

# Book Of Prayers

"I was a revolutionary when I was young and all my prayer to God was 'Lord, give me the energy to change the world.'

"As I approached middle age and realized that half my life was gone without my changing a single soul, I changed my prayer to 'Lord, give me the grace to change all those who come in contact with me. Just my family and friends, and I shall be satisfied.'

"Now that I am an old man and my days are numbered, my one prayer is, 'Lord, give me the grace to change myself.' If I had prayed for this right from the start I should not have wasted my life." (Bayazid)15

## CONTRIBUTORS

## FOREWORD

## PREFACE

## Guidelines for Lay Prayer at Base Events

## 1. SPECIAL RELIGIOUS DAY/SEASONS

Advent

All Saints Day

Christmas Eve

Christmas

Christmas/Hanukkah

Hanukkah

Epiphany

Sundays after Christmas

First Sunday After Christmas

Season After Epiphany

Lent

Ash Wednesday

Holy Week

Palm Sunday  
Maundy Thursday  
Good Friday  
The Easter Vigil  
Easter Sunday  
Passover  
Pentecost  
Season After Pentecost  
Ramadan  
Rosh Hashanah  
Rosh Hashanah and Tishrei  
Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur  
Yom Kippur  
Shavuot  
Trinity Season

## 2. PATRIOTIC/NON RELIGIOUS SPECIAL DAYS

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Earth Day  
Father's Day  
Flag Day  
Independence Day  
Labor Day  
Lincoln's Birthday  
Martin Luther King, Jr Day  
Memorial Day  
Mother's Day  
New Year's Day  
Prayer For The Nation  
Prayer For National Leaders  
Scout Sunday  
Secretaries Day  
Thanksgiving Day  
Thanksgiving Interfaith Service  
Thanksgiving Proclamation of President George Washington  
United Nations Day  
Valentine's Day  
Veteran's Day  
Washington's Birthday

## 3. ATHLETIC EVENTS

Air Force Academy Sports Dinner

Athletic Awards Banquet  
Athletic Event  
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Little League Opening Ceremonies  
Softball Tournament Banquet  
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#### 4. MEMORIAL/FUNERAL SERVICES

Christian Memorial Service  
Death After A Long Illness  
Death Which is Sudden  
Death of a Chaplain  
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Death of a Young Child  
Death of an Elderly Person  
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DUI Death Anniversary  
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Prayer at Death of Eastern Orthodox Airman  
Prayer at Death of Jewish Airman  
Prayer at Death of Muslim Airman  
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DEDICATIONS  
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BX/Commissary

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Credit Union

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Family Support Center

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Home

Housing Area

Learning Center

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Memorial

Memorial Park

Military Dining Facility

Organ

Plaque

PME Center

Recreation Center

School of Aerospace Medicine

#### **GROUND BREAKING**

Community Chapel And Child Care Center

Medical Center Organizational Ceremony

Medical Facility

New Dormitory

Rededication of the AF Chaplain Service Institute

## **6. AWARDS/CLASS GRADUATIONS**

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Awards Banquet

Baccalaureate

Community College Of The Air Force Graduation

Eagle Scout Court Of Honor

Graduations

National Defense University Capstone Class

NCO Academy

Officer Trainee Commissioning Ceremony

Outstanding Student Leadership Awards Luncheon

Pilot Training Graduation:

PME Graduation

Ranger Graduation

Recognition

ROTC Graduation

Senior NCO Academy Graduation

## 7. CLASSIC/HISTORICAL

Thomas Aquinas

Karl Barth

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

John Calvin

Glenn Clark

Chaplain William B. Downey At The Preflight Briefing Of The Enola Gay

St Ephraim

St Francis Of Assisi

Thomas Jefferson's Prayer For The Nation

Martin Luther King, Jr

Abraham Lincoln's Prayer For The Nation

Ignatius Loyola

Martin Luther

Martin Luther's Sacristy Prayer

Gen Douglas MacArthur - An Old Soldier's Prayer

Dwight L. Moody

John Henry Newman

Reinhold Niebuhr

Henri Nouwen

Chaplain James H. O'Neill's Prayer At The Battle Of The Bulge

Paul's Prayer For The Ephesians (Eph 3:14-21)

Mother Teresa

George Washington's Prayer For The Nation

John Wesley

Anonymous Confederate Soldier

Coventry Cathedral Prayer

Cry For Help (Psalm 42:1-6)

"High Flight" By John Gillespie Magee, Jr

Irish Blessing

Praise For Creation (Psalm 8)

Prayer For A Godly Nation (Psalm 33:10-22)

Prayer Found in The St Thomas of Canterbury Chapel of Dover Castle

Prayer Of Blessing (Numbers 6:24-26)

Prayer Of Confession (Psalm 51:1-13)

Seventeenth Century Nun

The American Soldier (SSgt Roy W. Villers, USAFR)

The Lord's Prayer (Matt. 6:9-13)

General Dwight D. Eisenhower

Alfred Lord Tennyson: Morte d'Arthur

An Old English Prayer

## 8. SICK AND LONELY

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Blessing During Pregnancy (Mother)  
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Blessing of an Airplane  
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For a Separation  
For a Spirit of Thanksgiving  
For Courage  
For Divine Protection  
For Family Life  
For Forgiveness  
For Hope  
For Neighbor - Love  
For One in Dire Extremity  
For Patience  
For Peace  
For People in Poor Nations  
For Purity  
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For Renewed Dedication  
For Stewardship of the Earth  
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For the Church  
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Meditation

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Meditation

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Meditation

Prayer

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Meditation

Prayer

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Meditation

Prayer

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Meditation

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The "Essence" Of Judaism (From The Talmud: Makkos)  
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## **SPECIAL RELIGIOUS DAY/SEASONS**

## Advent

Almighty God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last days, when He shall come again, to judge both the quick and the dead, we may rise to life immortal; through him who liveth and reigneth with thee and they Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.

Eternal God, who has given us the church and its holy days for our preparation and inspiration; may these days of Advent help keep us focused on whose birthday we celebrate at Christmas time, the fact that our presence is more important than our presents, and that we can help bring peace and good will to all. Amen.13 (J.B.)

O God, for whose deliverance people had been praying for centuries, we pause in this Advent season to thank you for the enlightenment and answer to their prayers that came to our spiritual forebears in and through the life of Jesus. For he indeed revealed in his life and teachings your love and amazing grace, your will and ways, and showed humankind how to love you by loving others as well as ourselves. May the spirit of this wonderful counselor be evident in our lives during these days before Christmas. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Creator God, who comes to us again and again through the marvels of nature, in the person of Jesus, through the voice of conscience, and through your Spirit that dwells within us: make us receptive during these days of Advent to your still, small voice that calls us from childishness to childlikeness, from fear to faith, from greed to generosity, and from a life that is self-centered to one that is centered in you, the ground of our being. For we want our lives to reflect the spirit of the one whose birth soon will be celebrated! Amen.13 (J. B.)

Loving and faithful God, who loves us even when we are unloving and unlovable and who does not forsake us even when we turn our backs on you; we gather to worship and praise you for this Advent season. May the meaning and message of Christmas on which we focus in these days of preparation inspire us to be more loving and faithful both to you and others. Thank you, O God, for the birth and life of the one in whom we see your love and faithfulness incarnated, even Jesus, the Christ. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Ever-coming yet ever-present God, we gather to prepare ourselves for the celebration of Jesus' birth. For we need your help in preventing the pace, parties, and presents of this season from crowding out the true purpose of Christmas in our lives - the rebirth of the Christ's spirit which is hope, peace, and joy. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest! Once again, Lord God, we approach the birthday of your clarion Child, your Suffering Servant, your messenger Christ. Once again we make a place for him, however cluttered it may be with the pieces of our broken dreams, with unfinished resolves and fragments of love. Once again the bed we lay for him is as poor as any manger. But, Father of us all, we pray that he will come among us nonetheless, that his goodness will take hold in our hearts, his grace infect our wills, and his glory once more capture our imaginations. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest! Amen.1

O Lord, the watchmen of ten thousand times ten thousand cities, publish to the winter night the news of thy coming. Even so, we praise thee, Word of light to our darkness, Word of peace to our warfare, Word of love to our fear. Let carols sing, let prayers adore, let the whole earth rejoice and declare thee. Thou art fire and garland. Thou art the good Shepherd and the true King. With angels and archangels we adore thee, world without end. Amen.1

Lord of the Advent, holy Invader, time's Comforter, O blessed Trinity: in thee all that ever was and is and shall be is made for shining. So do we praise thee for thy rage toward order before the universe was formed; so do we rejoice in the brightness of thy rising against all evil days; so do we praise thy coming in tirelessness to capture time by love. In this dark century make us thy watchmen to proclaim thy light, set us as servants to prepare a table before thee, and in our human wilderness move us to clear a highway for our God. Amen.1

Lord, thy season comes, thy fire, thy shout across our lonely night, and we are not ready. Alas, we are in a winter of fears; we are cold toward the stranger; we crowd toward emptiness. Caught up in the safe and mediocre, we avoid the vision; we miss the burning; we are deaf to the songs. We are ashamed. Now in this Advent we cry thy mercy and beseech thee that in us, once more, thy weather might browse and blow. Yea come, and grant us thy salvation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.1

Lord, there is winter in us and grievous loneliness and dark that does not go away. Our souls ache, our understanding blurs, our sins increase; and in this season of thy coming we learn again how we have made a waste-land of the human heart and engaged in labors that do not satisfy. Come now, O Beloved, to our wilderness. Make in us the crooked paths straight and the rough places plain, and let your major voice that speaks comfort to our despair speak in us also the word of hope whereby we can enter our days with trust and the hours of our deaths with spacious expectation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.1

Blessed Lord, in this season of thy coming the darkness in us deepens awaiting thy light, the evil in us trembles expecting thy mercy, the knowledge in us falters hearing thy truth. O we have sinned against innocence, forgotten human sorrow, denied pity, excused our-selves from love, and shunned holiness. Assail us by the bright blows of thy grace and make us teachable, that we may learn again the peace that comes on earth to people of goodwill; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.1

O Lord, in this alien time, this out-of-season century, this age absurd and wonderful and lost, we cry thy name whose name we cannot cry. O thou who art always coming, come! And give our voices praise and our eyes thy mystery. Let us taste thee in all our winter loneliness, and let us hear thee as a shout against our long despair - till touched by grace our griefs become our joys. Teach us to run with shepherds and to kneel with kings. Amen.1

Come, Holy One, who hastens us now with cumbersome shepherds unto Bethlehem, come and abide in us that we learn again the things that make for our peace. Give us that listening which hears thy compassion moving through all human loneliness, and in the midst of the high music turn us towards the anguish of others. In the snowfall air, in the anxious dark, keep us open to neighbor and stranger, to angels and kings; and make us all ready for Christ's morning over Herod's earth. Amen.1

Teach us, Lord God, how to wait faithfully and actively for the time of your coming. As we hear the celebrations sung through the ages, remind us that the tidings of great joy are being sung to our age as well, if we will but hear them and heed them. Prepare us to receive Christ when he comes to us as the innocent, as the jobless who has no place in our system, as the villager crucified by our weapons, as the stranger turned away from our friendship. Wherever he comes, in whatever guise, help us, Lord God, to know him, and knowing him to make a place for him in our hearts and in our lives. We pray in his own name and power. Amen.1

Gracious Lord Jesus Christ, our host at every celebration of thy birth among us: do thou preside over our rites of joy during the holy days of Christmas. Purify our every desire; make all our giving an act of love and not a duty only; be present at our tables to teach us love for our loved ones; restrain us with the remembrance of those in the world whose need is as boundless as our abundance; and give us a holy joy in keeping this feast. So be our host and help us to celebrate thy coming in Bethlehem by being ready to receive thy coming in glory. Amen.1

(First Sunday) Almighty God, who is from everlasting to everlasting, we worship you this day. In this too-busy season of the year, we step aside from the hurried and hectic pace of our lives to focus on what is truly important; we gather before you to seek your presence, to ask your forgiveness of our sins, and to intercede for others. We praise you for the fruitful earth, for the liberty we enjoy to worship and work, for family and friends who make our lives more complete. Yet we know, divine Father, that a full and complete life comes only through relationship with you through Christ our Lord. In this season of Advent — as we recall the Incarnation

and as we look forward to Christ's second coming as King and Lord of history — help us to open our hearts that Christ might come anew and afresh into our lives. May Advent truly happen within our hearts this day, as we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.6

(Second Sunday) Heavenly Father, creator and preserver of all, we gather before you in humility and gratitude. We praise you without ceasing, for you have forgiven our sin and made us your children, joint heirs with Christ. In this Advent season, we pray that you would prepare us anew and afresh for Christ's arrival. Too often we have allowed our attention to be turned away, our priorities to be disrupted; we have focused our energies on that which is secondary and temporary. Draw us again, O Lord, to Bethlehem; bring us anew, O Lord, to Calvary. Create within us a spirit of expectancy and openness to the Christ child; give us hearts of commitment and faithfulness toward the risen Christ. Prepare us to meet our Savior with new vitality, new courage, and new obedience. And even as you prepare our hearts to host Christ, prepare us to be dynamic witnesses to his good news, for we ask it in his name. Amen.6

(Third Sunday) Almighty God, our creator and our redeemer, we praise your glory; we rejoice in your loving-kindness. Surely you are our salvation; apart from you there is no hope in this life or the next. Enable us in this Christmas season to be faithful witnesses of your love and grace. All around us are persons caught up in the pushing and shoving, the anxiety and anger that seem so inconsistent with a season of peace; empower us to offer a stronger and finer example, that we might reflect the love of Christ to a loveless world. In this season filled with songs of love and joy, let us not forget that Christmas is a time of true happiness only as our lives are given to you in repentance and faith. May we come to know you more fully in these days, and may we demonstrate that knowledge day by day as we live for Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.6

(Fourth Sunday) Almighty God and everlasting Father, we have seen your light and have come to worship you. We have seen your light in the lives of Christian brothers and sisters, who have willingly sacrificed themselves in response to your call. We have seen your light in the lives of those who have been transformed by your grace, whose lives have moved from hopelessness to hope, from anger to love, from sin to salvation. And we have seen your light most perfectly displayed in your Son and our Savior, Jesus Christ — who stepped out of heaven's glories to share in our earthly experience; who taught a new way of life, characterized by love and forgiveness; who gave his own life for our true humanity. In these days of Christmas, help us to lay aside the season's tumult and frustration; help us to see Jesus only, and in the seeing may we be transformed by his holy light. For we pray in his most precious name. Amen.6

We journey toward Bethlehem, O God, where you will reveal the glory of heaven and the hope of earth. May the light of your glory brighten our path to the future, and may the brilliance of your hope beckon us to new beginnings.6

Almighty God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last days, when He shall come again to judge both the quick and the dead, we may rise to life immortal; through Him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, now and ever. Amen.

O God, Christmas will be here in \_\_\_ days. This morning help us face the question of whether or not we will be ready for Christmas. But help us consider the question not from the perspective of will our presents be purchased, our cards and packages be mailed, our baking done. Rather, will we really be prepared? Will we have rethought the deeper meaning Christmas? Will it dawn on us anew that Christmas means that you are always with us; that in Jesus we find the human example of how we are meant to live; that the greatest gifts we can give and receive are love, joy, peace, and hope? Only \_\_\_ more days. But thank you, God, that we don't have to wait. We can begin living Christmas right now! Amen.13 (J. B.)

Creator God, Source of all that we have and are, Sovereign of peace, Strength of our lives, Sustainer of the universe: in the humility of the shepherds and the expectancy of the Magi we prayerfully pause in your presence.



We humbly bow before you because we recognize that life and light and love came down in a special way at Christmas. We are reminded during these December days that in the one who was born in Bethlehem we see human life as it is meant to be lived; we find light that pierces the gloom and enables us to cope with and overcome even the most difficult circumstances that come our way; and we are reminded that no matter who or what we are we are lovable and loved by you, our Creator, and thus we can love ourselves and others. And, Great and Gracious God, we are expectant today because we are aware that Christmas brings out the best in ourselves and in others. We know that we enjoy life much more when we and others are more concerned to: give than to receive, forgive than to harbor grudges, love than to be indifferent, cheer than to chastise. We pray that Christmas for us will be not just a day but a spirit that we will keep alive throughout the year because we continually invite the Babe of Bethlehem to be born anew in and then to be expressed through our lives. Amen. 13 (J. B.)

Great, gracious, and giving God, whose gift of Jesus we celebrate during this season as we prepare for the anniversary of his birth; as the shepherds and Magi left their fields and homes to worship the Christ child, so we have come to this sanctuary to worship you. We praise and thank you this day, O God, for the revelation of your will and ways for our lives that was bundled in the Babe of Bethlehem. For as he grew in wisdom and stature and in favor with you and others, people ever since have witnessed the incarnation of how you want us to live. How grateful we are for the human example of one: who loved you and himself enough so that he could love even those whom he did not like, who resisted the temptations that he experienced, who shared his deepest feelings and desires with you in prayer, who enjoyed the company of others because he knew that alone he was incomplete, who forgave those who wronged him, who found meaning and purpose in life by being there for others. Forgive us for the times and ways in which, during the past week, we failed to emulate the example of Jesus. Strengthen us and renew our resolve in the days to come to give birth to Jesus' spirit, to be the hands and feet and mouth and heart - the body of Christ - as in gratitude we offer you, O God, the gift of our lives. Amen. 13 (J. B.)

Chaplain: We gather this night to receive the Holy Child into our midst.

**Congregation: Open our hearts, Lord, and fill us with hope.**

Chaplain: We have often forgotten the true meaning of Christmas, allowing the focus of our eyes to drift toward gifts and decorations.

**Congregation: Remind us, Lord, of the true meaning of Christmas.**

Chaplain: Let peace and joy abound among us, drowning every vestige of gloom and sorrow.

**Congregation: Begin a celebration within us, O Lord, that we may discover joy in this season.**

Chaplain: Let love and harmony dwell among us, washing away our selfishness, and binding us to one another.

**Congregation: We have not always lived according to your way, Lord. Make us children again this night that the magic of Christmas might begin in each of us a dance of trust which knows no end.**

**Unison:** Thus, in faith, we celebrate in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.\*\*

Almighty Father, since you sent Jesus to be our Savior, we know that you dearly love us. For this we give you thanks. Sometimes we act so selfishly, Father, and after we have done it we stop and ask ourselves why we behave that way. We are ashamed of our behavior and ask you to forgive us. May we want to see you and be with you. May we want you so much that we see you in every human being around us. May we see you in some because they are strong in the faith. May we see you in others when they are weak in their need. Come to us, Lord Jesus, through our sisters. Come to us, Lord Jesus, through our brothers. Come to us, Lord Jesus, through our own joy and sorrow; through our own pain and peace. Come to us, Lord Jesus, in any way you can. But, do help us to want you to come so much that we will continue to look for you with eager expectation. Come to us in the meeting of the need of (pray for special requests). Come to us in this Advent Season, dear Jesus. Amen.

O Lord, how soon we forget the reason for the season which we so recently celebrated. We know that the Advent of a new year does not erase all difficulties or old problems. Help us, however, to face life with new courage, new enthusiasm, and new assurance. May we renew ourselves in the basics of our faith. Remind us that

the property of newness runs through the whole economy of grace. May we face this new year with clear eyes and firm faith. May this new year be a new beginning - a beginning filled with order, meaning and purpose. Bless airmen and their families all over the world. Bless this food to our use and us to useful service. In thy name we pray. Amen.

***Advent candles may be lighted as the leader says:***

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation: in the darkness and in the light. Blessed are you in this food and in our sharing. Blessed are you as we wait in joyful hope for the coming of our savior, Jesus Christ.

**ALL: For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever.**

LEADER: Come, Lord Jesus!

**ALL: Come quickly!**

O Lord, during this season we thank you for the gift of Yourself. By Your presence we are humbled. We are blessed. For the gift of new births that add special meaning to this season, and for the privileges that are ours to witness to serve others in the spirit of divine love, we thank you. May we be more keenly aware of the many opportunities that are ours to serve – to give extra care to relationships that are fragile, to remember the often forgotten, to hear the cries of the lonely and to take time to be with those we love. Be present in a special way with those who in this season find depression, despair, and pain in the midst of their experiences of loss, loneliness or hopelessness. May they find again the gift of Your love and the fulfilled promise of Your peace. Be a protection for those who travel or may face danger during this season; be a presence to those who are away from home and loved ones; and, go before us into the next year as our eternal Guide. Amen.

## All Saints Day

O Lord our God, we rejoice in the communion of all thy saints, of prophets and apostles, of martyrs steadfast under trial and ordinary men and women who were found. Enable us, we pray, to draw inspiration and courage from them, and in our own lives to praise thee for the eternal joy that is both theirs and ours. Amen.<sup>1</sup>

O God of the living and God of the dead, we come before you now in prayer. We trust that you are leading us and teaching us, and we bend our ear now to hear your word in our lives.

(Sacred Pause)

Death is frightening and filled with mystery. We understand so little of what comes after life, and we grip our lives in fear. Like a child afraid of the dark, we aren't sure that what we will find after death is light and we are so afraid! We pray now for courage, for understanding, and for faith. We pray for the courage to die to ourselves while we live, so that we might come closer to you and be near your heart when we finally die. We pray for understanding of this mystery so that we can guide others to your holy presence and assure them of your love. And we pray for faith, faith to believe in you more deeply, faith to embrace death: our own and our neighbors' with conviction and strength. Above all, O God of love and peace, we offer you our lives now, so that when the time is ours, we can also offer you our death.<sup>12</sup>

## Christmas Eve

Lord of the Christmas, whose largess enfolds us and whose mercies redeem us, we have dealt casually with thy coming among us and have turned each one to his own way. In the presence of spaciousness we have put on the small mind and shown the closed fist. Now in thee may our evil ways be scattered and our sins dispersed. Put far from us the lusts that harass us and the several greeds that control us. And gather us joyfully to thy high table where, in the food and drink of heaven, we shall know thy salvation for all peoples through the things of earth; through Jesus Christ, the Son of the Most High. Amen.1

Lord, who in our wintertime sends Jesus to harry our countryside by grace and to refresh our tired cities as a fair wind: how can we but offer praises and glad hearts - for he shall dazzle us from the heights, yet settle close by us where we agonize and dream. So may we, in families and in neighborhoods across the world, find his mercy in our hearts and his jubilation, high and angel-tongued, a music in our flesh. Now in this bread and wine, broken and shared, let the major feast begin; and to thy name be honor and glory, dominion and power, forever and ever. Amen.1

Thou who gives us bread and drink and thereby heaven in our flesh and fire to burn away our dross: prepare us mightily to know together and with all the nations thy comfort, timeless and unbegun, brimming and now. Urge in us every desire to enact thy word of love among those who are cast down, and send us forth to liberate the captives. Persuade us to the majesties of hope within us waiting to be born, and against the murk of indifference that surrounds us; let us with Christ be bearers of the light. Amen.1

Praise to thee, thou far, thou near, for the mystery of thyself which begins, orders, and holds the utmost margins of space and time and all that lies therein, and for the gift of thyself that is resident among us, the Spirit that breathes into our being ancient strength and new possibilities! Praise, thou Incarnate, thou Son of man, for love made flesh and mercy walking and death undone! Praise, praise, praise, as the holy bread reaches us into timelessness and the eternal wine fires us to heal the sick and set the prisoners free! Amen.1

Blessed Lord, who hath chosen earth as thy cradle and broken heaven in upon our drear captivity to sin and death: discover in us whatever grieves for the world's anguish, and deepen our sorrow for what we have done evilly to one another and for what we have neglected in the need of neighbor and stranger. Move us to a mighty repentance. Remove from within us the comfortable lies and the arrogance by which we have prevented the world's peace and damaged goodwill among the nations. Then set our hearts toward Bethlehem. Amen.1

Ah, Jesukin, who in a rude barn gathers all creation: what shall we bring thee but sweet praise - for thou art the Word of heaven spoken across centuries; thou art the true Light who scans our darkness and scatters our despair; thou art the Savior who declares for the poor and brings hope to them that are cast down. At Christmas time, in the astonished nights and the holy mornings, all that is shall praise thee. Yea, with archangels and great kings, with sparrows and shepherd folk, all tongues shall sing thee. Let the brimming world repeat the sounding joy. Glory to God in the highest! Amen.1

Creating, loving, holy God, your Spirit, will, and ways clearly and unforgettably were revealed in the life and teachings of the one whose birth we celebrate within the hour. We pause, therefore, bathed in the light of the Christmas star, to examine whether or not our lives silhouette your image in which we have been created. This evening we would unwrap the baby Jesus from his swaddling clothes and let him grow into the one who became the Christ and our Redeemer. Thus on this Christmas Eve we ask some Christmas questions. Jesus saw the good and the potential in others. Do we? Jesus knew that it is when we give that we receive. Do we? Jesus helped people just because they were human beings, not because of who or what they were. Do we? Jesus knew who he was and thus sought to show his love and devotion to you by loving you with heart, soul, mind, and strength, and his neighbors as himself. Do we? May we truly celebrate Christmas tomorrow and then keep alive the spirit of Christmas by daily emulating the one whose name we bear and in whose spirit we pray - the Babe of Bethlehem who became the Savior of us all. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Heavenly Father, open our hearts to hear the song of the angels and to share the spirit of a peaceable Christmas. O Lord, make your salvation known to people the world over. As darkness descends from East to West, raise up you faithful in carols of praise and good cheer. Cause us to rejoice with them that we have not been abandoned to the night, but are now called to the light - your grace and truth, once wrapped in swaddling clothes and held closely to the chest by those who treasured the gift to mankind that was entrusted to their care and keeping. O Lord, we pray for the precious little ones of the earth. Help us to create for them a world of possibility and hope. Keep us from giving up and giving in - for they feel the touch of our decision. Bless us all in our many moods this night, O Lord, and grant us you peace. Amen.

How easy it is to pray tonight, O God. This season, and Christmas Eve especially, makes us feel unusually close to you and to one another. Perhaps it is because Christmas heightens in us those feelings that are so in harmony with your spirit: love, compassion, joy, gratitude, expectancy, hope. Whatever the case, we are experiencing the warmth of your and others' love; we feel motivated by your compassion to love and give of ourselves; in spite of whatever might cause us despair, there is within us an unquenchable joy; we are overwhelmed with gratitude for all that we have; we find ourselves facing confidently the future; we are engulfed by a hope that assures us that your strength will enable us to face all of our todays and tomorrows. Keep these many manifestations of your spirit, the Christmas Spirit, burning brightly within us each day we live. And keep us ever sensitive to how and with whom we can share the light that comes from the recognition of your presence and the desire to do your will - the light that was kindled most brightly in the one who was born the Babe of Bethlehem and who became your child, our Sovereign, our Savior, and the Light of the world - even Jesus, the Christ, in whose spirit we pray. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Father, as you sent your Son to be the Light of the world, so help us this evening to reflect upon the Light we bear in us. May these candles remind each of us to be light-bearers. May your light in us lead others to Jesus Christ. It was a silent night broken by the praises of the angelic host, proclaiming the birth of our Savior and Lord. A great light shone around the shepherds, as the angels announced the Savior's birth. May we be a great light to our community. Thank you, Father, for the gift of your Son to us. In his name we pray. Amen.\*\*

## Christmas

Almighty God, who hast given us thine only begotten Son to take our nature upon Him and to be born of a pure virgin: Grant that we, being regenerate and made thy children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by thy Holy Spirit; through the same our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Spirit, ever one God, world, without end. Amen.

Lord, at thy parable of birth kneel us with all the families of earth in the presence of the Most High. Astonish us with the calms of heaven, and make of our hearts a resting and a listening place. Then, O gracious One, as thou hast imprinted in our flesh the glory of thy salvation, send us forth to make known thy wonderful works to the children of men. As we have been invaded by light, let us enlighten; as we have been found, let us seek out the lost; as we have been liberated, let us set the captives free. This we pray in the days of Christmas wherein all peoples have been given a garland of joy. Amen.1

O God, what curious praise is ours for Jesus Christ- - a red tricycle for small and busy feet, skis for a boy to ride the wind, some perfumes for the body's love, a large check for sweet charity, two hundred Christmas cards signed "love" by hand, letters to friends long lost in years ago, much weariness and ribbons and short tempers. O find in this, O find in this, dear Lord, our human hearts, our hope for all, our praise for thee. For we stumble in the busy ways and have a lonely carol to sing before the holy places; in Jesus' name. Amen.1

O that our tongues were bells and our hands drums and our feet a dance and a leap that we might praise thee! Could the winter day but say for us our praise, or the brittle grass or the air on the blue jay's wing! Where is the music that shall sing thee? What word shall tell the heart's adoration? O Majesty, let us but kneel in the mind's dark, in the body's rush, in the soul's aloneness, and hear thee being born. Amen.1

O God, whose birth startles us with glory that reaches heaven to earth, with hope that summons earth to heaven: we confess that we are ill at ease before thee, that we have resisted thy promises. We have been affluent but not amazed, learned but not wise, successful but not satisfied. O in this burning time break through our make-believe, confuse our arrogance, and where we are timid in faith strengthen us for a mighty praise. Persuade us to those high celebrations that desire for everyone a world at peace and thy salvation everywhere descending; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.1

O God of Christmas and of every day, God of Jesus, and our God, too; how rare the opportunity for us to join in worship on the anniversary of the birth into the world of your child, who ever since has embodied for us a new and heightened expression of your presence and your love. We thank you for this day for which we have been preparing for weeks. For this is the day that especially reminds us of the importance of caring, hoping, repenting, intending, sharing, thanking, meditating, adoring, and serving. Forgive us for the occasions when these traits have been absent in our relating to you and /or others. May we keep alive within us these manifestations of the Christmas spirit not only today but in all of our tomorrows. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Almighty God, in this glad season we commemorate the birth of your Son, Jesus of Nazareth. Grant that his Spirit may be born anew in our hearts and that we may hear again the angelic chorus singing, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men.' With hearts filled with joy, we offer our praise to you. Thank you for Jesus and the hope of salvation he brings our way. Amen.

For this season we praise you O Father, a season of much celebration. We celebrate your presence in our lives, for family, friends, and workers. May this night be a demonstration of our thoughtfulness, as well as a time of turning to you, the reason of our celebration. This we pray because you live in and among us. Amen.

Lord God, we ask your blessing upon us this day as we begin yet another part of our voyage. Grant us, Lord, the ability, strength, and wisdom to meet the challenge of the new day and all that it may bring. Father, we thank you for the joy of the Christmas season and the opportunity to share it with others. We pray that the true spirit of

Christmas may become and remain our guiding light throughout the approaching new year. Amen.

Father, we recall the melody of Isaiah's words: "For you shall go out in joy, and be led forth in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall break forth into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands." Lord, we pray that you will lead us in joy and guide our paths in peace during this Christmas season. May you become more a part of our lives as we sing in praise of you. We sing because we rejoice that you are Emmanuel, God among us. Bless this celebration of peace and cause our hearts to reflect melodies of your love. Amen.\*\*



Dear Lord, today we celebrate the birth of your only begotten Son, Jesus our Lord. In our hearts we rejoice, for through your Son we experience your nature and true self. Our desire is to know you in a deeper way. Our goal is to serve you with total commitment. We are not worthy of your love but accept your grace with thankful anticipation of your blessing. Help us to exemplify the standards of Christ and serve him faithfully throughout the year. In his name we pray. Amen.\*\*

Almighty God, in this glad season we commemorate the birth of your Son, Jesus of Nazareth. Grant that his Spirit may be born anew in our hearts and that we may hear again the angelic chorus singing, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men." With hearts filled with joy, we offer our praise to you. Thank you for Jesus and the hope of salvation he brings our way. Amen.\*\*

Our Lord, we thank you for this food and for the memories of Christmas past and the joy of Christmas present. We thank you for the outward beauty of decorations, gifts, and goodies, and for the inward beauty of love and faith. An now, as you fill our hunger with this food, fill also our hearts with heavenly joy and earthly peace, that our faces may demonstrate a joy to the world, and our relationships a peace on earth, and good will toward all. Amen.

Gracious and loving God, thank you for the gift of Christmas - the gift of your child Jesus who so enlightens us that we find in him the way, the truth, and the example of the life you would have us live. As we celebrate the anniversary of Jesus' birth into the world, may we invite your child to be born anew within us so that our lives will reflect the spirit of Christ and brighten the lives of all whose paths cross ours. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Creator God, in this Christmas season we pause to reaffirm that you have called us to give birth to the Babe of Bethlehem in our lives. We are to be the hands, the feet, the eyes, the ears, the mouth, the heart of Jesus in the world today. May this season inspire us to live in such a way that others will see the Christ in and through us. Amen. 13 (J. B.)

As we gather to worship today, we thank you, O God, that Christmas need not be a once-a-year celebration. Grant that the loving, giving, sharing, and caring that were evident in our lives last week will continue to emanate from us throughout the new year! Amen.13 (J. B.)

Lord, gathered together amidst all this abundance, how grateful we must be for all your blessings. At this season, Christians rejoice in celebration of the birth of the infant, Jesus; Jews delight in remembering the victory for religious freedom of Judah Maccabee over the Syrian tyrant, Antiochus. Praised be you, O Lord, who brings us food and every blessing. Amen.

Our Father, once in a while it is as though a light goes on and we perceive more clearly a truth, a relationship, an emotion we didn't realize ever existed, but which was there all along. As we of the \_\_\_\_\_ gather for a meal and fellowship at this festive time of year, bless us with keen perception of all the marvelous blessings that have come to us this year for which we are privileged to give you our most hearty thanks. And, simultaneously, Father, as we are drawn closer to you, may we be drawn closer to each other. Make this meal and this evening be indeed a "lighting-up" time for us. Amen.

Our Father when you made your invasion into the world as a baby born in a barn at Bethlehem, you took us all by surprise. Help us to hear the dying echo "Peace on Earth, Good Will Toward Men." Remind us again Heavenly Father that there is no peace until we make peace with you. As we gather together tonight in this place to celebrate Christmas, ignite our minds with the strong symbols of Christmas that our hearts may be warm toward you. Bless our homes, family members, distant friends, comrades-in-arms, nation, Commander in Chief, with your Christmas spirit. Thank you for your splendiferous gifts to us without which life would have no meaning. In the name of the Prince of Peace. Amen.

We are especially thankful during this holy season for the gift of your love, and for the hope that fills our hearts, as we reflect on the event of Bethlehem nearly 2,000 years ago. We pray that the true spirit of Christmas will permeate our souls until we are generous in our concern for the welfare of all of thy children, and until we can really love our neighbors as ourselves. We pray for our fellow citizens who serve our country in distant and dangerous places. We lift up those who have experienced death, suffering, or loss in recent tragic events. Grant us thy protection during this Christmas season. Be with our Commander, and all of the members of this special community, and keep us from harm or injury. Sanctify this meal to our God, and our lives to thy service for the glory of thy name we pray. Amen.

Almighty God, at a time when "Star Wars" has ignited the imagination of many, we thank you for the bright star which appeared over Bethlehem to signal to the world your invasion of this planet. Thank you that your assault meant peace and joy and for the many strong symbols of Christmas which have continued to repeat through the centuries. As we stand before you tonight we are grateful for a hushed battlefield. We would much rather be here than out there in tents cold, muddy and alone with our MREs. Thank you for a meaningful Christmas in the name of the One who made it happen. Wonderful counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Amen.

O Lord God in the midst of abundance and abuse, bright lights and beautiful colors, carols and candy, dining and dancing, exaltation and espionage, fancy clothes and fine jewelry, gifts and gaiety, hangovers and humor, Kris Kringle and kisses, lovely ladies and loud music, money and merry making, nibbling and nuts, oceans and old fashions, presents and parties, quality and quantity, rank and regulations, Saint Nicholas and self-interest, tinfoil and tinsel, ultrasonic and unconcern, vacations and vitality, wardrobes and waste, X-rays, and X-enogamy, yule logs and year-end zero bank accounts and zestful living, O Lord, help us to sort out the true message of this season which is the message of love, peace and joy. Because a Savior is born. We ask you to bless this food to our bodies' use and bodies for use in thy kingdom's work. Amen.

Almighty and all-holy Father; we confess ourselves unworthy of thine unspeakable gift. We have not loved thee as we ought; nor have we always been loving to one another; kindhearted, forgiving one another; even as thou, for Christ's sake, has forgiven us. We have lived in selfishness and worldly pride; and the good gifts thou has bestowed upon us, we have not used to relieve the burdens of others. Pardon and blot out our offenses, we beseech thee; through the incarnate life and willing sacrifice of thy holy Son, even Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

O God, who makest us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of thine only Son Jesus Christ: Grant that as we joyfully receive Him for our Redeemer, so we may with sure confidence behold Him when He shall come to be our Judge, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.



Almighty God, who hast given us thine only begotten Son to take our nature upon Him, and to be born of a pure virgin: Grant that we, being regenerate and made thy children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by thy Holy Spirit; through the same our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Spirit, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

May the One born in Bethlehem—who joined divinity and humanity, love of God and labor for people—unite heaven and earth, in us as in him.<sup>6</sup>

Leader: We came with haste. We found Mary and Joseph keeping watch in the night, and the baby crying in a manger.

**People: Glory to God in the highest, and peace to all on earth!**

Leader: Now, as we return to our fields, we will not forget;

**People: We will keep all these things with gladness, pondering them in our hearts.<sup>6</sup>**

Leader: There is a people sent from God whose name is Hope.

**People: And the people named Hope shall bear witness to the light; despair shall not overcome us.**

Leader: There is a people sent from God whose name is Love.

**People: And the people named Love shall bear witness to the light; hatred shall not overwhelm us.**

Leader: There is a people sent from God whose name is Life.

**People: And the people named Life shall bear witness to the light; death shall not overpower us.<sup>6</sup>**

Our Father, help us to use this day wisely. Remind us to treat it as a gift. As commander and staff make us good stewards of all your resources. We pray especially for those among us who are not doing well, who lack in talent or training or motivation. Give us the patience and the insight and the courage to help them without removing their need to help themselves. In thy name we pray. Amen.

At Christmas, may God open

Your heart to his love,  
Your mind to his wonders,  
Your ears to his voice, and  
Your life to his presence.

May you experience

His peace for your troubles,  
His forgiveness for your guilt,  
His presence for your loneliness,  
His light for your path,  
His guidance for your journey, and  
His joy for your life.

May you know

The hope of the Christmas season,  
The rejoicing and celebration found in Christmas carols,  
The caring found under the mistletoe,  
The sharing found in giving,  
The good news proclaimed by the angels,  
The anticipation and excitement of the prophets,  
The Scripture's assurance that all is well, and  
The wonder of God's love found in Jesus.

May you leave with

The twinkle of bright lights in your eyes,  
The gay sounds of Christmas ringing in your ears,  
The vision of the Savior in your mind,  
The spirit of the season in your memory,  
The joy of the season in your life,

The faith of the season in your soul, and  
The message of the season on your lips.\*\*

## Christmas/Hanukkah

Dear God, hear our prayer, we thank you for creating all the light of the universe. We thank you for giving unto us the knowledge to create light in our world to dispel the darkness. We thank you for making your holy light available to us to illuminate our way. May the brightness of your love drive away all the shadows of the soul. As we enjoy the lights of Christmas and Hanukkah help us to share with others the light of love and peace and joy. Help us to send forth in this world beacons of brotherhood and good will to all people. Bless our celebration with your presence and this food to our well being. Amen.

