:12-13

You are God's chosen race, his saints; he loves you, and you should be clothed in sincere compassion, in kindness and humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with one another; forgive each other as soon as a quarrel begins. The Lord has forgiven you; now you must do the same.

June 1 Prayer

When the foundations are being overthrown,
what are the just to do?"

The Lord is in his holy temple;
the Lord's throne is in heaven.

His eyes look down on the poor,
he examines the children of men.

The Lord scrutinizes the just and the unjust,
and his heart cries for those who do evil.

At once a fire was kindled in my heart. I was taken
over by the love felt by the prophets and by those
who are Christ's friends.

The Man of Humble and Contrite Spirit

Thus says the Lord: With heaven my throne
and earth my footstool what house could you build me,
what place could you make for my rest?

All of this was made by my hand
and all this is mine – it is the Lord who speaks.
But my eyes are drawn to the man of humbled and
contrite spirit, who trembles at my word.

Forgiveness and compassion

O God, we see your almighty power most clearly in your forgiveness and compassion.

Pour out your Spirit upon us unceasingly: make us hasten to receive your promises, and give us a share in the joys of heaven.

Consolation

Lord, be generous with your grace to those who pray to you: by your power, may they follow your commandments closely, receive consolation in this present life, and embrace the joys that are to come.

ALL THINGS WELL

Mark,7; 37. 23 Sunday, Ordinary Time

‘HE HAS DONE ALL THINGS WELL,’ THEY SAID ‘HE MAKES THE DEAF HEAR AND THE DUMB SPEAK.’

“You are the Light of the World”

(A Treatise on Matthew by St Chromatius)

If we fail to live in the light, we shall, to our condemnation and that of others, be veiling over and obscuring by our infidelity the light men so desperately need. As we know from Scripture, the man who received the talent should have made it produce a heavenly profit, but instead he preferred to hide it away rather than put it to work and was punished as he deserved.

Good Night

Because he clung to me, I shall free him:

I shall lift him up because he knows my name.

He will call upon me and for my part, I will hear him:

I am with him in his time of trouble.

I shall rescue him and lead him to glory.

I shall fill him with length of days and show him my salvation.

A Warning Against Hypocrisy

“Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples: ‘The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat. So you must be careful to do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach. They tie up heavy, cumbersome loads and put them on other people’s shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them.’

‘Everything they do is done for people to see: They make their phylacteries wide and the tassels on their garments long; they love the place of honor at banquets and the most important seats in the synagogues; they love to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces and to be called ‘Rabbi’ by others.’

‘But you are not to be called ‘Rabbi,’ for you have one Teacher, and you are all brothers. And do not call anyone on earth ‘father,’ for you have one Father, and he is in heaven. Nor are you to be called instructors, for you have one Instructor, the Messiah. *The greatest among you will be your servant. For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.*’

A Sensible Man

. . . “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 Will of the Father

Yes—

it is my Father’s will that whoever sees the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and that I shall raise him up on the last day.’

FREEDOM

Jesus said: "If you make my word your home
you will indeed be my disciples,
you will learn the truth
and the truth will make you free."

It is He

*The Lord is compassion and love.
It is he who forgives all your guilt,
who heals every one of your ills,
who redeems your life from the grave.*

Regina Caeli

Queen of Heaven, rejoice,
Alleluia.
You who were made worthy to bear,
Alleluia.
He has risen, as he said
Alleluia.
Pray for us to God.
Alleluia.
Hail Mary. . .

The Celebration of the Eucharist

From the first apology in defense of the Christians by Saint Justin, martyr, (b. about 100, d. 165 AD)

No one may share the Eucharist with us unless he or she believes that what we teach is true, unless he is washed in the regenerating waters of baptism for the remission of his sins, and unless he lives in accordance with the principles given us by Christ.

We do not consume the eucharistic bread and wine as if it were ordinary food and drink, for we have been taught that as Jesus Christ our Savior became a man of flesh and blood by the power of the Word of God, so also the food that our flesh and blood assimilates for its nourishment becomes the flesh and blood of the incarnate Jesus by the power of his own words contained in the prayer of thanksgiving.

The apostles, in their recollections, which are called gospels, handed down to us what Jesus commanded them to do. They tell us that he took bread, gave thanks and said: Do this in memory of me. This is my body. In the same way he took the cup, he gave thanks and said: This is my blood. The Lord gave this command to them alone. Ever since then we have constantly reminded one another of these things. The rich among us help the poor and we are always united. For all that we receive we praise the Creator of the universe through his Son Jesus Christ and through the Holy Spirit.

