

# A Catholic Prayer Book



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# A CATHOLIC PRAYER BOOK

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CATHOLIC TRUTH SOCIETY  
PUBLISHERS TO THE HOLY SEE

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## PREFACE

‘The raising of the heart and mind to God.’ This traditional definition of prayer sums up what should be a regular activity for all of us. As we say at every Mass, “It is right to give him thanks and praise.” Prayer is, first of all, acknowledging God’s call and responding to Him in humility. As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states in a wonderful quote from St Thérèse of Lisieux: “For me, prayer is a surge of the heart; it is a simple look turned toward heaven, it is a cry of recognition and of love, embracing both trial and joy” (CCC 2558).

I warmly welcome this new edition of A Catholic Prayer Book which draws on a rich treasury of prayer spanning the writings of the Old Testament and the Fathers of the Church through to some of the great saints of the Middle Ages and more recent times. I am sure that it will be a great help to all who seek to enter more deeply into the life of prayer, which is “the encounter of God’s thirst with ours. God thirsts that we may thirst for him” (CCC 2560).

+ Cormac Murphy-O'Connor

✠ **Archbishop Cormac Murphy-O’Connor**

*15th August, 2000, Feast of the Assumption of Our Lady*

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## PREPARING FOR PRAYER

*From the Jesus Psalter, written by Richard Whitford, an English Bridgettine monk, in the sixteenth century.*

Jesus, grant me grace to fix my mind on thee, especially in time of prayer, when I directly converse with thee.

Stop the motions of my wandering head,  
and the desires of my unstable heart;  
suppress the power of my spiritual enemies,  
who endeavour at that time to draw my mind from  
heavenly thoughts, to many vain imaginations.

So shall I, with joy and gratitude,  
look on thee as my deliverer from all the evils  
I have escaped; and as my benefactor for all the good  
I have ever received, or can hope for.

I shall see that thou art my only good,  
and that all other things are but means ordained  
by thee to make me fix my mind on thee,  
to make me love thee more and more,  
and, by loving thee, to be eternally happy.

O beloved of my soul, take up all my thoughts here,  
that my eyes, abstaining from vain and hurtful sights,  
may become worthy to behold thee face to face  
in thy glory for ever. Amen.



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## BEGINNINGS

### The Sign of the Cross

*Christians begin their day, their prayers, and their activities with the Sign of the Cross. The Sign of the Cross strengthens us in our temptations and difficulties.*

In nómine Patris, et Fílii, et Spíritus Sancti. Amen.	In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.
Per signum crucis de inimicis nostris líbera nos, Deus noster. In nómine Patris...	By the sign of the cross deliver us from our enemies, you who are our God. In the name...

### The Lord's Prayer

*This is the prayer which Jesus taught his apostles when they asked him to show them how to pray (see Matthew 6:19 and Luke 11:2-4).*

Pater noster, qui es in cælis; sanctificétur nomen tuum; advéniat regnum tuum; fiat volúntas tua, sicut in cælo, et in terra.	Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.
Panem nostrum quotidíanum da nobis hódie; et dimitte	Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our

nobis débita nostra, sicut et nos dimíttimus debitóribus nostris; et ne nos indúcas in tentatiónem; sed líbera nos a malo. Amen.	trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.
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### **Glory be to the Father**

*The giving of glory and adoration to God is the basic duty of mankind, his creatures. In this form, called 'The little Doxology', it appears at the end of most psalms in the Divine Office.*

Glória Patri, et Fílio, et Spirítui Sancto.	Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.
Sicut erat in princípío et nunc et semper et in sæcula sæculórum. Amen.	As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen

### **Daily Dedication**

*Formerly the collect for Ember Saturday in Lent, this prayer is now used on the Thursday after Ash Wednesday.*

Lord, may everything we do begin with your inspiration and continue with your help, so that all our prayers and works may begin in you and by you be happily ended. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

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## MORNING PRAYER

### An order for Morning Prayer

**V.** O Lord open our lips

**R.** And we shall praise your name.

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. (Alleluia)

*(A suitable hymn such as the following is said)*

Transcendent God in whom we live,  
The Resurrection and the Light,  
We sing for you a morning hymn,  
To end the silence of the night.