Our Father, on this beautiful December day we thank you for our daily bread and ask your blessing upon it. At this Hanukkah/Christmas season, keep us mindful of lights that burn for freedom and the simple message that wherever the Herods of the world are defeated, where wise people are still willing to travel in search of a star, where shepherds faithfully keep watch, and where the family is still sacred, there O God your Holy gifts of love and life and peace and hope are born anew. Amen.

O Lord with strength of body we do our work. With understanding of mind we resolve the problems of work. With courage we meet the challenge of work. With love we relate to one another at work. With gratitude we pray that all that we do in our places of work will serve and please you. Amen.

Our Heavenly Father, for everything that is near and dear to us about this season: for family and friends, for cards and carols, for food and gifts, for decorations and memories--we are grateful. O Lord, amidst our enjoyment, let us also be mindful that the season is about Hanukkah candles that symbolize a burning passion for freedom and a light that still promises to lead wise men to peace. Let us remember that Christmas is about shepherds in uniform who keep watch around the world this evening and who will be home for Christmas only in their dreams. We remember an endless trek of refugees who have found no room in an inn. There is much darkness in the world but the light still shines in the darkness and the darkness has not put it out. Even Ebenezer Scrooge learned how to keep Christmas. May that be said by each of us this evening. We thank you for our food and drink, and in the words of Tiny Tim, "God Bless us Everyone."

Almighty and Everlasting Father, we celebrate two great feasts during this month of December, Hanukkah and Christmas. Both bring a festive air into our lives. The shammes which we use to light the candles on the "Feast of Hanukkah" gives of itself to create an additional flame without losing any of its own brightness. Let this be a sign to us that as we extend love to our neighbor we do not lose anything of ourselves. In the coming of Jesus, which we celebrate on the Feast of Christmas, you extend to us another sign of giving. Remind us that just as Jesus came to give of Himself for all, so we are called to give of ourselves to all. As we share the giving of gifts on these two feasts, may we be reminded of the greatest gift we each possess to offer to another, the gift of self. Strengthened by you, O Author of life, may we bear witness to you in our world. Amen.

## Hanukkah

O Lord on high, as our ancestors fought against the assimilationists in the days of Mattisyahu, so too may we fight against those who would destroy our glorious tradition in the name of assimilation. For your laws are eternal and everlasting, always refreshing the spirit. And may we, this Hanukkah, once again have victory over the enemy within. And with this victory, please let it be your will, that we once again are worthy to see the holy Light from your Temple. This is our prayer of peace, and for that let us say. Amen.

We light our candles this Hanukah, candles of love amidst the darkness of hatred; candles of hope where despair rages; candles of joy for hearts that are saddened; candles of peace for a planet torn by conflict. May the light of God, the light of love, radiate within our hearts; and may we express that light not only at this holiday season, but may we be beacons of love throughout the year. Amen.

Almighty and Omniscient Creator: On this first day of the Festival of Hanukkah when we recall the heroism of a handful of gallant God intoxicated men who vanquished a ruthless enemy and rededicated the holy Temple to thy service; teach us we pray thee to recognize:

1. That justice inevitably triumphs over injustice and that right ultimately conquers might.
2. That man was meant to serve as a conduit through which thy goodness flows to earth unimpaired.
3. That he who is without piety soon loses all sense of pity.
4. That just as the whole sun is reflected in a tiny drop of water, so a nation's character is often expressed by the behavior of a single citizen.
5. That pessimism hangs the drapes of despair over our every tomorrow, keeping out the rightness of hope and sunshine of enthusiasm.
6. That the measure of life is worthiness - not happiness; character - not comfort; therefore, it is mandatory that prayer should be a daily habit, not a seasonal ritual.
7. That thou O God, doth not look us over for medals, degrees or diplomas, but rather for scars and for our ability to break through the confining circumstances of the common-place.
8. That the only one worse than a quitter is he who is afraid to begin. Within the word Hanukkah meaning "Dedication", rests a root of a related Hebrew word "Chinuch" which means "Education". Hanukkah puts us on notice that without learning there can be no dedication. Teach us, to educate ourselves, so that we may dedicate our lives in service to you and to our fellow human beings. In your name we pray. Amen.

Most Beneficent Creator: As the Maccabees did during the feast of dedication and at this critical period in the history of this country when our democratic lifestyle is being weighed in the balance, we earnestly beseech thy reassuring support and thy protective grace. Just as in the time of Judah Maccabee, so too America's real strength is not found in its mineral resources, in its hydroelectric power or in its agricultural prowess. Neither does its accumulation of a vast weapons arsenal determine its omnipotence. America's strength is in its people who turn to thee for guidance and who recognize that the price of excellence is self-discipline and that the cost of mediocrity is disappointment. Indeed the true nature of America's greatness is purity and clarity of purpose, devotion to truth and the high regard for human life. The disciplined life is always capable of looking discouragement in the face and moving beyond it. Where the pessimist sees difficulty in every opportunity, the optimist sees opportunity in every difficulty. Where some grow under responsibility, others merely swell. Enable our people we implore thee, to transcend the immediate, and readily envision the seemingly invisible. May this trying interlude cleanse us of our defilement and goad us on to strident accomplishment. Teach us to recognize that true greatness like steam is made under pressure. Provide us we entreat thee with the durability of conscience which enabled our forefathers to set sail for unknown destinations confident that thou O Lord would shield them against all evil. Thou who are our Rock and our Salvation favor us with thy goodness and make us worthy of thy benefactions and as you granted your salvation to the ancient Hebrews during the Feast of Hanukkah, shed your light upon us today and grant us eternal salvation. Amen.

Eternal God, as you strengthened the Maccabees in their quest for freedom, we ask that you strengthen us for our ministry today. Grant that our work facilitate your people, our constituents, in their seeking of your light and

righteousness. Just as you chose the seed of Abraham to bring blessing to all the peoples of the world, so may you find the inhabitants of this land of sufficient merit that you might through us bless all of humankind in this day and age. Amen.

O God, on this festival of rededication, we are awed by the reminder of the courage and forthrightness of the Maccabees. How great must have been their faith - in you, in their purpose, and in themselves. Help us, in our day, if not to be Maccabees, at least to find inspiration in their example and encouragement in their deeds. Make us to know that when our hearts and hands are in the right, our aims are godly. Make us to believe that we, too, can accomplish what we set ourselves to do, providing your stamp of sanctity is on our purposes. May we, then, succeed in all we strive for, in every act which exalts and hallows your holy name. Amen.

The lights of Hanukkah recall to mind the strength of faith. It is the rekindling of the spirit which enables us to purify our thoughts and sanctify our deeds. Aid us, O God, in this season and at all times, to keep aglow the awareness of your spirit within us. Fire us with zeal to fulfill your purposes not only for ourselves but for our world, as well, and all its inhabitants. So may the flaming menorah be for each of us inspiration and encouragement to do your will and fulfill your sacred ends. Thus, by our lives and deeds, may the spirits of all humankind be rekindled to sanctify all life and praise your name. Amen.

God of might and redeemer of all humanity, show our generation too that tyrants are disappearing. Let us triumph as the Maccabees did over injustice and oppression so that we can worship you in a world that sees all its people free. Renew in us the confidence that our decisions, our dedication to work for justice, our devotion to duty can save the lives of oppressed people everywhere. Amen.

## Epiphany

O God, we praise thee for thyself in whom we live and by whom all things are sanctified and made for shining. We praise thee for this day which proceeds from thy bounty and returns to thy love. We praise thee for every moment when the work of our hands is blessed beyond our deserving and for every hour that our hearts are made glad by a wise and endless peace we did not earn. Amen.1

O Comforter, who from the other side of dark invades our despair, our loss, and who overcomes for all the harried people the disasters of nations, the defeats of flesh and soul: now in the brimming days that hasten us towards Bethlehem all life shall praise thee - the star-lost skies, the turning earth abounding in all weathers, twelve-winded airs across the valleys blow-ing, and everywhere the new dance teaching marrow, bone, and once again the new rejoicing firing our hearts; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.1

Now, Lord, hear our confession and receive our sorrow for our dullness, our stupidity, our fraud. Yea, seeing you, all love, our sin is a heaviness upon us and in us. We are a very winter of gray and cold. We live half--seeing, half-hearing, half-knowing, half-believing. Pity us. Awaken us. Save us. Be archangel in us till we dare to soar, and in all the plodding times and places of the months ahead be to us unicorn and dove and storm and star until our flesh becomes your wild, wise Word. Amen.1

Glory be to thee, O Lord our God, whose face is ever hidden from us, but whose will and love have been made known to mighty kings and simple shepherds. We come before thee not as wise but as seeking. Grant us the wisdom to glory only in thee - in thy judgment which condemns our foolishness and in thy love which comforts our suffering - that having learned to adore thee, we may find that our seeking ends in praise of thee who has long sought us in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.1

O Lord our God, who by the light of a star has dispelled the night of our fears and made us free to sing again: we give thanks that once more the weight of glory is pressed upon an inglorious world, that a stirring is in our midst and a hope is rising to strive against the world's despair. Be active in our minds and hearts, Lord God, so that no distress will prevent us from doing the works of light and of life, no impatience keep us from the slow work of building a place where love will be the mandate we obey. Amen.1

Lord God, who promised that your glory should be revealed and that all flesh should see it together: set a restlessness stirring in our hearts, a waiting for the light that will break into our darkness, a wondering before the innocence that will address our sinful world, a waking to the hope that will dispel our weariness in seeking your kingdom above all things. Glory to God in the highest! Amen.1

## Sundays after Christmas

O Lord God, in the presence of the Child, you have spoken to us with great tenderness, and we have answered with callousness. We confess that we have understood and still refused your call to deal tenderly with one another, to be peacemakers in the earth, to let justice roll down as waters and slake the thirst for righteousness in your world. Forgive us, we pray, and let a new birth of love happen in our lives now, as once it happened in that village stall. We pray in the name of the Child who is your Christ and our Lord, Jesus. Amen.1

O promising God, whose message is our mandate - peace on earth: we confess that we have welcomed the words but resisted their cost, that we have declared for peace but justified our wars. Once again in this season of remembrance and hope make our festivities recall that it was for peace that he came, for peace that he died, and for peace that he now both lives and suffers. May the justifications of violence go dry in the mouths of those who speak them; the peddlers of arms find no market for their goods; the old hatreds make sense no longer; the new hopes be irrepressible. Then we will sing, Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest! Amen.1

Lord God, who came among us in a simple circum-stance, then in a cowshed, now in a tenement room or a mud hut; who had the freedom to be poor, to be faith-ful, to die with integrity: be with us now to open our hearts to thy promise that, where we love one another in thy name, there wilt thou be in the midst of us. Grant us open ears, open minds, and open hearts, that the music of thy praise will echo the praises of our lives. Grant this, O Father, in the name of Jesus, whom we honor as thy Son and claim as our Lord. Amen.1

O Almighty God, who by the birth of the holy Child Jesus has given us a great light to dawn on our dark-ness: grant, we beseech thee, that we may walk in his light to the end of our days. Bestow upon us, we beseech thee, that most excellent gift of charity to all people, that the likeness of thy Son may be formed in us and that we may have the ever-brightening hope of eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.1

Heavenly Father, again we hear the ancient promise of peace on earth sung against the noise of war, and of goodwill toward men said against the record of our inhumanity. May thy gracious promise and thy tender love once more set hope alive in us; and having heard thy Son's birth announced in this clamorous world, may we be encouraged to believe in thy love, to have faith in thy promises, to build in our hearts and in our neighborhoods a safe manger in which to lay our newborn hope for a world where thy glory will shine round about. Amen.1

O God our Father, who has visited and redeemed your people, and has called on us to be redemptive forces in your world: help us, we pray, that the visions and hopes of this season will not fade after the twelfth day, nor the plodding, indulgent, and cruel realities take over again, unchallenged by the angels' song and the child's faith. By the power of your presence, Lord God, may the ceremonies of the season be more than ceremonies. May they call up in us new determination to have by our vision and persevere by our faith. Amen.1

*First Sunday After Christmas*

Almighty God, who is beyond human comprehension and beyond human experience, you are worthy of all honor and glory; you are from everlasting to everlasting. We are not worthy to enter your presence, yet in your grace you have not only brought us into relationship with you, you have even allowed us to call you Father. Truly we cannot fathom such love, yet we gladly and gratefully accept your invitation into this divine family, this blessed community. Even as you make us one with you, our Father, so bond our hearts together as your church, your family of faith. Too often in the past year we have fallen short of being family; we have allowed pride or greed or some other evil to disrupt and harm your church. Forgive us, Father, and prepare us in this new year to find new unity and peace and purpose as your church. Give us a deeper and more meaningful love for one another, even as you love us and as Christ gave himself for us. Help us to honor you with all of our lives during this new year, as we pray in Christ's name. Amen.6



*Season After Epiphany*

May God go with you as you depart into the desert, there to meet the temptations of the soul. May the Spirit lead you to an oasis where waters run deep and clouds rise high, and where the voice of heaven whispers in the cool of the trees.<sup>6</sup>

O God, make us vessels worthy of the wine of the new covenant. Let us carry it across an earth drenched with blood, anointing the wounds of God's peoples and raising the cup to their feverish lips. For long has the covenant been promised to the world, and long shall its wine be poured out for many.<sup>6</sup>

## Lent

Praise be to thee, O Lord our God, who art the rest of the weary, the refreshment of those for whom the world has grown old too early. Praise be to thee, thou Judge of all, who hast given us thy law to guide our lives and thy love to support us in walking according to thy law. Praise be to thee, O God our Redeemer, who daily calls us into a new path of life, lived by courage and faith in thy never-ending love. Amen.1

O Lord our God, whose Son Jesus Christ has gone before us into the desert of temptation, who has ascended one hill to be transfigured and another to be crucified: we praise thee without ceasing that thou hast been our God and our Savior, that thou didst give us one man with truly clean hands and a pure heart, one like us in human needs and freedom, yet without guile. For him who lived and died for us, and liveth for us evermore, we praise thee now and always. Amen.1

O God, who by the example of thy Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, teaches us the greatness of true humility, and calls us to watch with him in his passion: prepare us by faith in him to meet the crises of our own lives with steadfast endurance, even as he has showed us. We confess that we have not been faithful under trial, that we blow hot or cold as seems expedient, and that under the least adversity we quickly abandon what-ever measure of self-forgetfulness we have achieved. O Lord, forgive us who cannot watch one hour, who have not been faithful to thee in thy trial when we could not stand fast in our own. And may thy forgive-ness, ever-renewed, be our occasion for repentance and rededication. Amen.1

O most merciful Lord, who through thy Son faced temptations in the wilderness, and who knows the temptations that beset us daily: grant us grace to stand so surely in our faith that we may bring to every temptation both courage of spirit and strength of will, never surrendering to those desires which violate thy love for us. May the knowledge and example of Christ so fill us that we will set ourselves gladly to the tasks of prayer and meditation and self-discipline by which we are strengthened during these days of Lent. Amen.1

Almighty God, we give you thanks that Jesus called you Father and taught us to address you with the intimacy of daughters and sons. We are grateful for the images of your love and acceptance he conveyed by his stories, and for the knowledge that we are invited to take up his way of self-understanding and self-acceptance. Enable us to see the call to repentance as an invitation of the waiting Father, and teach us to use the days of Lent to ready our response. Amen.1

O God our Father, whose Son trod the path to death and met eternal life, who passed through the darkness of crucifixion to live in the light of resurrection, and who taught us to choose the hard road of self-examination and repentance that leads to true knowledge of ourselves and forgiveness: grant us this day and all the days of Lent the wisdom to see our need for repentance, the strength to renounce those things which we know to be evil, and the grace to seek thy forgiveness for the evil we do unwittingly. So by the path that leads through the trial of our spirits do thou grant us the gift of thy Holy Spirit which is eternal life. Amen.1

Dear Lord, who calls not the well but the sick to repentance, anoint us to be agents of your healing ministry. Send us forth as heralds of the fasting to which your prophet Isaiah calls us - the fast that loosens the bonds of wickedness, frees the oppressed, feeds the hungry, houses the homeless and clothes the naked - so that, when people ask, "Where are you, Lord?" you can answer. "Here I am."6

O God, you send us forth not into the world in which Jesus was born but into the world in which we were born. You will not save us from our world, because you have saved us for our world. And you have promised to go with us into that world, enabling us to do even greater works than those of Jesus. Go with us, dear Lord, and we shall become the keepers of your promise.6

Great, gracious, and giving God, Confidant of the confessing, Healer of the hurting, Help of the helpless, Hope of the hopeless, Light of the lost, Lover of the loveless, Savior of the sorrowing; when we pause long enough to

consider who you are and how you have enriched and undergirded our lives, we are humbled by the realization of how great you are and how amazing is your grace! Yet, in spite of your goodness to us, we too often take you for granted and admit you only to the periphery of our lives. We think of you periodically; we follow you half-heartedly and haphazardly; we love you luke warmly. Faithful Father, Marvelous Mother, Pardoning Parent; our prayer this morning is that we will be more intentional about our Christian living. May the season of Lent that we enter this week be a time when we more consciously practice your presence - asking ourselves; What would Jesus do in this situation? How would he relate to this person or that?" May we be more faithful followers of the one whose name we profess, ones who practice what we believe and preach, and among those who show others, not tell them, the way! Amen.13 (J. B.)

Living God of all who live, for whose spirit we long, to whose voice we would listen, and from whom we would learn; we pause in you presence in this Lenten season. Educate, empower, encourage, energize, and enlighten us as we embark on our journey designed to enable us more efficaciously to emulate the empathetic example of Jesus. Nudge us so that we will not be so nonchalant about these noteworthy days. May we never neglect our need for nurturing so we can be more than nominal disciples. Transform our tendency to thirst for the trite and trivial. Turn our thoughts, O Transcendent One, toward trying to temper our lives with the timeless traits of tenderness, thankfulness, thoughtfulness, and truthfulness. Creator God, we love you; we embrace you; we need you; we trust you. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Creative and Creating God, whose artistry that blanketed the earth with snow this past week is symbolic of the way in which your love blankets our lives, we come to offer our lives in worship - not because we must but because we may, not because we have earned your love but because you love us just because we are, not because we seek to be exceptions to the human race but because we seek strength for facing the difficulties that are a part of being human. As we thank you for your love and presence within and around us, we confess that sometimes we have been unloving toward and not present for others. For being apathetic rather than active, critical rather than caring, disdainful rather than devoted, griping rather than grateful, petulant rather than peaceful, neglectful rather than nurturing, spiteful rather than supportive, thoughtless rather than thoughtful, forgive us. As we move toward the conclusion of Lent and anticipate the celebration of Easter, may Easter's message of the hope of new life before death become a reality as we strive to live our lives as Jesus lived - as your children who, knowing that we are loved, love you, ourselves, and others. Amen.13 (J. B.)

God of winter and God of springtime, who created the universe with its changing seasons, we in your church thank you for the season of Lent. For in these days we have been learning more about how you want us to live by reflecting on the life and teachings of Jesus. Today we especially thank you for his life. For here was a human being like us who was so sensitive to your will and who so used his potential that he became the example of full humanity. Jesus learned and practiced the truths: that in your will is true peace, that your strength enables us to cope with life, that good can come for evil and tragedy, that there is hope in the midst of despair, that love is the most powerful force in the world. As Jesus matured and grew in his relationship with you to the point where these truths became part and parcel of his daily living, may we similarly hunger and thirst for this goal. For you have created us for yourself, and we are restless and unfulfilled until we are consciously committed to you. Amen.13 (J. B.)

We gather, O God, as pilgrims beginning our Lenten journey. During this season may we seek to learn more truths about you, more clearly discern your will for our lives, and then more faithfully live in the loving and serving manner as did the Christ in whose spirit we pray. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Gracious God, in whose image we have been created - the image we see personified in Jesus, the Christ - in this season of Lent we come to rededicate ourselves to follow Jesus and to be willing to deny ourselves for the sake of others. Strengthen us to help bear the burdens of those less fortunate than we, for we know that when we love and serve them we love and serve you. We pray in the spirit and seek to follow the example of the one who came not to be ministered unto but to minister, even Jesus, the Christ. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Heavenly Father, we come together in your sacred name to prepare ourselves for Lent. In our worship, open our hands to you, the guide of our lives. Open our eyes to you, the light for our paths. Open our ears to you, the teacher of divine wisdom. Open our hearts to you, the guardian of the temple within. Open our lives to you, the object of our love. Thus may we walk and not stumble. May we see and not forsake the true way. May we hear and not turn from your holy word. May we love you and welcome your presence in our inner being. May we demonstrate to others your truth and not restrain your kingdom's work. We thank you Father for Jesus who makes us new and reveals our sin but never leaves us where he finds us. Rather, in love he forgives us and restores us through faith. For his undying interest in us, for the depth of his understanding, for the power of his love and the vastness of his mercy, we give you thanks. Open our hearts and minds to you. Accept the sacrifice of our service and lead us always in triumph through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.\*\*

## Ash Wednesday

Almighty God, as we enter the days of penitence our fault is upon us, for we know well the desert places, the wild beasts, the satanic murmurings. We are afraid in the silences. We have refused others our hearts. We have fawned over the demons that promise power. We feel the wrath. Gracious Lord, create in us now a great repentance wherewith we can stand against the evil one, move with love through the terror and the drab hours, and trust in your promises - resonant and redemptive among all things and people, world with-out end. Amen.1

Our sins are upon us, O Lord; their dark hovers over us, and their evil prowls in us. We confess them, that they turn us from thee, and so from what is holy and pure; we acknowledge them, that they divide us from others, and so from pity and compassion; we fear them, that they carry in them a torment; we repent them, that they bear against us a judgment. O gracious One, recover us from the principalities and powers, this death in life, this chaos that destroys us, and grant us thy forgiveness which cleanses and thy pardon which sets us free, even Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.1

## **Holy Week**

We come to you, O Heavenly Father, in this Holy Week. Holy Week brings so much to mind; the passover, the passion story, pain and suffering. Help us to see how suffering builds character and makes deep our faith. Make us to know joy, and give us strength so that we are able to face sorrow. Amen.

## Palm Sunday

On this day when we remember the joyous procession of the palms that greeted Jesus on his entrance to Jerusalem, so we celebrate your presence among us this day, O Lord. As they praised Jesus that day, so let our hearts praise you on this special day. As they proclaimed his greatness, so we honor your majesty. And yet, Lord, we recognize that much of the crowd which praised him on Sunday would curse him only days later. And too often, Father, we see ourselves in that picture — not that we curse Jesus, but that we turn our backs on him. And it may be Lord, that apathy is more painful to you than outright opposition. So help us, Lord, as we celebrate this season of the year, to be consistent in our praise, faithful in our discipleship, and steadfast in our love, just as you have been steadfast in your love to us. We ask these things in the name of Christ, who loves us no matter what. Amen.<sup>6</sup>

God of the deep heavens, who places the eternal where people work and children play: praise for this day of waving palms, small beasts, and hopeful voices; praise for the divine foolishness upsetting our poise; praise for the divine patience that teaches us to endure; praise for colors, distance, somersaults, sing-song, dance; praise for all that is capering and playful whereby the confined are set free and the solemn vanishes away! Hosanna! Glory to God in the highest! Amen.<sup>1</sup>

Lord of the quiet way, we confess the sins, deliberate and vain, by which we have diminished others and made ourselves most miserable. And we are aware to our shame how our heavy-handedness has destroyed gentleness and despoiled the holy. Alas, in these feverish times, our stupidity has allowed us to pay court to demagogues and to count too much on the arithmetics of power. We have progressed to fear. We have achieved thin souls. May the High King of heaven forgive us; may he tutor us in humility; may he marry us to the divine love, even Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.<sup>1</sup>

Lord God, whose Son we hailed and crucified: we confess our inconstancy in faith. We have been loud with convictions and weak in performance of the works of love. We have been quick in saying and sluggish in doing what is right. We have nothing wherewith to lay claim on thy love. Forgive us, we beseech thee, as thou didst forgive the multitude that strewed thy path first with palms and then with derision. And as thou didst raise up thy Son, first on a cross and then on thy right hand, raise us up, we pray, from the sin into which we have fallen. Restore us to thyself and thus to new life, that we may be bold to live by thy grace. Amen.<sup>1</sup>

O God our Sovereign, we give thanks for this day of triumph and tragedy, when glory and sorrow are mixed, when courage and fear are met together. We are grateful, O Lord, for that humble procession we recall, for it is a symbol to us of your own costly and redeeming presence in this world of wheat and tares. Now help us, good Lord, in our minds and hearts to understand that just as you have entered the city of hope and of trial so we are called to take up our work in an imperfect world, not waiting for the kingdom of righteousness but working for it, not turning away from hard demands but accepting them in confidence that you are with us unceasingly. Amen.<sup>1</sup>

O God, who has brought us to this holy time wherein we renew the memory of our Redeemer's passion: enable us, we pray, to enter fully the drama of redemption in the coming days. Make vivid to us the suffering to which thy Son was put on our account and on our behalf, and vivid too the victory of life over death which he vouchsafed to us once and for all when he abandoned his tomb for a throne. By this may our faith be brightened and our obedience strengthened. All this we ask in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.<sup>1</sup>

O God, come to us this day in the parable of the meek King. Lift up our eyes always to the green tree. Give us the patience for burden and sadness of the small beast. Quicken us to the hidden laughter. Surprise us by joy. And against our walled cities, our regiments of fear, our committees of pride let the children come, and the dances of trust, and the somersaults of hope. Let the meek King be heard. Amen.<sup>1</sup>

Eternal God, today we join the crowds of every generation who, since the time of Jesus, have praised your name

for his coming! For his entering Jerusalem in the spirit of peace, love, and servanthood, not as a militant conqueror, we give you thanks. May the example of Jesus lead us to relate to you and others in the same manner, not just today, but every day that the gift of life is ours! Amen.13 (J. B.)

Loving God, like the multitude surrounding Jesus on that first Palm Sunday, we often praise you with our lips but then reject you in our hearts. Forgive us for marching to the beat of drummers other than you. May we resolve today to get our lives back in step with your plan and purposes. Amen.13 (J. B.)

God of grace and God of glory, we praise you for Jesus, who rode into Jerusalem on a donkey's colt, victorious through love and not through power or violence. Help us to learn from this example that in living as servants and seeking to meet others at their points of need, we find joy and give you glory. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Our Father, we are thankful for Jesus and his disciples who spread branches in his path and greeted him with praise. We thank you that through faith he enters our lives and reigns supreme. As followers of Christ, may we shout 'Hosanna' and welcome him as the King of kings, Lord of lords, and Savior of all the earth. Have mercy on us, Father, for we confess that we do not always treat you as King or go before you with praise. We acknowledge our measured faith that sometimes fades amid the concerns of daily life. Forgive us Father. Heal the wounds of our contrite hearts. Grant us strength and courage to serve you faithfully. And in your presence, may we always rejoice for indeed you are the Messiah marching in triumph, merciful in victory and gracious in rule. May honor and glory be yours. Amen.\*\*



## **Maundy Thursday**

Blessed be thou, O God of the universe, who sets the seed of the wheat and grape in the ground to die that they may bring forth and nourish life. Blessed be thou, O God of our salvation, who in this Eucharist feeds us the bread and wine of earth that in them we may know the meat and drink of heaven and be strengthened. Blessed be thou, O God of our liberation, who sanctifies these elements by the divine love that suffers with all sufferers and by the divine truth that sets all peoples free. Amen and amen and amen. 1

How marvelous thy mercy, O Lord, that from our separate, casual, and crooked ways calls us to thy table, thy high feast of grace, thy plain meal of forgiveness. And here we are as Peter who denied thee thrice; as John and James, priding to be first; as Matthew, publican and sinner; as Judas with his kiss of death; as everyman tangled in self-love, self-pity, and dark fear. O by thy bread put flesh on the ribs of our thin souls, and from thy cup pour fire to kindle us to be thy people, eager for joy and faithful in adoration. Amen. 1

O God, our God, blessed, all-wise, and eternal: hear our confession, and by such mercies as we cannot give one another save us from our sins; for we persist in our darkneses and tangibly break and destroy the flesh of the world and the souls of its people. We continue the wars; we live off the misery of others; we permit the comfortable lies. Even more, we wear the masks of righteousness and absolve ourselves from the crimes. Now as we eat and drink the broken bread and the wine of suffering, so nourish us that we desire again to risk ourselves for healing, even as Jesus who on the dark tree broke himself for all the earth. Amen. 1

O God, we come to thy mighty table with sin in us and around us. We carry havoc in the blood which is against thee. We dwell among people who forget thee. We are indifferent and have no peace. We burn but bear no light. We feel the utter desolation. Yet we are bound to thee as by a mystery, thou who art our peace, the light that shineth in the dark. Feed us thy daylight in this bread, the fire of heaven in this cup, even Jesus Christ who is the world's consolation. Amen. 1

## Good Friday

Hear, mighty Lord, how with one voice we speak our sorrow for our sins, those darkneses within that we set between ourselves and thee. O we are creatures of the little prides, the lazy mind, the meager trust, and the envious heart. The muddled world that we fear is our own creation. We are matted in by stupidities and nighted in by blindness. Take us now, thou majestic and merciful One, and teach us the hard lesson of forgiveness. Let the love we deny save us, even Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.1

On this Good Friday, O Lord, we recognize all that is not good about our lives, because it stands in such contrast to all that is good about you. We seem so concerned about our own comfort, but you sent your Son to a land where he had no place to call his home, no place to lay his head. We are consumed by advancing our own cause, but you sent your Son to become a sacrifice for others. We love ourselves most of all, but you so loved the world that you gave your only Son. This day is good, Lord, not because of anything we have done but because of what you have done for us. And because of your love and its incredible demonstration on the cross, we gather this day to confess our sins, to recommit our lives, and to praise your holy name. May the days ahead also be good ones, as your Holy Spirit works through our lives to demonstrate your love and power to a lost world. For we ask it in the name of the One who gave himself for us. Amen.6

As we come together for this Good Friday prayer breakfast, we are especially conscious of your love for each one of us. In that love your Son died for us and has given us the gift of experiencing the happiness that comes when we share our lives with others. Help us realize that we learn of you through one another, and that we grow closer to you as we grow closer to one another. Help us to make your presence more evident by our concern for those around us. Finally, bless this food we are about to receive and our efforts to serve you. Amen.

Father in heaven, in the midst of a culture that often thanks you that it's Friday, we gather on this special day to thank you that it's Good Friday. From earliest times, before history was written, you set out to bring humankind into relationship with yourself. You called Abraham to be the father of a great nation. You rescued the children of Israel from bondage in Egypt. You sent prophets, judges, and other leaders to bring your people back to you. Now, on Good Friday, we see the perfect life of a Son, come that we might find life in all its abundance. He gives himself, stretches out his arms as if to enfold to his breast the whole world, and then prays for all to hear: "Father, forgive them." Father, we come this morning to claim that call to relationship. Good Friday shows us the cross by which we have been given life. It is the halfway house that leads to Easter's joy, mission, and courage. With St Francis, the day reminds us that it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Bless each of us here today, Father, with deeper faith and trust in your promises to us. Show us daily your great mercy and your unfailing love--and then involve us in getting under the burdens that crucify others, to help lift the loads they carry. In the name of the suffering servant who became Lord of Lords we pray. Amen.\*\*

Lord God, whose messenger among us was a man of sorrows and one acquainted with grief, by whose stripes we are healed: hear us on this Day of Sorrows as we pray for all who bear the burdens of grief through the loss of loved ones or through bitter disappointment. Help them, O God, first by the knowledge that they do not carry their burdens alone, and then by the love that others bear them at the time of their trials. May all who sorrow know again that nothing in all creation can separate us from your love, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.1

Lord, send your abundant blessing upon your people who devoutly recall the death of your Son in the sure hope of the resurrection. Grant us pardon; bring us comfort. May our faith grow stronger and our eternal salvation be assured. We worship you, Lord, we venerate your cross, we praise your resurrection. Through the cross you brought joy to the world. Holy is God! Holy and strong! Holy immortal One, have mercy on us! This is the wood of the cross, on which hung the Savior of the world. Come, let us worship. How splendid the cross of Christ! It brings life, not death; light, not darkness; Paradise, not its loss. It is the wood on which the Lord, like a great warrior, was wounded in hands and feet and side, but healed thereby our wounds. A tree had destroyed us, a tree now brought us life.



## **The Easter Vigil**

Rejoice, heavenly powers! Sing, choirs of angels! Exult, all creation around God's throne! Jesus Christ, our King, is risen! Sound the trumpet of salvation! Rejoice, O earth, in shining splendor, radiant in the brightness of your King! Christ has conquered! Glory fill you! Darkness vanishes for ever! O happy fault, O necessary sin of Adam, which gained for us so great a Redeemer! The power of this holy night dispels all evil, washes guilt away, restores lost innocence, brings mourners joy; it casts out hatred, brings us peace, and humbles earthy pride. Night truly blessed when heaven is wedded to earth and we are reconciled with God!9

## Easter Sunday

O God of life and redemption, we bring our abundant praises to you on this wonderful Easter Sunday. We marvel at your love and celebrate your mercy, which were demonstrated so vividly in the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. We celebrate this day because of what you have done. Where we sowed sin, you repaid salvation; where we sowed rebellion, you reaped redemption; where we sowed death, you reaped life. On Good Friday, humanity offered you its cruelty and rejection; on Easter Sunday, you answered with grace and acceptance. How do we respond to such an awesome love? Help us, O Lord, to respond with faithfulness to the cause of Christ, who loved us all the way to the cross. Help us, O Lord, to respond with obedience to the One who was obedient to you no matter what the cost. Help us, O Lord, to respond with boldness as we proclaim the name that is above every name, the name that angels shout in triumph and that causes demons to flee in terror, the name that transforms and delivers, even the name of Jesus Christ, who rose on Easter Day. It is in his name we pray. Amen.<sup>6</sup>

O God most high; all praise and thanksgiving be unto thee; for the multitude of thy loving kindness and tender mercies unto us; and to all men. It is right that we should at all times give thanks unto thee; but chiefly, this day, are we bound to praise thee, for the glorious resurrection of thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord; who has taken away the sin of the world; who by his death hast destroyed death; and by his rising again hath brought us to everlasting life. To whom be all honor and glory; world without end. Amen.

We give thee thanks; that, having overcome the sharpness of death; He opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers; and that because He lives, we too shall live. Even now, having peace with thee through Him; we rejoice in the hope of thy great glory. Thanks be to thee, O God; who givest us the victory; through our Lord Jesus Christ; to whom, with thee the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all honor and glory; world without end. Amen.

Incarnate One, thou Servant broken on the tree, thou God assaulting death for all our sakes: triumphals, trumpets declare thee; bells, clamorous songs, all breath and tongues across the earth, the earth itself and all that is therein praise thy holy resurrection. Receive from us now, most blessed Lord, a jubilation above all other joys; for by thine Easter thou hast awakened all peoples to immortality, released our hearts from fear, and taught us the ways of thy compassion. Therefore, we give thee thanks and end-less adoration that all flesh shall at the last days stand, forgiven and loved, in the presence of the risen Lord, unto whom with thee and the Holy Ghost be all glory and honor, dominion and power, forever and ever. Amen.<sup>1</sup>

Praise be to thee, O sovereign and majestic Lord; for in our rising thou art our strength, and in our going about thou art our protector, and in our failing thou art our deliverer. Though the air split with fire and the mountains of death arise around us, thou wilt dispel misery, thou wilt take away fear, and thou wilt conquer death. Praise be to thee! Amen.<sup>1</sup>

O God, how can we come before thee in sin who so rarely approach thee in adoration? O the wrong in us is great! We have been busy with the art of self-pity, the enjoyment of our angers, the feeding of our prejudices. We have wasted our days and dreaded our nights. We feel baffled, troubled at heart, and useless. Turn us now from the tangle and the idolatry to a plain path, to a trust in thee, and transform us by the steady arm of thy forgiveness into new men and women validly alive in all times and places because we are alive in thee; through Jesus Christ our resurrected Lord. Amen.<sup>1</sup>

We give thanks, O Lord of the universe, that now and at the hour of our death you have provided the mighty resurrection for us and for all peoples, whereby according to your compassion the dead shall break forth into new life, and death shall have no dominion. We give thanks for the immortality always within us whereby we transform the world and its accidents and handle time and its stress and strain. Christ being raised from the dead, we give thanks that we are called as by trumpets and divine laughter to trust the days, honor the seasons, and believe in the coming age. Alleluia! Amen.<sup>1</sup>

Gracious heavenly Father, who creates new life in us daily and promises that new life with thee is our final destiny: we pray thee for all who are bereaved (and especially for \_\_\_\_\_). Heed their sorrows. Grant unto them, and to all who look into the bleak mystery of death, to see behind its dark visage the light of thy redeeming promise. Renew their hearts with a sure confidence that as all the world rests in thy providence so their loved ones rest now in thy loving presence. May the rejoicing of this day lift them from their sorrow into a new light of life. Amen.1

Almighty God, the Lord and giver of life, in the joy of this Easter morn may we see ourselves anew in the mirror of the resurrection. Help us to open our reluctant spirits to the glad tidings of this day, that they may be sustained with the sacrament of gratitude and praise. Strengthen us to live a holy life now. May we learn again to walk with eager steps, as those who have been healed, who have heard the shouts of victory, who look to the day when every worldly care dissolves and every selfish concern is crowded out by thy presence. All this we pray in the name of him who is Victor over death, and Lord over life. Amen.1

Gracious Lord, who intends that every hour wear the eternity of Easter: enter our prayers so that we speak as people of the resurrection who expect and hope for what they ask. Yet keep our concerns worthy of the calling to which we are called, and make our flesh and our wills ready to act on our words. As we beseech you for all in the world that needs mending, and for strength and hope to do our part and more, we ask especially that the world be rebuked, chastened, and loved into discovering again its true purpose in the praise of God and the love of persons; through Jesus Christ our risen and redemptive Lord. Amen.1

O God, who in Jesus Christ turned the defeat of Good Friday into the victory of Easter, bringing dawn out of darkness and life out of death, make us faithful witnesses to the life-giving power of your crossbearing love. Keep us ever mindful of the Risen One's promise that we would do even greater works than he. And send us forth, with hope renewed and zeal aflame, to labor in the vineyard of the Lord.6

O Lord, as you have made disciples of us, now you send us into the world to make disciples of others. Go with us and be our guide, that the witness of our lives may confirm the testimony of our lips. 6

Almighty God who brings new life back again out of the deadness of the winter, we thank you for the symbol of everlasting new life you have given to us, the resurrection of your son, Jesus Christ. In him we see hope of new life in the midst of our despair over not being the people we would like to be. We pray that through your son, Jesus Christ, we might be able to die to our old life of hurts, frustration, and sin, and rise to a new life of love, joy, and peace. May we be able to rejoice with the disciples that Jesus Christ is risen indeed, and because of it, we can live also. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Our Father we come to you for your blessing to seal within our hearts the inspiration and memories of this Easter Day. You have demonstrated your great power in raising Jesus from the grave. Forgive us O Lord, for doubting such power in the midst of our small problems and many frailties. Forgive us for our lack of faith that begs for pennies when we could write checks for millions; that strikes a match when we could have the sun. Give to us the faith to believe that there is no problem before us that your wisdom cannot solve. Especially do we ask that as the Easter sun has risen upon us, may the warmth of Easter's message also shine upon those who cannot worship with us because they are missing in action, or remain behind bars in prisoner of war camps. Let them know your power, too; may they soon be released. Now, for ourselves, our loved ones, for all mankind we ask a stout heart to bear our own burdens, a willing heart to bear the burdens of others, and a believing heart to cast all our burdens upon you. Hear our prayer and accept our praise and worship this day. In Christ's Name. Amen.