On Sunday we have a common assembly of all our members, whether they live in the city or the outlying districts. The recollections of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are

read, as long as there is time. When the reader has finished, the president of the assembly speaks to us; he urges everyone to imitate the examples of virtue we have heard in the readings. Then we all stand up together and pray.

On the conclusion of our prayer, bread and wine and water are brought forward. The president offers prayers and gives thanks to the best of his ability, and the people give assent by saying, "Amen." The eucharist is distributed, everyone present communicates, and the deacons take it to those who are absent.

The wealthy, if they wish, may make a contribution, and they themselves decide the amount. The collection is placed in the custody of the president, who uses it to help the orphans and widows and all who for any reason are in distress, whether because they are sick, in prison, or away from home. In a word, he takes care of all who are in need.

We hold our common assembly on Sunday because it is the first day of the week, the day on which God put darkness and chaos to flight and created the world, and because on that same day our savior Jesus Christ rose from the dead. For he was crucified on Friday and on Sunday he appeared to his apostles and disciples and taught them the things that we have passed on for your consideration.

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.

Dedicated to God

As a person dedicated to God, you must aim to be saintly and religious, filled with faith and love, patient and gentle. Fight the good fight of the faith and win for yourself the eternal life to which you were called when you made your profession and spoke up for the truth in front of many witnesses.

The Bread of Life

Jesus said to the crowd:

‘No one can come to me unless he is drawn by the Father who sent me, and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets: They will all be taught by God, and to hear the teaching of the Father, and learn from it, is to come to me. Not that anybody has seen the Father, except the one who comes from God: he has seen the Father. I tell you most solemnly, everybody who believes has eternal life.

‘I am the bread of life.

Your fathers ate the manna in the desert
and they are dead;

but this is the bread that comes down from heaven,
so that a man may eat it and not die.

I am the living bread which has come down from heaven.
Anyone who eats this bread will live for ever;
and the bread that I shall give is my flesh,
for the life of the world.’

Children of God

We must receive Christ so that he can give us birth, as the Apostle John says: To all who accepted him he gave power to become children of God. But this cannot be brought about except by the sacrament of cleansing and anointing, the sacrament which a bishop administers.

Sins are washed away by the cleansing waters of the font; the Holy Spirit is infused by oil of chrism; and we receive both at a bishop's hands and through his words.

Thus the whole man is born again and made new in Christ: so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. That is, having put behind us the errors of our former life, we should through the Spirit follow a new way of life in Christ.

The Good Shepherd

'I tell you most solemnly,

I am the gate of the sheepfold.

All others who have come are thieves and brigands;

but the sheep took no notice of them.

I am the gate.

Anyone who enters through me will be safe:

he will go freely in and out and be sure of finding pasture.

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy.

I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full.'

The Firstborn of the New Creation

The reign of life has begun, the tyranny of death is ended. A new birth has taken place, a new life has come, a new order of existence has appeared, our very nature has been transformed! This birth is not brought about by human generation, by the will of man, or by the desire of the flesh, but by God.

If you wonder how, I will explain in clear language. Faith is the womb that conceives this new life, baptism the rebirth by which it is brought forth into the light of day. The Church is its nurse; her teachings are its milk, the bread from heaven is its food. It is brought to maturity by the practice of virtue; it is wedded to wisdom; it gives birth to hope. Its home is the kingdom; its rich inheritance the joys of paradise; its end, not death, but the blessed and everlasting life prepared for those who are worthy.

This is the day the Lord has made – a day far different from those made when the world was first created and which are measured by the passage of time. This is the beginning of a new creation.

St Gregory of Nyssa

Advice from the Rock

1 Peter 1:13-14

Free your minds, then, of encumbrances; control them, and put your trust in nothing but the grace that will be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed. Do not behave in the way that you liked to before you learnt the truth, but make a habit of obedience.

John 15:1-8

I am the vine, you are the branches

Jesus said:

‘I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser.

Every branch in me that bears no fruit he cuts away,

and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes

to make it bear even more.

You are pruned already, by means of the word that I have spoken to you.

Make your home in me, as I make mine in you.

As a branch cannot bear fruit all by itself,

but must remain part of the vine,

neither can you unless you remain in me.

I am the vine, you are the branches.

Whoever remains in me, with me in him,

bears fruit in plenty;

for cut off from me you can do nothing.

Anyone who does not remain in me

is like a branch that has been thrown away – he withers;

these branches are collected and thrown on the fire,

and they are burnt.

If you remain in me and my words remain in you,

you may ask what you will and you shall get it.

It is to the glory of my Father that you should bear much fruit,

and then you will be my disciples.’