When early cock begins to crow,  
And everything from sleep awakes,  
New life and hope spring up again,  
While out of darkness colour breaks.

Creator of all things that are,  
The measure and the end of all,  
Forgiving God, forget our sins,  
And hear our prayer before we call.

Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost,  
Blest Trinity and source of grace,  
Who call us out of nothingness,  
To find in you our resting-place.

*One or more of the following psalms can be said:*

### **Psalm 63**

O God, you are my God, for you I long;  
for you my soul is thirsting,  
My body pines for you  
like a dry, weary land without water.  
So I gaze on you in the sanctuary  
to see your strength and your glory.

For your love is better than life,  
my lips will speak your praise.  
So I will bless you all my life,  
in your name I will lift up my hands.  
My soul shall be filled as with a banquet,  
my mouth shall praise you with joy.

On my bed I remember you.  
On you I muse through the night  
for you have been my help;  
in the shadow of your wings I rejoice.  
My soul clings to you;  
your right hand holds me fast.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it...

### **Psalm 149**

Sing a new song to the Lord,  
his praise in the assembly of the faithful.  
Let Israel rejoice in its Maker,  
let Sion's sons exult in their king.  
Let them praise his name with dancing  
and make music with timbrel and harp.

For the Lord takes delight in his people.  
He crowns the poor with salvation.  
Let the faithful rejoice in their glory,  
shout for joy and take their rest.  
Let the praise of God be on their lips  
and a two-edged sword in their hand,  
to deal out vengeance to the nations  
and punishment on all the peoples;  
to bind their kings in chains  
and their nobles in fetters of iron;  
to carry out the sentence pre-ordained:  
this honour is for all his faithful.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it...

*(Other psalms suitable for morning prayer include Psalms 24, 67 & 100)*

### **Scripture Reading**

#### **Rm 13:11b, 12-13a**

You know what hour it is, how it is full time now for you to wake from sleep. The night is far gone, the day is at hand. Let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armour of light; let us conduct ourselves becomingly as in the day.

### **Short Responsory**

**R.** You are the Christ, Son of the living God. Have mercy on us. *(Repeat)*

**V.** You are seated at the right hand of the Father.

**R.** You are the Christ, Son of the living God. Have mercy on us.

**V.** Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

**R.** You are the Christ, Son of the living God. Have mercy on us.

### **The Benedictus (Canticle of Zechariah)**

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel!  
He has visited his people and redeemed them.

He has raised up for us a mighty saviour  
in the house of David his servant,  
as he promised by the lips of holy men,

those who were his prophets from of old.  
A saviour who would free us from our foes,  
from the hands of all who hate us.  
So his love for our fathers is fulfilled  
and his holy covenant remembered.

He swore to Abraham our father to grant us,  
that free from fear, and saved from the hands of our foes,  
we might serve him in holiness and justice  
all the days of our life in his presence.

As for you, little child,  
you shall be called a prophet of God, the Most High.  
You shall go ahead of the Lord  
to prepare his ways before him.

To make known to his people their salvation  
through forgiveness of all their sins,  
the loving kindness of the heart of our God  
who visits us like the dawn from on high.

He will give light to those in darkness,  
those who dwell in the shadow of death,  
and guide us into the way of peace.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy  
Spirit, as it...

### Intercessions

**V.** Let us pray to Christ our Lord, the sun who enlightens all people:

**R.** Lord our Saviour, give us life!

**V.** We thank you for the gift of this new day.

**R.** Lord our Saviour, give us life!

**V.** May your Holy Spirit guide us to do your will.

**R.** Lord our Saviour, give us life!

**V.** Help us to manifest your love to all those we meet.

**R.** Lord our Saviour, give us life!

**V.** Renew in us your gifts, may we go forth in peace.

**R.** Lord our Saviour, give us life!

Our Father...