To you, all powerful God, ever-present Father, we turn our thoughts on this special morning. Yes, on this day we are impelled to praise you for the glorious resurrection of your son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who by his death, has destroyed death; who by his rising again has brought us everlasting life. We give thanks this morning for

Jesus' atonement for the world's Sin, and we pray that you help each of us personally understand more fully what Jesus' life, his death, and his living again, means in our lives today. Through every sharp pain of repentance and suffering we feel; for every effort to put aside all sinful ways; for every Christ-like thought and action we share with those around us, help us to come to know that your kingdom of heaven reigns within each of us here, now, to the degree that your Christ reigns within our hearts, and minds and lives.

Almighty God our Father, who showed your love for us by giving your son to atone for our sins and who promised us new life through our Lord's resurrection, hear us now as we humbly approach your throne of grace. We give you thanks and praise for the life, death and resurrection of our Lord, for in him we are given hope; in him we find purpose; in him the power of sacrificial love is revealed. For the gracious love that reaches beyond the tomb and calls us to life, we give you all glory and praise. As we reflect on the glory of the resurrection morning, we are mindful of situations which need your life-giving power today. We ask that you would restore order to our disorganized world so that we can stop living from crisis to crisis and from war to war. Help our world know the peace of your leadership rather than the tensions of selfish human striving. Our country is very much a concern of ours today. In a time when many of our people are disillusioned with government, we ask that you would give wisdom to our president, the congress, and the supreme court so that their decisions would be acceptable in your holy sight and would lead America in the Christian principles upon which it was founded. Finally, Father, we pray for ourselves. Life has dealt harshly with many of us, leaving us with the idea that we are unworthy of respect, even self-respect. Some of us have had professional difficulties that have attacked our dignity, and others have suffered personal trials that test their ability to keep on going. In our darkest hour we pray for your light and in our moment of failure we pray for your strength. Whenever we stand on the precipice of life's canyons, uplift us with your abiding presence so that we may not fall. Reach beyond the death-like grip of this world's hold on us and bring us to the new life of living each day in your love. Hear our prayers gracious Lord, and if it be your will, grant their requests, for we pray in the name of him who taught his disciples to pray saying, (the Lord's Prayer follows).

Ever-beckoning God, you continually call us from: apathy to action; callousness to caring, faithlessness to faithfulness, greed to generosity, haughtiness to humility, hopelessness to hope, meaninglessness to meaning, sadness to solace, sin to servanthood - in other words, from death to life. Forgive us for so often not heeding your call and remaining in the ruts that sink life below what it might and can be. Thank you for Easter. For its message is that we can grow and change; we can rise to higher planes of personal living; there is hope in the midst of our despair; there is joy in spite of sadness. As Jesus' tomb stood open on that first Easter morning, on this Easter may our lives stand open to your spirit that can breathe into us newness of life. Fill us with the radiance of this day so that your love may stream in and through us, bringing light and life to a world that often walks in shadows and death. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Eternal, ever-loving, ever-present God of Easter and our everyday existence: Accept our accolades and ascriptions of awe and adoration as we assemble in this sanctuary today. Save us from a saccharine, sanctimonious, social celebration of what should be a saving, spiritual, and symbolic Sunday and season. Thank you for Easter's teaching and truth that temptations, testings, troubles, trials, and tragedy can be transformed into triumph. Enable, energize, and empower us to the end that the evidences of Easter will be embodied and exemplified in our lives. Reawaken, renew, and redirect us so that we might rededicate ourselves to realizing the resurrection that reposes in our lives and desires release. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Lord God, our creator and redeemer, as the sun rises this morning, you are our strength and our song and our salvation. We rise early to praise you for your Son's resurrection, for in his victory there is power and promise and peace. Death is not the end of us. Sin will not finally conquer us. Evil has been overcome with good. Your presence takes our faltering faith and plants courage in our hearts. Your words to us are "Fear not!" You awaken in our hearts such faith as to enable us to grasp the future and trust in your providence. Father, we rejoice in all that you have done for us in creating this new day of grace. Assist us O God in receiving its blessings into good, joyful, and useful lives. In this time of new joy, we lift up before you the fallen world of which we are a part. You are more aware of our true needs than are we. Enter the lives of people everywhere to bring hope and

healing. We pray especially for those who are homeless and hungry, lonely and despondent, those held hostage in foreign lands, and those who labor to rescue them. Drive from our hearts all apathy and indifference, and replace these with the fire of your love. All these things and whatever more we should ask, we pray in the name of your risen, reigning Son who taught us to pray, saying "Our Father....Amen."\*\*

O Lord, for the presence of your Spirit who opens our hearts and minds to perceive the truth in your Son, our Savior, we are grateful. May that truth inspire us this morning. May we grasp its significance and know that the ultimate end of our quest for meaning and purpose rests in Christ, for he is the way, the truth, and the life. As a light shines in the midst of darkness, his resurrection calls us to live with hope and promise. His call is one which leads to inner peace, for through him the essence of who we are and of what we can be is made clear. By believing in Jesus, the door of salvation is open wide and with it release from guilt and sin. Thank you for being mindful of us, for being unwilling that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. For the love which compelled you to give your Son and which strengthened him to endure the cross, we are drawn to you. May the renewal of body and soul experienced through Jesus be known by us all. And may your presence encourage us to serve you faithfully forever. Bestow upon us now your favor and blessing. Amen.\*\*

O God, may we never forget the glory of Easter. To this end, stamp indelibly in our lives the meaning and message of this day: the assurance of your everlasting presence, the ultimate triumph of goodness over evil, and our possibility of new beginnings! Amen.13 (J. B.)

We praise you, O God, for the glory of Easter and for its message that day will succeed night, hope will vanquish despair, peace will prevail over conflict, love will conquer apathy and hatred, and life will outlast death! May our lives be so filled with the Easter spirit that it will shine through in what we say and do, just as it shone through in the life of Jesus, the Christ. Amen.13 (J. B.)

O God, with the memories of another glorious Easter still fresh in our minds, like the disciples of Jesus we gather on this first day of the week to celebrate the experience of resurrection: the promise of hope in the midst of despair, the possibility of new life before death, the assurance of continued life after death, and the reality of your spirit that is always present within and around us. May this and every Sunday be for us a "little Easter" that reminds us that Jesus is alive and that we are to be the body of Christ in the world today. Amen.13 (J. B.)



## Passover

Designer of History, Redeemer of Israel and Author of Liberty, on this day of Passover, as we recall the ancient event of exodus and the many miracles you performed for our ancestors at the Red Sea, we thank you for the freedom we enjoy in America and the liberty which is ours to leave to our children and to generations yet unborn. In your name we shall continue to "proclaim liberty throughout the land" and strive to help the "inhabitants thereof" to live in peace and harmony. We shall extend the hand of fellowship to the downtrodden in other lands to help them attain their God-given rights, and we shall endeavor to merit the blessings of human dignity which you bestowed upon us. Above all, we will so order our lives that they will faithfully reflect a genuine appreciation for the divine gift of redemption. May we celebrate this Passover as a reminder to all your children that unless the Temple of Peace is built in your name, the builders, regardless of effort and motivation, labor in vain; that physical freedom becomes meaningful only in the context of spiritual liberation. Heavenly Father and Redeemer, banish selfishness and arrogance in our midst and grant us a Passover that bridges the gap of alienation separating people so that those who value freedom will share it with all your children. Amen.\*\*

Lord God, we pray for our brothers and sisters, the Jews, at their holy season of remembrance of that time when, following your cloud of presence by day and the fire by night, they passed over from exile into freedom. We ask that their acts of recollection will be a source of strength and of faith in your unending care for them and for all your children. Help us, O God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to commit ourselves to insuring that no winds of holocaust will again blow across Israel, withering and destroying. Make us instruments of your peace, we pray, and hasten the day when the ancient vision of *shalom*, the kingdom of righteousness and peace, will be established in the hearts and communities of all people. Amen.1

## Pentecost

O God of wind and fire, who has given your Holy Spirit to indwell the lives of men and women of faith, as that band of believers gathered in an upper room that first day of Pentecost to await your presence, so we gather in hope and anticipation to seek your face. Even as your Spirit was poured out upon that company of disciples, so we pray that your Spirit might be poured out upon us. Let your Spirit sweep through our midst, lifting us above the mundane and familiar, and carry us into bold and adventurous realms of faith. Anoint us with your power, that we might go forth possessed of a new purpose and perspective, and that we might be transformed into mighty witnesses to your love and majesty. Let the spirit of Christ, who gave himself for us, empower us to give ourselves for others, even as we pray in his blessed name. Amen. 6

Almighty God, who gathers us into thy church that by hymns we may praise thee and by prayers make known our needs and the several needs of peoples everywhere: bless us now with that grace which moves us from words to works. And whether we are silent or mumble, whether we are eloquent or groan, let there be in us always a mighty hope for the healing of all the lands, for the days when joy shall prosper, and for the hour when the nations shall know and practice peace. Amen.1

Lord God of justice and of peace, we ask once more for thy tongues of fire to preserve us from the fire of our own tongues. Consume our hatreds lest they consume us, and by the power of thy presence check all un-bridled expression of our own power. Give us patience, wisdom, and hearts so enflamed by thy grace that we will speak with restraint and listen with compassion. Breathe thy Whitsun Spirit into our common lives both now and always. Amen.1

Lord God, who hast called us to be one in thy church, and thy church to be one with the sufferings and needs of the world: grant us grace to see thee by seeking opportunity to do thy will. May thy people be known by their readiness to bear one another's burdens, to seek and serve the cause of justice, and to witness well their concern for peace. Amen.1

Come, Holy Spirit, and help us to desire with a complete desire the health and happiness of all peoples. Cause us to care mightily that wars cease, that injustice fail, that the fear which troubles our hearts goes from us. Teach us by sign and gesture, word and silence, to know in our flesh the anguish that is in the world, to make it ours, and as a church to act in ways that heal, give hope, and renew; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.1

Lord God, who came to a scattered people and made them one with each other in understanding and in love, and who with tongues of fire fell upon men and women and consumed the walls of confusion which divided them from each other and isolated them from thy love: receive our thanks that thou hast been among us and that we can now take hope. We pray for the renewal of thy presence as a fire to consume the walls of hatred, fear, falseness, and arrogance by which people are scattered, becoming enemies to each other and to themselves. Lord God, by thy power divisions were overcome but each one's dignity and honor were preserved. Be it so again, we pray. Let that great unity prevail in thy church, and by its witness in the world may such a unity prevail among all races and nations. We pray in the name and in the confidence of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.1

O God the Creator, who hast made of one blood all the nations of the earth, and hast bound us together in the divine family as thy children: we pray for all who are alienated from their sisters and brothers, for all whose lives are discolored by hate or insistent pride, for the oppressor and the oppressed, the proud and the humiliated, the strong and the weak. Especially we pray that the wound of racial prejudice be healed wherever it is opened. And where prejudice spills over into conflict, chasten the powerful and strengthen the powerless, and give to both an honest desire for reconciliation without revenge. Amen.1

Eternal God, on this day of Pentecost we remember and celebrate the birth of the Christian church. For those disciples of Jesus who resolved to be the ongoing body of Christ, for those of succeeding generations who have kept the church alive, for the many ways in which the church ministers to us today, we give you praise and

thanks. Forgive us for taking the church for granted. And may our birthday gift to the church be a renewed commitment to be more faithful in our worship, our sharing, and our service. Amen.13

(J. B.)

As on the day of Pentecost long ago, so infuse us with your spirit, Holy One, that we might be overwhelmed by your presence within and among us! May we hear anew your call to be the body of Christ wherever we live or work or play, to the end that our daily lives will reflect the life and teaching of the one in whose spirit we pray. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Almighty God, on this day of Pentecost, may we be filled with your Holy Spirit as your followers were on this day. May you help us to open the doors of our hearts to the indwelling of your Holy Spirit. May the Spirit show us your truth, so that we do not wander from your side. May the Spirit also enrich us with those gifts that you would have us use to help glorify your name here on earth. Let the Spirit rule our hearts in all things and lead us to the way everlasting. In the name of Jesus, who along with the Spirit, reigns with you forever, One God. Amen.

Dear Lord when your Spirit came upon the apostles on the first Pentecost he brought change. Peter the braggart was changed into Peter your rock. Thomas the doubter was changed into Thomas the apostle to India. James and John who once had imperiously sought places of glory in your kingdom were changed to serve you through martyrdom and witness. A rabble was changed into the Church. Let your Spirit blow upon the earth again, and let him bring change. Change our doubts into faith and our fears into courage. Change the conflicts of the world into the peace of your kingdom. Like Peter, Thomas, James, and John, mold our weakness into the form of your strength. Amen.

Dear Lord and Father of us all, we give your thanks this morning for sending your Holy Spirit to dwell within us. We are thankful for the power, strength and help that the Holy Spirit brings to our lives individually and to the life of the Lord's Church collectively. We are thankful that the Spirit speaks to you on our behalf, that He searches our hearts and our minds and knows our thoughts and our feelings, our hurts and our struggles, our problems and our sins better than we do ourselves. We are thankful that the Spirit expresses the thoughts of our heart when we can't seem to find the right words to do so. We pray, O Lord, that you will cause the Holy Spirit to search our hearts at this very moment. Cleanse us of our hidden sins. Purge us of our wicked thoughts. Strengthen us with our inner struggles. Comfort us with our broken hearts. Help us cope with our painful moments. Give us, O Lord, "a steadfast heart, which no unworthy thought can drag downward; an unconquered heart, which no tribulation can wear out; an upright heart, which no unworthy purpose may tempt aside. Bestow upon us also, O Lord, understanding to know you, diligence to seek you, wisdom to find you, and a faithfulness that may finally embrace you." We pray, O Lord, that your Holy Spirit will bless this chapel congregation. Fill us with your Spirit and your power. Cause us to grow in faith, in love, and in numbers. Bless our ministry together in this community. Help us to do our part in spreading the good news of our Blessed Savior's redeeming love. Help us to grasp how blessed we are to be children of yours. Somehow, cause us to realize how selfish it is to keep this wonderful news to ourselves. Teach us to share it daily through the example we set by our lives, and through the conversations we have each day. All of these blessings we ask in the blessed name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

*Season After Pentecost*

Return now to the world, and go gladly, despite your fears. Though afflicted, you will not be crushed; though perplexed, you will not be driven to despair; though lonely, you will not be forsaken. The Lord of life dwells in you and among you, now and forever.<sup>6</sup>

Do not lose heart, for there is the abode of God. If your heart be troubled, God will share your agony; if your heart be triumphant, God will share your gladness. Do not lose heart, for there is the shelter for your neighbors. May you share their agony and gladness, as you trek, arm-in-arm, to the mountaintop.<sup>6</sup>

## **Ramadan**

It is related on the authority of Ibn Umar that whenever the Prophet of Allah, upon him be peace, saw the new moon, he would say: "Allah is the Greatest! O Allah! Let this moon rise above us in good fortune and faith, in peace and Islam, and in the successful achievement of that which is pleasing to, and loved by, you! Our Lord, and the Lord of the moon is Allah!" Another narration has it that the Prophet, upon him be peace, used to say: "A new moon of guidance and blessings! A new moon of guidance and blessings! I believe in Allah, the One that created you! (Repeated three times.) Praise to Allah who has taken away the month of Shaban and ushered in the month of Ramadan!" Upon breaking his fasts, the emissary of Allah, upon him be peace and blessings, would say: "Gone is the thirst. Moist are the veins. And assured is the reward, if it be the will of Allah!"

Tshriq prayer: "Allah is the Greatest! Allah is the Greatest! There is no god but Allah! Allah is the Greatest! Allah is the Greatest! And all praise is due to Allah!"

## Rosh Hashanah

Sovereign of the Universe and Creator, on the threshold of a new year, we turn to you for your blessing of life, health and joy. We are thankful for all that you have given us in the past year, for beauty, truth, strength and love. Thankful as we are for your blessings, we are painfully mindful of the imperfect world in which we live. In the new year which begins today, we look for the dawn of an era of love, peace and understanding for all your children. May the new year mark renewal of your promises of old and expression of the good which you have implanted within the heart of every man and woman. And let truth triumph over falsehood, life over death and love over hate. Amen.\*\*

In the hush and solemnity of this evening, with the shadows of the past year dispersing into the darkness of evening, I stand before this Ark; I stand before this congregation, and I speak to you, my God and God of my fathers and mothers. I beseech you for a year of new beginnings, fulfillment, peace and wholeness. I beseech you on my behalf and on behalf of those who cannot do so this evening--those who are overburdened, enslaved, ill or troubled. Where my actions have led to the strengthening of Jewish life, may my energies be renewed. Where they have been divisive and shortsighted, may I be forgiven. May my congregation not be judged harshly for my actions, nor I for theirs. May the coming hours and days be for mending the wounds between us and for seeking harmony one with another. In the short days that are mine upon this earth, open to me the potential for doing good, for bringing harmony and peace to all your creatures. Help me to speak gently and be patient with all you have created. Teach me to be sensitive to the needs of others and to what it is they strive to accomplish. Lord God, I stand before you this night in humility and in awe. May I be a worthy bearer and teacher of your Torah, and may my prayer find favor before you, for you are the one who in mercy hears our prayers. Blessed are you, O Lord, who harkens to our prayers. Amen.\*\*

Heavenly Father, as a new year affords us new opportunities, urge us on the nobler deeds, greater accomplishments, and deeper understanding. Let us comprehend that there is a potential inside each one of us to become your partner in the perfection of the world, if we will each do our small part of the work. Help us when we falter on the path, inspire us when our dedication weakens, and lead us onward when we lose our way. As a father teaches his children, Lord, show us how we can do more for others so that this year will bring all your children closer to the messianic era of peace. Amen.

Lord God, on this birthday of the world, when we remind ourselves of the mighty act of your creating, we turn to you in awe and reverence. Instill within us an abiding appreciation of your great majesty. Help us to know the limitlessness of your glory and the greatness of your all-encompassing love. As creatures, created by you, make us ever to understand that we are also co-creators with you. Aid us in comprehending that all that inspires us with awe and reverence for you is not only the world which you created, but also your spirit within each and every one of us. So may we, through our lives, reflect your majesty and glory, and epitomize your love. Thereby, may you be praised and each of us be blessed. Amen.

God and Father, on this day of remembrance, we recall the sacrifice of Abraham, our Father, and the willing devotion of the young Isaac. We, too, would answer your call to service and to offer ourselves willingly in duty to you and to our fellow human beings. Help us to hear your call; give us the strength and courage to respond, and provide our weak spirits with the will and determination to carry through on our responsibilities. Whether the demands on our own lives appear great or small, whether what is asked of us seems to require all or very little, make us willing, even eager to give ourselves to your sacred purposes. Thus, may our lives, too, like those of our fathers, be counted for blessing. Amen.

Sin, we have been taught by our tradition, is not categorical failure. Neither is it depravity nor irrevocable shame. Sin, we have learned from our teachers, is missing the mark. It is the tarnishing of that which is otherwise pure, the soiling of what was beforehand unsullied. O Lord, firm in this knowledge and confident in our faith in you and your forgiveness, help us to remove the tarnish from our thoughts and wipe clean the soil from our deeds. Renew in us purity of spirit and purpose that all we consider and all we do may be directed

toward loftier aims and more human purposes. Add greater sanctity to our strivings in mind and heart and hand. So may it be, through us, by your spirit, that sin will be removed from our world. Amen.

Father of mercies, we turn to you contrite in heart, crestfallen in spirit. We know that we are hardly worthy of bearing your name, much less your blessing. And yet, we come to you, not seeking for our few righteous acts nor recompense for any deeds of loving-kindness we may attribute to ourselves. Rather, we come to you in the knowledge that however many our shortcomings, however manifold our misdeeds, however far we have missed the mark, we may be confident of your acceptance and reassured of your compassionate forgiveness. Be merciful, O God, toward us; accept us and forgive our sins. So may our spirits be uplifted and our faith renewed. Amen.

Master of The Universe: As the Jews the world over, prepare to usher in the Jewish New Year, we solemnly beseech thy kindred blessings upon all thy children who glorify thy Name and who look to thee for salvation. Remove from thy world the odious threat of nuclear immolation and return to man the insight to choose the good over the evil, the genuine over the superficial and to never succumb to the blandishments of specious values. Teach us we pray thee, how to handle adversity, to view it as a challenge to overcome impossible odds and to awaken those dormant talents which can enable us to persevere come what may. Today as all times, we ask thy protective blessings to all gallant people. Reassure them with a sense of undiminishing optimism and faith in trying months ahead. Blessed be thy name forever and ever. Amen.

## **Rosh Hashanah and Tishrei**

Almighty God, Creator and Sustainer of all that is noble in life: Humbly do we invoke thy blessings upon those assembled here to do honor to the Hebrew month of Tishrei and Rosh Hashanah whence thou didst create both Adam and the Universe and when King Solomon chose to erect the Holy Temple in Jerusalem. Provide us with the insight to recognize that man's ability to be creative and to adorn his life with holiness proves that he is fashioned in thine image. Make him ever cognizant of his regal stature so that then he will avoid the pitfalls of mediocrity which threaten his well-being. Help us all O Merciful One to focus on our positive accomplishments rather than bemoan our dismal failure for our life's voyage. To grow in wisdom and nobility, is to sanctify time; time does not pass; we do, hence we must utilize it in dynamic and purposeful fashion. Tishrei puts us on notice to look upward to thee our Creator, to look outward unto others and to look inward into our own souls. Blessed be thou O compassionate Father, and blessed be they who place their trust in thee. Amen.



## **Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur**

As the sound of the shofar heralds the beginning and the end of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, our hearts are lifted through prayer and the sound of the ram's horn. It calls us to attention, reminds us of our purpose in this world. Life is full of uncertainties and perplexities. Prayer helps sustain and guide us. May the feelings evoked by the traditional holiday tunes and shofar sounds be with us during the coming year and may we recommit ourselves to Judaism. Amen.

Creator of the Universe and Benefactor of all mankind. As we welcome the Jewish New Year and Yom Kippur, we implore thy bountiful blessings upon thy people Israel and upon all Adam's descendants who are duty bound to glorify thy name all the days of their lives. We pray to remove the fetters of hatred and animosity which stricture the native abilities of all thy children from expanding the broad horizons of creative resolve essential for human progress. We especially implore thy boundless benefactions for the State of Israel, thine answer to our people's homelessness and drubbing discomfiture. Thy personal intercession alone can ensure her survival and enable her to take her rightful place among the family of nations. The viability of a nation's destiny flows from the water-sheds of its components to its individual citizens. Endow us, with the fortitude to choose the good over the evil, the genuine over the superficial, the determined over the lackadaisical, for only then will its destiny be crowned with victory. Help us, O Merciful One, never to succumb to the blandishments of false values, and make us ever aware that the gift of happiness belongs to those who unwrap it. As fellow Americans responsible for one another, alert us to our growing responsibilities as individuals and as members of a community, recognizing at all times that a precious deposit is given into our keeping, the fate of future generations. We especially pray that our sojourn in this life will not have been in vain and that those who come after us will seek to add a new link to the chain of our people's survival. Thy name be Blessed forever and ever. Amen.

## Yom Kippur

Lord God, for thousands of years communities of worshippers have expressed what everyone of us knows: sin and evil are ever present companions on life's way. While some persons are more sensitive to their sin, all honest men know its power. It doesn't matter whether we call it breaking the commandments, missing the mark, defiance, alienation, estrangement, or self-centeredness, sin is a persistent reality. Everyone of us has known the experience of Paul: "the good that I intend to do I don't do, and the evil that I try to avoid I fall into." Even if we escape the more blatant sins of cruelty, theft, lying, cheating or murder none of us can claim with a straight face that we have always cared for others as much as for our own selves. We have not always treated others with the kindness we miss when others have acted harshly against us. We have learned to live with our sin in a world where moral purity is a luxury few can afford. If we had to bear the full weight of our failures piled one on top of the other we would be crushed. You are a just God holding us responsible for our acts. Forgive us we pray and cleanse us. Take from us the oppressive burden of guilt. Create within us a new heart and a right spirit. You are a God of mercy treating us far better than we deserve. So on this day of atonement this Yom Kippur, blot out our sins, cast them behind your back and remember them no more. Amen.

Aveenu Malkenu, our Father, our King, on this Yom Kippur, as we fast and afflict our souls in repentance, help us rededicate our lives to the highest standard that we can reach. After this holy day has passed, keep us mindful of our sacred goals and of the inspiration of these hours of prayer. Remind us, Lord, in the days and months ahead of our intentions for the energy, the intellect, and the opportunities this year of service will give us. Help us make this year a period of accomplishment in which we join Jews around the world to bring the peace for which we pray to all the people of the earth. Amen.

Almighty God, Source of all life and author of all happiness, as Yom Kippur approaches teach us we pray thee to place our trust in thee and to understand that we need a greater Lord than we have had in the past. Make us ever aware that when we abandon our spiritual prerogatives, we soon flounder on the rock-strewn pathways of stricturing remorse. Help us to understand that life is worth living and that people are worth loving, that life should be sipped, not gulped and that bitter words of discord spring up beside fences of prejudice, that he who cares will be cared for, that stumbling blocks become stepping-stones and that talent becomes ability when we perceive life as a shared experience. Inspire us to focus on life's blessings; not its barriers, on its opportunities, not its obstacles, to be less concerned with difficulties and more aware of the opportunities which await us. Since a polished character never casts reflections, may we constantly seek to structure our lives on the bedrock of truth remembering that character is much easier kept than recovered. At this strange interlude of our country's history when the democratic process is being pummeled both from within and from without, inspire us to treasure our sacred heritage ever prepared to relinquish tranquillity for responsibility. Confer thy blessings upon all who are here to partake of thy bounties in the spirit of friendship and positive resolve now and forever more. Amen.

O God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who opened to all nations the power of your love through this scattered people, the Jews: grant us thankful hearts for the ties that bind Jews and Christians together as children of the same parents in faith. Now, in the days of awe and atonement, O Lord, help us to seek atonement for all the suffering heaped upon Jews by their spiritual kin, the Christians. As children of the same God and heirs of the same promises, we pray now to be forgiven for all those ways we may have sharpened our separation and to be strengthened in all the things that will bring us closer to each other and to you. Amen.1

## Shavuot

Author of the Word and Giver of the Torah, on this festival which commemorates Revelation, we pray that your Word will find fulfillment in our lives and our deeds. The Law of Sinai has been our guide throughout the millennia. In times of joy as well as adversity we have been your witnesses, proclaiming your Kingdom by our very existence, often at great personal risk and peril. Enable us, O Lord, to be as faithful to the Torah in the future as our parents and generations of ancestors were in the past. Forgive us those lapses from the way which speak of our human frailties. And enhance those qualities of strength and determination which characterized our historical romance with your Book and earned for us the tribute, "People of the Book." May we continue to be a "kingdom of priests and a holy nation," sanctifying your name always. Bless us in our study and application of the Torah to a life of Mitzvot--according to your will. For the Torah is a tree of life to those who grasp it, and those who uphold it shall be happy. Amen.\*\*

## Trinity Season

Surely, O Magnificence, thy jubilate is sounding among us, thy music summons our days, and every-where the mornings shout for joy. So may praise in us continue - in our handiwork as it serves thee, in our dreaming as it pleases thee, in our anguish as it trusts thee, in our loving as it honors thee. And so may our lives be visible thanksgivings for thyself who undergirds and saves. Amen.1

O Lord God, in whom the whole world abides and who cares for its good: we adore thee who art our life's source, support, and end. When thou, our great Original, dost touch us through creation's beauty, we praise thee that we have our source in thee. When thou, O Holy Spirit, doth daily bless us with health, comfort, and a good hope, we praise thee that we have thy gracious promise of a Comforter to support us in our life. When thou, O Redeemer strong to save, doth refresh us with forgiveness and a new vision, we praise thee that our end is hid in thee. All laud and glory be to thee, thou one and blessed Trinity, in our time and in all ages. Amen.1

O thou Creator of all that is, we give thee thanks for the multitude of thy ways in coming to us. Grant us always such a clear eye and a single desire that we shall know thee and thy message of love and grace and help, in whatever language it is spoken, behind whatever appearance it takes. O thou who art one and holy, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, hear us, Triune God, and receive our praise; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.1

We thank you, Lord of the universe, keeper of the high spaces, watcher beyond time, for returning us from our summer journeys and bringing us once more to the windowed church, the family of friends, this place of our rejoicing. We praise you for this season that now waits upon the blazon trees, the fire tastes, the dark birds going down the ancient sky. We thank you and praise you for the great works before us, the new beginnings, hope riding on the mornings, and peace gathering us in the nightfalls of a million stars. Amen.1

Almighty God, whom angels sing and peoples everywhere acclaim: we pray unto thy majesty and thy grace for this earth beset by earthquakes and famine, the nations broken by war, the peoples crippled by disease and fear. Protect us when nature goes berserk, and spare the innocent. Teach all lands a sweet reasonableness and a desire to live as one world under thy generous laws. Return the sick to health, and renew in all of us the spirit of hope, the desire for comradeship, the power of rejoicing. Amen.1

Praise now the Creator, who before all time spoke the beginning, voiced the stars into place, and gathered on earth adroit beasts, singing birds, dolphins and terrapins, the trees shaking out shade or catching winter snows. Praise the Lord who springs in us the body's fire, the heart's dream, and the soul's adventure. Praise him who laughs at the nations, who watches the cities rise and diminish, who takes the villages into his arms. Praise the majestic One who, among darkness and power, turns our history again towards himself that all the peoples shall be saved. Amen.1

Bind us together, Lord God, with all who have come before us, whose rest is now in your presence, and with all who live out their hopes and trials in other lands and places, whose names we do not know, whose faces we have not seen, but with whom we are all one people, all your children. May we have communion with them in our thoughts and prayers, and share the bread of life with them to the praise of your glory. Amen.1

**PATRIOTIC/NON RELIGIOUS SPECIAL DAYS**

## Armed Forces Day

O God and Father of us all, we gather on this special day to bear solemn testimony before thee and to the citizens of this great nation of ours, for loving gratitude and respect for all of our servicemen and women in uniform today. Grant, we beseech thee, Lord, that the liberty and freedom we count so dear, might remain with us always, and that those who are still in bondage by tyrants, might someday have the same privileges we do. We especially pray today, heavenly Father, for safety, guidance, and protection for all our service members. Comfort and sustain their spouses and children who often have to sustain the pain of long separation. Keep, O Lord, our nation at peace, but should our enemies dare to test our strength, may they find us invincible because our trust is in thee, in whose name we make these petitions. Amen.

Our Father, we thank you for your providential hand in history and especially for these last successful pages in American military history. We are proud to be Americans and to stand our watch in uniform over values that are worth defending. May our pride never become arrogance and our strength never be found in weapons alone. Amen.

Our Lord of hosts, in whom our fathers trusted; we give thanks for all men and women, citizens of the United States of America, who have and are serving the Armed Forces of our land. In time of peace, each stands as a promise of peace; in time of disaster or conflict, each stands as our nation's willingness to support, defend and bequeath their lives for this freedom. May our tribute to each of these citizens and service members imitate our support to all nations whose love is for peace. God, support our Commander-in-Chief and military leaders that our sacred trusts in our Armed Forces be echoed "In God We Trust." Amen.

Almighty and ever-blessed God, on this Armed Forces Day, we dedicate anew our military power for the cause of peace both at home and abroad. Accept our humble thanks for the opportunities that abide in our land, for your guidance in hours of peril and for your tender love in times of need. We pray today for your blessing upon all the men and women of the Armed Forces who stand ready and willing to serve and defend our country. Grant them steadfastness of heart, inspire them in the cause of peace, guide their endeavors as they remain loyal to our country and faithful to you. Rekindle in all America a spirit of sacrifice and a steadfastness of purpose. Empower us with the intellect to comprehend, with the compassion to be concerned, with the dedication to achieve and with the faith and fortitude to follow each task through, so that all our labors support peace and freedom for all mankind. Hear us as we pray for this nation and all nations that you will hasten the fulfillment of your promise of peace that shall have no end, now and ever more. Amen.

Almighty and ever-blessed God, as we begin Armed Forces Week, we come to you with grateful and humble hearts. For over 200 years you have blessed our nation with dedicated and selfless men and women in uniform always prepared to defend our nation's freedoms. The peace and security that is ours today is a direct result of the continued contributions and sacrifices made each day by men and women in uniform in the line of duty. We pay tribute to them, Lord, and ask you to protect them wherever in this world they proudly serve their country. Amen.

Dear Lord, tonight we have so many things for which to be thankful. As a nation we have been granted many freedoms that are not available to people of other countries. We have freedom of speech and most important, the freedom to worship you, O Lord. Tonight we are assembled to recognize the members of our Armed Forces who strive to ensure that our country remains strong and free. We ask that you bless all service members stationed throughout the world. Remember those who have given their lives for their country. We ask a special blessing for the President of the United States and thank you for the strength and guidance you have provided him. Lord, we ask that you also bless the families of our servicemembers and continue to watch over them during times of hardship and separation. We ask this in your name. Amen.

Especially today we would pray for those who wear our country's uniform in areas of danger, and for those who prepare to go to such places. For all in every place who devote years of their lives to the safeguarding of liberty

and justice for all, we pray. We pray for our president and his advisors, for the United Nations, for those leaders of countries whom we call our enemies, that their hearts and minds may earnestly desire and strive for peace among the nations. And we pray for ourselves, that we may be peace-makers in our own small way, seeking more to build up than to tear down, more to praise the good than to condemn the bad, more to do honest work than to complain. We are but children who need a Father's love and correction, his strength and his instruction. Make our lives strong, Lord, for the sake of Jesus Christ and his witness in the world. Amen.

May the Lord God of Hosts be mighty in his blessings of us and our country. May he challenge our minds with memories of the valiant patriots who have gone before us. May he inspire our wills with steadfast courage to follow the good paths where they have led. And may he strengthen our hearts with determination that we never falter in the honored service of our country and in faithful worship of our God. Amen.

Lord God of Hosts, whose powers are from everlasting to everlasting and whose name is above every name in heaven and earth: keep, we pray thee, under thy protecting care the Armed Forces of our country and all who serve therein. Defend them amid violence on land or sea or in the heavens, and grant that they may be a sure defense and safeguard for the peoples of the United States; a security for such as come and go in peaceful and lawful pursuit. In time of peace keep them from evil, and in the day of conflict suffer not their courage to fail; that they may guard the American heritage against those who would destroy or straiten the liberties of government by the people and to the end that the blessings of religion and law may be preserved to posterity. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Heavenly Father, I commend to thy gracious care and keeping all the men and women in our Armed Forces at home and abroad. Defend them day by day with thy heavenly grace; strengthen them in their trials and temptations; give them courage to face the perils that beset them and help them to know that no one can pluck out of thy hand those who put their trust in thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

O Lord God of Hosts, stretch forth, I pray thee, thine almighty arm to strengthen and protect the airmen of our country. Support them in the day of battle, and in the times of rest and training keep them safe from all evil; endue them with courage and loyalty; and grant that in all things they may serve without reproach through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

O God, to whom we give our highest praise, look with mercy, we beseech thee, upon all who wear the uniform of our Armed Forces, and upon all people of the free world. As all people are called to a task, and we are called to this task of continually winning and keeping our nation's freedom, may we accept this mission gladly, and perform our tasks admirably. But, O God, as we display the power and might of a warrior, may we never forget that the ultimate might and power rests in thy hands, and even as we arm ourselves with weapons, may we also arm ourselves with thy truth and righteousness, that true victory may surely be ours. In the name of our Master. Amen.

Almighty God, we thank you for this opportunity to come together this afternoon. You have given each of us a need for support in our lives and a need to be assured that what we are doing is appreciated. We are especially grateful to those who have concern for the men and women in our military and wanted to express their concern by attending this luncheon. We ask you to bless them with continued health of mind and body and reward them for their efforts. We in the military are thankful for this occasion and ask that you deepen our appreciation for all who support us. Help us to show our gratitude by a sincere willingness to make whatever sacrifices necessary to do our part in preserving the gifts you have given each of us and our country. Accept this occasion as our way of saying we are your people, united in keeping your peace and spreading your kingdom. Bless this food we are about to receive and our efforts to serve you. Amen.

Eternal Father, we are gathered here to remember the selfless service of those who are honored today. I pray that you will bless them in their new endeavors. Give them the strong sense of your presence and leading in their futures. May their example spur us on to greater accomplishments. In your holy name we pray. Amen.

Father in heaven, as we conclude this enjoyable social time, we find it hard to believe that many of our young people are walking along the DMZ in Korea or other far off locations on the edge of freedom. They probably feel alone, unsupported, fearful. It is hard to believe that some in this room may be called to direct their people into combat. They too, will feel alone, unsupported, fearful. Most of us here will be called upon to make decisions that will affect the careers and lives of others. At those times we will also feel alone, unsupported and fearful. Bless us with a constant awareness of your presence in our lives. Let this occasion, and occasions like this, give us the support we need from our fellowmen and women to lessen our fears. This we ask with confidence in your fatherly care and providence. Amen.

Eternal and ever blessed God, who has been our helper in times past, continue to be our help in these days. On this Armed Forces Day we offer to you our praise and thanksgiving for the blessings of the past, the challenge of the present, and the hope of the future. Make us ever mindful of the sacred trust we have received from our fathers. Instill in our hearts a deeper sense of righteousness and justice. Enable us to rededicate ourselves to the heritage and principles that have made our nation great. Keep us ever alert and ready to seize the opportunities of today and give us the ability to take a hard look at the future and a willingness to accept the challenge of tomorrow. We pray for the men and women who constitute the fabric of our military strength. We would especially remember those who are exposed to danger and peril in the defense of our nation, those who are prisoners of war or missing in action and their families, who wait in loneliness and sadness of heart. Be near to each one of them and give them a sense of comfort of your presence. Finally, we pray for your fatherly benediction as we join with those around the world who work toward the end that righteousness and peace shall prevail among all the nations of the world. Amen.

O God, we pause to acknowledge you as the Lord and giver of life. We thank you for all your blessings upon us. Be with those who serve in the armed forces today, especially our leaders. Endow them with courage and conviction. Add wisdom to their knowledge, and flavor their ambition with a sense of service. Do not allow us to be victorious without first being right; may we not have greatness without goodness. May our motivation for might be our love of peace; peace in our world, among all people, within ourselves, and most of all we pray for peace with thee. We ask you not for tasks more suited for our strength, but strength more suited to our tasks. Give us a positive faith that we may see in every difficulty an opportunity, in every blessing a responsibility, and in every protection a purpose. Amen.