You did not choose me. . .

You did not choose me:
no, I chose you;
and I commissioned you
to go out and to bear fruit,
fruit that will last;
and then the Father will give you
anything you ask him in my name.
What I command you is to love one another.’

The Penitent Thief

Lord Jesus Christ, you gave the penitent thief, dying on the cross, the gift of entering your kingdom.

We confess our sins and trustingly ask you that after our death you will bring us, too, rejoicing through the gates of paradise. Where you live and reign for ever and ever.

Praising God

We are praising God now, assembled as we are here in church; but when we go on our various ways again, it seems as if we cease to praise God. But provided we do not cease to live a good life, we shall always be praising God. You cease to praise God only when you swerve from justice and from what is pleasing to God. If you never turn aside from the good life, your tongue may be silent but your actions will cry aloud, and God will perceive your intentions; for as our ears hear each other's voices, so do God's ears hear our thoughts.

St. Augustine

PRAYERS AND INTERCESSIONS

IT WAS BY GOD'S GIFT THAT THE RISEN CHRIST
APPEARED TO THE APOSTLES. THEREFORE LET US
ADDRESS OUR PRAYERS TO GOD:

– LORD, MAKE US SHINE WITH THE GLORY OF
CHRIST.

O GOD, FATHER OF ALL LIGHT, WE PRAISE YOU
TODAY WITH THANKFUL HEARTS, FOR YOU HAVE
CALLED US INTO YOUR GLORY AND LIGHT TO
RECEIVE YOUR LOVING KINDNESS.

– LORD, MAKE US SHINE WITH THE GLORY OF
CHRIST.

AS THE WHOLE FAMILY OF MAN STRIVES FOR A MORE WORTHWHILE LIFE, STRENGTHEN AND PURIFY THEIR EFFORTS BY THE POWER OF YOUR SPIRIT.

– LORD, MAKE US SHINE WITH THE GLORY OF CHRIST.

DEDICATE US TO THE SERVICE OF MANKIND, SO THAT THE HUMAN RACE BECOMES AN ACCEPTABLE OFFERING TO YOU.

– LORD, MAKE US SHINE WITH THE GLORY OF CHRIST.

AS THIS DAY BEGINS, FILL US WITH YOUR LOVING KINDNESS, SO THAT WE SPEND THE WHOLE DAY PRAISING YOU IN TRIUMPH AND DELIGHT.

– LORD, MAKE US SHINE WITH THE GLORY OF CHRIST.

The Power of the Spirit

Lord, may the power of the Holy Spirit come upon us, and make us able to keep our minds faithfully attuned to your will and to live holy lives.

DO YOU BELIEVE AT LAST?

'DO YOU BELIEVE AT LAST?'

LISTEN; THE TIME WILL COME – IN FACT IT
HAS COME ALREADY –

WHEN YOU WILL BE SCATTERED,

EACH GOING HIS OWN WAY AND LEAVING ME
ALONE.

AND YET I AM NOT ALONE,

BECAUSE THE FATHER IS WITH ME.

I HAVE TOLD YOU ALL THIS

SO THAT YOU MAY FIND PEACE IN ME.

IN THE WORLD YOU WILL HAVE TROUBLE,

BUT BE BRAVE: I HAVE CONQUERED THE
WORLD.'

Our Strength

O God, you are the strength of those who hope in you: in your kindness, attend to our prayers.

Weak and mortal, we can achieve nothing without you: always give us your support, so that we carry out your commandments, pleasing you in both intention and action.

IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST

THE GOOD LORD HAS GRANTED US THE PRIVILEGE OF SHARING IN THIS, THE GREATEST, MOST DIVINE AND CHIEF OF ALL NAMES, SO THAT, HONORED BY THE NAME OF CHRIST, WE ARE CALLED "CHRISTIANS." SO THEN WE MUST ENSURE THAT IN US ARE SEEN ALL THE MEANINGS OF THE NAME OF CHRIST, SO THAT OUR TITLE IS NOT FALSE AND MEANINGLESS BUT IS BORNE OUT BY OUR LIVES.

O LORD, LET US ALWAYS FEAR, HONOR AND LOVE YOUR HOLY NAME; FOR YOU NEVER DEPRIVE OF YOUR GUIDANCE THOSE YOU HAVE ESTABLISHED SOLIDLY IN YOUR LOVE.

Called to Liberty

You were called, as you know, to liberty; but be careful, or this liberty will provide an opening for self-indulgence. Serve one another, rather, in works of love, since the whole of the Law is summarized in a single command: Love your neighbor as yourself.