### Concluding Prayer

Almighty God, you have given us this day;  
strengthen us with your power  
and keep us from falling into sin,  
so that whatever we say, or think, or do,  
may be in your service and for the sake of the kingdom.  
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ your Son,  
who lives and reigns in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
ever one God, world without end. Amen.

✚ May the Lord bless us, keep us from all evil and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.



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## PRAYERS THROUGHOUT THE DAY

### Morning Prayer of St Francis

*St Francis of Assisi (1182-1226)*

Lord, help me to live this day, quietly, easily;  
to lean on your great strength, trustfully, restfully;  
to wait for the unfolding of your will, patiently, serenely;  
to meet others, peacefully, joyfully;  
to face tomorrow, confidently, courageously.

### Prayer of St Thérèse of Lisieux

My life is but an instant, a passing hour.  
My life is but a day that escapes and flies away.  
O my God! You know that to love you on earth  
I only have today.

Lord, what does it matter if the future is gloomy?  
To pray for tomorrow, oh no, I cannot!  
Keep my heart pure, cover me with your shadow  
Just for today.

O divine Pilot! whose hand guides me.  
I'm soon to see you on the eternal shore.  
Guide my little boat over the stormy waves in peace  
Just for today.

**Prayer of Abandonment***Charles de Foucauld*

Father, I abandon myself into your hands;  
Do with me what you will.  
Whatever you may do, I thank you;  
I am ready for all, I accept all.  
Let only your will be done in me and in all your creatures.  
I wish no more than this, O Lord.  
Into your hands I commend my soul:  
I offer it to you with all the love of my heart,  
for I love you, Lord, and so need to give myself,  
to surrender myself into your hands without reserve  
and with boundless confidence, for you are my Father.

**St Patrick's Breastplate**

I bind unto myself today,  
the power of God to hold and lead,  
his eye to watch, his might to stay,  
his ear to harken to my need:  
the wisdom of my God to teach,  
his hand to guide, his shield to ward;  
the word of God to give me speech,  
his heavenly host to be my guard.  
Christ be with me, Christ within me,  
Christ behind me, Christ before me,  
Christ beside me, Christ to win me,

Christ to comfort and restore me.  
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,  
Christ in quiet, Christ in danger,  
Christ in hearts of all that love me,  
Christ in mouth of friend and stranger.

### **Prayer for Humility**

*St Alphonsus Ligouri*

Most humble Jesus, give me a share of your humility.  
Take from my heart everything that displeases you;  
convert it totally to you,  
so that I may no longer will or desire  
anything other than what you will.

### **Prayer of Thanksgiving**

We give you thanks for all your gifts,  
Almighty God, living and reigning now and forever.  
Amen.

### **Grace Before Meals**

Bless us, O Lord, and these thy gifts which we are about  
to receive through thy bounty.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

### **Prayer to our Guardian Angel**

Angel sent by God to guide me,  
be my light and walk beside me;  
be my guardian and protect me;  
on the paths of life direct me.

### **Angel of God**

Angel of God, my guardian dear,  
to whom God's love commits me here,  
ever this day (or night) be at my side,  
to light, to guard, to rule and guide. Amen.

### **Te Deum**

*Written at the beginning of the fifth century,  
perhaps by St Nicetas of Remesiana (335-415)*

You are God; we praise you;  
You are the Lord; we acclaim you;  
You are the eternal Father.  
All creation worships you.  
To you all angels, all the powers of heaven,  
Cherubim and Seraphim, sing in endless praise;  
Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
The glorious company of apostles praise you.  
The noble fellowship of prophets praise you.  
The white-robed army of martyrs praise you.  
Throughout the world the holy Church acclaim you;

Father, of majesty unbounded,  
your true and only Son, worthy of all worship,  
and the Holy Spirit, advocate and guide.  
You, Christ, are the king of glory,  
the eternal Son of the Father.  
When you became man to set us free  
you did not spurn the Virgin's womb.  
You overcame the sting of death,  
and opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers.  
You are seated at God's right hand in glory.  
We believe that you will come, and be our judge.  
Come then, Lord and help your people,  
bought with the price of your own blood,  
and bring us with your saints  
to glory everlasting.