Almighty God, we thank you for your many blessings upon our great nation. You have given us a bountiful land in which to live. Your hand has ever been upon us to sustain us in adversity and to guide us in prosperity. We thank you for the gift of dedicated people who have served in the armed forces of our country; for each person in every level of responsibility who has loved and defended our nation, who has helped to pass on to us the blessings of freedom and peace. You have given our nation great strength and wealth. We humbly pray for great wisdom to use aright the mighty forces at our disposal for the defense of that freedom and the preservation of peace in our world. Help us always to trust in thee, to honor and to value highly the qualities of faith character, and moral integrity that provide the ultimate source of our strength. Provide all those who serve today in the armed forces a full measure of your care and protection. You, O Lord, are our strength and shield. We thank you for the food we will enjoy tonight and all the sustenance you have provided. Bless us with your abiding presence now and forever. In thy name we ask it. Amen.

Let us pray. We have assembled here on this Armed Forces Day, gathering by the strength of our commitment to that great community of patriots who are going and have gone before us in the endless pursuit of American freedom. O Lord, you call us each by name and bind us together in spiritual unity. It was you who instructed us to keep justice, and do righteousness for soon your salvation would come. You commanded us to proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. Our American forefathers followed your guidance and built this nation on the principles of liberty and justice for all. As we strive to follow both your direction and theirs, give us the mind to recognize and remember the real sacrifices of lives, families, homes, riches and more that our comrades in arms gave for us that we might live a free people. Give us the heart to realize that not all peoples



are free in this world. That true liberty for America is bounded by true liberty for all people. Our thanks and praise pour out to you, Lord God, for giving divine strength to the men and women who served their country faithfully, throughout our nation's history, in conflict and in peace. Help us to heed the words of John Philpot Curran when he said, "It is a common fate of the indolent to see their rights become prey to the active. The condition upon which God hath given liberty to man is eternal vigilance which condition, if he break, servitude is at once the consequence of his crime and the punishment of his guilt." Lord, we are not slaves except to your will. Keep us ever vigilant that we fall not prey to our selfish pride and comfort but help us to truly practice worthy sacrifice for world peace and national liberty. By your almighty power we pray. Amen.

O Lord, grant us freedom with discipline, motivation with understanding, and determination with compassion. O Lord, give us the will for self-preservation, and the strength and power to help those who are willing to help themselves. O Lord, give us insight and patience, wisdom along with a sense of duty, and ability coupled with restraint to adjust to the changes in nature and men. O Lord, show us your ways, and never deliver us into the hands of any enemy. Bless us with your heavenly and earthly bounties, and never let us be in want. Guide us in being friendly and generous toward one another. Instill in us faith and knowledge, and let all of us have the ability to live at peace within ourselves. O Lord show the people of our nation the right way to serve and guard the sacredness of all orderly freedoms. Let us realize that you have given us riches not given to any other nation under the sun, let us be ever grateful, and accept the responsibilities which they entail. You are our God, and to you we would ascribe glory and honor, now and forever. Amen.

Eternal and everliving God, in whom we have our faith, our hope and our trust, we thank you for our heritage of freedom and liberty. With joyful hearts, we give you thanks for those noble and courageous individuals who have returned from prison camps, strong in their faith and steadfast in their resolve. May their examples of heroism, sacrifice and perseverance continue to be an inspiration to us all. Keep us ever mindful of those families who still have loved ones missing in foreign lands. Help us to share more deeply in their anguish. Sustain and strengthen them in their solitude and sorrow by your presence. For all the men and women of the armed forces, grant them your protection; preserve them from harm; make them courageous, vigilant and faithful in the performance of their duties. Give them the assurance of your guidance and strengthen them that they may serve in accordance with your will. Finally, we pray for your benediction as we join with men and women of good will around the world to work for peace and justice among all people and all nations. Amen.

Our God and Father, we acknowledge you as our creator, sustainer and redeemer. Thus, we bow before you. You always desire the best for your people, so we thank you that you created us with a passion for freedom and that in every generation you have raised up people who have risked their lives to preserve this virtue. We are particularly grateful for the men and women here tonight who have been so instrumental in defending our nation and maintaining peace. We honor them for their service to the Air Force and our country and pray your blessings upon them and their families. Fill us now with good cheer, and bless the food to our strength and our lives to your service. Amen.\*\*

Our gracious God, we pause in grateful thanks for all that you have given us as a nation and a people--for this association of these men and women who are engaged in a most honorable profession that counts duty more than cost--honor more than sacrifice. Rekindle in us and good people everywhere the spirit and commitment to carry high the banner of freedom, and give us clarity of vision that would recognize peace at any price is not peace at all--that life is not without risk nor freedom without sacrifice. Continue to bless our good land, our president and our commander. Give us the strength and courage to stand against evil for that which is right and the wisdom to distinguish the one from the other. Bless us all now as we gather here in one mind and spirit "to enjoy these good gifts of food which flow from the bounty of your hand." Amen.

There is always a soldier who lies in the field, and once he defended his country. There are those who have worn the military uniform, and still carry in their hearts the spirit of patriotism. There are those who stand tall to salute their flag. And their hearts beat with glory and greatness. There are those who are always ready to carry arms to defend their country. And there are many people who would stand to greet them when they pass by. We

are proud of those soldiers who have stood with courage to protect liberty, justice and equal opportunity for all. There are many soldiers who are proud to see their country great among all nations. The greatness of a nation and people are a gifts of the Lord to those who know him at all times. The Lord brings his people out of war in victory to live in love, honor and peace. Let us honor all soldiers with respect and appreciation, and be proud before all nations. Amen.

Lord God, our Father, you know better than we do that recruitment for defense goes at least as far back into biblical times as Gideon--the judge who rose in a time of need to defend the Hebrews in the Promised Land. It is as current as the slogan, "Aim High - Go Air Force." We thank you for the honor of work, the dignity of defense involvement, and the responsibility of citizens to defend and protect America. We're grateful for those who keep that challenge in the eye and minds of our citizens. Let excellence, effectiveness, and efficiency be their watchwords, and give success to their work. Father, in these days of democratic stirrings and sacrifices for freedom in other lands, help us to hold freedom's torch high. Let us be more completely your children from day to day, O God our Strength and our Redeemer. Amen.\*\*

## Earth Day

Creating God, Creator of the planets, the sun, the moon, the stars, and of life itself; we, the epitome of your creation, pause to worship you with words and songs of praise! You are our God; we are your people; and we have come to affirm this fact! Yet, Eternal Spirit, we confess that we do not always live as though we are yours. You created us to care for one another and the world in which we live. Too often, however, we uncaringly treat others as things to be used, and we thoughtlessly abuse the world into which we were born. Forgive us, we pray. Thank you, God, for Earth Day and for its reminders and challenges for each of us to be better caretakers of the planet you have entrusted to us. Inspire us this day to be better citizens of this earth: who seek to conserve and not waste exhaustible natural resources, who do not spoil the beauties of nature by littering or trashing, who urge our elected officials to curtail deforestation and pollution. May we go forth from this place with the words of Edward Everett Hale ringing in our ears and informing our lives: "I am only one, but still I am one. I cannot do everything, but still I can do something; and because I cannot do everything I will not refuse to do the something that I can do." Amen.13 (J. B.)

## Father's Day

O God our heavenly Father, speak to us this day as we gather to honor our earthly fathers. We thank you for their guidance, firmness, and example. For us whose fathers have passed away, we gather to honor their memory. For those fathers who are still with us, may our appreciation increase and our relationship with them be strengthened. This we pray in your holy name. Amen.

Holy Father, help us who are fathers or who hope to be one day to accept the challenge of this day. We gladly take the special treatment, the gifts and cards...let us also accept the command of Christ to love our families sacrificially. May we be more creative in how we spend our time with our children. Help us to give them what they need...lots of our individual attention. And may our spiritual example stir faith within them. This we ask in your Son's name. Amen.

Heavenly Father, you have promised to "restore the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers." We pray that on this special day your reconciling love would be in the hearts of all who are present here today. Give our fathers the wisdom and grace for effective leadership in our homes. May each child see in their father a reflection of you, our heavenly Father. To this end grant us peace. For your Name's sake, we pray. Amen.

Our abiding Heavenly Father with your silent strength you fill us with feelings of joy and wonder. You watch over every move and gesture we make, like a loving father watching his child to grow and develop into the reflection of his own values and dreams. On this special day we set aside to honor fathers throughout our land, instill in us a gratitude of the care we have received and for the poignant memories of special times when our earthly fathers have etched on our spirits a higher meaning of love and devotion. Through their examples we have come to understand and accept your world and your ways. They are our teachers, our companions, our friends. And you, in your infinite wisdom, give us fathers to bless our lives and encourage our growth in every way. Eternal God and Father, we praise your life-giving nurturing, your patience, your love. And we ask your blessing on all fathers as they seek your help and guidance in this awesome task of self-giving. In your holy name we pray. Amen.

O God, give us godly fathers. Stir the hearts of all our fathers that they might seek to be more like the Heavenly Father. Lead them to become men of great faith, strong hope and bedrock integrity. Especially do we pray that you would give them the capacity to receive love and the ability to give love, that they might be more like you, Lord. Amen.

For our fathers, who have given us life and love, that we may show them respect and love, we pray to the Lord...

For fathers who have lost a child through death, that their faith may give them hope, and their family and friends support and console them, we pray to the Lord...

For men, though without children of their own, who like fathers have nurtured and cared for us, we pray to the Lord...

For fathers, who have been unable to be a source of strength, who have not responded to their children and have not sustained their families, we pray to the Lord...

God our Father, in your wisdom and love you made all things. Bless these men, that they may be strengthened as Christian fathers. Let the example of their faith and love shine forth. Grant that we, their sons and daughters, may honor them always with a spirit of profound respect. Grant this through Christ our Lord. Amen.<sup>3</sup>

We gather, O God, aware that today is designated as one on which to honor our fathers or their memories and also the attributes of fatherhood that we have learned from and experienced through Jesus, who called you Father. May our worship thus inspire us anew to exhibit these qualities by leading lives that are faithful, affectionate, thankful, honest, exemplary, and reverent. Amen.<sup>13</sup> (J. B.)

God, our Creator, you are to us like a father. You love us no matter what; you are continually concerned for our welfare; you seek to influence and guide us in ways that will result in our betterment; you give us freedom to grow by making mistakes as well as by enjoying successes; you always stand ready to help and listen. Thank you, O God. May we be better, more appreciative, and more loving children. Amen.13 (J. B.)

O God, on this particular day, to call you Father has special significance. For today we pay tribute to our fathers or their memories, and we are especially mindful of the attributes of fatherhood. Yes, many of us are thinking with gratitude of that man who has or had such great influence on his or her life, that man who seeks or sought to embody the ideals of fatherhood. For what is a father? A father is: fair, faithful, and forgiving; able, accepting, and authentic; temperate, thankful, and thoughtful; honest, honorable, and hospitable; embracing, empathetic, and exemplary; reasonable, receptive, and responsive. As we thank you for these qualities in our fathers, we are grateful that they are your attributes, too. And, O God, we pray that these same traits also might be evident in our lives. Amen.13 (J. B.)

God our Father, in your wisdom and love you made all things. Bless these men, that they may be strengthened as Christian fathers. Let the example of their faith and love shine forth. Grant that we, their sons and daughters, may honor them always with a spirit of profound respect. Grant this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

*Blesses the congregation saying:* And may almighty God bless you all, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.9

Our Heavenly Father, you call us your children and provide for us, as even our own father's have done. We ask that you bless all fathers here and elsewhere as they seek to provide for their families. May you grant them patience and kindness, mercy and grace, and faithfulness and love for the awesome responsibility they bear. Stand beside them and strengthen them, so that they know that they do not stand alone, but are sustained by your presence. May we seek today to honor our fathers and show them we care for and appreciate them just as we care for and appreciate you as the one who gave us life and created this world with all of its joys and possibilities. Amen.

Heavenly Father, you have promised to "restore the hearts of fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers." We pray that on this special day your reconciling love would be in the hearts of all who are present here today. Give our fathers the wisdom and grace for effective leadership in our homes. May each child see in their father a reflection of you, our heavenly father. To this end grant us peace. For your name's sake, we pray. Amen.

May the Lord, the Giver of gifts, give unto you that which is good and that which is true; the will to help and the courage to do, a heart that can sing the whole day through, whether the skies are gray or blue. May the Lord, the Giver of gifts, give these to you. Amen.

May the Lord, the Giver of gifts, give unto you that which is good and that which is true; the will to help and the courage to do, a heart that can sing the whole day through, whether the skies are gray or blue. May the Lord, the Giver of gifts, give these to you. Amen.

## Flag Day

On this special day, O Lord, we praise you for the nation and the flag which flies over our land. As we look to the stars on the blue field, we are mindful of the heavens and your creation. As we look to the stripes, we remember the rays of your light and your truth. May this awareness, light and truth permeate our lives and the way in which we relate. Help us, O God, to pray and to know that this flag represents one nation under God. May your divine wisdom be manifested in the thoughts of our president and in our legislative, judicial, and military leaders. Bind us as one in strength and in your love. As our flag has carried the message of human rights and religious freedom throughout the world, may it continue to do so in the days and years to come. This we pray in the holiest of names. Amen.

God of all power and might, on this occasion of Flag Day and the US Army birthday, we ask thee to look with favor on our nation and on our leaders. We thank thee for all the hallowed memories and sacred sentiments which cluster about our flag. Make, O Lord, our nation, our flag, and our Army symbols of service and goodwill to all people. May our flag float in majestic silence in times of stress and tranquillity, in times of war and peace, in prosperity and adversity as a sign of hope freedom, and peace to a troubled world. Bless this Republic, our entire Army and each of us individually, enabling us ever to remain a nation whose God is Lord. Amen.

Father, God in heaven, we give thanks on this day of celebration. We ask your mercy and blessing on the nation symbolized by these patterns of cloth. May the colors and patterns of this flag seem to always bring to mind the purpose of the nation it represents. May the whiteness of the stripes and stars always be bright for purity and never dim or yellow. May the red of the shed blood never be forgotten. May the blue of the sky and the brightness of the stars always represent the striving of our nation toward higher purposes and heavenly goals. It is only a symbol, Father, but let it today and always be a symbol of freedom. May it always be flown in honor and never in shame. And may we be ever mindful of the constant conflict against freedom that surrounds us and the victory that our flag symbolizes for us in that conflict. Guard our hearts and spirits and keep us from idolatry, but bless us in our honoring of this piece of cloth and all it represents. Amen.

Almighty and everlasting Father, on this Flag Day, we praise you for preserving the Republic, for defending it from enemies that would destroy it from within and without and for keeping our precious freedoms of religious liberty, and equal justice, and meaningful life. We thank you, O God, for this beautiful banner, which represents a unified nation under your divine care. We are grateful to you for this standard which represents men and women of the armed forces and other organizations who courageously shed their blood in the defense of their country, and those who loyally work and train to maintain the peace. May we ever proudly display our flag as an emblem of our commitment to true peace throughout the universe. For it is in your name we pray. Amen.

Eternal God, through whose power our fathers won their liberties of old, grant we ask thee to instill this same devotion to our flag, her colors of purity, devotion, and beauty of this land. May we stand in devotion to her as we pass by, offer prayers of comfort over her, and give tribute in our pledge of allegiance to her. In the days of trouble, may we not give up our religious liberty to her. In your holy and righteous name. Amen.

Almighty God, we thank you for the flag that flies today with it's great symbol of freedom. Keep love's banner flying o'er us as we walk in the way of those who do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with thee. Fashion our desires, our duties, and our deeds in accordance with thy will that we may labor for a better world filled with better people for the betterment of all. In thy holy name we pray. Amen.

## Independence Day

O Lord, on the eve of Independence Day, we pray that you will make each of us aware of the solemn responsibilities which we face in defending our heritage of freedom. Remind us that without dependence upon you we will surely fail. Enable our President and those in political authority to do their work with wisdom and justice. Continue, O Lord, to be the protector and defender of us all. In your name we pray. Amen.\*\*

God, our Father, on this Independence Day we pause for a few moments to give you thanks for a nation conceived in liberty and dedicated to the principle that all are endowed by their creator of certain inalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Life has been extended for rich and poor alike, dread diseases that cut short human life in infancy have been virtually eliminated. Now we grapple with the killers of our technological age - death on the highways, disorder proliferating from our stressful urban existence, heart attacks, hypertension, and cancer and the awful specter of nuclear holocaust. In the pursuit of life, help us to realize that it isn't how long we live, but how we live long that is important. Amen.

All peoples enjoy the gift of life, many enjoy the privilege of freedom; some enjoy the quality of courage. Life without freedom is intolerable. Freedom without courage is impossible. Military service has made courage a way of life. The courage of the past is in the hands of history. The courage of the future is in our hands. As we recall those who have fallen, let us rededicate ourselves to the tradition of courage. Give us a deep sense of reverence for life, a passionate desire for our freedom. Continue in us the courage of those who have woven this tradition into the history of our country. Amen



Almighty God, with gratitude we remember our heritage and our history. With admiration we salute our flag and cherish the values it represents. With respect we honor our constitution which proclaims the dignity of all persons. With reverence we hold dear the memory of all who gave their lives to make these things possible. With joy we celebrate this occasion and ask you to bless our food and our lives to do your will. Amen.\*\*

Lord God Almighty, in whose name the founders of this country won liberty for themselves and for us, and lofted the torch of freedom for nations then unborn: Grant that we and all the people of this land may have grace to maintain our liberties in righteousness and in peace. Amen.

Lord God Almighty, you have made all the peoples of the earth for your glory, to serve you in freedom and in peace. Give to the people of our country a zeal for justice and the strength of forbearance, that we may use our liberty in accordance with your gracious will. Amen.

As a nation we were convinced early that we could not endure half slave and half free. No one can tolerate liberty as long as brothers and sisters are in chains or shackled by poverty or ignorance, or a denial of basic rights which enable them to contribute to the good of society. Our most elusive dream has been the pursuit of happiness, for no person can give happiness to another. It is a state which each must find individually. Help us to discover the secret that happiness comes not from pursuit or ingrown indulgence, but from sharing not just what we have, but who we are. Re-create in each of us the dreams of our founding fathers, who by your grace knew that where there was no dream, there was no destiny. Amen.

We ask God's blessing on our country and all its citizens. May we who have the privilege of American

citizenship always serve the nation worthily and with a good conscience. Encourage everyone to obey the Constitution and the just laws of the State and to give support, respect and obedience to those who represent that law. And thus, may our nation remain the home of the brave and the land of the free. Amen.

O Lord, grant us freedom with discipline, motivation with understanding, and determination with compassion. O Lord, give us the will for self-preservation and the strength and power to help those who are willing to help themselves. O Lord, give us insight and patience, wisdom along with a sense of duty, and ability coupled with restraint to adjust to the changes in nature and persons. O Lord, show us your ways and never deliver us into the hands of any enemy. Bless us with your heavenly and earthly bounties and never let us be in want. Guide us in being friendly and generous toward one another. Instill in us faith and knowledge and let all of us have the ability to live at peace within ourselves. O Lord, show the people of our nation the right way to serve and guard the sacredness of all orderly freedoms. Let us realize that you have given us riches not given to any other nation under the sun. Let us be ever grateful and accept the responsibilities which they entail. You are our God and to you we would ascribe glory and honor, now and forever. Amen.

We thank you, God for all that is good, beautiful, and delightful in our lives. We thank you for the marvels of the universe and the blessings bestowed on our country. We thank you for our big and little problems that help to keep us humble and human. Inspire us to share with open hands the many blessing and gifts that you have given to us. May we manifest our gratitude not only with our lives, but by living lives of goodness and generosity. Praise be to God. Amen.

We thank thee for our inheritance for this republic built on the premise of the God of our Fathers, who didst kindle love, liberty, and faith. Bestow upon us her children, in our day, love for liberty, freedom, and peace for which our nation on this day stands. Never let our maintenance of liberty and righteousness faint. Show us the future that sends us forward, filled with pride and God's love for our heritage. Amen.

O God, who has offered freedom to all men, we give praise and thanks for this day which celebrates the bringing of freedom to some. In our celebrations this day; our joyful remembering the events that led to independence; help us to recall that we are never fully independent until we surrender in dependence to you and your will. We rest, as our liberty does, on the actions of others who have gone before. These "Forefathers" pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honors for the sake of liberty. Strengthen us so we may do no less. Amen.

Lord of the nations, you have blessed our land with the spirit of love and freedom. You have also blessed our ancestors with the will and strength to seek out and maintain that freedom, and we thank you for that. Keep that will and strength alive in us today, that we may continue to strive for true freedom for all people. Let us never fall into complacency simply because we have what we need, but help us always to remember that until all are well fed, until no one is homeless, until none live in fear, not one of us is absolutely free. Our prayer today is that you, O God, would keep us firmly on the path that works toward such true freedom for all. Continue to bless our nation and all nations. Hear our prayer. Amen.

God of our weary and silent tears, you have brought us this far on our way. We give you thanks for life, health and strength. We thank you for giving us this land and our heritage. Forgive us for the times we've thought only of ourselves and transgressed against ourselves, neighbors and you. Have mercy upon us. Bless the leadership of our nation at every level. Grant them the wisdom and courage to move our nation in a manner that will result in a productive economy, sound learning and a sensitive response to the needs of the populace. Grant us the wisdom and courage to always prove ourselves a people mindful of your favor and glad to do your will. Help us to rise above the human tendencies that oppress us and encourage oppression of others. Empower us to truly become "one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all." In your name we pray. Amen.

Gracious master and our Lord, we come now to celebrate the birthday of our Nation. Many years ago our fore-parents came to this Canaan Land seeking the milk and honey of free expression, free thought, and a better



way of life. As thou wast with thy servant Moses in the desert, so wert thou with George Washington in Colonial America. Thou hast seen us through war, depression, peace, prosperity, social unrest and social change. Just as Israel continued her forward march, we continued our growth, maturing from thirteen fledging colonies to fifty harmonious states. We ask that thou will forgive us of our individual and national sins, for all have sinned and have come short of the glory of God. We pray that thou will give the leaders of our nation thankful eyes to watch over the billowy clouds of our bright days and steadfast eyes fixed upon thy fiery chariots through our dark nights. Father as we gather here today, we are mindful that two crowds celebrate and fellowship in this birthday event. There is the crowd we see and the crowd that we do not see. The former includes this body and our sphere, and the latter includes George Washington, Molly Pitcher, Booker T. Washington, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Jr, and many others. Most of all, dear Father, it includes your son, Jesus Christ, the Lord of the new Cannan, new America, new Earth and new Heaven. Grant us, dear Father, a place in thy eternal sunset where freedom, justice, equality and life reigns forever. Amen.

We thank thee, O God, for our founding fathers, whose faith and freedom is both our heritage and our hope. May we have the courage they had to face realistically the burning issues of their day. May we have the spirit of trust in God which enabled them to believe when the days were dark and difficult, and may we in some measure pass on the heritage of freedom to our children's children, even as our forefathers have passed on to us the eternal torch of freedom's faith. We pray for this nation that it may ever uphold what is right, oppose what is wrong, and always strive to do thy will. Hallow all our work in this place. Impart to our waiting spirits the gifts of self-mastery and self-control. May no task seem trivial, no duty too small, no program without meaning, no day without its splendor. Hold us to truths higher than ourselves, to standards which keep us straining for improvement, to principles tested by time and confirmed in experience. May we go forth to our temporal duties with a sense of the transcendent and eternal in our hearts. In the name of our Lord we pray. Amen.

God, source of all freedom, this day is bright with the memory of those who declared that life and liberty are your gift to every human being. Help us to continue a good work begun long ago. Make our vision clear and our will strong: that only in human solidarity will we find liberty, and justice only in the honor that belongs to every life on earth. Turn our hearts toward the family of nations: to understand the ways of others, to offer friendship, and to find safety only in the common good of all. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.<sup>9</sup>

Heavenly Father, we invoke your presence and ask your blessing as we pause to remember the many blessings you have showered upon our nation since the Declaration of Independence was proclaimed in 1776. We seek inspiration for our lives, and for good and unified relationships with others in our community and in our nation. Grant each one of us the opportunities and the abilities to do our part in building a great state and a great nation. Make us see that this cannot be done by people who are mere coupon-clippers on the original costly investments made by brave soldiers and statesmen who have gone before us. Give us faith in God and love for our fellowmen that we may have something to deposit on which the young men and women of today can draw interest tomorrow. We know that a different world cannot be made by indifferent or cowardly people; so provide us with the energy to challenge, question, initiate, always investing our concern and pledging ourselves to try to bridge the gap between the "ought" and the "is". Help us to live in the knowledge that you have matched us to this hour in history, and that the place and time of our service to you and to our country is not random, but by your wisdom and direction. Finally, Father, let us not imagine that the mere hearing of a prayer on the Fourth of July will suffice to achieve the righteousness that exalteth a nation. Inspire each one of us here to see you and find you in daily, private prayer. And then, as you strengthen us individually, also make us collectively aware of what we can accomplish together - as a team that believes that "unless the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." Watch over us and all the members of our armed forces this day and always. In Christ's name. Amen.

O Lord God, our Father, we are grateful for the abundance you have provided our land so that we could become a great nation. Lord, help us to realize that all you have given us is but a trust to be shared. Father, grant us the unselfishness and ingenuity to make your abundance available to all people everywhere. As we face these exciting days as a nation, grant us the vision to see your will and the courage to attempt it. May the faith and

service and love that strengthened our forefathers so inspire us that we may serve the needs of our day without counting the cost, even as they did not count the cost in theirs. O, Lord, our prayer for our nation is that you will give us faith for today and hope for tomorrow. Amen.

O God we pray for our beloved land. We need your help. We need your guidance, for our folly has clearly and repeatedly demonstrated that we can't get along on our own wisdom. Help us, Lord, to see that all true Americanism exists only in being your men and women; that patriotism can have no other foundation; that it has no other roots. We pray, O loving and merciful God, that all across this land there may be a return to the faith of those men and women who trusted in you as they faced the danger and peril of the frontier, not alone in crossing the continent, in building their cabins, in rearing their families, in eking out a living, but also in raising a standard of faith to which people have been willing to return down through the years. Help us, the citizens of this nation, to want to do the right things. Instill within our hearts the right attitudes. Impute to our lives the right motives. May all that we say and do, spring from compassionate and understanding hearts. Make us willing, as individuals and as a nation, to seek as resolutely for righteousness as we have sought for riches, for you have told us that righteousness exalts a nation, but that sin is reproach to any people - even a people whom your grace and favor have spared the ravages of whistling bombs and whining mortars. Bless and guide those who nationally bear the brunt of responsibility for making our prayer of this day come true. Bless the President of the United States. Lift him above the claim of politics. Fill him with the Spirit of God that shall make him fearless to seek, to know, and to do right - whatever that may be. Strengthen and empower his cabinet, his advisors and the members of Congress. May it become a fact that we have a government composed of persons who know the Almighty God as the Commander and follow him as their Leader. May they place your will first in their prayers and in their lives. Bless - and save - this land that we love so much, O Lord, and help her to deposit her trust not in armies, navies, and air forces alone, not alone in stocks and banks, nor only in the achievements of the human mind, but may she trust in that righteousness which alone exalts any nation and by which alone peace can finally come to us. This we ask in your name which is above every name. O God. Amen.

Almighty God, our loving Father, we approach your throne of grace this morning with hearts full of thanks for the two centuries of freedom our nation has been allowed to enjoy. We know that our nation stands because it is your will for us to stand and not because of our power or because of our technology. We pray, O Lord, that if it is in accordance with your Divine will that you will cause our nation to withstand the forces that would destroy it. Protect us, O Lord, from external attack and for internal decay. Remind us constantly that it is righteousness that exalts a nation. Empower us with your Holy Spirit so that we will act as salt in our society to preserve and purify it by melting the hearts of many which have been hardened by sin. We pray, O Lord, that you will use us as beacons to shine the penetrating light of truth and justice into the darkness of sin wherever we find people who are oppressed by the shackles of Satan and his servants. We praise you, O God, for granting us the most precious freedom of all - freedom from sin through the death, burial and resurrection of your Son and our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. Whatever else may happen to us, we know that the victory is ours through the blood of our Savior. Purify our lives of whatever evil is present. Wash us in the blood of the Lamb and cause us to stand pure and spotless in your sight. Grant us the determination to resist the Devil and his influence upon us. Cause him to flee from us as you have promised that he will if we will resist him. Draw near to us, O God, as we draw near to you. We pray, O Lord, for those whose hearts are burdened today with grief with concerns of any kind. We know that you love us and understand our needs better than we do ourselves. Comfort our hearts in the face of trouble. Give us the strength we need to go on with life. All of these blessings we ask in the name of our Savior. Amen.

Almighty and eternal God, we give thee thanks for this nation's freedom and for those individuals throughout history who have lived and died for our independence. We bless thee for the many opportunities this nation provides and for the pride we share in our accomplishments over the centuries. Grant that we may be faithful citizens always mindful of thy Lordship. This prayer we offer in thy holy name. Amen.

Most gracious Father, in your name our nation came to be. Through your guidance freedom has flourished, the dignity and worth of all people have been made know. From our shores the hope of liberty has been broadcast,

and America is that inspiration of all who desire democracy, justice and peace. Grant, most Holy God, that the people of this nation never hold unpriized the achievements of our fathers. Give us grace to maintain our liberties and our vision. Strengthen in us a commitment that in obedience to your law this nation shall not flounder, and that we shall show forth your praise among all the nations of the world. Amen.

O Lord God, Almighty Creator, accept our praise today. For generation after generation you have shown forth your almighty power. Your blessings have been ours from our very beginning as a nation. We thank you for the freedom that was won over 200 years ago. Help us to appreciate that freedom as we celebrate it today. We pray for those nations whose people are oppressed. Where they thirst for freedom, Lord, may their thirst be quenched. Where they hunger for peace, Lord, may their hunger be satisfied. We remember today how we have grown from thirteen states to fifty. We thank you that liberty is enjoyed, tyranny is abhorred, justice is practiced and hate is being conquered. Help us to remember what you have commanded. That we should act justly, love mercifully and walk humbly with our God. May we show forth those characteristics as a nation for the next 200 years. Help us, O Lord, to trust in you, to remember the lessons of our past, to be resourceful with the prospects of the future. Let freedom ring in our lives, our nation and our world. Amen.

Vast God, as with each breath we have need of thee, remind us that we have a need of one another; that we have need of a great vision whereby this marvelous, chaotic, dreaming America comes true in our flesh; that we have a need to forgive one another because we are human beings, not gods; that we have a need to honor all persons. Therefore, daily and hourly brood among the various peoples of this land, continuing us always in that unity of life that arises out of patience with one another's differences and out of concern to enact generously whatever advances the common good. And unto thee be all the praise. Amen.1

Defend, O Lord, this gracious land from misuse of power, distrust of neighbor and stranger, corruption of the marketplace, the illusions of wealth; and give unto those allowed to govern us a due respect for thy sover-eign rule over all nations, including our own, that they may be guided always by thy compassion for all peoples, thy vision of peaceable towns and cities everywhere, thy claim upon us to be a servant nation for the sake of all the world. Then by thy strength enable us to enact in our lives a patriotism whose first allegiance is to thy laws and thy ways; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.1

Lord God, before whose everlasting glory the nations rise and pass away: we pray for the grace to know and the will to do the things of honor, equity, and com-compassion while our nation lives. As our founders worked to form a nation, let us work to form a family of nations. As they hoped for a place where free souls could live in dignity, let us be animated by the same hope and erase the indignities still inflicted on poor and outcast peoples. As they brought great courage and imagination to their tasks, help us to bring the same to ours, lest by small minds and selfish prudence we waste our inheritance. Amen.1

All men and women enjoy the gift of life; many enjoy the privilege of freedom; some enjoy the quality of courage. Life without freedom is intolerable. Freedom without courage is impossible. The Air Force has made courage a way of life. The courage of the past is in the hands of history. The courage of the future is in our hands. As we recall those who have fallen, let us rededicate ourselves to the tradition of courage. Give us a deep sense of reverence for life, a passionate desire for freedom. Continue in us the courage of those who have woven this tradition into the history of our country. Amen.

Lord God Almighty, in whose name the founders of this country won liberty for themselves and for us, and lofted the torch of freedom for nations then unborn: Grant that we and all the peoples of this land may have grace to maintain our liberties in righteousness and peace. Amen.

Lord God Almighty, you have made all the peoples of the earth for your glory, to serve you in freedom and in peace: Give to the people of our country a zeal for justice and the strength of forbearance, that we may use our liberty in accordance with your gracious will. Amen.

God of our forebears, and our God, too; we pause on this special day to offer thanks for the nation in which we live. We are grateful for those of the past whose ideals and actions gave birth to these United States. May our worship today remind us of our roots and motivate us to do whatever we can to help bring to fruition the vision of one nation, under you, where there is liberty and justice for all. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Creator God, who holds the whole world in your hands; we thank you this day for the part of your world called the United States of America. But may we never forget that we are part of a global village and that all people - red and yellow, black, brown, and white - are precious in your sight. Amen.13 (J. B.)

God of our mothers and fathers, we worship this day conscious of the heritage that is ours and mindful of those who conceived and gave birth to these United States. May our gratitude for their efforts and sacrifices be shown by our striving to keep burning brightly the torch they lit - a torch designed to reveal to all a nation whose sovereign is God, the One in whom we trust. Amen.13 (J. B.)

God of all nations, Parent of all humankind, Good Shepherd of all who will follow you; as we approach the anniversary of the birth of our nation we are mindful of the heritage we enjoy as citizens of these United States of America. For those who created a new republic sought to base it upon the foundation of noble ideals. They affirmed that all people are created with equal and inalienable rights, including life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. We confess, however, that all too often we have forgotten or forsaken the heritage entrusted to us by our founding fathers and mothers. Instead of making you our Supreme Judge we have followed the dictates of our own consciences, even when they conflicted with your divine will. Our guidelines more and more have become "Is it good for the economy?" or "Is everyone else doing it?" rather than "Is it right or wrong?" And instead of recognizing all people as your children and that we are all brothers and sisters, we have discriminated against and put down those who differ from us in color of skin, or in sexual gender, or in religious faith, or in economic status. Forgive us. And as we celebrate the birth of our nation may each of us resolve to do a better job of making ours one nation under you, with liberty and justice for all. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Wise and wonderful God, Creator of the universe and ultimate source of life's blessings, we pause in awe and humility as we ponder your greatness and your goodness. We are amazed at the world in which we live, with all of its natural resources and its natural laws that have brought order out of chaos. We are humbled by the miracle of birth and life, for they remind us that there is a power greater than we. As we approach another anniversary of the birth of our nation, we give you thanks for the heritage that is ours. For the Native Americans who saw you in the forces of nature - sun, moon, stars, clouds, rain - and who sought to conserve the land and animal life, we thank you. For the Pilgrims who uprooted themselves from their homeland and came to these shores so they could be free to worship in ways meaningful to them, we thank you. For the founders of our nation who affirmed "In God we trust," we thank you. This morning we ask you to forgive us for not taking better care of those who were here before the colonists arrived and for too often despoiling the beauty and wasting the exhaustible resources of land and animal life. Forgive us, too, for taking for granted our freedom to worship, that too often results in our neglecting this facet of life. And forgive us for putting our trust in the many gods that sometimes crowd you off center stage - the stock market, the games we play, our penchant to please ourselves instead of you. As the Fourth of July dawns, may it dawn upon us that from time to time we need to examine our heritage and do a better job of caring for others, caring for our God-given resources, and caring about you! Amen.13 (J. B.)

O God, who is Ruler and Lord, impart your spirit to those who lead the destiny of our nation. We rejoice that you have set us in this great nation. We thank you for our country which has nourished and preserved us. Help us always to recognize the responsibilities that flow from our citizenship, and most of all to perform them with integrity and honor. Remind us often that to whom much is given, much will be required. Grant grace O Lord, to our leaders who daily make important decisions that affect the lives of us all. Give them strength of body, quickness of mind, and wisdom of the soul for their responsibilities. Bestow on them the will to act justly to all men and women. Purge them of self-indulgence. Remove from them lust for power. Broaden their vision to see

that you have created a unique country where all people are considered equal and free. Through them save the people and bring the entire world to peace and harmony. What we ask for our own leaders, we ask for all leaders. Mold their wills to your will, and use them to prepare your kingdom of justice and love. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

## Labor Day

Lord, we never seem to have enough time. We rush and rush from one activity to the next...one experience after another. There never seems to be enough time...time to finish...time to be with...time to listen, or time to write. Time is a perishable gift--the hours are too short...the days are too short...our lives are too short. Tonight, Lord, I ask not that you give us more time...or time to do this or do that...but the wisdom to do well whatever you want of us in the time you have given us. Amen.

Lord, the only things that last and stand the test of time are the things I have come to know by my own efforts...by personal intimate contact with sweat and hard work and pain and effort and people...these I cherish. Bless them, Lord; they are now part of me. Amen.

Lord, you created with your hands and with your mind--and then you rested. In your leisure, you looked with love on your work--and you were happy. It was good. We have made our world into a place where work doesn't always produce good--and where those who relax don't always sleep well. So Lord, help us to follow your example even more closely--to work hard and creatively at projects we can enthusiastically support, and then to feel good about resting, confident that we deserve our leisure. Amen.

Creator God, the Labor Day weekend is a fascinating one! It reminds us of the work we are privileged to do and by which we earn our daily bread. It provides a holiday on which we can relax from our usual labor and play. It contains this Sunday when we can come to your house to spend an hour worshipping you. This morning, however, we confess that our lives are not as integrated and whole as we would like them; our relationships are not as meaningful and satisfying as we desire. Help us to understand that this is because we are confused about the roles of work, play, and worship in our lives. For we tend to worship our work, to work at our play, and to play at our worship. Forgive us. And may this special time in your presence start us on the road toward the goal of our work being a means and not an end, our play being fun, and our worship being real. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Lord of heaven and earth, we praise you for your mighty act of creation in which you made a good earth and peopled it with your creatures. You built natural laws into the universe that it might sustain life; you told your world to abide by those laws - and it was so. Then you created people in your image and told them to abide by your laws. But they did not! And people ever since have suffered the consequences of refusal to obey those laws. As we meet today in recognition of the role of law in our society, we ask for a new awareness both of the importance of lawfulness and of how it may be achieved. Help us, we pray, truly to achieve a "Generation of Progress" in the achievement for all people everywhere of that expression of law called "justice and human rights." In your name we pray, O God. Amen.

God of the continents, whose mighty acts continue to astound us: enter the celebrations of this Labor Day to bless those men and women who across this goodly land, work faithfully to provide bread for the nation and those things needful for the well-being of all the world. Help us who receive so much at their hands to honor them and to support them by every honest means toward safe working conditions, fair wages, and satisfactions in the labor undertaken and accomplished. And command us to march hand in hand toward this nation's declared purposes of liberty and justice for all. Amen.1

Almighty God, you have so linked our lives one with another that all we do affects, for good or ill, all other lives: So guide us in the work we do, that we may do it not for self alone, but for the common good; and, as we seek a proper return for our own labor, make us mindful of the rightful aspirations of other workers, and arouse our concern for those who are out of work. Amen.