Let me put it like this: if you are guided by the Spirit you will be in no danger of yielding to self-indulgence, since self-indulgence is the opposite of the Spirit, the Spirit is totally against such a thing, and it is precisely because the two are so opposed that you do not always carry out your good intentions.

What the Spirit brings is very different: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, trustfulness, gentleness and self-control. Since the Spirit is our life, let us be directed by the Spirit.

A Homily on the Beatitudes by Saint Gregory of Nyssa

God is like an inaccessible rock

The feelings that come to a man who stands on a high mountain peak and looks down onto some immense sea are the same feelings that come to me when I look out from the high mountain peak of the Lord's words into the incomprehensible depths of his thoughts.

When you look at mountains that stand next to the sea, you will often find that they seem to have been cut in half, so that on the side nearest the sea there is a sheer drop and something dropped from the summit will fall straight into the depths. Someone who looks down from such a peak will become dizzy, and so too I become dizzy when I look down from the high peak of these words of the Lord: Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

These words offer the sight of God to those whose hearts have been purified and purged. But look: St John says No-one has seen God. The Apostle Paul's sublime mind goes further still: What no man has seen and no man can see. This is the slippery and

crumbling rock that seems to give the mind no support in the heights. Even the teaching of Moses declared God to be a rock that was so inaccessible that our minds could not even approach it: No-one can see the Lord and live.

To see God is to have eternal life – and yet the pillars of our faith, John and Paul and Moses, say that God cannot be seen. Can you understand the dizziness of a soul that contemplates their words? If God is life, whoever does not see God does not see life. If the prophets and the Apostle, inspired by the Holy Spirit, attest that God cannot be seen, does this not wreck all the hopes of man?

It is the Lord who sustains our floundering hope, just as he sustained Peter when he was floundering in the water, and made the waters firm beneath his feet. If the hand of the Word stretches out to us as well, and sets us firm in a new understanding when these speculations have made us lose our balance, we shall be safe from fear, held safe in the guiding hand of the Word. Blessed, he says, are those who possess a pure heart, for they shall see God.

O Lord, let us always fear, honor and love
Your Holy Name;
for you never deprive of your guidance
those you have established solidly in your love.

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!”

The glorious choir of Apostles –

The noble ranks of prophets –

The shining army of martyrs –

all praise you.

Throughout the world your holy Church proclaims you.

- Father of immeasurable majesty,
- True Son, only-begotten, worthy of worship,
- Holy Spirit, our Advocate.

You, Christ:

- You are the king of glory.
- You are the Father's eternal Son.
- You, to free mankind, did not disdain a Virgin's womb.
- You defeated the sharp spear of Death, and opened the kingdom of heaven to those who believe in you.
- You sit at God's right hand, in the glory of the Father.
- You will come, so we believe, as our Judge.

And so we ask of you: give help to your servants, whom you set free at the price of your precious blood.

Number them among your chosen ones in eternal glory.

Bring your people to safety, Lord, and bless those who are your inheritance.

Rule them and lift them high for ever.

Day by day we bless you, Lord: we praise you for ever and for ever.

Of your goodness, Lord, keep us without sin for today.

Have mercy on us, Lord, have mercy on us.

Let your pity, Lord, be upon us, as much as we trust in you.

In you, Lord, I trust: let me never be put to shame.

O God, you raised up the blessed John the Baptist to make ready a perfect people for Christ the Lord.

Give your people the grace of spiritual joy

and guide the minds of all the faithful

onto the path of salvation and peace.

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.

The Moral Reflections on Job by Saint Gregory the Great

If we receive good from the hand of God, why should we not also receive evil?

Paul saw the riches of wisdom within himself though he himself was outwardly a corruptible body, which why he says We have this treasure in earthen vessels. In Job, then, the earthenware vessel felt his gaping sores externally; while this interior treasure remained unchanged. Outwardly he had gaping wounds but that did not stop the treasure of wisdom within him from welling up and uttering these holy and instructive words: If we have received good at the hand of the Lord, shall we not receive evil? By the good he means the good things given by God, both temporal and eternal; by evil he means the blows he is suffering from in the present. Of those evils the Lord says, through the prophet Isaiah,

I am the Lord, unrivaled, I form the light and create the dark. I make good fortune and create calamity, it is I, the Lord, who do all this.

I form the light, and create the dark, because when the darkness of pain is created by blows from without, the light of the mind is kindled by instruction within.

I make good fortune and create calamity, because when we wrongly covet things which it was right for God to create, they are turned into scourges and we see them as evil. We have been alienated from God by sin, and it is fitting that we should be brought back to peace with him by the scourge. As every being, which was created good, turns to pain for us, the mind of the chastened man may,

in its humbled state, be made new in peace with the Creator.