Save your people, Lord, and bless your inheritance.  
Govern and uphold them now and always.  
Day by day we bless you.  
We praise your name for ever.  
Keep us today, Lord, from all sin.  
Have mercy on us, Lord, have mercy.  
Lord, show us your love and mercy;  
for we put our trust in you.  
In you, Lord, is our hope;  
and we shall never hope in vain.

**Act of Faith, Hope and Love**

My God, I believe in you,  
I trust in you,  
I love you above all things,  
with all my heart and mind and strength.  
I love you because you are supremely  
good and worth loving;  
and because I love you,  
I am sorry with all my heart for offending you.  
Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.  
Amen.

**Come Holy Spirit**

*The first versicle and response are taken from the alleluia  
verse before the gospel of Pentecost; the second versicle  
and response from the third antiphon for the Office of  
Readings on Pentecost and the prayer from the votive  
Mass of the Holy Spirit in the Roman Missal.*

**V.** Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful

**R.** And kindle in them the fire of your love.

**V.** Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created

**R.** And you will renew the face of the earth.

Let us pray.

Lord, by the light of your Holy Spirit  
you have taught the hearts of your faithful.

In that same Spirit  
help us to relish what is right  
and always rejoice in your consolation.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

**R. Amen.**

### **Prayer for Benefactors**

Reward those who have been good to us  
for the sake of your name, O Lord  
and give them eternal life. Amen.

### **Prayer of St Francis**

*St Francis of Assisi (1182-1226)*

Lord make me an instrument of your peace;  
where there is hatred, let me sow love;  
where there is injury, pardon;  
where there is discord, union;  
where there is doubt, faith;  
where there is despair, hope;  
where there is darkness, light;  
where there is sadness, joy;  
O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be  
consoled as to console,  
to be understood as to understand, to be loved as to love.  
For it is in giving that we receive.  
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,  
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

**Prayer for Final Perseverance***St Alphonsus Ligouri*

Our dear Redeemer,  
relying on your promises,  
because you are faithful, all-powerful and merciful,  
we hope, through the merits of your Passion,  
for the forgiveness of our sins,  
perseverance until death in your grace;  
and at length we hope, by your mercy,  
to see and love you eternally in heaven.

**Prayer for Christian Unity***John Henry Newman; adapted from  
'Meditations and Devotions.'*

O Lord Jesus Christ,  
when you were about to suffer,  
you prayed for your disciples to the end of time,  
that they might all be one,  
as you are in the Father,  
and the Father in you.  
Look down in pity on the many divisions  
among those who profess your faith and heal the wounds  
which the pride of man and the craft of Satan have  
inflicted on your people.  
Break down the walls of separation which divide one  
party and denomination of Christians from another.  
Look with compassion on the souls who have been born



in one or another of these various communions and bring them all into that one communion which you set up in the beginning: the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.

### **St Patrick's Prayer**

I arise today, through the power of the Trinity, through the faith in threeness, through trust in the oneness of the Maker of the earth, and the Maker of heaven.

### **Prayer of St Richard**

*St Richard of Chichester (1198-1253)*

Praise be to Thee, O Lord Jesus Christ,  
For all the benefits which You have given us,  
For all the pains and insults which You have borne for us.  
O most merciful Redeemer, Friend and Brother,  
May we see You more clearly, love You more dearly,  
And follow You more nearly, Day by day. Amen.

### **Prayer of St Ignatius Loyola**

*St Ignatius Loyola (1491-1556)*

Teach us Good Lord, To serve You as You deserve,  
To give and not to count the cost,  
To fight and not to heed the wounds,  
To toil and not to seek for rest,  
To labour and not to ask for any reward,  
Save that of knowing that we do Your will. Amen.

**Prayer to St Anthony for things that are lost**

O great St Anthony, who has received from God a special power to recover lost things, help me that I may find that which I am now seeking.

**An Old French Prayer for Friends**

Blessed Mother of those whose names you can read in my heart, watch over them with every care. Make their way easy and their labours fruitful. Dry their tears if they weep; sanctify their joys; raise their courage if they weaken; restore their hope if they lose heart, their health if they be ill, truth if they err, and repentance if they fall. Amen.