## **Lincoln's Birthday**

Gracious and glorious God, whose principles for living have been exemplified by a great cloud of witnesses who have gone before us, this morning we are especially reminded of the historic hero whose birth is remembered this weekend. From the life of this man who became President of our nation and preserver of the Union we can learn so many lessons: the value of working diligently to achieve our goals, the need to try again when we fail, the strength that comes from hope, the immorality of discriminating against another person because of the color of his skin or her station in life. As Abraham Lincoln was called the Great Emancipator, help us not to forget that you, O God, are the greatest emancipator. For when we earnestly seek to follow your intention for us, when we consciously attempt to model our lives after that of Jesus: we are set free from the bondage of sin; we are saved from an existence that has little or no meaning to a life that has purpose and direction; we are delivered from fear and filled with hope; we are given the grace to forget the past, begin again, and keep on becoming. Thank you for standing ready to help us be freed to become more fully human and to actualize more completely the love, compassion, and penchant for serving you and others that wells within us but whose floodgates we need to open wider. May the realization of more of our potential be our goal today and every day that we are privileged to live. Amen.13 (J. B.)

## Martin Luther King, Jr Day

Dear Lord, help us to worship you in truth and holiness. In our devotion, give us understanding to know that we are all brothers and sisters, created in your image to serve you faithfully. And perceiving this insight, may we be willing to share your message of reconciliation with our neighbors. We praise you, O God, for Martin Luther King, Jr, and all your servants who, having finished their course, challenge us to remain steadfast in our quest for justice, equality and freedom. May Dr King's dream be our dream and may peace prevail among all people of the world. Amen.\*\*

Lord, we rejoice that as a nation we have been singularly blessed. On this day of remembrance, we thank you for people with vision. In particular we are grateful for Martin Luther King, Jr, who had a magnificent dream and with courage pursued it. He reminded us that our "greatest defense...is to take affirmative action on behalf of justice, for a threat to justice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." Help us, Lord, to be zealous instruments of your justice and to follow Martin Luther King's example by working for peace among all people. Bless our efforts to serve you by helping us to live in harmony as your children. Amen.\*\*

Almighty God, we thank you for the diversity of races and cultures in this world, for it is our differences that enrich life and make it exciting. Bless us through ever-widening circles of fellowship and increase our knowledge of you that our love for others might grow. In the words of St Francis, "Lord, make us instruments of your peace. Where there is hatred, let us sow love; where there is discord, union;... Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand." Help us to mature in your grace so that we will be more loving and understanding of one another. This we pray in the name of our Lord. Amen.\*\*



Gracious Father, today we honor Martin Luther King, Jr, whom you brought to a holy mountain, to whom you gave a vision, and who gave his life in proclaiming your word. You told us through him that we must love the oppressor as well as the oppressed; that if we claim to love even one person, we must love all; that to love one another unto death is the way of holiness. Inspire us all by his example that we too may ascend the mountain; that we too may see a vision; that we too may be your faithful servants and help bring about the kingdom of the Lord on earth--a kingdom of truth and life, a kingdom of holiness and grace, a kingdom of justice, love and peace. May we now be inspired by the spirit of Martin Luther King, Jr, and follow his example by reaching out to others. Amen.\*\*

O Lord, we assemble here today to remember and honor a great American, a man of vision and hope. May the dream of Martin Luther King, Jr, become the dream of all people, a dream of peace, love and harmony, drawing the nations of the world together in cooperative balance. May his life of courage and pursuit of justice serve to inspire each of us to live more in conformity to your will. Amen.\*\*

Our Lord, as we gather for this luncheon, we thank you for the life and legacy of the Rev Martin Luther King. We thank you for his dream, for his words of freedom, equality, and justice, and for a vision that all of your children can climb the mountain of noble destiny. Bless this food to the nourishment of our bodies, and strengthen our resolve to live, speak, and act in such a way that our achievements will be worthy of the best within each of us, and our freedom will be seen not as the right to do as we please, but as the opportunity to please to do what is right. This we pray in our Lord's name. Amen.\*\*

Dear Heavenly Father, creator of all mankind, we thank you that you are not a discriminator between races of



mankind. We thank you that you do not withhold your sovereign grace from those who, in the eyes of some, may not possess the socially acceptable credentials. We especially thank you today for the courage and faith of one man, Dr Martin Luther King, Jr, who remained faithful to your principles of justice and righteousness and called our nation back to you. We pray that today our memory of this great man will be more than an epitaph; but a call to all of us to dedicate our energies to the freedom of all people of all races and classes. May we, too, stand against the prejudice and bigotry of those who would build their own self interest on the ashes of the basic human needs of others. May we be a constant reminder to others that all peoples everywhere have been created in your image and, therefore, are worthy of dignity and respect. To the end that our brothers and sisters throughout this land might always be free. We pray in your most gracious name. Amen.

Our God and Father of creation, allow us your enabling presence during this eventful occasion. We are truly thankful for all you have done for us through your special agents of love. As we reflect upon the memory of Dr Martin Luther King Jr, consider our thoughts of concern as we plead for your continued blessings of compassion and mercy. Though as a people we have done some correcting of man's inhumanity to man, the task for which Dr King gave his life continues to haunt us. Give us that love of humanity that allows the sensitivity necessary to continue this fight for human dignity. Energize us with your overcoming power forever. Amen.

Let us pray. Dear Lord the Father of us all, we thank you for the opportunity we have today to celebrate the life and memory of your servant, Martin Luther King, Jr. We thank you for people from every generation who have been willing to live by their principles not only when it was the popular thing to do, but also when it became unpopular and life threatening. We thank you for the dream that Dr King had, a dream that because of our sinfulness we regret has yet to be fully realized, but thankfully is still in the slow process of fulfillment. We pray that one day, the time may come when it will not matter what the color of a person's skin, the language spoken, the place of birth, the manner of worship or lack of it, social status or material wealth or poverty, but that we may be able to live together as brothers and sisters. This morning help us to inventory our own prejudices and fears, and seek to eliminate those which are improper. Help us to examine our own principles, our own personal values and determine our willingness to hold fast to them. May we consider being dreamers of better times and life styles, not for the sake of noble rousing, but for the sake of humanity. We pray in your holy name. Amen.

Almighty God, we praise you for sending us a man of peace who resisted tyranny, a man of nonviolence who fought for liberty, a man of God who worked for people. Thank you, Lord, for Martin Luther King, Jr, who inspired us with his dream, who walked into our lives and our hearts with marches for justice, who demanded freedom with great courage in the face of great danger, and who passed on into your promised land. Thank you for his noble legacy to continue the journey to that land here on earth, in life for all people. Thank you, Lord for Martin Luther King, Jr. Great God and Father of us all, destroy prejudice that turns us against our brothers and sisters. Teach us that we are all the children of your love, whether we are black or red or white or yellow. Encourage us to live together and love one another in peace as did our brother Martin Luther King, Jr. Thank you, Lord, for Martin Luther King, Jr. Change us from the ignorance that nourishes injustice and from the indifference that causes hearts to break. Help us to demonstrate your love beyond caste and color. We pray for the spirit of love to help us work religiously for peace and true brotherhood. Help us to break away from our selfishness and lead us to freedom. Give us power to make changes and peace to mend broken spirits. We remember and we thank you for your servant, Martin Luther King, Jr. Grant that we may not rest until all peoples of this great land share the benefits of true freedom and gladly accept its disciplines. This we ask in the name of our Heavenly Father. Amen.

God our Father, we give you thanks for allowing one of your servants to suffer so that freedom bells will ring in the heart, soul, and mind of people everywhere. We pray for the King family that you provide them a blessed assurance, to know that their loved one's death was not in vain. Help us to hold on to the spirit of faith, hope, and love. In your great name we pray. Amen.

Creator God, Master and sustainer of all life. Today we worship you in our gathering as we honor a great leader, Martin Luther King, Jr. On this holiday we are reminded of marches, boycotts and sit-ins. We are also reminded

that many gave their lives so that all people could enjoy the freedoms of this great country. O God our Father, thank you for making this day a reality. Thank you for building within our spiritual and moral fiber a thirst and hunger to confront social injustices and institutional wrong doings. We praise you God for allowing this day to point towards an even higher tomorrow. We praise you for being in complete control of our past, present and future. And we adore you for allowing us to help make this world a better place for all people everywhere. May we follow the leading of your Spirit forever. Amen.

May thy spirit go forth as a right wind smashing down all the barriers to brotherhood and all the enemies of thy divine love. Oh Lord, grant unto us the vision to see each other as you see us. To complement each other, to love and help each other and to fulfill your purpose for the kingdom. Open, O Lord, the eyes of our understanding to the past that we may see right the present hour and the future. Help us to establish a city whose builder and maker is God, whose light of liberty and beacon of brotherhood shines to the whole world forever. O God, only your plan will work. Help us to truly be your people. In thy name we ask it. Amen.

Almighty God, as you have drawn us together in honor of your prophets, send us forth to settle the Promised Land that they saw from the mountaintop but were not allowed to enter. Give us, as you gave them, tough minds and tender hearts, that we too might become apostles of nonviolence in a land of violence, champions of justice in a society of injustice, and heralds of peace in a world of conflict. Amen.6

Divine Creator, who did fashion man in your own image and who also made him of one blood with his fellows, on this day we remember the birthday of your servant, Martin Luther King, Jr. He struggled throughout his life and finally suffered martyrdom in the cause of making brotherhood a reality. We in the military have known and experienced the common humanity of man in times of great stress, danger, need and crisis in our lives. Then, our largely artificial barriers of class, of creed, or color gave way to the divinely implanted impulse to protect and defend each other, to share with our fellows the crust of bread, the cup of water, and the word of reassurance. Hasten the day when elemental brotherhood will be the continuous order of the day rather than seen only in times of catastrophe and disaster. To this end, bless all that is said and done in this Memorial Service today. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Our Heavenly Father we thank you for the contribution of Dr King and all those who follow in his steps. We thank you for the beauty of their uniqueness, the vitality of their faith, the nobility of their sacrifice, and the inspiration of their accomplishments. We thank thee for their contribution to the American way of life, their love of freedom, their eternal hope, unfolding dream and their unshakable and undying faith. Help us, God, to be aware of your presence within all people of faith. Open our hearts to the divine influence, eliminate our prejudice and hardness of heart. Amen.

Our Father in Heaven, you surround our daily life with familiar things and well-know faces. You not only instruct us, but also command us to love others as much as we love ourselves. We pray you will help us to remove all that divides us from one another. Teach us what it means to truly love one another in deed, and not by word alone. Teach us to practice kindness instead of hindrance, love instead of hate, helpfulness instead of destruction. Use us to give life meaning and purpose and hope, instead of trampling down, crushing under and destroying that life. Our Father, we are grateful for the man whose birthday we remember today. Accept our thanks for giving us, even for a little while, Martin Luther King, Jr. Help us to practice what he lived and died for. May the world be a better place because he lived. Through Christ, our Lord, we pray. Amen.

Almighty God, we acknowledge your presence during this national birthday in honor of Dr Martin Luther King, Jr, for his non-violent approach to love, freedom and justice for all humanity. We ask that you will continue to guide and lead us through your wisdom and knowledge. Thank you for your eternal understanding and mercy when we fail in our benevolence toward one another. May we remember the dream of Dr King as we continue to interact with one another in society. Amen.

A day to celebrate the life and dream of Martin Luther King, Jr. A day to reaffirm the American ideals of

freedom, justice, and opportunity for all. A day for love not hate, for understanding not anger, for peace not war. A day for the family: to share together, to reach out to relatives and friends, and to mend broken relationships. A day when the community rids itself of the barriers which divide it and comes together as one. A day when people of all races, religions, classes and stations in life put aside their differences and join in the spirit of togetherness. A day for our nation to pay tribute to Martin Luther King, Jr, who awakened in us the best qualities of the American spirit. A day for nations of the world to cease all violent actions, seek non-violent solutions, and demonstrate that peace is not just a dream but a real possibility. If only for a day, if for only one day, each of us serves as a “Drum Major for Justice and Peace,” then we will bring to life the inspiring vision of freedom which Martin Luther King, Jr dreamed. And when this happens, and we allow freedom to ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up the day when all God’s children “... will be able to join hands and sing... ‘Free at last, free at last, thank God Almighty, we are free at last’.”

Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, we thank you for creating within us a hunger and thirst for liberty, and justice. Forgive us when we selfishly are only concerned about our rights and not freedom and justice for all. Today as we honor the life of Dr Martin Luther King, Jr, we thank you for one of your children who had a dream, who saw the vision of Protestant, Catholic and Jews, whites and blacks, people of all races, creeds and colors living out that dream. May we too dream a little today Lord, of the possibilities of life in a nation and a world under God, with life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness under the influence of your Holy Spirit. As Dr. King takes his place in our history as one of America’s spiritual fathers and heroes, may we humbly take our place at the front in the continuing struggle for liberty and justice for all. Bless this food and may our bodies and souls be nurtured today to serve and glorify your Holy name through loving and serving our neighbor. Amen.

**LEADER:** In the grand order of the universe, our Lord God wisely has chosen men and women to serve him in each era. Such a servant of our Lord God was Martin Luther King, Jr, whose birth we now commemorate. We are thankful for the life of this 20th Century Prophet of Freedom, who joined the prophets of history in the cry:

**CONGREGATION:** In the name of freedom, let my people go.

**LEADER:** Martin Luther King, Jr envisioned the ultimate freedom: the freedom achieved in struggle; the freedom reached in brotherhood; the freedom fired by the dream of a man; the freedom inspired by the lot of a people; the freedom free of hate; the freedom full of love.

**CONGREGATION:** In the name of freedom, let my people go.

**LEADER:** He came into our lives when the yearning of people to be free had turned their attention to justice. For justice, and only justice, we shall follow, that we may live and inherit the land which the Lord our God gives us.

**CONGREGATION:** In the name of justice, let my people go.

**LEADER:** He reminded us that the spirit of humanity soars from depths of despair with the strength and belief in the promise of the Creator of the universe. We know and we testify: The Lord loves justice... He will not forsake his saints.

**CONGREGATION:** In the name of the Lord, let my people go.

**LEADER:** And so he set off with us on a journey for justice. It was a journey proclaiming the words of the ancient prophet, Amos: “Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream.” It was a journey calling forth the modern Christian ministry to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to set at liberty those who are oppressed.

**CONGREGATION:** In the name of the prophet, Amos, and in the name of the suffering people, let my people go.

**LEADER:** The journey went to Montgomery, to affirm human dignity and courage; to Birmingham, to defeat the sickness of separating human life; to Selma, to ensure the equality of people in human affairs; to a hundred nameless communities to remove painful shackles of oppression and light joyous torches of liberty.

**CONGREGATION:** In the name of this journey toward freedom, let my people go.

**LEADER:** When war was encountered, the leader of this journey sang with the people: "Ain't gonna study war nor more." When violence was met, he spurned it and said; "Hate is too great a burden to bear."

**CONGREGATION:** In the name of the Promised Land, let my people go.

**LEADER:** So we are thankful that the Spirit of the Lord anointed a man who preached good news to the poor, who rejected segregation and embraced liberation, who prophesied the greatness of his people in struggle for the deliverance of all people.

**CONGREGATION:** In the name of the Spirit of the Lord, let my people go.

**LEADER:** We praise the Lord God for sending us a man of peace who resisted tyranny, a man of nonviolence who fought for liberty, a man of God who worked for people. Thank you, Lord, for Martin Luther King, Jr who inspired us with his dream, who walked into our lives and our hearts with marches for justice, who demanded freedom with great courage in the face of great danger, and who has now passed on into your Promised Land. Thank you for his noble legacy to continue the journey to that land here on earth, in life for all people. Thank you, God. You have sent us one who now causes us to say:

**ALL:** In the name of Martin Luther King, Jr, let my people go.

Almighty God, as we depart, go before us as our Guide. Renewing us with the spirit of service and sacrificial love exemplified in the life of Dr King. May we be agents of hope and justice. May we never pass by on the other side of the road, but walk with eyes open to the needs of our communities, with ears open to the needs of our world; and, with hands open in helpful service to our neighbors. Then we will not only be blessed, but be a blessing to our world. This is our prayer. Amen.

God of the universe and of all people, Parent of the human family in which we are sisters and brothers of one another, we pause to offer our special prayers prior to a significant national holiday. You have called us, O God, to be dreamers of dreams and to dream that one day ours indeed will be one nation, under you, with liberty and justice for all. We confess, however, that we dream too much and act too little. We are not always color blind. We accept and judge others on the basis of how they are different from us, thus erecting barriers because of race, class, creed, or gender. We forget that red or yellow, black or white, all are precious in your sight. Thank you, God, for people like Martin Luther King Jr - those who in the past and even today challenge us to ensure that none will be denied life, liberty, or the pursuit of happiness; none will be denied justice or opportunities. For all of us are persons, not pigmentations! Amen.<sup>13</sup> (J. B.)

## Memorial Day

Almighty God, today we offer our gratitude for all the men and women who have served their country in defense of freedom. For their sacrifice of time, talent and life, we pay them homage. Help all who have gathered here to remember those whose sense of dedication and patriotism led them to preserve the democratic way of life we enjoy. Enable us to follow their lead and do all that we can to further the cause of peace in the world. To this end we seek your blessing. Amen.\*\*

Almighty God we remember on this Memorial Day all your servants who have departed this life in the service of their country. We pray that having opened to them the gates of larger life, you will receive them more and more into your joyful service, that they may win with you and your servants everywhere the eternal victory. For us who are here, may the Lord bless us and keep us. May the Lord make his face to shine upon us and be gracious unto us. May the Lord lift his countenance upon us and give us peace now and forever more.

Father, we see our world with many faces--faces of peace and faces of war, faces of plenty and faces of want, faces of joy and faces of sadness. In times past, when the faces of courage and sacrifice were needed, we were blessed with men and women who offered their lives and did not doubt that it was right. Today, in this ceremony, we remember them. Help us, Lord, to show our gratitude by sharing the face of freedom with others. We can do no less for those who have done so much for us. Amen.\*\*

O God our strength and redeemer, by your leading our ancestors brought forth on this continent a great nation, born of faith and struggle, dedicated to liberty and freedom, characterized by justice and courage, and committed to promotion of the common good. A changing world continually challenges these time-honored values, proving the temper of their metal in American lives. In such moments, we seek your blessing, O Father. Enable us by your good spirit to grasp the future firmly. Guide us through the maze of temptations by lesser gods. Prosper each initiative for human freedom, for peace and justice in our land, and for the common good of our global village. Bless our speaker today, and each one present. Refresh us in eternal values, and inspire our hearts and lives to fulfill the potential you've placed in each one of us. Amen.\*\*

Father in heaven, this is no time to glory in war, but rather to remember and give thanks for those who have cherished freedom and liberty more than life. As we recall with thanksgiving the soldiers, sailors, marines, and airmen who have lost their lives in defense of America, let us rededicate our lives to the ideals for which they paid the supreme price. Their legacy is our birthright and our responsibility. Help us so to perform the mission placed in our hands that generations yet unborn will continue to enjoy the freedoms we hold dear. Grant us skill, dedication, and courage for the daily tasks of maintaining the bright torch of liberty. By your grace and by your power, let us mount up as eagles - run and not grow weary - walk and not faint - that our land may ever exist in peace and security. In your holy name we pray. Amen.\*\*

O God, our Heavenly Father, you who would not willingly bring suffering to humanity, your creation; you have brought us to this place today, that our sensibilities might be shaken, that we might weigh the peace of this setting against the pain and terror which brought thousands who died in wars to rest here and in countless other gardens. The contrasts are so stark that we would like not to see, much less experience them. But it is for us the living to bear remembrance. To remember first, Father, then rejoice, that it was not we who sacrificed self before the enemies of each age of war, but some other son, daughter, sister, mother, brother, or father. Few are the names we know on the gravestones, but they read not with our names imprinted and we are glad. And then to remember, Father, that those who sacrificed could well have been us. That all too soon the gifts of war -- the torn body, the early grave -- could have been ours; a price that we would have paid. We were willing, not cowards or heroes, but willing. And finally, to remember that time underscores the futility of wars; that foes become friends, that friends become foes, until the confusion of friend and foe makes us wonder at it all and recognize the mindlessness of warring. Dear God, help us to remember the significance of a "Memorial Day" and pray indeed for the implements of war to be forged anew into the plowshares and pruning hooks of our children. This is our prayer that we offer in your Holy Name, in memory of those of the past and in the hope for

a future of peace. Amen.

Father, our nation has marched toward its destiny to the cadence of soldiers tramping under the flag. When our nation has been drawn into war, our youth have given themselves to secure peace and freedom for the nation. We owe those who have fallen a debt we can never repay. We pray that there will never again be a need for our soldiers to march away to armed conflict. As our fallen comrades rest peacefully in their graves, may we be ever vigilant that their sacrifices not be in vain. Amen.

Eternal God, the Creator of all people, we gather on this Memorial Day to pay tribute to those men and women who have made the supreme sacrifice of life itself, for the preservation of the freedom of our beloved nation. For their devotion to duty, for their willingness to accept the responsibility of a solemn, sacred mission, we give you thanks. And, as on this day we remember and honor their lives, their deeds and their deaths, may we again resolve that their deaths should not have been in vain. But, may we as citizens of a nation founded upon faith in Almighty God, stand firm to keep the peace that others have given their lives to win. Bless the loved ones of those whom we honor today. Fill them with a pride that is truly justified, and a comfort that can come only from you. We make these petitions in the name of him who has given us life, peace and freedom. Amen.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, in whose hands are the living and the dead; we give you thanks for all of your servants who have laid down their lives in the service of our country. Grant to them your mercy and the light of your presence, and the assurance of your peace. Amen.

O Lord our God and Heavenly Father, as we have heard your voice calling us out of darkness into your marvelous light, so on this Memorial Day may we hear the voices of the thousands of our fellow Americans who have fallen in the noble cause of national freedom. May it call us to a sense of unity with them and their loved ones, to share collectively their loss and sadness. May it call us to a renewed determination as military personnel, for a deepened responsibility toward our various tasks in the overall mission of the armed services. May it call us to a mixture of pride and relief for the preserved freedoms which they have purchased. May it call us to a renewed sense of appreciation for the liberty and opportunity which have been safeguarded by their sacrifice. O Lord, we remember, we hear, we serve, with your wisdom and strength. Amen.

May the Lord our God bless us all present here, to memorialize those who died to preserve our liberty and freedom in our nation and in the world. And may the Lord our God remember all those whose sacrifice gave this nation its greatness, progress, and richness. May our memory of them be an honorable one, full of thanksgiving to the Lord who accepted them into his kingdom. The Lord is for all, and in him we believe, and to him we pray, remember all who died in the service of their country, whether in the air, on land, or at sea. O Lord, be gracious and merciful onto them and let your light shine upon them, for you are our God and unto you we ascribe glory now and forever. Amen.

Eternal and ever-loving God, we thank thee for the privilege of meeting on this hallowed day in this free nation, under these spacious skies to hallow the memory of our noble and dead who gave their full devotion to thee and our country. Bless, Almighty God, the thousands of disabled veterans in our hospitals today. Relieve their pain and suffering and give them hope and cheer. On this day of sacred memory, we ask for grace and prayer to live more noble lives, to become better servants of the living God, better fathers and mothers, better sons and daughters, and better citizens of America and of your world. Until that great day when we shall see war no more, grant us strength to live as you have taught us, in your most holy word. Amen.

Great and Gracious God, our help in ages past and our hope for years to come; we gather on this Memorial Day weekend to affirm, like Paul of old, that "whether we live or whether we die, we are God's." We pause to thank you for the lives and love of those who have died and who now live with you and also continue to live within us. For their memories that always will be ours, we praise you. Amen.<sup>13</sup> (J. B.)

O God of Eternity, our times are in your hands. The reading of the names of our fallen heroes has reminded us

of that. And the tribute to them symbolized by the laying of the wreath in their memory reminds us that even more important than how long we live is how well. In this quiet moment of meditative memory, we think of them each and remember them before you. We think also of their families and ask that your great heart of love may sustain them all in the times of deep sadness, loneliness, and even of anger, which breaks their hearts from time to time. We also think today of other heroes, who inhabited other times, who like our fallen friends, have helped to build a nation based upon your principles of justice for all and freedom for all - freedom from want, and from tyranny and from fear, and freedom to worship you as they choose. You blessed America and made her strong. Help her also to be good. Bless and save this land which we love so much, O Lord, and for which any of us would die if necessary. Help her to deposit her trust not alone in armies, navies, and air forces, not alone in stocks and banks, nor only in the achievements of the human mind, but in that righteousness which alone exalteth any nation and by which alone peace can finally come. May it be O God, that the words "In God we trust" is not just a motto inscribed upon our coins, but a rule of life emblazoned upon our hearts. In your name we pray. O Lord. Amen.

Eternal God, as we celebrate the events of this all American week, we pause to remember those who have gone before and the sacrifices they made so that we may have the freedoms we enjoy this day. Let us in this moment rededicate ourselves to the highest ideals our fallen comrades lived and died for. Help us to maintain the fitness, develop the loyalty, cherish the integrity that is essential to accomplish the missions that are yet before us. Grant that we may always be an instrument of your peace in a world that is all too familiar with war. This we ask in the name of the great friend and master of all, our Lord and our God. Amen.

O Lord our God, we remember before you this day the men and women of our Armed Forces who gave their lives that freedom and justice could live. We recall their sacrifices and offer them anew on the alter of liberty. Grant, gracious Father, that their deaths not be in vain, and that liberty and peace continue in America through our efforts. Give us an abiding sense of the heritage our veterans have bestowed, and the grace of your presence in our ranks, now and evermore. Amen.

Great God of the universe, as we turn our thoughts to the past sacrifices of those who died so that we might live in freedom, grant us hearts and minds that are truly thankful. Help us to fully appreciate the price that was paid at places like Bunker Hill, the Battle of New Orleans, The Alamo, Gettysburg, San Juan Hill, The Ardennes, Omaha Beach, Iwo Jima, Pork Chop Hill, and most recently Lebanon, Grenada, and Kuwait. Thank you for those who gave the "last full measure of devotion" and laid down their lives for this country. As we remember these fallen comrades-in-arms who died in both distant and recent conflicts, fill us with resolve that we might be willing to lay our lives on the line to defend the precious freedoms we still enjoy today. But most of all, enable us to trust you, the living God, and to entrust to your keeping ourselves and our country. For we know that no man or nation can enjoy the blessings of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness without your gracious intervention in the affairs of men. Amen.

Our heavenly Father, on this Memorial Day, we stand in grateful acknowledgement of our past history. We thank thee for those who have lived and worked to bring us to this present hour. We acknowledge our debt to those of our nation who have given their lives for their country, for freedom, justice, and liberty. May we never forget the value of their sacrifice, nor the nobility of courage nor the tenacity of endurance, which have purchased for us peace, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Now, O God, help us to prize and keep this heritage that we may be true as they were true, loyal as they were loyal. Grant unto us the wisdom to weigh and evaluate the greater issues of life and forever live, fight and die for these great causes. We humbly pray for peace. Not only among nations, but among and within ourselves. Amen.

O God, you are our Father and the Father of all mankind which means that we are all members of the same family - brothers and sisters. We would speak to you now, Father. What we have to say to you is that we are mindful today that we are standing in the sacred place of the armies of the faithful, countless souls that passed and left no name. We remember that each who decided within himself or herself that freedom is worth defending and if need be dying for, is known to you and valued by you even if others forget. We want to remain

sensitive O God to the high price that others before us, in whose shoes we now stand, paid for the priceless gift of freedom, for the right of home, the church, the school, for the open door to personhood in a land the people rule. God of justice, save us from the awful sin of forgetting those who died for our sake and our children's sake. Lord, we want our children to be free to live and grow up and have the opportunity to experience the good gift of life you give. We pledge our lives in the service of eternal vigilance for the cause of peace. Amen.

Almighty God, you have given us this good land for our heritage; We thank you for the natural majesty and beauty of the land, for the great resources of this nation and for the men and women who have made this country strong. We thank you especially for the torch of liberty which has been lit in this land. Although we have sometimes failed to follow its clear light, give us strength to maintain its promised freedoms for all people. Help us, O Lord, to finish the good work here begun. Strengthen our efforts to blot out ignorance and prejudice, and abolish poverty and crime. Hasten the day, we ask, when all people in our nation will lift their voices in one united chorus of freedom and liberty for all. We remember before you, O Lord, with grateful hearts all those men and women of our country who in the day of decision were not wanting and gave their full devotion to preserve the freedom and liberties of our nation. May we in our day give honor to their sacrifice as we continue to preserve, protect, and enlarge those ideals for which they gave their lives. We pause, not to give meaning to their deaths, but to know the true meaning of our lives. Let them be our teachers as we seek to rediscover the sources of courage, dedication, patriotism, and sacrifice. May we not rest until all the people of this land share the benefits of true freedom and gladly accept its disciplines. Grant us courage and strength to preserve as we seek to carry out your holy purpose of brotherhood for all mankind, that your name might be glorified in all the world. Amen.

Father, we thank you for the sacrifice, the ultimate giving of their lives of these men and women we honor today. Without their willingness to give totally of themselves, we would not continue to remain free. There are men and women who lie in unmarked graves all over this world who gave of themselves. There are families still mourning the deaths of husbands and brothers, wives and sisters given in the wars of our nation and we continue to seek your mercy, grace and care for each of these. Thank you Father for them in the name of your son Jesus Christ. Amen.

Lord our God, as we stand here today, thousands of miles away from home, we stand proudly, for we gather to remember comrades in arms who have given us our legacy of freedom, of greatness, and our niche as a nation of history. And we stand Lord, remembering in their deaths your own words so silently loud this day. No greater love have any than those who give their lives freely, out of love, out of commitment to something greater than themselves. Dedicate us today, Lord to those same principles. Help us rise above our own narrow lives to recognize the blessings you have given us in our American heritage. And Lord, help us to remember above all else your hand in our destiny, for without you we are nothing. You are Lord of all nations now and forever. Amen.

Almighty Eternal God, in whom all generations of mankind live and move and have their being: Today we remember with deep gratitude, pride and esteem these men and women who have given their lives in the cause of freedom - these who have made the ultimate sacrifice. Lord, we are proud that their wishbones were not where their backbones should have been, that they did not choose the path of ease and comfort, but accepted the challenge of difficulty. They were men and women whose hearts were clear and whose goals were high - men and women who mastered themselves. Lord, our prayer today is also for the living - not only those gathered here but for our nation as a whole. May no forgetfulness or indifference of ours make them who have perished as though they had never been. To the end that these dead shall not have died in vain, may we receive with fit humility the fruits of their sacrifice, and carry on to further fulfillment their deepest hope for their land and ours that freedom may continue to live. Amen.

God of power and glory, who led your children out of bondage with a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night: lead us, we pray, out of bondage to the mean goals and small-minded desires which propel nations into war. Make us be servants of peace, reluctant to force our wills on others, quick to honor the hopes and integrity of



our neighbor nations in this small world, and always more ready to build than to destroy. Grant us grace to be proud but not arrogant, loyal but not blind, dutiful but not slavish, so that we may honor our flag by giving it second place to your peaceable design for the world. Amen.1

Almighty God, who governs the nations with justice and mercy: accept our thanksgiving for this land in all its promise, chaos, failure, and fulfillment, and hold in your foreverness the sweep, height, and hope that is America. Help us to honor those who have broken and cleared the way before us - voyagers and exiles, school-teachers and minutemen, liberators who fashioned just laws. Deepen in us the excitement of clipper ships and Moby Dick, wagons west and cattle drives, Walden and the sprawling railroads. Make us penitent in remembrance of those robbed and plundered, massacred and driven, harried and enslaved -victims who paid the price of others' greed. Still keep our hearts glad and grateful for the dead and the living who gave and continue to give their talent, service, and life itself to the dream of this nation as sanctuary for the oppressed and homeland for the free. Amen.1

As we pause to lift our hearts and minds in prayer, let us be mindful of those who have laid down their lives in the service of their country. Lord, we ask your strength, that we might dedicate ourselves to perfecting your kingdom of peace and justice among nations. Let us give thanks for the many blessings of freedom which we possess, purchased at the cost of many lives and sacrifices. Fill us with the courage to fulfill our tasks as men and women and in no way break faith with the fallen. We commend these fallen to your mercy and ask that you give them eternal rest...this we ask and pray in your name. Amen.

God, tomorrow is our nation's Memorial Day. There was a time when people in small towns all across our land gathered in parks or cemeteries and heard the flowery oratory, felt the stirring marches, stood in silence at the crack of rifles and the haunting notes of taps that spoke an Amen to the list of local heroes while some elderly relative sat teary-eyed on the stand. We were there to remember our nation's history and heroes. But that is a part of another age. We don't live in small towns anymore and high school bands no longer march five miles to stand among the graves of men they never knew. So why bother you with a prayer for Memorial Day? Because you know how badly we need a sense of both heritage and destiny, at least a hero or two we can call to mind, an event that stands out because it was the point at which those values which nourish us were preserved. We can be no greater than the men and women we most admire. So keep our memories alive with our gratitude and gratitude alive with faithfulness. Amen.

Eternal father, who alone rules the destinies of nations and who has deemed that men should live in freedom and not fear, awaken in us a new appreciation of our land that we may apply ourselves to the great work of keeping alive a sense of freedom. Grant us your spirit as we honor those who have fought a good fight and finished the course. On this day we call to remembrance those who served in far off places and have laid down their arms to march into that land of eternal peace. We remember the sufferings, the fears and the horrors of what they endured. It is a time for us to realize that much of our best blood has been spilled - all over the world - so that we might live free and unchained! May they, and those who suffer wounds for peace, as well as their families who valiantly and silently also serve, receive rest from their struggles and a "well done" from you, Captain of their souls. Permit us never to forget our comrades-in-arms from whose fallen hands we have taken up the sacred cause of freedom. Today, we consecrate unto you the debt of our national gratitude which is their rightful due. Keep sacred their sacrifice in our hearts. Keep holy our course in your sight. Enkindle within us a flame of selfless unwavering devotion to duty that we may never be found wanting in those qualities of spirit and mind which alone are able to preserve hearth and home, the peace of our nation, and the tranquillity of the world. We earnestly implore your providential care as we face the grim and great task which lies ahead. May the day soon come when we can lay down arms and more earnestly give our attention to do justice, to live in kindness, and to walk humbly in your sight. Amen.

Our Heavenly Father: This memorial day as many celebrate with time off, picnicking, enjoying a beautiful day, and the beginning of summer seasons--we pay honor and tribute to those and their families who remind us what this day is truly about. We call it Freedom. Some were Rangers, some aviators, some SEABEES, some grunts,

some navigators, some Bereas, some SEALs, some Marines, some mechanics and some Chaplains, all dedicated for the sacrifice of Life if required. In our silence, in our tears, in our memory, in our words, in our love, we keep the torch burning today. We remember and we shall never forget. So help us God. Amen.

Father in heaven, this is no time to glory in war, but rather to remember and give thanks for those who have cherished freedom and liberty more than life. As we recall with thanksgiving the soldiers, sailors, marines, and airmen who have lost their lives in defense of America, let us rededicate our lives to the ideals for which they paid the supreme price. Their legacy is our birthright and our responsibility. Help us so to perform the mission placed in our hands that generations yet unborn will continue to enjoy the freedoms we hold dear. Grant us skill, dedication, and courage for the daily tasks of maintaining the bright torch of liberty.

Almighty God, Lord of life and of death, we gather on this Memorial Day of \_\_\_\_ to honor our country's dead. Men and women who have lived and died for the love of their country. So it is for these that we stand here today. Yes, we stand here for what they have done and for what they have given--their lives. So help us to look beyond the graves--the tombstones--and see their lives. Lives--people that you loved, people that we loved. Now, along with our entire country, we pause, we reflect, we pay tribute and we honor all these that have gone on before us. We give thanks for their service, and we verify by our presence here today that their efforts were not in vain. We praise you, O God, King of the Universe. Blessed be your holy name now and forever. Amen.

The Prophet Isaiah tells us: "Nations will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore." Lord, on this Memorial Day, we pause to remember with gratitude those who paid the ultimate price for the cause of peace and freedom. We thank you for what they have taught us about honor and courage. Help us to faithfully continue their efforts that our children, grandchildren and great grandchildren may live in a peaceful world and know the reality of beating swords into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks. Amen.

Almighty and everlasting God, we remember before you with humble gratitude those who gave their lives for the freedom we enjoy. We give you thanks for their memory and good example, their courage and devotion, even unto death. Look mercifully, we ask, upon the unrest in the world. Draw all people to yourself and to one another in the bonds of peace. Grant understanding to the nations that they might be united in a compassionate community where there is justice and mercy, truth and freedom. We commend to your gracious care and keeping all women and men of our armed forces at home and abroad. Defend them day by day with your heavenly grace; give them courage to face the perils which beset them; and grant them a sense of your abiding presence wherever they may be. Amen.

Our being here today is due to the supreme sacrifice of these men. When the Allies destroyed the Thousand Year Reich, they ensured freedom for the Western World. In learning of the atrocities and barbarities of the Nazi death camps, we have some idea of what a Hitler victory would have meant for the world. One can recount the deeds of these soldiers with the grief and bitterness of their having lost their lives; or, one can resolve that their sacrifice will be for inspiration and renewal in our lives. For some, the Allied advances came too late. Nevertheless, while they had the breath of life, they too dreamed of a better world - a world for which these gallant people gave their lives. I share with you from the writings of one such person - from the Diary of Anne Frank:

"It's really a wonder that I haven't dropped all my ideals, because they seem so absurd and impossible to carry out. Yet I keep them, because in spite of everything, I still believe that people are really good at heart. I simply can't build my hopes on a foundation of confusion, misery, and death. I see the world gradually being turned into a wilderness. I hear the approaching thunder, I can feel the suffering of millions, and yet, if I look up into the heavens, I think that it will all come out right one of these days; that this cruelty will end, and that peace and tranquillity will return again. In the meantime, I must hold on to my ideals for perhaps the day will come when I shall be able to carry them out."

May Anne's words and these soldiers' deeds be fulfilled in us - in our deeds and lives - and may this be our

prayer - our resolution on this Day of Memorial. Amen.

## Mother's Day

Lord, your Word speaks often of good women and good mothers. We read of mothers like Moses' mother, of Naomi and Hannah. They were women of faith who instilled in their children strong faith in God. Bless our mothers today. Give to them your love and strength and wisdom that they might love their children with nurture and discipline like unto your very own nurture and discipline so that their children might indeed rise up and call them blessed. Amen.

O Great Creator God, who has nurtured us tenderly like a mother, we give you thanks, honor, and praise this day. We are grateful beyond words for the gift of mothers, their uniqueness, their strength, and their love. Through their compassionate care we have learned to love others; through their unfailing vigilance and nurturing, we have absorbed values and direction. In their lives is written large the meaning of human devotion and godly patience. With loyalty that places family first and self last, that asks so little for the self, mothers have ever served as models of devotion. Through their example, we better understand the infinite loving kindness with which you have guided, preserved, and protected us, patiently loving us despite all our imperfections, constantly watching over us, and gently correcting us for our good. Lord, amazement fills our hearts at the thought of so great a devotion and faithfulness that we can only respond with joyful gratitude. Thank you for the warmth and security of maternal care. Through these special people, we learn to love you and your creation. In your name we pray. Amen.