We should especially notice the skillful turn of reflection he uses when he gathers himself up to meet the persuading of his wife, when he says If we have received good at the hand of the Lord, shall we not receive evil? It is a great consolation to us if, when we suffer afflictions, we recall to remembrance our Maker's gifts to us. Painful things will not depress us if we quickly remember also the gifts that we have been given. As Scripture says, In the day of prosperity do not forget affliction, and in the day of affliction, do not forget prosperity.

Whoever, in the moment of receiving God's gifts but forgets to fear possible affliction, will be brought low by his presumption. Equally, whoever in the moment of suffering fails to take comfort from the gifts which it has been his lot to receive, is thrown down from the steadfastness of his mind and despairs.

The two must be united so that each may always have the other's support, so that both remembrance of the gift may moderate the pain of the blow and fear of the blow may moderate exuberance at receiving the gift. Thus the holy man, to soothe the depression of his mind amidst his wounds, weighs the sweetness of the gifts against the pains of affliction, saying If we have received good at the hand of the Lord, shall we not receive evil?

O Lord, guide the world in order and peace according to your plan: may your Church rejoice and worship you in tranquillity.
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.

The Bread of Life

'I am the living bread which has come
down from heaven.

Anyone who eats this bread will live
for ever;

and the bread that I shall give is my
flesh, for the life of the world.'

Children of Light

O God, by your grace you adopted us
and chose us to be children of light.

Grant that we may not become
entangled in error and shadow
but always shine with the glory of truth.

Saints Peter and Paul, Apostles - Solemnity

St Peter

“I do so love St Peter,” says a friend of mine. “Whenever he opens his mouth, he puts his foot in it”.

She is right, of course. Whatever else St Peter may be, he is not the model of a wise and noble hero. He walks on the water – but then panics and starts to sink. He makes the first profession of faith – and moments later blunders into error and is called Satan by the Lord. He refuses to be washed, and then, when the purpose is explained to him, demands to be washed all over. And, of course, he betrays his master soon after having been warned that he will and having sworn not to. If Peter is the rock on which the Church is built, what a fissured and friable rock it is! How much better, we think, to have chosen the Sons of Thunder, for their energy; or Judas Iscariot, for his financial acumen; or John, because he was loved the best.

The choosing of Peter teaches us a lesson. The Church’s foundation-stone and its first leader is not all-wise, all-knowing, good, heroic, and beautiful. He is a very ordinary man who makes about as many mistakes as we would in his place, and kicks himself for them just as thoroughly afterwards. If St Peter had been a hero, we could easily have despaired of ever becoming like him. If St Peter had been great, and noble, and good, we could have told ourselves that the Church is for the saints, despaired, sat down, and not bothered. But the Church is not just for saints: it is for confused, impetuous, cowardly people like us – or St Peter. The rock crumbles, the ropes are frayed, the wood is rotten – but, although that improbable building, the Church, is made of such inferior materials, it grows (on the whole) faster than it collapses, and it is grace that holds it together.

In the end, it was grace that gave the coward the courage to bear witness when it counted, grace that gave the fool the wisdom he

needed to set the infant Church on her way, grace that taught the impetuous man patience and forbearance.

We none of us admire ourselves, however much we would like to; let us not try to admire St Peter either, but admire instead the grace he was given, and pray that, weak as we are, we may be given it too, and may use it.

St Paul

St Paul is not an attractive figure today. We are still knee deep in the overripe fruit of late romanticism: we admire men who feel, not think; who enchant people into following them, not argue them into submission.

There is even, nowadays, a fashion for saying that Paul invented Christianity as we know it, that he set out with the cynical aim of fashioning an enduring institution; and that the real Christianity, the Christianity of Christ, is something quite different from and far nicer than the Christianity we know.

Yes, Paul's mind did shape the early Church. Yes, without him things would have been different. And all the information that we have in the New Testament is entirely consistent with the whole thing being a Pauline conspiracy.

But so what? "Consistent with" is a treacherous phrase. The evidence of my eyes is entirely consistent with there being an invisible lion in my fireplace, because you can't see invisible lions; but I still don't believe there is one. I trust the world, I have faith in it, and invisible lions are not part of that faith. I trust God, I have faith in the Holy Spirit – I say so out loud on Sundays – and I believe that God called Saul because he needed him, and that the renamed Saul did and said what needed to be said and done.