**Prayer of Self-Dedication to Jesus Christ (*Oblatio Sui*)**

*Ascribed to St Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556)*

Lord Jesus Christ, take all my freedom, my memory, my understanding, and my will. All that I have and cherish you have given me. I surrender it all to be guided by your will. Your grace and your love are wealth enough for me. Give me these, Lord Jesus, and I ask for nothing more.

***Oblatio Sui (Prayer of Self-Dedication to Jesus Christ)***

Suscipe, Domine, universam meam libertatem. Accipe memoriam, intellectum atque voluntatem omnem. Quidquid habeo vel possideo, mihi largitus es: id tibi totum restituo, ac tuae prorsus voluntati trado

gubernandum. Amorem tui solum cum gratia tua mihi dones, et dives sum satis, nec aliud quidquam ultra posco.

### **Evening Prayer of St Augustine**

Watch, Lord, with those who wake or weep tonight. Give the angels and saints charge over those who sleep. O Lord Jesus Christ, tend Your sick ones, rest Your weary ones, bless Your dying ones, soothe the suffering ones, pity all the afflicted ones, shield the joyful ones, and all for Your love's sake. Amen.

### **Prayer of Mother Teresa of Calcutta**

*Founder of the Missionaries of Charity (1910-1997)*

The fruit of Silence is Prayer.

The fruit of Prayer is Faith.

The fruit of Faith is Love.

The fruit of Love is Service.

### **Prayer of Daily Service**

Make us worthy, Lord, to serve our fellow men throughout the world who live and die in poverty and hunger. Give them through our hands this day their daily bread, and by our understanding love, give peace and joy. Make us, Lord, worthy to serve our brothers and sisters who are scattered all over the world, who live and die alone and poor. Give them today, using our hands, their daily bread. And, using our love, give them peace and happiness. Amen.

**Prayer of St Teresa of Avila**

My God, dispose of me, and of all that belongs to me, according to your good pleasure. Amen.

**Prayer to the Sacred Heart of Jesus**

*John Henry Cardinal Newman (1801-1890)*

Most sacred, most loving Heart of Jesus, you are concealed in the Holy Eucharist, and you bear for us still. Now, as then, you say: "With desire I have desired." I worship you with all my best love and awe, with fervent affection, with my most subdued, most resolved will. For a while you take up your abode within me. O make my heart beat with your Heart! Purify it of all that is earthly, all that is proud and sensual, of all perversity, of all disorder. So fill it with you, that neither the events of the day, nor the circumstance of the time, may have the power to ruffle it; but that in your love and your fear, it may have peace. Amen.

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## PREPARING FOR CONFESSION

### De Profundis

#### *Psalm 130*

Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord,  
Lord, hear my voice!

O let your ears be attentive  
to the voice of my pleading.

If you, O Lord, should mark our guilt,  
Lord, who would survive?

But with you is found forgiveness;  
for this we revere you.

My soul is waiting for the Lord,  
I count on his word.

My soul is longing for the Lord,  
more than watchmen for daybreak.

(Let the watchman count on daybreak  
and Israel on the Lord.)

Because with the Lord there is mercy  
and fullness of redemption,

Israel indeed he will redeem from all its iniquity.

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.

### **Act of Contrition**

*This prayer is taken from  
the revised Rite of Penance, 1974.*

My God,  
I am sorry for my sins with all my heart.  
In choosing to do wrong  
and failing to do good,  
I have sinned against you  
whom I should love above all things.  
I firmly intend,  
with your help,  
to do penance,  
to sin no more,  
and to avoid whatever leads me to sin.  
Our Saviour Jesus Christ suffered and died for us.  
In his name, my God, have mercy.  
Amen.

**Confíteor**

Confíteor Deo omnipoténti,  
beatæ Mariæ semper  
Vírugini, beáto Michaéli  
Archángelo, beáto Ioánni  
Baptístæ, sanctis apóstolis  
Petro et Paulo, ómnibus  
Sanctis, et vobis, fratres:  
quia peccávi nimis  
cogitatióne, verbo et ópere:  
mea culpa, mea culpa, mea  
máxima culpa.