Dear Father in heaven, we thank you for your gift of a mother's love. Each of us has been nurtured and sustained by the unselfish giving of life itself. For all the unending household chores, the hours spent taking us here and there, the lessons learned by being loved even when we were undeserving, the kind and gentle patience that guides, supports, and protects us through the years; and most of all for teaching us your ways. May each mother receive an extra measure of your grace and goodness both now and in the life to come. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, we pray. Amen.

O merciful Lord God, Thou has commanded me to honor my father and mother, and truly Thou also hast shown, even until death, humble obedience to thy parents. From the depth of my soul I fervently beseech thee, O God, hear my prayer and have mercy upon my parents, who have and are bringing me up in thy grace and love. Protect them from all evil, harm and sickness, grant them health, and mercifully pour forth their efforts and deeds; have mercy on them according to thy great mercy, that faithfully serving thee, through them I also may be worthy to praise and serve thee. Amen.

Loving God, as a mother gives life and nourishment to her children, so you watch over your Church. Bless these women, that they may be strengthened as Christian mothers. Let the example of their faith and love shine forth. Grant that we, their sons and daughters, may honor them always with a spirit of profound respect. Grant this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

*Blesses the congregation saying:* And may almighty God bless you all, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.<sup>9</sup>

Almighty God, you care for us as a mother cares for her children. You see that we have all our needs met and you comfort us when we are suffering. We ask, O God, that today you would bless all the mothers here and elsewhere as they strive to care for their children in the best way they know how. May you grant them patience and kindness, mercy and grace, faithfulness and love for the awesome responsibility they bear. Be present with them so that they know that they are not alone, but you are always there, ready and able to support and strengthen. Also, may all of us take today as an opportunity to give thanks for our mothers and seek in some way to show how much we care for them as we also seek to thank you and show you our appreciation for your everlasting love. Amen.

Dear God, life is filled with important people who show concern and love to us. Yet there is none quite so special as Mother. Thank you for giving her the desire to hold us and the will to direct our steps while we were

young. Grant that her compassion and friendship shall always remind us of your love for us your children. May she experience peace and grace on this Mother's Day. Amen.

For our mothers, who have given us life and love, that we may show them reverence and love, we pray to the Lord...

For mothers who have lost a child through death, that their faith may give them hope, and their family and friends support and console them, we pray to the Lord...

For women, though without children of their own, who like mothers have nurtured and cared for us, we pray to the Lord...

For mothers, who have been unable to be a source of strength, who have not responded to their children and have not sustained their families, we pray to the Lord...

Loving God, as a mother gives life and nourishment to her children, so you watch over your Church. Bless these women, that they may be strengthened as Christian mothers. Grant that we, their sons and daughters, may honor them always with a spirit of profound respect. Grant this through Christ our Lord. Amen.<sup>3</sup>

May the Lord, the Giver of gifts, give unto you that which is good and that which is true; the will to help and the courage to do, a heart that can sing the whole day through, whether the skies are gray or blue. May the Lord, the Giver of gifts, give these to you. Amen.

## New Year's Day

Heavenly Father, we thank you for your watchcare over us this past year and for bringing us safely to this hour. We are grateful for your everlasting arms which have supported us in our work and strengthened us for the journey into the year ahead. Lead us forward to serve you more perfectly that we may achieve what is best for this nation and that which advances the kingdom of righteousness, justice and truth. Now as we come to the end of this year and stand upon the threshold of the new, we offer this benediction: 'May the Lord bless you and keep you; may the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you; may the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.' Amen.\*\*

**Chaplain:** If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.

**Congregation:** The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

**Chaplain:** Friends in Christ, the New Year has come. With the gift of tomorrow, our living Lord offers us new life, a new beginning, an opportunity for repentance, and a new day in which to serve. Let us kneel and receive the future joyfully as a gift from his hand (congregation kneels). Let us prepare to receive the New Year by imploring the forgiveness of our gracious God for the failures of the past. Hear the prayers of your people, Lord, as we confess our self-centeredness, our apathy toward human needs and our lukewarm commitment to you.

**Congregation:** (Silent Prayer)

**Chaplain:** Let us prepare to receive the New Year by thanking our God for his gracious love and forgiveness. Hear us Lord as we give thanks for your sustaining power through all the personal trials we have known this past year.

**Congregation:** (Silent Prayer)

**Chaplain:** Let us prepare to receive the New Year by resolving to live more fully for Christ. In this New Year, may we receive you as Lord and eagerly strive to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with others.

**Congregation:** (Silent Prayer)

**Chaplain:** Let us prepare to receive the New Year by praising God for his manifold blessings. Hear us Lord as we praise you for the personal blessings of this past year.

**Congregation:** (Silent Prayer)

**Chaplain:** He who sits upon the throne says, "Behold, I make all things new." Welcome us, Lord Jesus, as we welcome one another into this New Year which you have made. Grant that we may be made new and your light might shine through us.

**All:** Amen.\*\*

Lord of the universe, we stand on the threshold of a New Year mindful of the events of this past year and aware of the uncertainties facing us and our world. As we move into the new year, anxious yet hopeful, help us, O Lord, to make real the unrealized dreams we cherish. Strengthen us in our resolve to walk in better paths, growing in our love for family, friends and country. Let this year bring us one step closer to our ultimate dream of peace. Amen.\*\*

O God, how does one adequately sum up a year of days? How do you bring to mind and to prayer those memories, those children of time, that crowd our present past and give definition to what we have become? Tonight, O God, help us in our attempt to bring together, rummage through, and draw out the feelings and thoughts which cause us to recognize our common community and our oneness in you. In prayer, O Lord, bring us to see that emotional cloth which covers the contours of another year in our lives so that we might find ourselves complete, dressed as servants of your holy will. O Lord, whatever comprises our history together-our fears and sorrows, joys and success-we bring before your presence this night, this eve of another year. For you are the ancient of days and the eternal yes-the same today as you were yesterday and will be in our hoped-for tomorrow. O God, we commend ourselves and those we so deeply love to your gracious care. Keep us in your hands and bless us both now and forevermore. Grant us your peace this night. Amen.

Holy Father, we ask you for renewal this day. As we consider our goals for this new year, remind us to discuss them with you. May we who are filled with our careers not neglect our families. Help us to evaluate, and if

necessary, to restructure our priorities. We commit ourselves to you this year in church, home, and profession. Give us opportunities to communicate your love and our faith. In spite of our human frailty, bless all our endeavors. May our activities this year honor you and reap eternal significance. This year may you be preeminent in our lives, for we ask this in your blessed name. Amen.

O Lord, we plan and purpose and yet in actuality we know little of the future-that empty end of the hour glass that is filled by the events and emotions that mark the days to come. We ask this night, O God, that you would lift from us the weight of the past year and allow us again to renew our vision of a world in which we can celebrate the gift of life which you have given us. Amen.

Now the Lord will bless you all. He will lift you when you fall and speed you on your way this new year. He will flood you with his grace when he lifts his shining face to help you overcome every fear. He will give you peace wherever you are bound. Amen.

Holy One, whose presence we keenly feel during the Christmas season and whose child Jesus we especially are inspired to follow as we celebrate his birth; may we carry the spirit of Christmas with us into and throughout this new year. Make us wise enough to know that the feelings and actions of love, generosity, involvement, and compassion that have welled within us during the holidays are to be the hallmarks of our daily lives. To make them such is our New Year's resolution! Amen.13 (J. B.)

Ever-faithful, ever-loving God, who amid all the changes in life is always our source of comfort, strength, and hope; we gather on this first Sunday of the new year to worship and praise your name. Forgive our failures of the past, and accept our gratitude for the gift of being able to begin again. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Eternal, always present God, on this first day of a new year we pause to thank you for your promise always to be with us. You have been our help in the past and are our hope for the year to come. Free us from the temptation to spend too much time regretting the past, and challenge us to face the future assured that you will give us the strength needed to face whatever comes our way. We pray in the spirit of the one whose birth we just celebrated, even Jesus, our Savior, who was called Emmanuel - "God with us." Amen.13 (J. B.)

Creator of Life, who ever was, is now, and ever shall be; God of change and God of new beginnings; we pause at the threshold of this new year to acknowledge that you were with us in the past and to affirm that you will be with us in the future. May our worship this day inspire us to make the most of and to put to the best use possible the new year that contains the future we will help to create. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Eternal God, as a new year begins, forgive our failures of the year now passed. Sustained by our faith that you are a loving and merciful God, may we go forward into the new year resolved better to keep your commandments, to be more appreciative of your blessings, and more closely to approximate the example for living found in the one whose birth we just celebrated, even Jesus, the Christ, in whose spirit we pray. Amen.13 (J. B.)

O God, whose commandments we would keep, whose community we would enjoy, and to whose service we would be loyal, we pause before you as we cross the threshold of another year. For its open doors of possibilities and its hope of new beginnings, we give you thanks. We are especially grateful that at the core of our faith is the message that life is a matter of becoming and that we can begin again. We confess that there is some of the year just passed that we would like to forget and erase: words that hurt rather than helped, acts that we know were sinful. Some of these blots and stains we can remove by corrective action in the days to come, and we pray from you the desire and strength to right these wrongs. But some of our mistakes are irreparable, and all we can do is sincerely ask your forgiveness while at the same time vowing not to repeat our errors of the past. So thank you for the new page in our lives. May the entries we make on it be in harmony with your design for us. And months from now may we be more satisfied with this year's page than last year's. For it is a reasonable expectation that we should be better and worthier at the end of the year than we are at the beginning! May this be our goal.

Amen.13 (J. B.)

Almighty God, our Heavenly Father and Provider, we come before your throne of grace this morning very much aware of our need for your providential care during the new year. We pray that you will provide for us as you have so graciously done in the year which is now past. Help us not to be bogged down by anything which has happened in the past year. For the sins we have committed, we pray that you will provide us with forgiveness. For the mistakes and failures of the past, we pray that you will renew us with hope and optimism for the future. For those whom can't seem to let go of the past, we pray that you will break their hold and help them to look to what lies ahead. For those with broken hearts and tearful eyes, we pray that you will provide true friendship and bring back joyful smiles. For those with confused minds and endless problems, we pray that you will provide clear judgment and strength to endure. For those with physical injuries or bad health, we pray that you will provide Divine comfort and speedy recovery. For those parents who need help in raising their children, we pray that you will fill them with love and understanding for each other. For those couples whose marriages are in trouble, we pray that you will help them to see the good in each other instead of the bad. For our military members who face danger in times of peace as well as in times of war, we pray that you will provide safety and protection. For those in positions of power whose decisions affect the lives of others, we pray that you will provide wisdom from above. For our country which was founded on trust in you as our God, we pray for peace and a renewal of our faith. We give you thanks for our Lord Jesus Christ through whom we have the forgiveness of our sins and the gift of eternal life. Help us to move boldly into the future knowing that our Lord will be with us every step of the way, for it is in his precious name that we pray. Amen.

O God, our days go by as a dream and the seasons run swiftly on and are gone, and we do not turn to thee nor hear thy Word nor look for thee in the night watches. We walk in the mazes of our own vanity. We listen to the prattle of foolish men. And in the dark of our own dark, we look into our own blind eyes. O holy, high, and mighty Lord, break us loose from our folly. Capture us by grace and hold us in mercy, lest our years go by empty, drab, and lost. Save us through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.1

Like Abram's journey, the year before us brims with promise and uncertainty. So, Lord God, we pray for a good passage through it, drawn by new questions and safe from absurd conclusions. Help us daily to measure our pursuits by our best commitments, and finally to learn from one another how to journey in the world as those who love it well and serve it wisely. Amen.1

Almighty Father, this evening marks once more the transition of one year into another, and again prompts the reflection of where we have been and where we are going. The past is evident; the future, as usual, is unknown. Please grant, Father, that whatever this future year may hold, may it be one of continuing creation, so that, in union with our fellow man, we may develop lives marked by peace and good will to all. Amen.

Almighty God, another year has begun for us, your children. And even as we change our calendars, we mark the changing of our lives. The new year brings with it new challenges. We face the challenge of building marriages and raising our children in committed Christian homes in a society that has thrown away the very idea of commitment. Some of us face the challenge and hurt of growing older without children. Some face the challenges of youth, others the challenges brought by aging. Some face the challenges of careers that may be going nowhere, while others face the challenge of careers that threaten to replace everything else in our lives. In the midst of a new year filled with challenges old and new, help us, Lord, to recognize your powerful presence. Remind us, Father, that no challenge is too great when you stand with us. Make this new year a good year, filled with your love and grace made manifest in our lives, for we ask it in the name of the One who goes with us whatever the challenge. Amen.6



## Prayer For The Nation

Almighty God, you have given us this great land as our heritage. We humbly pray that we may always remember your generosity and faithfully do your will. Bless our land with honest industry, truthful education and an honorable way of life. Defend our liberties and strengthen the resolve of the people who have come from throughout the world to make America their home. Lead us to choose the harder right instead of the easier wrong. Help us to appreciate the opportunities that are ours as we struggle to bring harmony to an unsettled world. May we balance our concern for justice with a willingness to display mercy, and may our concern for security be tempered with a willingness to take risks which will produce worthwhile change for the good of all people. O Lord, we pray for your guidance as we work together for the best interest of our communities, our nation, our world, and the ultimate goal of peace. When times are prosperous, let our hearts be thankful and in troubled times may our deepest trust be in you. Amen.\*\*

Our heavenly Father, we bow before you as the one perfect source of all wisdom, goodness and mercy. Teach us to be wise in ways that exalt truth, fidelity and honor. Instill within us a passion for human service and an ambition to contribute to the greater good of our nation. May right and justice ever be cornerstones of our free society. Bless our country and continue to strengthen us with the ideals of her founders. Amen.\*\*

We are thankful for the lives, the skills and the accomplishments of our founding fathers. We are grateful for our national heritage, for the valor of our heroes, the devotion of patriots, and the freedom of religious expression. Remind us again that the price of freedom is never cheap, that vigilance must be our motto, that sacrifice and devotion to duty is our calling. Increase our love for our country that we may guard it as a trust. May we be strong and steadfast in our devotion to freedom, determined in our intolerance of evil, and committed in our dedication to justice and the pursuit of peace. Amen.\*\*

O Lord, we pray for America, thanking you for our forefathers whom you mercifully guided in building this beautiful nation--a nation indivisible, with liberty and justice for all. We pray humbly for all those men and women who with faith in you and their country gave themselves for our freedom. In memory of them, give us a passionate determination to be instruments of peace among the nations of the world. Let our hope today be America the beautiful, one nation under God. Amen.\*\*

God, we pause to acknowledge your presence here with us; to remember that your dream for us is an abundant life--a life that is filled with joy, love and peace. Lord, we are grateful for dedicated Americans who molded this nation into a land of the free and a home of the brave, a country for all people. Those who passed the torch of liberty to us invested much of themselves in personal sacrifice. They gave their energy to help neighbors build homes. They gave their food to feed those who lost employment. They gave their time to encourage the sick. They provided a place of rest to those who were homeless. Father, you have blessed us with much beyond the simple necessities of daily life. Grant us a clear vision of the needs of the poor. And help us to emulate our forefathers by sharing our wealth with those less fortunate than ourselves. In so doing, we pass on to others the hope of opportunity and the encouragement of a caring nation. May we know that it is in giving that we speak most clearly of our faith and patriotism. Bless us now and guard our country always. Amen.\*\*



Loving Father, we pause to ask your continued blessing upon America. You have given us this land as a trust. May we be worthy of our heritage and mindful of your favor. Through your guiding hand, we pray that you will enable us to carry out the responsibilities that are ours as those called to defend freedom and preserve peace. Grant we pray a special measure of your wisdom to our President and all who serve in positions of authority. Bless America and keep her strong. Amen.\*\*

Heavenly Father, in the beginning you created us to be free, to exercise the right of choice with all the responsibilities such privilege requires. We indeed are thankful for every blessing you have given us. Today, we are especially grateful for your love expressed through the freedom we enjoy as individuals and as a nation. Remember, Lord, those who sacrificed to make our independence a reality. Bless us as we strive to preserve the heritage they left us. May our efforts lead to peace among the nations of the world. Amen.\*\*

Lord, we thank you for America and for the virtues of democracy--virtues which ensure liberty and justice throughout the land. Our nation is one blessed with freedom and hope. Guide us in our efforts to live in peace. Spare us from attitudes which detract from our heritage. Affirm in us our dependence upon you and instill within us courage to serve you faithfully. Bless those who lead us with wisdom. May our efforts to defend liberty illumine the way of peace and bring happiness to all. Amen.\*\*

## Prayer For National Leaders

Be with our national leaders, O Lord. Give them courage to face the truth, prudence to make sound judgments and a willingness to work for a strong government. We want always to be your agents for peace in the world--not a peace based on military parity alone, but one that is based on harmony and justice for people everywhere. As we keep ourselves strong and alert in the face of threats to our security, help us to keep alive the vision of a world in which all people are free from political and economic oppression, free to celebrate their unity as your daughters and sons-- children bound together in your love. We offer our prayer in gratitude for the many gifts you have given us, especially the gift of freedom. Amen.\*\*



Father, we commend our nation to your merciful care, that being guided by your providence, we may dwell secure in your peace. Grant to the President of the United States, members of his administration, Congress and all in authority, wisdom and strength to know and do your will. Help them by the power of your Holy Spirit to formulate laws and policies that advance the cause of justice and peace. May our leaders be ever mindful of their calling to serve instead of being served. May your commandments be their guide. And grant that both rulers and people will serve you with one mind and heart. Amen.\*\*

## **Scout Sunday**

O God, your will is that all your children should grow into fullness of life. We lift to you the ministry of scouting. We offer you thanks for camping, to teach us that the world is our great home; for study and work, to build character; for service, to see our responsibility to those in need; for encouragement in genuine patriotism and vital faith. Bless the work of scouting, in this place and around the world, that, through its efforts, the young may, like our Lord, increase in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with you and all people. Amen.<sup>3</sup>

## **Secretaries Day**

O Lord, today we acknowledge and celebrate the fact that behind every successful office there is a good secretary. We recognize their crucial part in our mission. We thank you for their commitment to the highest standards of excellence. They also make the work place nicer, more pleasant, human, and special. May they accept this luncheon as our real appreciation for what they do to make life better all year long. Bless this food and each person present. And to you, Lord, in whose name we pray. Be praise and Thanksgiving, now and forever. Amen!

## Thanksgiving Day

Blessed be the Lord our God, who feeds the whole world with goodness, grace and mercy; whose loving kindness endures forever. Through your gracious love, we enjoy the bounty of this Thanksgiving Day. Nourish and sustain us with the food we eat and with the gift of your presence. Amen.\*\*

We offer our thanks to you, O God, for all we have received, though undeserving. For the investment of time, talent, and even the lives of those who have gone before us and made free nations great. We have benefited from all the past efforts of men and women who have sacrificed so that we may enjoy freedom and prosperity. We are especially grateful for families who love us and friends who stand by us through good and bad times. We confess our failure to say a quiet "thank you" for the basic pleasures of food, shelter, and clothing. Help us to face the future with courage, that we might have the strength to meet any challenges. We do not pray for easy lives, but for the assurance to face life confidently, through the eyes of faith, holding fast to hope. We do not ask to receive much, but only to share the resources we have with those whose need is greater than our own. Turn hearts cold with indifference into ones warmed by compassion. Accept our gratitude for all your mercies to us which are fresh every day. In your holy name we pray. Amen.\*\*

Heavenly Father, as Thanksgiving arrives, we think of the Pilgrims who sailed across a stormy ocean long ago, in search of religious freedom and a new opportunity for life. Early on they learned that faith in you, combined with hard work, is an unbeatable recipe for contentment. They were supreme realists. Centuries later, we are still pilgrims. Often forgetting the formula of faith and hard work, we wonder why life so often disappoints us. At our Thanksgiving feast, may we take a long, loving look at our lives, all stuffed with blessings, and then remember the source of all that is good. Make our holiday a time of true thanksgiving for all we have, and may we offer both a prayer and a hand to those who have less. In your holy name we pray. Amen.\*\*

Our Father, we thank you for this food and for the beauty of the country in which we now live and serve. We thank you for our heritage as Americans, and the strong feelings we have about our country and freedom. Strengthen us with this food that we might live in honor to you and our country. As we depart this table, send us out grateful that you have called us into an unfinished world, to share a hand with you in its completion. Amen.\*\*

Almighty God, we thank you and praise you for your great goodness to us. We are grateful for life in all its fullness and variety; for beauty and strength and stability in the created world around us; for light and color, and the rhythm of the seasons. We stand in awe of your created works; the mountains towering toward heaven; the canopy of stars, each marking and reflecting the touch of your hand. And yet with all of this grandeur, you have seen fit to gift each of us in special ways. We lift our hearts in gratitude to you when we remember how intimate is your constant and abiding care for each of us. You have showered us with blessings of love. For our families and friends, and for all the human relationships that enrich our lives, we praise you. For the daily gifts of home and food and work, and for those who bring us joy, we thank you. And now, most merciful Father, we pray that you will receive and sanctify our offering of worship: our gifts and our lives. We give you praise from grateful hearts. Amen.\*\*

Almighty God, we give you thanks for the goodness and loving kindness you have shown toward us. For the blessings you have given in the past and for the promise of your continued faithfulness, we thank you. For the blessings of life, we give you praise. More importantly, Lord, we thank you for the redemption you provided us in your word. We are prone to forget the source of our blessings. Help us, Lord, today to remember, and in remembering, to show forth our praise and thanksgiving not only with our lips, but with our lives. In your name we pray. Amen.

O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come; our shelter from the stormy blast, and our eternal home." We thank you, Lord, for a warm dry place to sleep, for abundant good food to take away our hunger, for friends whose presence helps to ease the boredom of waiting. We thank you, Lord, for the gift of life itself, and

for the meaning and purpose that our faith in you brings to our lives. Give us now your peace. In your strong and powerful name we pray. Amen.

Our power is shut off, and suddenly we become thankful for electricity. Our garbage is not picked up, and suddenly we become thankful for the garbage collector. The toilet doesn't flush, and suddenly we become thankful for plumbers. Our roof leaks, and suddenly we become thankful for carpenters. A good friend dies, and suddenly we discover how much he meant to us. Why is it, Lord, that we take for granted the uncounted blessings of life until they are removed from us? We take for granted, the mind you have given us, the beauty of the earth around us, the rain and soil combining to produce our foods, the love of family and friends surrounding us. Today we thank you, for being patient with us, for not forgetting us when we forget you, for loving and forgiving us, for music and singing, for rest and leisure, for those who understand us, for laughter and joy, for being with us now. Most of all we thank you for not withholding the blessings of life from us even though we take them for granted. Bless us and our families as we celebrate this, our national day of Thanksgiving. Bless this food for our nourishment and renew us for service to you and our fellowman. Amen.

Gracious Master and our Lord, it is once again that we set the sails of the Mayflower reaffirming religious tolerance, seeking peace and prosperity, and giving thanks for thy most bountiful blessings. We pray that thou will blow the winds of purity and clean our ship of sin and evil. We pray that thou will send the navigational winds and continue to chart us in a godly direction. As our ship becomes old and tattered, we pray that thou will salvage but a small part, that it will serve to remind us of that first voyage and first Thanksgiving where the Pilgrims gathered their harvest, prepared, ate, and gave thanks unto thee for bringing them safe to shore and sustaining them over the long winter. Dear Father, bring us again to shore, bring us from the mountain of selfish abundance to the valley of sharing with the less fortunate; bring us from the great seas of arrogance to the small ponds of humility; and most of all, bring us from the ocean of uncertainty to safe shores in thy arms. Hear our prayer, dear Lord, and grant us thy peace. Amen.

Dear Heavenly Father, we humbly bow before you as the Creator of the Universe, the giver and sustainer of life, to thank you for your bountiful blessings upon us. We thank you for your presence in the history of our nation. Your presence is evident from the time of our pilgrim forefathers to your abiding presence in our everyday life. Make us aware that all that we are and that all we possess is truly a product of your grace. We thank you for a time of Thanksgiving; a time when a nation stops, the wheels of industry grind to a stop, the tables of commerce close in a period of thanks. We pray that this spirit may be with us throughout the year. We humbly pray that your blessings will continue to be upon this nation and its people. Amen.

Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, who has given us good land for our heritage and blessed us with freedom, we humbly beseech thee to bless us this day of Thanksgiving with honor, courage, wisdom, and duty. Grant us the grace to reaffirm our moral and spiritual values. Save us from violence, discord, and confusion; from pride and arrogance and all evil. Bless our God-fearing President, our civilian and military authorities, and members of the United States Armed Forces. Bless our churches and remember us who have gathered here in thy Name to bless thee, praise thee and thank thee. For thou art blessed who feeds us and gives life to our flesh; who fills our hearts with joy and happiness, and enables us to do good for others in thy Name. Amen.

I thank you, O God, for a country that allows, even encourages us, to pray, to give thanks, and to share our spiritual needs in public fashion. In such moments the sacrifices of the past make sense and the mystical fellowship of free people continues to gel and take hold. I ask, O God, that the sacrifices we now make, however limited, may add to the tradition evidenced and honored today. So often, O Lord, the love and service to our fellow man which we intend is much greater than the love we actually give. Help us, O Lord, by selfless deeds to make up the difference. Give us a good night. Amen.

Ever-present and ever-giving, God, who has given us the gift of life and its attendant blessings, as we enter this week of Thanksgiving grant us one more gift - the gift of a grateful heart. Forgive us for taking life for granted and for complaining about what we lack instead of rejoicing over what we have. May our worship today

enhance our gratitude! Amen.13 (J. B.)

We come to you, O God, as thankful people! We are mindful in this Thanksgiving season of our blessings, not just our difficulties; of our successes, not just our failures; of our assets, not just our liabilities; of our strengths, not just our weaknesses; of our joys, not just our sorrows. Grant us, we pray, the attitude of gratitude - not only in these coming days, but every day that life is ours. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Creating, ever-faithful, ever-giving, and ever-loving God, we gladly and gratefully gather to speak and sing your praise. On this Thanksgiving Sunday we are mindful of all that you have given us. We confess, however, that too often ours is only silent gratitude, which is of no use to you or to others. Thus we pray that we will be inspired anew intentionally and concretely to reflect and express our gratitude in what we say and in what we do, as did Jesus, the Christ, in whose spirit we pray. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Ever-giving and generous God, who loves us not because of our merits but just because we are; we pause in your presence, overwhelmed by our blessings. Life itself, family, friends, food, home, church, community, the marvels and beauty of creation, and other gifts too numerous to mention fill our lives to overflowing. Keep us, we pray, from ever taking for granted what we enjoy. And may we always remember that we are the caregivers and caretakers, not the owners, of all that seems to be ours. In gratitude and humility we pray. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Ever-loving God of grace and God of glory, who empowers us for the living of our days, we gather in this place dedicated to your worship and service as we enter this week of Thanksgiving. We are grateful for this special season that reminds us of blessings that we sometimes take for granted. Thus, today accept our gratitude for gifts of: thinking, hugs, acceptance, nature, kindness, salvation, goals, identity, vocation, ideals, nation, guidance.

Forgive us for sometimes forgetting or using unwisely these gifts that are ours. And may we be motivated to express our gratitude for your innumerable gifts by seeking to live as you would have us live - by loving you with heart, soul, mind, and strength, and our neighbor as ourselves. We pray in the spirit of another of your gifts to us, Jesus, the Christ, in whom we have seen the way, the truth, and the life. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Our Heavenly Father on this Thanksgiving Day, we pray that we may not be numb to the many blessings for which we ought to be thankful. Give us your gift of contentment, that we may not always waste our time desiring more, but learn to use, enjoy and be thankful for what we have. Bless us in all that is right and correct us in all that is wrong. Give life to our thankful and good intentions, lest they be stillborn. May our hearts now truly reflect thankfulness for the meal we are about to eat, the appetite which enables us to enjoy it, but most of all for you, the Provider of both. Amen.

O Lord, make this hour a time in which we are graced with your presence. Let our fears be replaced by our hope in the future things to come; so that we may be witnesses of your promises. Make this moment a time in which a family gathers to support each other. Bless all here gathered and this bounty we receive to the nourishment of our bodies. Amen.

Our Father who art in heaven, we give you thanks for this holiday season and especially for this Thanksgiving Day. A day which is meaningful to us as a nation because of our heritage, and a day which is equally meaningful to us as individuals because of the closeness it brings to our families and because of the memories of good times spent with those that we love in days gone by. Help us to be grateful for the freedom that we so often take for granted. Keep us mindful that thousands upon thousands of servicemen and women gave their lives that we might be free. Help us to be grateful for our families and our friends and our loved ones. Keep us mindful of how precious those relationships are and of how quickly they can be changed because of the suddenness of death or the length of separation caused by our jobs. Help us to be grateful for this fine Thanksgiving Dinner that has been prepared for us. Keep us mindful that many thousands of people in our world are starving to death at this very hour. Bless the ones who have worked so hard preparing this very special meal for us to enjoy. Help us to take the time to say "Thank you" to them for their work and their concern for us on this special day. Most



of all help us to be grateful for your steadfast love for us regardless of how rebellious we become. We ask these blessings in Your holy name. Amen.

Our most gracious and loving Heavenly Father, we give thanks to you this day for the bounteous gifts which you have bestowed on our country. We are thankful for all the blessings of riches, of strength, of freedom. But most of all we are thankful for the Christian Heritage and foundation that we have from our fathers, those men and women who sought a new land where all could be free to worship you. Thank you Lord for all that you have given us and will continue to grant us in your loving mercy. We come to you in the name of your Son and our Savior. Amen.

O Lord, make this hour a time in which we are graced with your presence. Let our fears be replaced by our hope in the future things to come; so that we may be witness of your promises. Make this moment a time in which a family gathers to support each other. Bless all here gathered and this bounty we are to receive to the nourishment of our bodies. Amen.

O God, our most merciful Heavenly Father, who made us in your image and loved us before we knew you, we give thanks to you for the life and the spark of love you created in us. We thank you for the fierceness of anger, for it helps us to recognize and appreciate love as it overcomes anger; we thank you for those who dare to doubt because they help us grow by causing us to reevaluate our beliefs; we thank you for people with insight, for they show us the folly of our ways; then, O Lord, we thank you for the grace which makes all gifts possible - not cheap grace but grace bought by your Son's shed blood, given for us in love. We raise this prayer of Thanksgiving in the name of the risen savior. Amen.

Lord our God, often we see holidays merely as breaks in our routine, as times to lay back and take it easy, to withdraw within ourselves and escape from the hassles of life. Lord, we do indeed need those kinds of breaks. But help us too, Lord, to catch the deeper meaning of this holiday. To sense the richness of the blessings which surround us. To rejoice in the great gift of our country and the freedoms within which we live, freedoms we have pledged our lives to protect. Help us to experience gratitude, Lord, for those around us, our families, our friends, our comrades in arms. Help us, especially, Lord, to understand your part in all of this and to give you the praise and the glory. We ask all this in your holy name. Amen.

Almighty God, you have abundantly blessed America and its people. We give you thanks for this great country and the liberty we enjoy. We give you thanks for forefathers with wisdom and a vision for freedom. We give you thanks for families and friends. May this Thanksgiving remind us of our past blessings, and may it cause us to recognize your work in our land today. Thank you for loving us and enabling us to work and produce the fruit of the land. We give thanks. Amen.

Our Lord and God, we give thanks to you this day. We give you thanks for the abundance that you have bestowed upon us. We are thankful not only for the abundance of material possessions, but also for your faithfulness in times of joy and grief, laughter and sorrow, health and sickness, assurance and doubt, peace and war, life and death. We are able to do your will and give thanks in all things, because you are with us in all circumstances. We thank you in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The paraphrased prayer of David, I Chronicles 29:10: O Lord, you are the God we have known all our lives. And we pause to offer our Thanksgiving and praise. Everything in the heavens and on this earth belongs to you and all that we have is really yours. We are so privileged to live in your kingdom. We recognize that you are in control of everything and you are the Divine Commander over us all. All our riches and honor come from you alone. It is at your discretion that we have been so greatly blessed. It is from your hand that all our power and strength, all our greatness and goodness have come. Bless now this food and our fellowship together tonight. Help us always to stay in your favor, for we do honor and bless your holy name. Amen.

Our Heavenly Father, on this Thanksgiving Day, we pause to praise thy name, accept our humble thanks for all

thy blessings. Help us to be aware of all that thou hast done for us through the offer of thy grace and the extension of thy provision and providence. We ask for a continuance and an enlargement of the mercies thou has already shown to us, for we acknowledge our need and dependence upon thee. Shed thy light upon all those in the armed forces who defend our freedom, preserve our heritage, and live and die for peace in our world. Comfort those who may be away from home on this day; yet, assure them not only of the presence of love from home but also from thee. Bless this day we reserve and this food we eat for the good and glory of thy wonderful and matchless name. Amen.

Almighty God, we humbly give you thanks for all your goodness and loving kindness, and all the blessings of this life. But above all, we thank you for your unspeakable gift of love in the redemption of the world through your Son, Christ Jesus - the source of hope and the means of grace. Instill in us an awareness of all your goodness, that our hearts may be overflowing with gratitude, that we might show forth our praise, not only with our lips, but also with our lives, giving ourselves to your service and walking in your sight with all holiness and righteousness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, we pray. Amen.

Almighty God, our Father, we approach your throne of grace this morning with hearts full of thanks for the many ways in which we are so richly blessed. We give you thanks for our food, our clothes and our warm homes. We give you thanks for our families, our friends and our neighbors. We give you thanks for our wives, our husbands and our children. We give you thanks for our jobs, our possessions and the conveniences which we take for granted. We give you thanks for life, for health and for the good times we enjoy. We give you thanks, O Lord, for even the hard times, the difficult times and the sad times, for we know they help us grow in faith, in love, and in character. But most of all, O Lord, we give you thanks for loving us as you do with a steadfast love. We give you thanks for not leaving us alone to die in our sins but instead providing forgiveness through the gift of your only Son, the Lord Jesus, through whom we have eternal life to be thankful for. Cause us to grow in faith as each day passes. Help us to love you and to serve you, regardless of what the storms of life may shower upon us. We ask these blessing in the name of our Savior. Amen.

Yea, thou Lord of us all; thou Sovereign of the air's ocean, the valley's running, the cumbersome moun-tains; thou goodness in the taste of our souls: we praise thee for the clamorous and holy seasons; for the furrow, the stalk, the leaf, and the grain; and for the feast all gold and red and high. We praise thee for great mercy toward our sins, for constant love when we are in despair, for strength to rise again in the dark hour. We praise thee for thy peace against our wars, and for thy ways of peace that shall redeem nations, Amen.<sup>1</sup>

Thou Lord of all that is, thou Creator of the air's ocean, thou Juggler of stars, thou whose voice mur-murs its music throughout all the earth, thou high and holy One in whom we dream: surely and with exaltations we name thy name with thanksgiving, we call out to thee with praise. We give thee thanks that thou hast set the fires of the blood, taught the mind to run, breathed in us souls. And we praise thee for families whereby we learn to love, and for neighborhoods wherein we learn to trust. Surely thy goodness and mercy is ever upon us, full measure, pressed down, and running over. Surely thy bounty is upon the land, thy sceneries within our hearts, thy compassion open across the whole bent world. Amen.<sup>1</sup>

O God, our source and our hope, we give thanks for the ordinary and the extraordinary things that sustain us and make our lives rich and whole - for daily bread, and for the experience of discovering that it is a bless-ing; for friendships and duties, for good hopes and precious memories, for the gifts we give each other by our understanding of one another's hopes and hurts, for the rich variety of our experience as human beings, for the family reunions that mark this season. Help us by the power of your Spirit to act from gratitude, as befits those who have received the great gift of your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.<sup>1</sup>

Almighty God, we praise your name and glorify you, remembering your promise that while the earth remains, seedtime and harvest shall not fail. We bless you for the supports of this life, for the kindly fruits of the earth, for the food we too often receive without thanks and eat without remembering you. May gratitude be restored in us, we pray, and all our uses of this world's bounty be touched with thanksgiving. Then we will know that what

we have is not our own alone, but ours to share as it is ours to use. Amen.1

Our Father, we are especially mindful this Thanksgiving week to count and give thanks for our many blessings: for families, health, a place to work, the freedom to worship, and for the renewed hope of positive change in the world. May occasions such as this strengthen goodwill and understanding among friends and allies. As you have so richly blessed our countries Lord, may we ever seek to be a blessing in our world. We thank you for our daily bread O Lord. This we pray in your holy, just and loving name, Amen.

Father, we come to you in prayer on this Thanksgiving Eve. We thank you Lord for the bountiful gifts which we have received, for the blessings of freedom, and support of friends and families. Father, you are the One Eternal Creator from whom all blessings do flow. Grant, we beseech you, your holy presence to everyone. May all creation come to know your name and give thanks. Amen.

Let us go forth with a Thanksgiving to God in our hearts that moves us to give... food and shelter to care for those who lack...a listening ear for those who hurt...a helping hand for the weak...that the giver of every good and perfect gift may be glorified as the love He gives touches the lives of our neighbors, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.\*\*

We Give Thanks (Recitation/Reflection on Thanksgiving)

We are Thankful for our Country (Recitation/Prayer of Thanksgiving for our country)

Scripture: Deuteronomy 28:1-11

Hymn: "O Beautiful for Spacious Skies" (AFH #200)

We are Thankful for our Families (Recitation/Prayer of Thanksgiving for our families)

Scripture: Joshua 24: 1-15

Hymn: "We Praise Thee, O God" (AFH #53)

Reflection

Thanksgiving Prayer

Hymn "Great is Thy Faithfulness" (AFH #111)

*Thanksgiving Interfaith Service*

Call to Worship

Invocation

Responsive Reading: Psalm 100

*Thanksgiving Proclamation of President George Washington*

Whereas, it is the duty of all nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for His benefits, and humbly implore His protection and favor; Whereas, both the houses of Congress have, by their joint committee, requested me “to recommend to the people of the United States a day of public thanksgiving and prayer, to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many and single favors of Almighty God, especially by affording them an opportunity peaceably to establish a form of government for their safety and happiness!”

Now, therefore, I do recommend this day to be devoted by the people of these great states to the service of that great and glorious being who is the beneficent Author of all the good that was, that is, or that will be, that we may then all unite in rendering unto Him our sincere and humble thanks for His kind care and protection of the people of this country.