Paul is not some cold and remote intellectual – just read the Epistles, and see if that stands up. Paul is always reminding

people of his weakness – look, I know what I ought to do, and I keep on doing the opposite – look, I have this thorn in my flesh and God absolutely refuses to take it away. Paul is not all mind – he does have his troubles too.

But yes, Paul does have a mind, and that raises problems in an age that doesn't, that uses "clever" as a term of abuse. Remember, though, that we are commanded to love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our mind, and with all our strength. Perhaps we cannot love St Paul very much nowadays; but let us at least pray for the grace to love God with our minds, as he did.

June 29, Solemnity of Saints. Peter and Paul

HUMILITY

A person may be faithful; she may have the power to utter hidden mysteries; she may be discriminating in the evaluation of what is said and pure in her actions. But the greater she seems to be, the more humbly she ought to act, and the more zealous she should be for the common good rather than her own interest.

REJOICE

O God, the world had fallen flat in the dust
but your Son's humility stood it upright once more.

Fill your faithful people with a holy joy:
take those whom you have torn away from slavery to sin
and make them rejoice eternally.

RISE FROM SLEEP

We should at long last rouse ourselves, prompted by the words of Scripture: Now is the time for us to rise from sleep. Our eyes should be open to the God-given light, and we should listen in wonderment to the message of the divine voice as it daily cries out: ***Today, if you shall hear his voice, harden not your hearts;*** and again: If anyone has ears to hear, let him listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches. And what does the Spirit say? Come my sons, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord. Hurry, while you have the light of life, so that death's darkness may not overtake you.

Saint Benedict

BENEDICT XVI ON THE FEAST OF ST. BENEDICT

“Parables, by their nature, require an effort of interpretation, they appeal to our intelligence but also to our freedom. ... In the final analysis the true 'Parable' of God is Jesus Himself ... Who, in human form, both hides and reveals divinity. Thus, God does not force us to believe in Him; rather, He draws us to Him with the truth and goodness of His incarnate Son. Love, in fact, always respects freedom”

MERE CHILDREN

Everything has been entrusted to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, just as no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.’

Matthew 11:25-27

Psalm 119

1

Happy those whose way is blameless, who walk by the teaching of the LORD.

2

Happy those who observe God's decrees, who seek the LORD with all their heart.

3

They do no wrong; they walk in God's ways.

4

You have given them the command to keep your precepts with care.

5

May my ways be firm in the observance of your laws!

6

Then I will not be ashamed to ponder all your commands.

7

I will praise you with sincere heart as I study your just edicts.

8

I will keep your laws; do not leave me all alone.

9

How can the young walk without fault? Only by keeping your words.

10

With all my heart I seek you; do not let me stray from
your commands.

11

In my heart I treasure your promise, that I may not sin
against you.

12

Blessed are you, O LORD; teach me your laws.

13

With my lips I recite all the edicts you have spoken.

14

I find joy in the way of your decrees more than in all
riches.

15

I will ponder your precepts and consider your paths.

16

In your laws I take delight; I will never forget your word.

17

Be kind to your servant that I may live, that I may keep
your word.

18

Open my eyes to see clearly the wonders of your
teachings.

19

2 I am a sojourner in the land; do not hide your
commands from me.

20

At all times my soul is stirred with longing for your edicts.

21

With a curse you rebuke the proud who stray from your commands.

22

Free me from disgrace and contempt, for I observe your decrees.

23

Though princes meet and talk against me, your servant studies your laws.

24

Your decrees are my delight; they are my counselors.

25

I lie prostrate in the dust; give me life in accord with your word.

26

I disclosed my ways and you answered me; teach me your laws.

27

Make me understand the way of your precepts; I will ponder your wondrous deeds.

28

I weep in bitter pain; in accord with your word to strengthen me.

29

Lead me from the way of deceit; favor me with your teaching.

30

The way of loyalty I have chosen; I have set your edicts before me.

31

I cling to your decrees, LORD; do not let me come to shame.

32

I will run the way of your commands, for you open my docile heart.

33

LORD, teach me the way of your laws; I shall observe them with care.

34

Give me insight to observe your teaching, to keep it with all my heart.

35

Lead me in the path of your commands, for that is my delight.

36

Direct my heart toward your decrees and away from unjust gain.

37

Avert my eyes from what is worthless; by your way give me life.

38

For your servant fulfill your promise made to those who
fear you.

39

Turn away from me the taunts I dread, for your edicts
bring good.

40

See how I long for your precepts; in your justice give me
life.

41

Let your love come to me, LORD, salvation in accord with
your promise.

42

Let me answer my taunters with a word, for I trust in your
word.

43

Do not take the word of truth from my mouth, for in your
edicts is my hope.