Ideo precor beátam Mariám  
semper Víriginem, béatum  
Michaélem Archángelum,  
beátum Ioánnem Baptístam,  
sanctos apóstolos Petrum et  
Paulum, omnes Sanctos, et  
vos, fratres, oráre pro me ad  
Dómimum, Deum nostrum.

**I Confess**

I confess to almighty God,  
to blessed Mary ever Virgin,  
to blessed Michael the  
archangel, to blessed John  
the Baptist, to the holy  
apostles Peter and Paul, and  
to all the saints, that I have  
sinned exceedingly in  
thought, word and deed,  
through my fault, through  
my fault, through my most  
grievous fault. Therefore, I  
beseech blessed Mary ever  
Virgin, blessed Michael the  
archangel, blessed John the  
Baptist, the holy apostles  
Peter and Paul, and all the  
saints, to pray for me to the  
Lord our God.

### **Act of Contrition**

*St John Chrysostom (adapted)*

O God, loose, remit, and forgive my sins against you,  
whether in word, in deed, or in thought;  
and whether they are willingly or unwillingly,  
knowingly or unknowingly committed, forgive them all.  
For you are good and you love all human beings.  
And through the prayers of your most holy Mother,  
or your heavenly servants and holy spirits,  
and all the Saints who have found favour with you,  
enable me to receive without condemnation your holy  
Body and your Precious Blood.  
Let my soul and body be thus healed and my evil  
imaginings be driven away,  
for yours is the kingdom,  
the power, and the glory: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,  
now and forever. Amen

### **Prayer of Firm Purpose of Amendment**

*Prayer of St Benedict of Nursia (480-547)*

O Lord, I place myself in your hands and dedicate myself  
to you. I pledge myself to do your will in all things: To  
love the Lord God with all my heart, all my soul, all my  
strength. Not to kill. Not to steal. Not to covet. Not to bear  
false witness. To honour all persons. Not to do to another  
what I would not wish done to myself. To chastise the  
body. Not to seek after pleasures. To love fasting. To



relieve the poor. To clothe the naked. To visit the sick. To bury the dead. To help in trouble. To console the sorrowing. To hold myself aloof from worldly ways. To prefer nothing to the love of Christ. Not to give way to anger. Not to foster a desire for revenge. Not to entertain deceit in the heart. Not to make a false peace. Not to forsake charity. Not to swear, lest I swear falsely. To speak the truth with heart and tongue. Not to return evil for evil. To do no injury: yes, even to bear patiently any injury done to me. To love my enemies. Not to curse those who curse me, but rather to bless them. To bear persecution for justice's sake. Not to be proud. Not to be given to intoxicating drink. Not to be an over-eater. Not to be lazy. Not to be slothful. Not to be a murmurer. Not to be a detractor. To put my trust in God. To refer the good I see in myself to God. To refer any evil in myself to myself. To fear the day of judgement. To be in dread of hell. To desire eternal life with spiritual longing. To keep death before my eyes daily. To keep constant watch over my actions. To remember that God sees me everywhere. To call upon Christ for defence against evil thoughts that arise in my heart. To guard my tongue against wicked speech. To avoid much speaking. To avoid idle talk. To read only what is good to read. To look at only what is good to see. To pray often. To ask forgiveness daily for my sins, and to seek ways to amend my life. To obey my superiors in all things rightful. Not to desire to be thought holy, but to

seek holiness. To fulfill the commandments of God by good works. To love chastity. To hate no one. Not to be jealous or envious of anyone. Not to love strife. Not to love pride. To honour the aged. To pray for my enemies. To make peace after a quarrel, before the setting of the sun. Never to despair of your mercy, O God of Mercy. Amen.