Benediction

## **United Nations Day**

O Lord our God, who dost most marvelously work out the reconciliation of all peoples through thy living word: bring thy word to bear with power, we pray, on the United Nations and on all those who sit in its councils. Instill in them such awe of thy power that they will use their own power responsibly to advance justice and establish peace in the relations among nations. We beseech thee to hear our prayer, as we also thank thee that thou hast assured us that our prayers are heard through the perfect mediation of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.<sup>1</sup>

## Valentine's Day

God of Love, whose love best was illustrated long ago in the way Jesus of Nazareth loved you and those with whom he shared life, we pause in your loving presence to reaffirm that you are our God and we are your people, to be reminded that you are like an ideal loving parent, and to reassess our lives in the light of your love. Thank you for loving and caring for and about us. Forgive us for the times when we have failed to love you and others as we know we should. We confess that too often we take you for granted and forget that there are some rules and regulations by which you would have us live; too often we think that if we do not like someone we are excused from loving that person; too often we view others as objects and not persons, thus demeaning and dehumanizing them. O God, on this day associated with love, make us better lovers of you and one another. Help us to notice, help us to care, help us to be available to any person in need. For in loving others we love you, in serving others we serve you, in ministering to others we find our lives strengthened and enriched. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Heavenly Father, thank you for your plan for love and lovers and for giving us the ability to experience the special relationship between a man and a woman. Since you are the author and designer of human love, we ask you to teach us to grow in our love. Help us to love you Lord with our whole heart, soul, mind and strength. Enable us to love our neighbor as ourselves. Help us to love with God's love - love which is always forgiving, patient, kind and faithful - love which is never jealous or envious, never haughty, selfish or rude. Bless our time of fellowship. Thank you for the food you have given us. Thank you that we can share together in this special occasion. Amen.

## Veteran's Day

Almighty God, the cause of liberty is yours. It is likewise the cause of those who have defended it against tyranny and oppression. Remembering the veterans who have served in America's Armed Forces, we give you thanks. We are grateful that you inspired their sense of patriotism and strengthened them in unselfish service. Their courage and vigilance insured the freedom and peace we enjoy today. Grant, we pray, O Lord, to each of them a generous portion of your grace and to America, our native land, your blessing. Amen.\*\*

Eternal God, on this Veteran's Day, we are reminded of a tiny cemetery far across the sea where snow-capped Himalayas pierce the sky. In those mountains is a small grave marker on which are written these words: "When you go home, tell them of us and say, we gave all our tomorrows that you might have today." And so we pause to remember those brave warriors and others like them who gave their tomorrows for the ideals we value today--the ideals of freedom, justice and peace. How many pilots have been lost? How many foxholes were soldiers' graves? How many sailors died at sea that we might have today? Perhaps we will never fully know the number, but they are known to you, O God, and we ask your mercy that they might be held tightly in your hand and covered with your grace. Renew our spirits and grant us strength to serve you and our country with pride and courage. Comfort those who have lost loved ones in the cause of peace. Equip each of us to persevere and make right the wrong. Prepare us for that time when the last trumpet will sound, when the last flag will be folded, when the last salute has been given, when all the tomorrows have given way to today. Amen.\*\*

Gracious God, our heavenly Father, we want honestly to thank you for the blessings you have entrusted to our use. So many of them came so repetitiously that we live as if they were just part of the normal scheme of life. When we stop and think, we know that isn't so. We do thank you for the life we have today. We thank you for friends, family and the freedoms which have been given to us. On this occasion we offer up special prayers of thanksgiving for those who sacrificed much for us. Many actually gave their lives so that we might live in freedom; and we pray that our appreciation might lead us to live thankful lives distinguished by responsibility. We do not pretend to appreciate fully the pain, loneliness and suffering they and their families endured. But we thank you for your love which defies all attempts of description. We entrust to your loving care all those who have preceded us into your presence. And we pray that we, the living, might also entrust ourselves to you, daily seeking your wisdom and direction, in our lives everyday. In the spirit of these prayers, we commit this day and our lives to you. Amen.

Heavenly Father, in all things you call us to remember. We remember your promise to Abraham, your action in the lives of the prophets and Israel, and your grace and promise of eternal life through Jesus Christ. Now we gather to remember those who once were our comrades-in-arms and now rest in you. May we always hold dear the striving for peace, the will of duty and the faith in you for which they lived. By your grace, continue to be with us in order that one day we may never again face war. Be with us that your children will all live in peace and in faith toward you. Amen.

O Gracious God, on this Veteran's Day we give thanks to those who've shown the way of freedom and justice by giving their all in heeding your eternally triumphant call. Now, as we honor our courageous and brave may we follow your way that for us you pave. Though our trials be different, our adventures quite varied, we honor our veterans, who before us you've carried. Though many may see no more of tomorrow they've lived not in vain, nor in tragic sorrow but rather in peace. They've won the real prize to new dawns, with you, their souls do arise. They've defended this land with dignity and pride on the wings of eagles and angels. They ride to be near to you, creator and friend, as examples of life without end. Amen.

O Almighty God and most wonderful Father, today we remember all service members who have served their country with distinction. We recall their courage and strength and dedication. We ask your protection for those who actively serve you today. Grant eternal life to those who have passed from this world and grant perseverance to those still serving. This we ask in your holy name. Amen.



Dear Father you who were known by the ancients as the Lord of Hosts, we bring you thanks for the host whom we honor today. We thank you, Father, for your power and for the lives of those which you have empowered in the service of our nation. For all of the men and women who have given of their time, their honor, and even of their lives for the sake of freedom, we offer praise and thanksgiving. It was through their efforts and your grace that we persist in our freedom. We pray today, Father, that we might live to see a time when there will be no need for others to be known as "veterans." We pray for the peace of our nation and of the world. We ask that you be gracious to all of those serving now, wherever they are in this world. We pray your blessings in their lives as we now honor them and those who went before. May all who have served and who do serve find peace and strength through your power and their faith. Amen.

Gracious Father, we come into your presence asking that you bless this worship service in which we seek to pay tribute to our veterans - past and present - for their many contributions to the freedom we enjoy today. But Lord, most of all we want to pay tribute to you, our Almighty Father, for we know that it is by your decree that nations rise and fall. Open our eyes, O Lord, so that no matter how alone we may feel, that like Elisha's servant in the long ago, we may look around us and see that we are surrounded by chariots of fire and an army more powerful than any on the face of the earth. To your great and holy name we give thanks for the freedom we enjoy - a freedom which allows us to worship you even now. For it is in the name of our Lord that we pray. Amen.

Our God, and God of our ancestors, as we look backward on this Veterans Day, let us recognize the dedication of those men and women who served our Armed Forces before us. Help us to make their sacrifices for freedom our guide in our daily duties. Uphold high the standard of service they set so that we will do our best each day. Amen.

Father, we give thanks to you for the courage and sacrifice of the men and women of the Armed Forces. It has been through their dedication to duty and your bounty that our country has continued to remain free. As we celebrate this particular day of emphasis in our country we come to realize that you are the one who has given to us courageous individuals to lead and to serve in our military forces, and for that we are thankful and grateful. Amen.

## **Washington's Birthday**

Almighty and eternal God, you have revealed your glory to all nations. God of power and might, wisdom and justice, through your authority is rightly administered, laws are enacted, and judgment is decreed. Assist with your spirit of counsel and fortitude the President of these United States, that his administration may be conducted in righteousness, and be eminently useful to your people over whom he presides. May he encourage due respect for virtue and religion. May he execute the laws with justice and mercy. May he seek to restrain crime, vice, and immorality. We, likewise, commend to your unbounded mercy all who dwell in the United States. Bless us and all people with the peace which the world cannot give. We pray to you, who are Lord and God, for ever and ever. Amen.<sup>9</sup>

## **World Day of Prayer**

Almighty God, we praise you, we thank you that you have founded your church in this world, that your word is still proclaimed and that we experience your presence in our midst. Give us courage to fearlessly proclaim our faith and thankfully bear witness to your love. Keep us walking in the paths of righteousness for your name's sake. Give courage and comfort to those who suffer for the sake of the gospel, many of whom are imprisoned because of their faith. Strengthen them with the power of your life giving word and keep them from weakness and despair. Help us to "pray without ceasing" in times of joy and hardship in order to be instruments of your peace. In the name of Christ. Amen.

God, we are joining with all your people to lift our voices in praise and thanksgiving. May this day of united prayer remind us of our "oneness" and our dependence upon each other. Unite us in our quest for peace in the world, and make us aware of your presence in us that may produce internal calm. As our prayers reach up to thee like a mighty wind, send your Spirit among us to forgive our sins; open our eyes to see our neighbor's need and touch our emotions that we may be moved to share with the needy of the world. May all people be blessed on this day. Amen.

Almighty and eternal God, may your grace enkindle in all of us a love for the many unfortunate people whom poverty and misery reduce to a condition of life unworthy of human beings. May those who are at peace with one another hold fast to the good will that unites them; may those who are enemies forget their hatred and be healed. Arouse in the hearts of those who call your Father a hunger and thirst for social justice and for fraternal charity in deeds and in truth. Grant, O Lord, peace in our days, peace to our souls, peace to our families, peace to our country, and peace among nations. Amen.

# ATHLETIC EVENTS

## **Air Force Academy Sports Dinner**

O God, the mountains that we love to scale melt like wax in your presence. The wind, like the Falcon is where you ride. With your mighty voice you say peace, and all is still. We gather this evening for fun, food, and fellowship. As we grapple and search the mysteries of the 21st century help us remember the paramount importance of the present moment. Help us not to be so far sighted that the daily grows dim and dull. Oh yes, we dream of what the Air Force could look like in the year 2015, but we still have the wonder of today. Grant us your presence as we enjoy the here and now. The moments that we share around our table this evening. The rekindling of friendships in this room tonight. The bounty of blessedness by the food we are about to partake. And the joy and fun there are in games, competition, and watching the “Falcons” toy with its prey “Billy the Goat” (Navy mascot) this weekend. Oh yes, the future looks bright but it looks so much brighter if we see it through the lens of fun, laughter, and hope of today. Grant us this wish for we pray in your Holy Name. AMEN

## Athletic Awards Banquet

Almighty God, we approach you this evening in a spirit of celebration and joy--a spirit emanating from victories won, friendships established and knowing that in our respective sports we have performed to the best of our ability. We are grateful for the challenge of competition because through it we grow in our understanding of ourselves, of others and you. We learn that we are not powerless, that perseverance and commitment have their reward. We learn the importance of belonging and that teamwork, support and cooperation are essential. So thank you for this time of celebration and recognition, for the meal we will eat and for encouraging us to achieve our potential not only in sports but in all of life. Amen.\*\*

In this victory celebration, we thank you for the talent, energy and outstanding effort of one of Team \_\_\_\_\_'s best players, \_\_\_\_\_. His/her skill and dedication elevates him/her far above the average player and distinguishes him/her as a true "all American". It is our prayer that you will bless him/her as he/she prepares for his/her next challenge with the team at \_\_\_\_\_. May he/she execute his/her plays well, reach the goal line and be blessed with victory after victory. But as in all of life - Lord - there will be obstacles that seem insurmountable, opponents who will thwart his/her progress and \_\_\_\_\_ will have to punt. Remind him/her and remind us all, that every loss of down provides an opportunity to learn, to improve and eventually, to succeed. And regardless of the score, may it always be said "we did our best." And now God, help us celebrate the championship season of one of Team \_\_\_\_\_'s very best, bless the food we're about to eat, and the unique friendship which can only be established on the "field of play." Amen.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, for the blessings of body, mind and spirit we give you our thanks. In particular, we are grateful for the success and achievements of our base sports program this past year; for the skill, inspiration and concern of our coaches and trainers; for the discipline, dedication and desire of fellow teammates; for the lessons of life learned on the fields of competition; and for our nation we have the privilege to represent and serve. Be with us, O Lord, in all our activities. Support us with your care and hold out before us challenges to meet and victories to win. Finally, gracious Father, bless this food we are about to receive. May your grace and peace rest upon us now and forever more. Amen.\*\*

Our Father, as we meet here to honor those who have distinguished themselves through excellence in athletics, we pause to recognize your presence and to give you thanks. On this occasion, we recall the words of General Douglas MacArthur who said, "Upon the fields of friendly strife are sown the seeds that upon other fields in other days will reap the fruits of victory." We thank you not only for the sheer enjoyment of sports, but also for those valuable attributes of mind and body which they produce--for the virtues of cooperation, sacrifice, courage, determination and fair play. And while we honor those who have excelled, we thank you for the contribution of each person who has participated, including the coaches, officials, fans, and families who supported the sports program this year. Be with us, we pray, in the activities of this evening and bless us with happiness and peace. Amen.\*\*

O God, we give you thanks for this our country, whose very defense has been entrusted to us. We have sought to fulfill that responsibility by engaging in this week of competition. We have improved our skills and increased our ability and now we come to the time of awards for that excellence. Bless all who have thus excelled this day. May their example of excellence serve to inspire all of us to greater professionalism as we carry out our responsibilities. Continue to keep us safe; bless and keep us, in God's name we pray. Amen.

## Athletic Event

Our Father in heaven, may the gift of life forever excite and challenge us to excel in all that we do. Accordingly, may each player and fan present for the game today experience the satisfaction of achieving their potential. May the game be marked by excellence in execution of play and commitment to victory. And may the professionalism and dedication exemplified on the playing field symbolize our devotion to duty, integrity and freedom. Bless us now to your safe keeping and grant peace to our world. Amen.\*\*

We pray, O God, that a spirit of friendship will prevail during the game today. Protect the athletes, keeping them safe from injury. They have arrived at this moment after long hours of practice and sacrifice. Reward their efforts with increased maturity and confidence--confidence in body and spirit, maturity in victory and defeat. Also, place temperance and generosity in the hearts of those who support these teams. Above all, let us thank the Lord who gives skill and talent to each of us to make our world a better place in which to live. Amen.\*\*

Eternal God, we are thankful for the gift of life and youth. As we open this new basketball season, grant us the best reward in all of contests of skill that are entered. As the games are played may the players play up to their abilities, may the coaches be good examples, may the officials be wise, and may the parents be helpful and good sports. Lord, keep all from spite and the harboring of grudges. Make us considerate winners and gracious losers. Enable us to be doer's and not always mere spectators in athletics as well as all of life, so that we may enjoy the clean joy of all life. Amen.

Our Father and Our God, we are reminded of that biblical account of Jacob and how he wrestled with you Lord, and how that having laid hold upon the promise of his forefathers refused to loose his hold until he had received your blessing. Teach us Father, this commitment to achieve; let us run the race with such a conviction as this. As we sport with our fellow man may we demonstrate deep devotion to you above, that all will clearly see those attributes so desperately necessary among men below. In the name of Jesus Christ our Lord who has faced so great an opponent, and has gained the prize of our salvation. Amen.

God our Father, we thank you for being the creator and sustainer of all that we know, as in your creation you have given us diverse abilities. Help us O Lord to "Run the Good Race" to your glory and the best of our ability. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

Dear Lord, tonight we are grateful for the life you give us. We are thankful for this sports event which brings people of all ages together in a spirit of excitement. During this game we pray that good sportsmanship will prevail on both sides of the football. We pray that we might be mindful of your presence here in the stands, on the field, on the sidelines and most especially in our hearts. This we pray in your most holy name. Amen.

Loving Father, grant to those who play today, as well as to those of us who are here to watch, a deep commitment to good sportsmanship. Help each team, O God, to do its very best, to be conscientious in its play and determined in its effort. Help each player to be alert, dedicated, and confident. Keep all of them safe from injury. Thank you for this time of recreation and enjoyment. These things we pray in your name. Amen.\*\*

O God, pour out your blessing on all who are assembled here. Not only have you given life and energy to these athletes, but you also have granted them talent to participate competitively. Help them to achieve their goals and to experience the satisfaction of having played to the best of their ability. Amen.\*\*

Dear Heavenly Father, we thank you for the young people assembled here today for the purpose of athletic competition. They are truly your gift to us. As they participate may they learn more than anything else the skill of good sportsmanship. Protect their young bodies from injury. Cause coaches to remember that athletes learn by their mistakes. Above all else may coaches lead their teams by setting positive examples. Remind parents that this is a time of learning and fun. Youngsters' legs are shorter, their hands smaller, but their hearts are big and their minds impressionable. May they hear words of encouragement and support and love. May your peace

be with us and your grace watch over us. Amen.

Father God, you have wonderfully created us with physical bodies of potential skill and minds that enjoy achievement. We pause this morning to acknowledge the blessing of unity that comes from teamwork in athletics. Bless the members of the (name of team) team as they participate in competition to play to the best of their God-given abilities. By so doing, they will bring honor upon themselves, this (name of unit, etc), and you. Grant them safe traveling mercies as they travel across the nation. Amen.

God of grace and beauty be with us powerfully this day as we come together in friendly competition. Help us to realize that the prowess demonstrated by our contenders in these games is itself your gift to them. No sporting movement, no graceful motion has its beginnings in man or woman. Rather, the ability we display reflects the harmony of your creation and the dynamics of your universe. Protect and support our athletes today. Keep them safe from injury. May their skills give you glory and their victories praise you. Amen.

O God, our Creator and Sustainer, we thank you for continued health as we prepare ourselves for this day and this event. Bless us with your presence and power so that we may compete with honor, dignity and fair play. Endue us with a respect for our competitors and may we compete without causing injury or experiencing anger or hatred. And when our competition is ended, bless us with the awareness of your love, and in that love, may we remember our love for those with whom we have competed. In your name we pray. Amen.

Lord, we recognize today the beauty of life and the fulfillment that comes from facing the challenges of this world. You have created within each of us the desire for achievement and excellence. We ask that this competition will reflect the highest ideals of our professional and personal values. Grant to each participant safety from serious injury; to those who officiate, clear and sound judgment; to us who are spectators, a sense of enjoyment. Make us aware of the responsibility that rests upon us to create peace in our own hearts, in our own homes and in every association with others. Amen.

## **Cheerleading Competition**

Almighty and everlasting God, hear our prayer to you at the opening of this youth cheerleading competition. We pray for a spirit of friendship to prevail during the competition today. Protect these cheerleaders and keep them safe from injury and harm. They come to this competition after long hours of practice and sacrifice. Reward their efforts with increased maturity and confidence; confidence in body and spirit, maturity in victory and defeat. Place temperance and generosity in the hearts of those who support these teams. Help us all to remember why we are here today, why we compete and why we strive to do the best we can do. All who do their best are winners in your eyes, O God. Above all, we thank you, Lord, for giving us the skill and talent to make our world a better place for all to live. In your holy name we pray. Amen.



## Little League Opening Ceremonies

Our Father, we pause at the beginning of this Little League season to recognize you as the one who has given to us the beauty of sky under which we live and the grass on which we play. We thank you for giving us the opportunity to exercise our bodies and minds. Help us to develop and grow into persons who will be pleasing to you. Teach us during this baseball season the important lessons of decision making, of team effort, of sacrifice and what it means to win and lose. Lord we pray you will help the officials, the managers and the parents to remember that the players are learning from them even as they learn from one another. Enable each to see the games as opportunities in which everyone wins something through new understanding and new relationships. Protect the players, officials and spectators from injury, and grant to each of them the joy of good sportsmanship and games well played. Amen.\*\*

Almighty God, Lord of the Universe, Our Heavenly Father, as we pause now in a moment of prayer we recognize that you are the source of all life and animation and that in you we live and move and have our very existence. We pray now for the Little League, that your Spirit would undergird its administrators, the coaches and managers, and all those involved in this growing and developing of youthful bodies. Bless every family represented here today and especially the players coming together in this sports program. May they give of their best, and have a good time in the good spirit of athletic competition. Amen.

## **Softball Tournament Banquet**

Almighty God, we ask your blessing upon all the participants in this softball tournament. Grant, we pray, the opportunity for spirited competition, good sportsmanship and safety for all players. May excellence serve as the standard of performance and may everyone win by playing to the best of his/her ability. Bless now this food to our nourishment and us to your service. Amen.\*\*

## **Special Olympics**

Father, we thank you for this day and for everyone gathered here. We are grateful for the opportunity of fun and fellowship through this year's Special Olympics. As the events begin, remind us that winning is not the most important thing for us, because with you as our God and Father, we are all winners. Now, grant us a great time together. Bless the participants, their families, friends and those who have devoted their time and energy to plan these games. Amen.\*\*

Heavenly Father, you teach us that we are wonderfully made. Each of us is awake and alive! Each of us uses your creative force of energy to accomplish our events and tasks. Each of us reflects the power of your loving hand. Assist us in these Special Olympics to do our best. In whatever place we finish, help us to remember that each of us is a champion. Amen.\*\*

## **Super Bowl Sunday**

God of grace and God of glory; Fountain of light and truth; Lover of every soul; Source of all that we have and are; Sustainer of our lives: we have gathered for worship on a super day as well as Super Sunday. We confess, Holy One, that often we become confused about what is important in life and that our priorities are all mixed up. There are times when we feel that football is as important as faith, when games are of more interest than grace, when huddles attract our attention more than homelessness, when plays have more stature than prayer, when coaches seem on a par with the Christ, when success can be substituted for sportsmanship, when salaries make us forget about stewardship, when touchdowns are equated with theology. Restore us to our senses, O God. Let us remember that persons are more important than points, that serving is more important than Super Bowls, that worship is more important than winning, and that the love we experience coming from you and one another enables us to get through the periodic losses that come our way in life. Amen.13 (J. B.)

## **Tournament**

Father, today marks the beginning of the \_\_\_\_\_ tournament. Teams have traveled from near and far to compete for the honor of being called the best in our command. We begin by recognizing that it is you who created bodies with grace and skill, and gives us minds and spirits to enjoy achievement. We pause in gratitude to acknowledge the spiritual benefits of competitive athletics in teaching discipline, teamwork, cooperation, fairness, and obedience. During this week of intense competition, may we not lose sight of good sportsmanship and fair play. Give us a safe and satisfying tournament, and bless all who participate with a positive, affirming experience of athletic competition. For your name's sake we pray. Amen.\*\*

## **Track Meet Invocation**

Lord God, architect of our earthy frames, draw close to us now in your loving power as we come together to celebrate the privilege of athletic competition. Guide our minds and hearts to enjoy the company of one another as we compete today in these athletic events. Help us to realize that it is not the competition but the personal achievement that makes life meaningful and worthwhile. Help us to celebrate the achievements of everyone participating here today. Lord, touch each woman and man, boy and girl, in this gathering with your Spirit of peace that they might find true peace in themselves thereby offering peace to a troubled world. In your everlasting name we pray. Amen

## Youth Sports Season Opening

O Lord our creator, we thank you for the opportunities we have to play, learn, compete, and grow. We praise you for all your gifts to us of mind, hand, eye, and brain, which enable us to enjoy the world you have provided for us from the beginning. Be with us through this season. Cause us to practice and play in safety, and teach us that there are joys equal to winning--the joy of loving, the joy of improving one's skill, the joy of being a good teammate, and the joy of cheering our friends on! Bless us all--players, coaches, officials, and families, as we praise you evermore. Amen.\*\*

Eternal God, we acknowledge your presence in this (name of event) youth sports program. In the exercising of bodies and minds, may we see the continuation of your creative process as young people go through the natural physical and mental process of healthy growth, through competitive sport. We give you thanks our Father for each of those who have given and who continue to give time and effort to make this program a success - the members of the staff, coaches, umpires, parents and most of all the players themselves. May we all, in this commitment, work as a team to realize the successful fulfillment of the personal, team, and community goals of this activity. Amen.

We thank you O Lord for this day and for this occasion which brings us together. Especially are we grateful for these young people in whom you have placed the eagerness, the joy and the excitement of life. We pray your blessings upon them as they begin this season of (name of event). Thank you for the coaches who give of themselves to help mold these young lives. Thank you for the parents and friends who support and make this opportunity possible. Grant to these young people your safety and protection. Give them joy in their victories and courage in their defeats. May this experience be a time of fun and a time of growth. We pray this prayer in the name of the Lord of life, both now and forever. Amen.

**MEMORIAL/FUNERAL SERVICES**



## Christian Memorial Service

### PRELUDE AND PROCESSIONAL

\*POSTING OF COLORS

\*INVOCATION

### OPENING REMARKS

### HYMN

**CHAPLAIN:** Jesus said: I am the resurrection and the life. If anyone believes in me, even though he die, he will live, and whoever lives and believes in me will never die.

**PEOPLE:** Our help is in the name of the Lord who made heaven and earth.

### HYMN

LITANY: Twenty-Third Psalm

CHAPLAIN: The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want; he makes me lie down in green pastures.

**PEOPLE: He leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul.**

CHAPLAIN: He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

**PEOPLE: Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil.**

CHAPLAIN: For you are with me, your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

**PEOPLE: You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.**

CHAPLAIN: You anoint my head with oil, my cup overflows.

**PEOPLE: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.**

### PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

### SCRIPTURE READINGS FROM THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS:

### HYMN OR SPECIAL MUSIC MEDITATION

\*HYMN

\*RETIRING OF THE COLORS

\*TAPS

\*BENEDICTION:

### POSTLUDE AND RECESSIONAL\*\*

(\*Congregation Standing)

## Death After A Long Illness

Most faithful God, lively is the courage of those who hope in you. Your servant \_\_\_\_\_, suffered greatly but placed his/her trust in your mercy. Confident that the petition of those who mourn pierces the clouds and finds an answer, we beg you, give rest to \_\_\_\_\_. Do not remember his/her sins but look upon his/her sufferings and grant him/her refreshment, light and peace. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.11

## Death Which is Sudden

Lord, as we mourn the sudden death of our brother/sister, \_\_\_\_\_, show us the immense power of your goodness and strengthen our belief that \_\_\_\_\_, has entered into your presence. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.11

Lord our God, you are always faithful and quick to show mercy. Our brother/sister \_\_\_\_\_, was suddenly [and violently] taken from us. Come swiftly to his/her aid, have mercy on him/her, and comfort his/her family and friends by the power and protection of the cross. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.11

God of us all, we thank you for Christ's grace, through which we pray to you in this dark hour. A life we love has been torn from us. Expectations the years once held, have vanished. The mystery of death has stricken us. O God, you know the lives we live and the deaths we die — woven so strangely of purpose and of chance, of reason and of the irrational, of strength and of frailty, of happiness and of pain. Into your hands we commend the soul of \_\_\_\_\_. No mortal life you have made is without eternal meaning. No earthly fate is beyond your redeeming. Through your grace that can do far more than we can think or imagine, fulfill in \_\_\_\_\_ your purpose that reaches beyond time and death. Lead \_\_\_\_\_ from strength to strength, and fit \_\_\_\_\_ for love and service in your kingdom. Into your hands also we commit our lives. You alone, God, make us to dwell in safety. Whom, finally, have we on earth or in heaven but you? Help us to know the measure of our days, and how frail we are. Hold us in your keeping. Forgive us our sins. Save our minds from despair and our hearts from fear. And guard and guide us with your peace. Amen.3

## Death of a Chaplain

Gracious God, today you have called your servant to his/her place in your heavenly home. In this life, he/she served you faithfully as a pastor, teacher and friend to countless airmen and their families, bringing them to goodness in your love. Even in mourning, we remember his/her days among us, and we thank you for his/her calling and his/her life. Comfort those to whom he/she was special: family, co-workers, and casual acquaintances whom he/she touched. Grant that we understand that even in death his/her prayers and goodness remain with us. Let us recall him/her as the model of your love. Amen.

O Lord who has for generations called people to be preachers and prophets and entrusted them with a special message of hope and reconciliation, we remember with gratitude today the life and ministry of our departed brother/sister \_\_\_\_\_. Many years ago he/she saw a vision of what the world could be under your guidance and dedicated all talents and energy to bring it about. We mourn, along with his/her family his/her untimely loss but re-dedicate ourselves to the course for which he/she gave the very best he/she had. We remember with hope and gratitude the words of the Psalmist, "God is our refuge and strength a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear." Amen.

## Death of a Commander

Father of all mercies, we remember before you this day the life of \_\_\_\_\_, commander, airman, friend. In living he/she instilled the values that he/she cherished: service, dedication and integrity. In our grief, we are reminded of the esteem in which we held him/her. Console us, Lord, with the knowledge that in life he/she transformed us by giving us a vision of what leadership could be. Give your peace to his/her family, who mourn with a depth that only you can know. Amen.

Eternal God, we are aware of your promise always to be in our midst, even when we walk through a valley of dark shadows. At this moment we find ourselves in one of those valleys. Our eyes seek to pierce the darkness, and we confess to you that, with the weight of this present grief, your presence seems almost out of our reach. Make yourself real to us in this hour. Pierce our darkness with your light and your love. Give us thankful hearts for the contribution and leadership of \_\_\_\_\_. Grant that his/her memory will be a beacon which rallies us to greater service within us, this installation, this community, this nation. Make us to know that the same principles which were manifest in \_\_\_\_\_ are made available to each of us at this time. And through all these things, with the presence of your Holy Spirit, grant that hope may beat high in our hearts even at this dark hour. Amen.

Heavenly Father, we acknowledge you as the Lord of life and death, of this world and of the promised world to come. We ask for the comfort of your peace in this our loss. As your servants on earth, we shall strive to continue the work of our departed brother/sister, knowing that in time we too shall join him/her in glory with all the saints. In a firm faith in the resurrection that you promise to all who believe, we pray in your name. Amen.

O God of loving kindness and tender mercies, from the depths of our souls we thank you for experiences that call us closer to you. Through our sorrow, grief, and tears may the nation experience the mercy of your providence. Almighty God, we offer unto you our praise and thanksgiving for the leadership, dedication, and sacrifice of our deceased Commander. We thank you for our departed leader in whose love we were blessed, by whose wisdom we were guided, and in whose tenderness we were healed. We pray for our fallen leader who gave life in service to the peace, prosperity, and potential of our native land. Grant that patriotism and unselfish devotion may make us cherish more deeply that freedom for which our nation stands. Help us to remember that distress, suffering, neither death, nor things present nor things to come could separate us from your love. May our nation remain indivisible through this crisis because in God we trust. Amen.

## **Death of a Parent**

God of our ancestors in faith, by the covenant made on Mount Sinai you taught your people to strengthen the bonds of family through faith, honor, and love. Look kindly upon \_\_\_\_\_, a father/mother who sought to bind his/her children to you. Bring him/her one day to our heavenly home where the saints dwell in blessedness and peace. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.11

## Death of a President

In your mercy, Lord, hear our prayer. Today our nation grieves the passing of our leader. Fear and confusion cloud our mourning. Concern for our nation's future rests heavily in our hearts. Grant, Father, the mantle of your wisdom upon our new president, that he/she may provide stability and leadership in the days ahead. And let us honor the memory of President \_\_\_\_\_ by our commitment to his principles of freedom, peace and love for this our land. Amen.

O God, our Heavenly Father, at this time of national grief over the death of our president we pray that you will comfort us with the strength and consolation of thy love. Send your peace upon us as we struggle with the uncertainty of human life. Increase our faith, hope and love and enable us to comfort one another by our common sorrow. In the midst of this darkness may we continue to see your will and have the courage to overcome our doubts and fears and accomplish your mission for our world. This prayer we ask in your name. Amen.

Merciful Father, you are the comforter of all who sorrow and the helper of all who are in need. Our hearts are full of sadness as we mourn the death of President \_\_\_\_\_. Give, we pray, to his family, and to us, the blessing of your grace in this hour of grief. We thank you for his patriotic, unselfish leadership of our beloved land. May his unwavering love of country stir us to a deeper dedication of those principles upon which our nation was founded. We thank you, heavenly Father, that in Jesus Christ we have hope. Help us all to hear anew the words of Jesus, "Because I live you shall live also." Through Jesus Christ our savior and Lord. Amen.

## **Death of a Spouse**

Eternal God, you made the union of man and woman a sign of the bond between Christ and the church. Grant mercy and peace to \_\_\_\_\_, who was united in love with her husband/his wife. May the care and devotion of her/his life on earth find a lasting reward in heaven. Look kindly on her husband/his wife and family/children as now they turn to your compassion and love. Strengthen their faith and lighten their loss. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.11



## Death of a Young Child

Our Father, God today we are before you with hearts filled with sadness, hopes dashed, and emptiness. For we are suffering the loss of \_\_\_\_\_. He/she had brought us so much happiness, his/her life was filled with joy, but now he/she is gone from us. We try to understand but can't. We just feel the loss, the hurt, the loneliness. We know Jesus said the Kingdom of God belongs to those like little children, and we thank you that he/she is with you. We thank you that he/she is experiencing the fullness of his/her creation in your presence. We thank you for the Resurrection and eternal life, and that we shall see one another again on that great day. But now we need your presence, your strength, and your wisdom. Our grief is so real. But so is your love and your hope. Fill us with your love and hope; comfort us in our loss for we need you. May your grace be ours today, in the name of Jesus our Lord we pray. Amen.

O Lord, who shares with us the depth of our despairs, help us to realize that you do not stand in the shadows watching us as we weep but that you are right in the middle of our problems grieving with us. We do not ask for an explanation of this tragedy, though we have questions and frustrations that defy our ability to understand. We simply ask for strength and grace to see us through until we can put our shattered lives back together and get on with the business of living. Those who come today as support to the \_\_\_\_\_ family feel this loss deeply, but we know that in no way can we fully understand or feel the emptiness and frustrations of this family. To them we offer our sincere sympathy and support and pray that the God of comfort lifts up the light of His countenance on you and gives you peace. Amen.

Loving God our Father, it is out of your love that you first gave us life and because of that love your care never fails. Your love is the radiant beauty and innocence of childhood and the light that shines across the ages. For all you have given us we give thanks. We give special thanks for the gift of one we loved, \_\_\_\_\_, whom you have now taken to yourself. Into your loving arms we now commit this child remembering the words of our Lord Jesus, "Let the children come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of Heaven." May things eternal grow more real in our hearts, more full in its meaning, that in our living and dying we may accept your love and your peace. Amen.

O Lord: Our hearts are breaking! Our eyes run over and blur with tears. Our lives feel filled with darkness and grief. We feel almost totally overcome with loss, with questions of "why"? With self-recriminations, with despair. We pray for peace within our hearts. Help us to know the sureness of your love, even now. Remind us that there is nothing in all of creation, not even the death of \_\_\_\_\_, which is "...able to separate us from the love of God." We entrust \_\_\_\_\_ to your total and eternal care. And we pray that his/her life during these short (days/months/years) will be a blessing sustaining us until we join \_\_\_\_\_ and you in eternity. In our Lord's name we pray. Amen.

O God, help us to remember how your dear Son took little children into his arms and blessed them. Give us grace, in your name, to entrust the soul of this child to your never failing love and care. O God, receive this little child whom we love and remember with affection into the fellowship of the Kingdom of heaven. Help us who continue to live and work in this place to serve you continually, to trust in the promise of eternal life, and be united with this child and all your children in glory. Amen.

Most merciful God, under the warmth of your love, we come to you as our only helper in this time of great need. You are the Lord of our lives, and beside you there is none else. Hear us as we now lift up our heartfelt concerns to you. You are our only source of strength and understanding. We realize that all things on earth are temporary and fade away. You give for a little while, and then you call for their return to your heavenly kingdom. The flower is cut down in the tender bud, and death spares not even the innocence of childhood. O Lord, let not our faith in your goodness be shaken by the mystery of your ways. With all our trials, help us still to put our trust in you. Send the consolation of your Word into the hearts of those who mourn the early death of this child. Give to the grieving parents an understanding submission to your will. Help them to realize that the tender bud which has faded here will bloom immortal in heaven. Grant, that with peaceful confidence they may lean upon your

promises, and that they may not sorrow beyond what is proper and reasonable. May this profound sadness draw them into still closer communion with you as they abide by your will here on earth. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen.

O Lord, hear our prayer for your servant \_\_\_\_\_ who died in the midst of life, his/her promise still blossoming. Be his/her comfort and his/her solace, we pray, and let him/her rest in your care, where all tears are wiped away and no torment touches. We pray for his/her family and friends as well, good Lord. Grant them the assurance of faith even when faith in any goodness is severely challenged. Hear their sighs of sorrow, and comfort them. May no bitterness overtake them, nor an end of hope for their own lives. "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted." So said our Lord; may it be so for them. Amen.1

Lord God, source and destiny of our lives, in your loving providence you gave us \_\_\_\_\_ to grow in wisdom, age and grace. Now you have called him/her to yourself. We grieve over the loss of one so young and struggle to understand your purpose. Draw him/her to yourself and give him/her full stature in Christ. May he/she stand with all the angels and saints, who know your love and praise your saving will. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.11

God our Father, your love gave us life, and your care never fails. Yours is the beauty of childhood, and yours the light that shines in the face of age. For all whom you have given to be dear to our hearts, we thank you, and especially for this child you have taken to yourself. Into the arms of your love we give his/her soul, remembering Jesus' words, "Let the children come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." To your love also we commend the sorrowing parents and family. Show compassion to them as a father to his children; comfort them as a mother her little ones. As their love follows their hearts' treasure, help them to trust that love they once have known is never lost, that the child taken from their sight lives forever in your presence. Into your hands we also give ourselves, our regret for whatever more we might have been or done, our need to trust you more and to pray, all our struggles for a better life. Comfort us all. Keep tender and true the love in which we hold one another. Let not our longing for you ever cease. May things unseen and eternal grow more real for us, more full of meaning, that in our living and dying you may be our peace. Amen.3

## **Death of an Elderly Person**

God of mercy, look kindly on your servant \_\_\_\_\_, who has set down the burden of his/her years. As he/she served you faithfully throughout his/her life, may you give him/her the fullness of your peace and joy. We give thanks for the long life of \_\_\_\_\_, now caught up in your eternal love. We make our prayer in the name of Jesus who is our risen Lord now and for ever. Amen.11

## Death of a Stillborn

Almighty God, loving Parent of all your children, we come in sorrow that \_\_\_\_ has been taken from us so soon. Sometimes the burdens of life almost overwhelm us. Yet we put our full trust in you, knowing that through your Son Jesus Christ you are with us always. We take comfort that your loving arms surround us in our time of grief. Be with \_\_\_\_'s mother, who has carried him/her with love for so long. We know you feel her disappointment and pain. May her faith be renewed in the days ahead as she regains her strength. Be with \_\_\_\_'s father and/or other family members. You know the heaviness of his (their) heart(s). Pour out upon them (her) your gracious healing, in the name of Jesus Christ, the great Physician, we pray. Amen.3

Blessed Jesus, lover of children, in lowliness of heart we cry to you for help. Expecting the life of a child, we have witnessed his/her death. Our despair is profound, and we know you weep with us in our loss. Help us to hear your consoling voice, and give healing to our grief, merciful Savior. Amen.3

## **DUI Death Anniversary**

Dear Heavenly Father, we come with a prayer for those of us who will not care enough during the holidays to avoid drinking and driving. We pray for those who will not care enough to call a cab or a friend when they have had too much to drink. We pray for mercy for the families who will lose a loved one. For the little boy who will not have a father to play catch with him; for the little girl who will not have a father to walk her down the aisle at her wedding or a mother to shed a tear that special moment; for the spouse who must battle life's difficulties alone; for those who will lose a friend because they did not have the time to drive that friend home. Father we pray for those who for some unknown reason do not wish to enjoy the joys of life - their children growing up - or those special moments. Oh Father, forgive us for we truly do not know what we are doing! Amen.