44

I will keep your teachings always, for all time and forever.

45

I will walk freely in an open space because I cherish your
precepts.

46

I will speak openly of your decrees without fear even
before kings.

47

I delight in your commands, which I dearly love.

48

4 I lift up my hands to your commands; I study your laws,
which I love.

49

Remember your word to your servant by which you give
me hope.

50

This is my comfort in affliction, your promise that gives
me life.

51

Though the arrogant utterly scorn me, I do not turn from
your teaching.

52

When I recite your edicts of old I am comforted, LORD.

53

Rage seizes me because of the wicked; they forsake
your teaching.

54

Your laws become my songs wherever I make my home.

55

Even at night I remember your name in observance of
your teaching, LORD.

56

This is my good fortune, for I have observed your
precepts.

57

My portion is the LORD; I promise to keep your words.

58

I entreat you with all my heart: have mercy on me in
accord with your promise.

59

I have examined my ways and turned my steps to your
decrees.

60

I am prompt, I do not hesitate in keeping your commands.

61

Though the snares of the wicked surround me, your
teaching I do not forget.

62

At midnight I rise to praise you because your edicts are
just.

63

I am the friend of all who fear you, of all who keep your
precepts.

64

The earth, LORD, is filled with your love; teach me your
laws.

65

You have treated your servant well, according to your
word, O LORD.

66

Teach me wisdom and knowledge, for in your commands
I trust.

67

Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I hold to your
promise.

68

You are good and do what is good; teach me your laws.

69

The arrogant smear me with lies, but I observe your
precepts with all my heart.

70

Their hearts are gross and fat; as for me, your teaching is
my delight.

71

It was good for me to be afflicted, in order to learn your
laws.

72

Teaching from your lips is more precious to me than
heaps of silver and gold.

73

Your hands made me and fashioned me; give me insight
to learn your commands.

74

Those who fear you rejoice to see me, because I hope in
your word.

75

I know, LORD, that your edicts are just; though you afflict me, you are faithful.

76

May your love comfort me in accord with your promise to your servant.

77

Show me compassion that I may live, for your teaching is my delight.

78

Shame the proud for oppressing me unjustly, that I may study your precepts.

79

Let those who fear you turn to me, those who acknowledge your decrees.

80

May I be wholehearted toward your laws, that I may not be put to shame.

81

My soul longs for your salvation; I put my hope in your word.

82

My eyes long to see your promise. When will you comfort me?

83

I am like a wineskin shriveled by smoke, but I have not forgotten your laws.

84

How long can your servant survive? When will your edict
doom my foes?

85

The arrogant have dug pits for me; defying your teaching.

86

All your commands are steadfast. Help me! I am pursued
without cause.

87

They have almost ended my life on earth, but I do not
forsake your precepts.

88

In your kindness give me life, to keep the decrees you
have spoken.

89

5 Your word, LORD, stands forever; it is firm as the
heavens.

90

Through all generations your truth endures; fixed to stand
firm like the earth.

91

By your edicts they stand firm to this day, for all things are
your servants.

92

Had your teaching not been my delight, I would have
perished in my affliction.

93

I will never forget your precepts; through them you give me life.

94

I am yours; save me, for I cherish your precepts.

95

The wicked hope to destroy me, but I pay heed to your decrees.

96

I have seen the limits of all perfection, but your command is without bounds.

97

How I love your teaching, Lord! I study it all day long.

98

Your command makes me wiser than my foes, for it is always with me.

99

I have more understanding than all my teachers, because I ponder your decrees.

100

I have more insight than my elders, because I observe your precepts.

101

I keep my steps from every evil path, that I may obey your word.

102

From your edicts I do not turn, for you have taught them
to me.

103

How sweet to my tongue is your promise, sweeter than
honey to my mouth!

104

Through your precepts I gain insight; therefore I hate all
false ways.

105

Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light for my path.

106

I make a solemn vow to keep your just edicts.

107

I am very much afflicted, LORD; give me life in accord
with your word.

108

Accept my freely offered praise; LORD, teach me your
decrees.

109

My life is always at risk, but I do not forget your teaching.

110

The wicked have set snares for me, but from your
precepts I do not stray.

111

Your decrees are my heritage forever; they are the joy of
my heart.

112

My heart is set on fulfilling your laws; they are my reward
forever.

113

I hate every hypocrite; your teaching I love.

114

You are my refuge and shield; in your word I hope.

115

Depart from me, you wicked, that I may observe the
commands of my God.

116

Sustain me by your promise that I may live; do not
disappoint me in my hope.

117

Strengthen me that I may be safe, ever to contemplate
your laws.