### **Prayer for Divine Mercy**

*From the Diary of Saint Maria Faustina of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy (1905-1938)*

O Greatly Merciful God, Infinite Goodness, today all mankind calls out from the abyss of its misery to Your mercy - to Your compassion, O God; and it is with its mighty voice of misery that it cries out: Gracious God, do not reject the prayer of this earth's exiles! O Lord, Goodness beyond our understanding. Who are acquainted with our misery through and through, and know that by our power we cannot ascend to You, we implore You, anticipate us with Your grace and keep on increasing Your mercy in us, that we may faithfully do Your holy will all through our life and at death's hour. Let the omnipotence of Your mercy shield us from the darts of our salvation's enemies, that we may with confidence, as Your children, await Your final coming - that day known to You alone. And we expect to obtain everything promised us by Jesus in spite of all our wretchedness. For Jesus is our Hope: Through His merciful Heart as through an open gate we pass through to heaven.

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## PREPARING FOR MASS AND HOLY COMMUNION

### Prayer of St Ambrose

*Preparation for Mass; attributed to St Ambrose  
(c. 339-397), bishop of Milan*

Lord Jesus Christ,

I approach your banquet table in fear and trembling,  
for I am a sinner and dare not rely on my own worth  
but only on your goodness and mercy.

I am defiled by many sins in body and soul  
and by my unguarded thoughts and words.

Gracious God of majesty and awe,

I seek your protection,

I look for your healing.

Poor troubled sinner that I am,

I appeal to you, the fountain of all mercy.

I cannot bear your judgement,

but I trust in your salvation.

Lord, I show my wounds to you  
and uncover my shame before you.

I know my sins are many and great  
and they fill me with fear,

but I hope in your mercies,

for they cannot be numbered.

Lord Jesus Christ, eternal king,

divine and human,  
crucified for humanity,  
look upon me with mercy and hear my prayer,  
for I trust in you...  
Have mercy on me,  
full of sorrow and sin,  
for the depth of your compassion never ends.  
Praise to you, saving sacrifice,  
offered on the wood of the cross for me and for all.  
Praise to the noble and precious blood  
flowing from the wounds of my crucified Lord,  
Jesus Christ and washing away the sins of the  
whole world.  
Remember, Lord, your creatures,  
whom you have redeemed with your blood.  
I repent of my sins  
and I long to put right what I have done.  
Merciful Lord, take away all my offences and sins;  
purify me in body and soul,  
and make me worthy to taste the holy of holies.  
May your body and blood,  
which I intend to receive, although I am unworthy,  
be for me the remission of my sins,  
the washing away of my guilt,  
the end of my evil thoughts  
and the rebirth of my better instincts.

May it spur me on to works pleasing to you and be profitable to my health in body and soul and a firm defence against the wiles of my enemies.

Amen.

### **Prayer of St Augustine**

Lord Jesus, let me know myself and know you,

And desire nothing, save only you.

Let me hate myself and love you.

Let me do everything for the sake of you.

Let me humble myself and exalt you.

Let me think of nothing except you.

Let me accept whatever happens as from you.

Let me banish self and follow you,

And ever desire to follow you.

Let me fly from myself and take refuge in you,

That I may deserve to be defended by you.

Let me fear for myself, let me fear you,

And let me be among those who are chosen by you.

Let me be willing to obey for the sake of you.

Let me cling to nothing, save only to you,

And let me be poor because of you.

Look upon me, that I may love you.

Call me, that I may see you,

And for ever enjoy you. Amen.

**Prayer of St Thomas Aquinas**

*Preparation for Mass; attributed to St Thomas Aquinas  
(c. 1225-1274)*

Almighty and ever-living God,  
I approach the sacrament of your only-begotten Son,  
our Lord Jesus Christ.

I come sick to the doctor of life,  
unclean to the fountain of mercy,  
blind to the radiance of eternal light,  
poor and needy to the Lord of heaven and earth.

Lord in your great generosity,  
heal my sickness, wash away my defilement,  
enlighten my blindness, enrich my poverty,  
and clothe my nakedness.

May I receive the bread of angels,  
the King of kings and Lord of lords,  
with humble reverence,  
with purity and faith,  
with the repentance and love  
and the determined purpose  
that will help to bring me to salvation.