118

You reject all who stray from your laws, for vain is their
deceit.

119

Like dross you regard all the wicked on earth; therefore I
love your decrees.

120

My flesh shudders with dread of you; I hold your edicts in
awe.

121

I have fulfilled your just edict; do not abandon me to my oppressors.

122

Guarantee your servant's welfare; do not let the arrogant oppress me.

123

My eyes long to see your salvation and the justice of your promise.

124

Act with kindness toward your servant; teach me your laws.

125

I am your servant; give me discernment that I may know your decrees.

126

It is time for the LORD to act; they have disobeyed your teaching.

127

Truly I love your commands more than the finest gold.

128

Thus I follow all your precepts; every wrong way I hate.

129

Wonderful are your decrees; therefore I observe them.

130

The revelation of your words sheds light, gives understanding to the simple.

131

I sigh with open mouth, yearning for your commands.

132

Turn to me and be gracious, your edict for lovers of your name.

133

Steady my feet in accord with your promise; do not let iniquity lead me.

134

Free me from human oppression, that I may keep your precepts.

135

Let your face shine upon your servant; teach me your laws.

136

My eyes shed streams of tears because your teaching is not followed.

137

You are righteous, LORD, and just are your edicts.

138

You have issued your decrees in justice and in surpassing faithfulness.

139

I am consumed with rage, because my foes forget your words.

140

Your servant loves your promise; it has been proved by fire.

141

Though belittled and despised, I do not forget your precepts.

142

Your justice is forever right, your teaching forever true.

143

Though distress and anguish come upon me, your commands are my delight.

144

Your decrees are forever just; give me discernment that I may live.

145

I call with all my heart, O LORD; answer me that I may observe your laws.

146

I call to you to save me that I may keep your decrees.

147

I rise before dawn and cry out; I put my hope in your words.

148

My eyes greet the night watches as I meditate on your promise.

149

Hear my voice in your love, O LORD; by your edict give me life.

150

Malicious persecutors draw near me; they are far from
your teaching.

151

You are near, O LORD; reliable are all your commands.

152

Long have I known from your decrees that you have
established them forever.

153

Look at my affliction and rescue me, for I have not
forgotten your teaching.

154

Take up my cause and redeem me; for the sake of your
promise give me life.

155

Salvation is far from sinners because they do not cherish
your laws.

156

Your compassion is great, O LORD; in accord with your
edicts give me life.

157

Though my persecutors and foes are many I do not turn
from your decrees.

158

I view the faithless with loathing, because they do not
heed your promise.

159

See how I love your precepts, LORD; in your kindness
give me life.

160

Your every word is enduring; all your just edicts are
forever.

161

Princes persecute me without reason, but my heart
reveres only your word.

162

I rejoice at your promise, as one who has found rich spoil.

163

Falsehood I hate and abhor; your teaching I love.

164

Seven times a day I praise you because your edicts are
just.

165

Lovers of your teaching have much peace; for them there
is no stumbling block.

166

I look for your salvation, LORD, and I fulfill your
commands.

167

I observe your decrees; I love them very much.

168

I observe your precepts and decrees; all my ways are
before you.

169

Let my cry come before you, LORD; in keeping with your word give me discernment.

170

Let my prayer come before you; rescue me according to your promise.

171

May my lips pour forth your praise, because you teach me your laws.

172

May my tongue sing of your promise, for all your commands are just.

173

Keep your hand ready to help me, for I have chosen your precepts.

174

I long for your salvation, LORD; your teaching is my delight.

175

Let me live to praise you; may your edicts give me help.

176

I have wandered like a lost sheep; seek out your servant, for I do not forget your commands.

AMEN

Lord Hear My Voice

— Lord, hear my voice: I have put all my hope in
your words.

– Lord, hear my voice: I have put all my hope in
your words.

I rise at dawn and cry out to you.

– Lord, hear my voice: I have put all my hope in
your words.

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

– Lord, hear my voice: I have put all my hope in
your words.

The kingdom of God is the peace and joy of the Spirit

Turn to the Lord with your whole heart and leave behind this wretched world. Then your soul shall find rest. For the kingdom of God is the Peace and Joy of the Holy Spirit. If you prepare within your heart a fitting dwelling place, Christ will come to you and console you.

His glory and beauty are within you, and he delights in dwelling there. The Lord frequently visits the heart of man. There he shares with man pleasant conversations; welcome consolation, abundant peace and a wonderful intimacy.

So come, faithful soul. Prepare your heart for your spouse to dwell within you. For he says: If anyone loves me, he will keep my word and we shall come to him and make our dwelling within him.

Amen