May I receive the sacrament of the Lord's  
body and blood  
and its reality and power.

Kind God,  
may I receive the body of your only begotten Son,  
our Lord Jesus Christ,

born from the womb of the Virgin Mary,  
and so be received into his mystical body  
and numbered among his members.

Loving Father,

as on my earthly pilgrimage

I now receive your beloved Son

under the veil of a sacrament,

may I one day see him face to face in glory,

who lives and reigns with you for ever.

Amen.

### **Adoro Te Devote (Latin version)**

*Attributed to St Thomas Aquinas (c. 1225-1274)*

Adóro te devóte, latens Déitas,  
Quæ sub his figúris vere látitas:  
Tibi se cor meum totum súbiicit,  
Quia te contéplans totum déficit.

Visus, tactus, gustus in te fállitur,  
Sed audítu solo tuto crédito.  
Credo, quidquid dixit Dei Fílius:  
Nic hoc verbo Veritátis vérius.

In cruce latébat sola Déitas,  
At hic latet simul et humánitas;  
Ambo tamen credens atque cónfitens,  
Peto quod petívit latro paénitens.

Plagas, sicut Thomas, non intúeor;  
Deum tamen meum te confíteor.

Fac me tibi semper magis credere,  
In te spem habere, te diligere.

O memoriále mortis Dómini!  
Panis vivus, vitam præstans hómini!  
Præsta meæ menti de te vivere.  
Et te illi semper dulce sápere.

Pie pellicáne, Iesu Dómine,  
Me immúndum munda tuo ságuine.  
Cuius una stilla salvum fácere  
Totum mundum quit ab omni scélere.

Iesu, quem velátum nunc aspício,  
Oro fiat illud quod tam sítio;  
Ut te reveláta cernens fácie,  
Visu sim beátus tuæ glóriæ. Amen.

### **Adoro Te Devote (English version)**

*Attributed to St Thomas Aquinas (c. 1225-1274)*

Hidden here before me, Lord, I worship you,  
Hidden in these symbols, yet completely true.  
Lord, my soul surrenders, I longing to obey,  
And in contemplation wholly faints away.

Seeing, touching, tasting; these are all deceived;  
Only through the hearing can it be believed.  
Nothing is more certain; Christ has told me so;  
What the Truth has uttered, I believe and know.



Only God was hidden when you came to die;  
Human nature also here escapes the eye.  
Both are my profession, both are my belief;  
Bring me to your Kingdom like the dying thief.

I am not like Thomas, who could see and touch;  
Though your wounds are hidden, I believe as much.  
Let me say so boldly, meaning what I say.  
Loving you and trusting, now and every day.

Record of the Passion when the Lamb was slain,  
Living bread that brings us back to life again;  
Feed me with your presence, make me live on you;  
Let that lovely fragrance fill me through and through.

Once a nesting pelican gashed herself to blood  
For the preservation of her starving brood;  
Now heal me with your blood, take away my guilt;  
All the world is ransomed if one drop is spilt.

Jesus, for the present seen as through a mask,  
Give me what I thirst for, give me what I ask;  
Let me see your glory in a blaze of light,  
And instead of blindness give me, Lord, my sight.  
Amen.

**The Prayer of Humble Access**

*The Book of Common Prayer, based on a prayer of  
St Ambrose*

We do not presume to come to this your table,  
O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness,  
but in your many and great mercies.  
We are not worthy even to gather up  
the crumbs under your table.

But you are the same God whose property  
is always to have mercy:  
grant us, therefore, gracious Lord,  
so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ,  
and to drink his blood,  
that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body,  
and our souls washed through his most precious blood,  
and that we may evermore dwell in him and he in us.

**Prayer of Thomas à Kempis**

Lord Jesus Christ,  
to whom belongs all that is in heaven and earth,  
I desire to consecrate myself wholly to you and be yours  
for evermore.  
This day I offer myself to you in singleness of heart,  
to serve and obey you always,  
and I offer you without ceasing a sacrifice of praise and  
thanksgiving.

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