## Memorials/Funerals

Grant, Father, the peace of mind that assures those who sorrow in time of trouble. In the midst of our loss, give us eyes to see the eternal light of your goodness and the blessed security of your presence. We are your children and seek your care. Console us with the assurance of your grace and give strength to affirm our faith. Amen.\*\*

O God of grace and glory, we remember before you today, \_\_\_\_\_. We thank you for \_\_\_\_\_ and the memory of shared experiences. In your boundless compassion, comfort all who mourn his/her death. Stand by each of us and help us to see death as the gate to eternal life. Assured of your divine provision, may we pursue our course on earth with confidence and hope. Grant us strength for the days ahead and renew our faith to walk humbly with you. Comfort and guide us that we might know the consolation of your love. Amen.\*\*

Almighty and eternal God, we ask you to be with the family of \_\_\_\_\_. Even as your Son was moved to weep over the death of his friend Lazarus, so we know you are touched by the tears of those who mourn the loss of \_\_\_\_\_. In your divine providence, fill the aching void in our hearts with your comforting presence and grant peace through the assurance of your love and care. Amen.\*\*

Almighty God, we ask that you fill this solemn moment with the majesty of your presence. Our hearts are saddened by the loss of these who have given their lives to sustain the freedom that we so richly enjoy. Bring your comforting Spirit to the families and friends of these courageous airmen. Grant, O God, your peace and love to them for you alone can fill their emptiness with hope. We trust them to your care. For those of us who live today, we pray that this Memorial Ceremony will inspire us to a greater commitment to you and all people everywhere. Help us to be creative that we might draw upon the limitless resources which you have provided. May we be brave so that enemies who would deprive us of our freedom will not succeed. Grant us wisdom to solve problems and enrich life. Fill us with compassion for those in need and inspire us to live by your word that oppression might cease, freedom might prevail, and dignity and honor might reign. Then we shall know that the heroes we honor today will not have died in vain. We offer our prayer in your holy name. Amen.\*\*

O Lord, the loss of a loved one or friend fills us with despair, loneliness, fear, anger, emptiness, and frustration. But, O God, despite our sadness, we have hope, for your Son gave us the promise of eternal life. His promise brings us assurance, encouragement and peace. As we honor the memory of \_\_\_\_\_ may we exemplify his/her love and joy, his/her courage and faith, his/her dedication both to you and his/her country. May the ideals which guided him/her inspire us as well. Comfort us in our grief and sustain us to serve you with purpose and commitment. Amen.\*\*

Our Father, today our grief walks alongside the deep sense of accomplishment in a life well lived. My prayer is not for the departed, now safely with you in eternal rest, but for these loved ones and friends now remaining. I pray that the consolation of your love will comfort the empty interior of grief; that the sorrow of this moment, and the many more that will follow, will be turned to joy; that heads and hearts will be lifted by the great resources of spiritual courage you give to us; and that just as surely as Jesus arose, we shall all take heart in this, the cornerstone of our faith. Therefore we draw strength from your promises, and commend ourselves to you, in the Savior's name. Amen.\*\*

Eternal God our Father, the death of \_\_\_\_\_ has filled this family's eyes with tears and their hearts with sorrow. We are distressed by the mysteries of your providence. As your child we want so much to say, "Not my will, but thine be done," but at times we find it difficult to do. Forgive us and help us. We pray by your Holy Spirit, to accept your ways as always best. Apply to these wounded hearts the healing touch of our precious promises, and let them soon experience its power. Teach us not to mourn as those who have no hope. Wipe away the tears from our eyes that we may be able to see through the mist, beyond death and grave, to the Resurrection and Life assured by the glorious victory of our Savior Jesus Christ over death and the grave. May the passing of \_\_\_\_\_ remind us that we, too, are but pilgrims and strangers on earth. Grant us the grace to love less and less the things that are material and temporal, and to love more and more the things that are spiritual and eternal. Teach us to

number our days and to apply our heart to the wisdom taught by Jesus Christ, that He is the Way and the Truth and the Life, and that no one comes to you but by Him. In your Holy Name we pray. Amen.

Our gracious Father, we thank you for the ties of love that bind your children together and for the qualities of character, good works, and personal relationships that endeared \_\_\_\_\_ to us. As our God of comfort, look with compassion upon these who are bereaved, whose hearts are bowed down with grief. Give them understanding hearts that they may welcome your grace and comfort. You have promised grace sufficient for our every need, so we turn to you in this hour of sorrow for strength and courage. May the fellowship of loved ones and friends and the church strengthen and support these who mourn and bring assurance of your love and strength to them. We pray in your holy name. Amen.

O Lord of the living and the dead, the mantle of whose mercy is cast over all things so that nothing in all creation can separate us from your love which we have known in Jesus Christ our Lord: hear our prayers for all who fear death and whose lives are lived in that shadow. Quicken in them a lively hope and a free engagement in this life, its joys and sorrows, its tasks and rewards. May your perfect love come clear to them and cast out fear, as you have promised through your Son, Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. **Amen.**

Hear our prayer, O God, who created us with glory and honor, and who has called us to live in freedom. We give thanks for your servant \_\_\_\_\_ and for that certain holy ambition that inhabited him/her and flowed out into the excellence and devotion of his/her work. By such as he/she, we have had our sense of the world enhanced. Gracious God, be our strength and our joy, that we too may apply ourselves to excellence in whatever we do, and by the refining of our gestures of work and play may capture something more of the promise of our humanity. We pray in the name of him who was among us to reveal us to ourselves and assure us of your love, even Jesus Christ. Amen.

We come here today to reverence and remember our fallen comrades who have given their lives in \_\_\_\_\_. As we recall the situation there, we are flooded, overwhelmed with a myriad of mixed emotions: anger, outrage, frustration, bitterness, revenge, confusion and sorrow. Our initial reaction was probably a numbness of shock, a sense of disbelief. We are torn by the inner tensions of an Old Testament "eye for an eye" and a New Testament "love your enemies." Jesus says: "Greater love than this no person has, but that life is given for others." We are a nation that believes in human rights, a nation which accepts the responsibility of being its brother's keeper, a nation that cares enough to risk a Lebanon, a Grenada, a \_\_\_\_\_. Based on these beliefs, we are a nation whose men and women respond at times with the ultimate sacrifice of laying down human life. We mourn their loss and the sorrow their loved ones now feel. We are fiercely proud of them, that in strange lands, befriended by few, assaulted by many, motivated by that sense of "greater love" they gave their lives in a cause of justice and freedom. Yes, we do reverence and remember them. Ones such as they make real the words that we are a "nation under God" striving for liberty and justice for all. May their names be boldly inscribed in the Book of Life and may their loved ones be comforted by the knowledge that they will not be forgotten and that they have not died in vain. Amen.

We thank you, O God our Father, for all who by brave commitment have given their lives for their country. We realize that none of us cherish the thought of having to pay the supreme price of death for our country which these young men and women have had to pay. Nevertheless, we still find young men and women like these who, each knowing the price they might have to pay, have been willing to put on the uniform of their country and go into battle. We are thankful for men and women of bravery like these who have been willing to even give their lives for the peace of the world and the freedom we enjoy here this morning. Look down with compassion upon these loved ones, O God, give them the comfort and understanding needed in this dark time. Help them to know that you love them and in the midst of their sorrow, they may find thy presence. We are thankful also for the men and women who were able to be with us to receive their honors. We are grateful for their dedicated service to their God, their country, and their fellowman. May your spirit of guidance go with them that they may continue to be a channel of service to others. Impress upon us all, as we depart from this place, the importance of the sacrificial giving of ourselves in service to our God, our country and our fellowman. Amen.

Our Father, at this time of profound grief, we do not know how to pray as we ought. But you, O God, who searches our hearts, can interpret our sighs which are too deep for words. We, as a people, as a nation, invoke your healing presence, your comfort, your strength, and your wisdom. Amen.

Almighty God, in your keeping there is shelter from the storm, and in your mercy there is comfort for the sorrows of life. Hear now our prayer for those who mourn and are heavy laden. Give to them strength to bear and do your will. Lighten their darkness with your love. Enable them to see beyond the things of this mortal world the promise of the eternal. Help them to know that your care enfolds all your people, that you are our refuge and strength, and that underneath are your everlasting arms. Amen.<sup>3</sup>

O Lord Almighty, remember those who died fighting to protect the dignity and the freedom of humanity. Let our spirits be proud of them. Let our hearts be compassionate and our minds be clear and determined in giving them honor and respect. Let us be dependent on the loving kindness of the Lord our God. As we remember the departed, let us be true airmen in war and in peace. Let us be courageous protectors and true guardians of freedom. Let us be the true masters of selfless love. O Lord, guide us in the way of moral responsibility; enlighten us - true believers in ethics and justice. Let this day be a day of commemoration and honor to those who sacrificed their lives in order to give us liberty and national security. Remember them, O Lord, in your mercy and have compassion on us. Make us a generation of wisdom, discipline, and good faith. Amen.

Heavenly Father, these past few days have been filled with so many emotions - anguish, pain, confusion, sorrow, and an overwhelming sense of loss. Though we live daily with the reality of death, we still fail to understand it and are never ready for it - especially as it has come to our friend and fellow airman, \_\_\_\_\_. We are simply devastated, stunned, hurt. Through the caring presence of your Holy Spirit, minister to our needs. Give comfort, strength, and resolution to the family. Cause them to know your sustaining grace, and keep all of us in the shadow of your care. Amen.

Dear Lord, we come to you with heavy hearts and many questions. Speak to our needs and to the needs of the family members of \_\_\_\_\_. We gather in \_\_\_\_\_'s memory and draw strength in our togetherness and your name. Guide our thoughts and help us to sort our feelings, that we might better handle life in these days ahead. Thank you for being near to us right now. In our Creator's name we pray. Amen.

Eternal God, the source and giver of life, the destiny toward whom all life flows, we have gathered in this memorial service to remember \_\_\_\_\_. Sanctify every good memory and cut short every vain attempt to treat his/her death lightly. In his/her death give us the honesty to appreciate him/her simply for who he/she was among us. In the awful waste of death for one so young, we are dismayed how transient and fleeting life is. Give us the grace to give him/her the integrity of his/her death. Comfort those who knew him/her well and mourn his/her loss. Bring peace to the troubled spirits of all those who have the courage to face their own death. Let his/her death be a bond between us, as we are never far from death. Speak comfortably to us that we may never need to fear the terror of death nor flee from the rare privilege of life. Amen.

Lord, our God, how long will our young be devoured? How long will death spread it's wings in peacetime as in war? We need your spirit with us to teach us how to live, how to treasure and preserve the life you have given us, and how to enjoy and uplift the few beautiful moments we share with others. We live haphazardly. We fail to understand the guidance you have given us. Please open our eyes and our hearts - fill us with foresight and wisdom - bless us all with many creative years of life, and may the memory of \_\_\_\_\_ enrich his/her friends and dear ones. May the fact of his/her tragic death inspire us all to greater awareness of the dangers we all face - and may you be with us and with \_\_\_\_\_'s spirit now and always. Amen.

Almighty God, we remember before you today your faithful servant \_\_\_\_\_; and we pray that, having opened to him/her the gates of larger life, you will receive him/her more and more into your joyful service, that, with all who have faithfully served you in the past, he/she may live and reign with you, for ever and ever. Amen.



Almighty God, our heavenly Father, in whose hands are the living and the dead; we give you thanks for all those of your servants who have laid down their lives in the service of our country. Grant to them your mercy and the light of your presence, and the assurance of your peace. Amen.

May the Lord our God bless us all present here, to memorialize those who died to preserve liberty and freedom in our nation and in the world. And may the Lord our God remember all those whose sacrifice gave this nation its greatness, progress and richness. May our memory of them be an honorable one, full of thanksgiving to the Lord who accepted them into His kingdom. The Lord is for all, and in Him we believe, and to Him we pray may we remember all who died in the service of their country, whether in the air, or on land or in the sea. O Lord, be gracious and merciful unto them, and let your light shine upon them, for you are our God, and unto you we ascribe glory now and forever. Amen.

We pause now in the busy routine of this new day to pay our last respects to the memory of \_\_\_\_\_ who died \_\_\_\_\_. Be particularly close, O Lord, to those who loved him/her most in this their hour of greatest need. Help them survive and enable them to bear-up under the burden of their pain and loss. Be with us all. Amen.

O Lord Almighty, remember those who died fighting to protect the dignity and the freedom of mankind. Let our spirits be proud of them. Let our hearts be compassionate, and our minds clear and determined in giving them honor and respect. And let us be dependent on the loving kindness of the Lord our God. As we remember the departed, let us be true soldiers in war and in peace. Let us be courageous protectors and true guardians of freedom. Let us be the true masters of brotherly love. O Lord, guide us in the way of moral responsibility; enlighten us--true believers in ethics and justice. Let this day be a day of commemoration and honor to those who sacrificed their lives in order to give us liberty, and our nation security. Remember them, O Lord, in your mercy, and have compassion on us. Make us a generation of wisdom, discipline and good faith. Amen.

Eternal God, you commit to us the swift and solemn trust of life: since we know not what a day may bring forth, but only that the hour for serving you is always present, may we wake to the instant claims of your will upon our lives. In the face of questions without answers, of dreams unfulfilled, of the emptiness that will not go away, we are only compelled to thank you always for lives faithfully lived, for good memories and living hopes. We are reminded as we pray for family and friends who are touched with the feeling of sorrow, that we pray to one who does not let go unnoticed even the falling of a sparrow to earth. We pray to one who weeps for his world, and therefore we come trusting that in life or death, we may find rest and comfort in him. Amen

We give them back to you, dear Lord, who gavest them to us. Yet as thou didst not lose them in giving, so we have not lost them by their return. For what is thine is ours always, if we are thine. And life is eternal and love is immortal, and death is only a horizon, and a horizon is nothing more than the limit of our sight. Amen.

In sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ, we commend to Almighty God our brother/sister \_\_\_\_\_, and we commit his/her body to the ground: earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust. The Lord bless him/her and keep him/her, the Lord make his face to shine upon him/her and be gracious to him/her, the Lord lift up his countenance upon him/her and give him/her peace. Amen.

Heavenly Father, we come to you at this hour when we feel the anguish of our loss. Our hearts are heavy and our spirits are low. The separation is painful and we hurt at the deepest levels of our being. It is so comforting for us to realize that you know what we are experiencing. For you, too, have experienced the separation and the death of your beloved Son. May you fill the emptiness in our lives with your divine presence and bring us the assurance and peace that we need in order to face the reality of death and hope of eternal life. Amen.

Almighty God, we ask you to be with us this morning as we come together with heavy hearts and confused minds for this memorial service. We know we cannot think of life without measuring it between birth and death. Still, the death of loved ones and friends does bring grief. We ask you to bless and protect the families of \_\_\_\_\_,

their friends and fellow airman. Comfort them, strengthen them at this time, and bless them by helping them to keep beautiful memories uppermost in their minds. Amen.

Heavenly Father, we dedicate this service to the memory of \_\_\_\_\_. We ask that you keep us alert these next few moments to the reality of our human frailty. Allow us to see beyond the passing pleasures of the day to the depths of life's meaning which you have prepared for us. Through your power and obedience, open in each of us a deeper appreciation of the gift of life and hope which you allow us to share together. Amen.

O Lord and Master, we know that you understand and are touched by our sorrow and heartbreak during this time, because the scripture says even you wept as you stood by the grave of your friend Lazarus. May your promise not to leave people comfortless be fulfilled as you reveal yourself to the spouse, children, relatives, and friends of the one we remember here today. Cause us to hear you say, "I am the resurrection and the life." Help us, O Lord, to turn to you with true discernment, and to abide in you through living faith, that finding now the comfort of your presence we may also have a sure confidence in you for all that is to come. Fill all our hearts with trust in you that, by night and day, at all times and in all seasons, we may, without fear, commit those who are dear to us and to your never failing love for this life and the life to come. Amen.

Almighty God, in gathering together to pay tribute to our fallen comrades, we wrestle with minds that are bewildered and hearts that grieve. These airmen have been called upon to pay the supreme sacrifice. Why it should be them or why it should be under these circumstances is known only to you. We rest these questions in your hands of providential care and mercy. We are eternally grateful for the hope of the Resurrection and the promise of eternal life. In time, that will become a comfort to the grieving family and friends. But immediately, there is anger, fear, despair, doubts, the loneliness, grief and hopelessness. Lord, may these be replaced by the miracle of love and care. May we all become instruments of that love and care. As airmen and members of a grateful nation, may we dedicate our lives to continued service as a tribute to our fallen comrades. For those of us who yet live, we are forced now to reflect upon the uncertainty of life. We thus commit our lives to redeeming every waking moment, to bring peace and happiness to our home and family, our nation, and our world. Amen.

O God of spirits and of all flesh, who hast trampled down death and overthrown the Devil, and given life to thy world: Do thou, the same Lord, give rest to the souls of thy departed servants in a place of brightness, a place of refreshment, a place of repose, where all sickness, sighing, and sorrow have fled away. Pardon every transgression committed, whether by word or deed or thought. For thou are a good God and lovest all people. For thou are the Resurrection, the Life and the Repose of thy servants who have fallen asleep, O Christ our God, and unto thee we ascribe glory, together with thy Father, who is from everlasting, and thine all-holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, now and ever unto ages of ages. Amen.

Almighty God, our Creator and Redeemer, you have given us our brother/sister \_\_\_\_\_, to know and to love in our pilgrimage on earth. Uphold us now as we entrust him/her to your boundless love and eternal care. Assure us that not even death can separate us from your infinite mercy. Deal graciously with us who mourn, that we may truly know your sure consolation and learn to live in confident hope of the resurrection; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.<sup>3</sup>

Lord our God, the death of our brother/sister \_\_\_\_\_ recalls our human condition and the brevity of our lives on earth. But for those who believe in your love death is not the end, nor does it destroy the bonds that you forge in our lives. We share the faith of your Son's disciples and the hope of the children of God. Bring the light of Christ's resurrection to this time of testing and pain as we pray for \_\_\_\_\_ and for those who love him/her, through Christ our Lord. Amen.<sup>11</sup>

Gracious heavenly Father, hear our prayers for all who are bereaved by the loss of a loved one. Grant the light of thy presence and thy supporting love to them, O Lord, that their dark moments be not without some light, and their burdens be not intolerable. Strengthen our solidarity with them, both in compassion and in service, and

make us instruments of thy tender pity for them and for all sufferers. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, who promised that the mourners shall be comforted. Amen.<sup>1</sup>

Father, we ask your blessing as we conclude this memorial service for \_\_\_\_\_. In love and concern, let us remember his/her family and friends in our prayers. Bless us with a realization of how precious life is and help us fill each day with beautiful memories of sharing with and assisting others, and of using the talents you have given us. This we ask with confidence in your Fatherly love. Amen.

O Lord help us to see that a time of grief is a time of love, a time of faith and a time of hope. Our faith in you, God, supports us as we suffer the loss of \_\_\_\_\_. Our hope is strengthened by trust when we don't understand. Our love for each other reaches a new high as we come together today to remember \_\_\_\_\_ and to give thanks that we have been privileged to share life together. Amen.

Almighty God our Heavenly Father, we give you thanks for the American way of life we enjoy today. Let us not forget, O God, that the rights and privileges we enjoy have blood on them and that every good gift was bought and paid for in human sacrifice. These men and women we honor this morning have had to pay the price and make the sacrifice with their lives. It is with humble and thankful hearts that we pay our tribute and offer our prayers for them this morning. You are a compassionate visitor in the time of sorrow. Therefore, in this hour and in the days to come, may your loving spirit console and sustain the families and friends here this morning who mourn the loss of their loved ones. May they look beyond the darkness of this hour for your will and purpose for all of life, not just in this part of life. We are grateful for the men and women that were able to be here to receive their rewards this morning. We are grateful for their lives and the sacrifices they have made in the fight for peace. May your blessing go with them in the days ahead that their lives may continue to be a source of blessing for others. Make us all aware, O God, of the responsibility that rests upon us to create peace in our own hearts, in our homes and in every association with our fellowman. Lead us, inspire us, make us your people to walk in your way, that this land may become in a new and deeper way, God's own country. In the name of the God of our Fathers, who is still our God, we pray. Amen.

Almighty God, gracious Lord and Father of us all, we bow before you in humble recognition of our dependence upon you. We give you praise and thanksgiving for your continuous love and abiding presence in our lives. We praise you for the lives of those we honor here this day who paid the supreme sacrifice that their brothers and sisters in this land and other lands might live in honor and human dignity. We thank you for the homes from which they came, for the love of home which sustained them, and for the love of God which upheld them. We pray for their families, friends, and loved one. We pray that thy love will continue to guide and strengthen them. We thank you for the lives of these other men and women we have honored here today. We are grateful for their dedicated service to God, country and their fellowman. Grant them, we pray, many years of opportunity ahead in which they may continue to be channels of blessing to humanity. Guide us all, we pray from moment to moment that in all things, at all times, we might remember that we are called to be men and women of God through serving our fellowman. Amen.

Do not stand at my grave and weep; I am not there. I do not sleep. I am a thousand winds that blow. I am the diamond glints on snow. I am the sunlight on ripened grain. I am the gentle autumn's rain. When you awaken in the morning's hush I am the swift uplifting rush of quiet birds in circled flight. I am the soft stars that shine at night. Do not stand at my grave and cry; I am not here, I did not die.<sup>14</sup>

Father God, we turn to you in trust and confidence in this time of sorrow. For only you give balance and meaning to our lives. It is so easy for us to see only injury and death at this time. Yet Paul reminds us that those who die with you also live with you. Help us to remember, Father, that we do not belong to ourselves but to you who created and restored us. We ask to be able to pray honestly and truly that your will be done, and that the sentiments of Job be ours also when he said that you gave and you took away. May your name be blessed. In that same light, we pray now for the injured and for those who died. And even though we walk in the dark valley, help us not to fear, for you are with us. And to you we give, honor and glory. Amen.

Lord Jesus Christ, you are our way, our truth, and our life. Look kindly on us today as we come together to bury our brother/sister \_\_\_\_\_. During the \_\_\_ years you gave him/her life on earth, he/she believed and trusted in you. He/she lived a life that gave evidence of his/her deep love for you and for God our Father. He/she loved his/her country as well, and served it with devotion and dedication for \_\_\_\_ years. He/she was a good parent. We pray that you console \_\_\_\_\_(spouse), now, and that you give strength to their children. Bless \_\_\_\_\_ today with a place in your Father's house. May he/she enjoy eternal life in paradise forever, and may he/she rest in peace. Amen.

God of us who are living and those who have preceded us in death, you whose we are whether we live or die, our hearts are overflowing with the gift of remembrance as we worship you this day. How great and humbling is our debt to the past and to those present with us now only in our memories. For the lives of those to whom this day we dedicate lasting memorials that will enhance the ministry of our church and for others near and dear to us who now from their labors rest, we give you thanks. For those who throughout the history of our nation have given their lives in behalf of freedom, justice, and peace, we express to you our gratitude. Guide and sustain us, O God, as we receive their inheritance, defend it, invest it, and share it with the world. Keep us faithful to the qualities of personhood and nationhood that are acceptable to you so that we, too, may leave for others a heritage that is imperishable and undefiled. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Almighty God, make us aware of your presence and of all those who have served our country with distinction. Deal graciously with their families and friends, giving them comfort and consolation. Finally, make us and all generations to follow, deeply grateful for their selfless sacrifice. Inspired by their example, may we set aside selfish ambition and dedicate ourselves to the noble cause of freedom and peace. Amen.\*\*

O Lord, our God, help us as we seek to raise our thoughts from this changeful life to the calm eternity in which you dwell and to those things which know no change. Lead us to the rock that is higher than where we stand. Lift us out of disappointed purposes and broken hopes into the peace of your holy and blessed will. We turn to you in humble trust. Amid the decay of the visible, things draw nigh to us. O God, our invisible comforter. As the changes of life leave us poorer and sadder, may we know more of the constancy of your love, and the unfailing riches of life, eternal. Reveal your love in comforting ways to each of us in Christ's name we pray. Amen.

Lord, thank you for your presence at this memorial service commemorating the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Decommissioning of the Marine Air Warning Squadron Eight. We offer our thanks for the military members and families of this unit that served with distinction. Some even gave their lives. Today we dedicate ourselves to the same ideals that we began with over fifty years ago. Some of us now believe in those ideals even more than we did many years ago. Bless us as we carry forth the dream of providing our children and grandchildren with a more secure world in which to live. Bring peace to our troubled world. May it begin with peace in our hearts, peace in our homes, peace in our communities, and peace in our nation. We've been around long enough to know such peace can come only as we have peace with God. Amen.

Lord, we feel a sense of common loss tonight--the loss of a co-worker. Bring healing and comfort to those who feel the deeper pain of this tragedy. Give us the ability to support and encourage our co-workers. Help all of us to keep looking forward and sustain us with your grace and presence. Keep your hand on those who stand guard and for those who sleep, give them quiet and refreshing rest. Amen.

Lord remember all those who have fallen asleep in the hope of resurrection and eternal life. Forgive all their sins committed in knowledge or ignorance. Let them enjoy your eternal blessings in the Light of your presence; grant them peace, refreshment, fellowship with your saints, and life that never ends. Have mercy on us, for you are full of grace and love mankind. Amen.

(Excerpt from *The Book of Common Prayer*, Seabury Press, NY)

O God, who gave us birth, you are ever more ready to hear than we are to pray. You know our needs before we ask, and our ignorance in asking. Give to us now your grace, that as we shrink before the mystery of death, we may see the light of eternity. Speak to us once more your solemn message of life and of death. Help us to live as those who are prepared to die. And when our days here are accomplished, enable us to die as those who go forth to live, so that living or dying, our life may be in you, and that nothing in life or in death will be able to separate us from your great love in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.<sup>3</sup>

Eternal God, we praise you for the great company of all those who have finished their course in faith and now rest from their labor. We praise you for those dear to us whom we name in our hearts before you. Especially we praise you for \_\_\_\_\_, whom you have graciously received into your presence. To all of these, grant your peace. Let perpetual light shine upon them; and help us so to believe where we have not seen, that your presence may lead us through our years, and bring us at last with them into the joy of your home not made with hands but eternal in the heavens; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.<sup>3</sup>

We thank you, Lord, that you are with us in all the moments of our lives. We need that reminder from you, Father, because there are times when life closes in around us, and we feel afraid, and alone. We need to hear you say to us, as to your disciples of old, "...I am with you always." In this moment of memory we ask for that assurance of your presence:

- Your presence with the one departed from us in whose name and memory we gather here for this occasion.
- Your presence with his/her parents, moving on through life with confidence and faith, in the needs of their loss and pain.
- Your presence with his/her school friends who in these past days have learned hard lessons about dealing with life and loss.
- Your presence with each one of us gathered in warm and solemn recollection of the life of a friend.

May each of us see beyond the tragedy of a Good Friday to the victory of an Easter Sunday, in the name of the living Lord, we pray. Amen.

## **Pearl Harbor Day**

Dear Father, on this annual recollection of the Pearl Harbor tragedy, we pray for thy benign blessings and guidance. Enable us to reflect clearly and conscientiously upon our priceless heritage. Let us be determined to guard and preserve it through all trials and difficulties. Help us to be worthy of the lofty ideals for which so many courageous men and women sacrificed so much. Grant us steadfast spirits always to defend our great inheritance for the countless generations yet unborn. Cast thy countenance upon our beloved country, the United States of America. Shelter the inhabitants of our land from all anguish, peril, and gloom. May this blessed haven ever be the citadel of justice, freedom, and brotherhood. May the time not be distant O God, when mankind will live in security and confidence as it is written in the book of thy Prophet Isaiah: "Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore." Then the glory of God shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together. Amen.

## **Prayer at Death of Catholic Airman**

Eternal rest grant unto him/her, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him/her. May his/her soul and all the souls of the faithful, departed through the Mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

## Prayer at Death of Eastern Orthodox Airman

O God of spirits, and of all flesh, who hast trampled down death and overthrown the Devil and given life to thy world; do thou, the same Lord, give rest to the soul(s) of thy departed servant(s) \_\_\_\_\_, in a place of brightness, a place of refreshment, a place of repose, where all sickness, sighing, and sorrow have fled away. Pardon every transgression which he/she/they has/have committed, whether by word or deed or thought. For thou art a good God and lovest mankind; because there is no man who lives yet does not sin; for thou only art without sin; thy righteousness is to all eternity; and thy word is truth. For thou art the Resurrection, the Life, and the Repose of thy servant(s) \_\_\_\_\_ who is/are fallen asleep. O Christ our God, unto thee we ascribe glory, together with thy Father who is from everlasting, and thine all-holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Christ our Lord, grant rest to your servant among your saints, where there is no pain, sorrow or suffering, but everlasting life. With the righteous who have reposed in your peace, grant rest, Savior, to the soul of your servant, and bestow upon him/her the blessed life which is from you, merciful Lord. Lord, remember this your servant who has fallen asleep in the hope of the resurrection. Forgive him/her every transgression he/she has committed in thought, word or deed. Grant him/her peace and refreshment in a place of light where your glory delights all the saints. For you are the resurrection, the repose and the life of your departed servant, and to you I give glory, now and forever. Amen.



## **Prayer at Death of Jewish Airman**

Thy sun shall no more go down neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended. Amen.

### **Prayer at Death of Muslim Airman**

(The person who leads in prayer should stand and face Mecca if possible.)

Allah is Great! (four times) There is no God but Allah and Mohammed is his prophet.

Glory be to thee, O Allah, and I praise thee. Thy praise is glorified, and there is no God other than thee.

O Allah! Pray onto Muhammad and upon the family of Muhammad as you sent prayers onto Abraham and the family of Abraham. And bless Muhammad and the family of Muhammad as you blessed Abraham and the family of Abraham. Verily thou art praiseworthy and glorious.

O Allah! forgive those of us who are still living and those who are dead; those of us present and those who are absent, and our minors and our elders. O Allah! let the one whom thou keepest alive from among us, live his/her life according to Islam, and let the one whom thou causest to die from among us, die as a believer. Our Lord, neither deprive us of the reward of faith, nor subject us to strife and temptation after him.

Peace and Allah's mercy be upon you.

(The individual's eyes should be gently closed and the following prayer may be repeated.)

Allah! Make his/her affair light, render easy what he/she is going to face after this, bless him/her with thy vision, and make his/her new abode better for him/her than the one he/she has left behind. Amen.

## **Prayer at Death of Protestant Airman**

Depart, dear brother/sister, out of this world in the name of the Father who created thee, in the name of the Son who redeemed thee, and in the name of the Spirit who made thee whole. Amen.

Gracious God, we thank you for the life you have given to us, and we commend this child of yours into your care. Grant him/her rest from the troubles of this world in the peace of your holy kingdom. Amen.

## Prayers at the Graveside

O God, by whose mercy the faithful departed find rest, send your holy angel to watch over this grave. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.<sup>9</sup>

In sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ, we commend to almighty God our brother/sister \_\_\_\_\_ and we commit his/her body to the ground: earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust. The Lord bless him/her and keep him/her, the Lord make his face to shine upon him/her and be gracious to him/her, the Lord lift up his countenance upon him/her and give him/her peace.<sup>10</sup>

Lord Jesus Christ, by your own three days in the tomb, you hollowed the graves of all who believe in you and so made the grave a sign of hope that promises resurrection even as it claims our mortal bodies. Grant that our brother/sister, \_\_\_\_\_, may sleep here in peace until you awaken him/her to glory, for you are the resurrection and the life. Then he/she will see you face to face and know the splendor of God, for you live and reign for ever and ever.

All: Amen.<sup>9</sup>

Almighty God, look with pity upon the sorrow of your servants, for whom we pray. Amidst things they cannot understand, help them to trust in your care. Bless them and keep them. Make your face to shine upon them, and give them peace. Amen.<sup>3</sup>

O Lord, support us all the day long of our troubled life, until the shadows lengthen and the evening comes, and the busy world is hushed, and the fever of life is over and our work is done. Then in your mercy grant us a safe lodging, and a holy rest, and peace at the last; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.<sup>3</sup>

Eternal God, you have shared with us the life of \_\_\_\_\_. Before he/she was ours, he/she is yours. For all that \_\_\_\_\_ has given us to make us what we are, for that of him/her which lives and grows in each of us, and for his/her life that in your love will never end, we give you thanks. As now we offer \_\_\_\_\_ back into your arms, comfort us in our loneliness, strengthen us in our weakness, and give us courage to face the future unafraid. Draw those of us who remain in this life closer to one another, make us faithful to serve one another, and give us to know that peace and joy which is eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.<sup>3</sup>

Now to the One who is able to keep you from falling, and to make you stand without blemish in the presence of God's glory with rejoicing, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, power, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.<sup>3</sup>

Almighty God, our Father, from whom we come, and to whom our spirits return: You have been our dwelling place in all generations. You are our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Grant us your blessing in this hour, and enable us so to put our trust in you that our spirits may grow calm and our hearts be comforted. Lift our eyes beyond the shadows of earth, and help us to see the light of eternity. So may we find grace and strength for this and every time of need; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.<sup>3</sup>

This body sleeps in dust  
Immortal joys await the host  
In perfect beauty may it rise  
When Gabriel's trumpet shakes the skies.<sup>11</sup>  
*-Epitaph on a tombstone in Long Island, New York*

## Suicide

O Lord, our God, we come to you today in our sorrow. We grieve the loss of a fellow airman. The Scriptures encourage us to come to you in our pain and despondency. For some, the sense of lostness seems too great and the loneliness too vast to turn even to you for comfort and strength. Take, we pray, the soul of this troubled one and give the rest and peace that only you can give, the rest and peace this airman so often sought and did not find in this life. We thank you that even when it is difficult for us to reach out, you nevertheless are ever present in love and mercy. Amen.

God our Father, you have sent us your only Son so that we might realize that we are never alone. We never stand by ourselves. We join St Paul in declaring that “we are afflicted in every way but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed.” And so we pray confidently, Lord God, that \_\_\_\_ will find peace in your loving arms, and that we will be a little more aware that our own lives are not meant to be lived in isolation, aware that our lives cannot be lived without conflict. Rather, Lord, through the challenges we face, with you as our helper, guide and shield, may we continue to grow, to deepen, to develop into the people whom you have called to be your own. This we pray in your holy name. Amen.

God, lover of souls, you hold dear what you have made and spare all things, for they are yours. Look gently on your servant \_\_\_\_, and by the blood of the cross forgive his/her sins and failings. Remember the faith of those who mourn and satisfy their longing for that day when all will be made new again in Christ, our risen Lord, who lives and reigns with you for ever and ever. Amen.11

## **Terrorist Attack**

Almighty God, we are shaken with horror and despair at the utter cowardice and senseless hatred that has spawned yet another terrorist attack. We crave the presence of your Spirit as we walk through this terrible valley of dark shadows. We need You to "ground" and "center" our emotional selves so that we are overtaken by your grace and wisdom. We implore you, loving God, to enable us to bear the pain and the loss of again losing our loved ones to enemies who hide in the dark and kill without caring. Grant our leaders, not only American, but this planet's leaders, the courage to find the wisdom to chart the road to peace with haste. Give those whose loss today is not only national, but deeply personal, the clarity to see an unexpected future, the hope to overcome the turmoil of this hour, the strength to do what must be done, and the bravery that is lacking in those who stole their loved ones. And we will give you the honor and the glory. In your holy name we pray. Amen.

## **Unit Tragedy**

Our Heavenly Father, in this hour of stunned grief, our first reaction is silence. But in our silence, as many airmen before us have done, we turn to you and ask for your presence and reassurance and guidance. By our prayers, we also seek to reach out through you to our fellow airmen and their families. But, especially, we pray for the airmen who lost their lives; and for their most valued, dedicated service to the Air Force and to their country by helping to maintain peace in the world. Comfort those who loved these airmen, with your Fatherly reassurance, that you “will never leave them nor forsake them.” Challenge us, Father, to use the time you have appointed yet to us to bring wisdom, justice, truth, healing, assurance and peace into the lives of others with ever greater singleness of mind, Help us now as we go about doing the important tasks that are ours as men and women of the United States Air Force. Hear us, Father, for the sake of your most faithful promises. Amen.

## **Vigil For The Deceased**

*Using one of the following greetings, or in similar words, the minister greets those present.*

May the God of hope give you the fullness of peace, and may the Lord of life be always with you.

**All: And also with you.**

The grace and peace of God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

The grace and peace of God our Father, who raised Jesus from the dead, be always with you.

**All: And also with you.**

May the Father of mercies, the God of all consolation, be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

## OPENING SONG

## INVITATION TO PRAYER

My brothers and sisters, we believe that all the ties of friendship and affection which knit us as one throughout our lives do not unravel with death. Confident that God always remembers the good we have done and forgives our sins, let us pray, asking God to gather \_\_\_\_\_ to himself.

*Pause for silent prayer.*

*The minister says one of the following prayers.*

Lord our God, the death of our brother/sister \_\_\_\_\_ recalls our human condition and the brevity of our lives on earth. But for those who believe in your love, death is not the end, nor does it destroy the bonds that you forge in our lives. We share the faith of your Son's disciples and the hope of the children of God. Bring the light of Christ's resurrection to this time of testing and pain as we pray for \_\_\_\_\_ and for those who love him/her, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

O God, glory of believers and life of the just, by the death and resurrection of your Son, we are redeemed: have mercy on your servant \_\_\_\_\_, and make him/her worthy to share the joys of paradise, for he/she believed in the resurrection of the dead. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING: 2 Corinthians 5:1, 6-10

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Psalm 27

## GOSPEL

A reading from the holy gospel according to Luke 12:35-40

Jesus told his disciples: "Gird your loins and light your lamps and be like servants who await their master's



return from a wedding, ready to open immediately when he comes and knocks. Blessed are those servants whom the master finds vigilant on his arrival. I say to you, he will gird himself, have them recline at table, and proceed to wait on them. And should he come in the second or third watch and find them prepared in this way, blessed are those servants. Be sure of this: if the master of the house had known the hour when the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. You also must be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will come.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

## HOMILY

### PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

Leader: Let us turn to Christ Jesus with confidence and faith in the power of his cross and resurrection. Risen Lord, pattern of our life for ever: Lord, have mercy.

**All: Lord, have mercy.**

Leader: Promise and image of what we shall be: Lord, have mercy.

**All: Lord, have mercy.**

Leader: Son of God who came to destroy sin and death: Lord, have mercy.

**All: Lord, have mercy.**

Leader: Word of God who delivered us from the fear of death: Lord, have mercy.

**All: Lord, have mercy.**

Leader: Crucified Lord, forsaken in death, raised in glory: Lord, have mercy.

**All: Lord, have mercy.**

Leader: Lord Jesus, gentle Shepherd who brings rest to our souls, give peace to \_\_\_\_\_ for ever: Lord, have mercy.

**All: Lord, have mercy.**

Leader: Lord Jesus, you bless those who mourn and are in pain. Bless \_\_\_\_\_'s family and friends who gather around him/her today: Lord, have mercy.

**All: Lord, have mercy.**

### THE LORD'S PRAYER

Friends [brothers and sisters], our true home is heaven. Therefore let us pray to our heavenly Father as Jesus taught us:

or

With God there is mercy and fullness of redemption; let us pray as Jesus taught us:

or

Let us pray for the coming of the kingdom as Jesus taught us:

**All: Our Father...**

## CONCLUDING PRAYER

Lord Jesus, our Redeemer, you willingly gave yourself up to death, so that all might be saved and pass from death to life. We humbly ask you to comfort your servants in their grief and to receive \_\_\_\_\_ into the arms of your mercy. You alone are the Holy One, you are mercy itself; by dying you unlocked the gates of life for those who believe in you. Forgive \_\_\_\_\_ his/her sins, and grant him/her a place of happiness, light, and peace in the kingdom of your glory for ever and ever. Amen.

or

Lord God, you are attentive to the voice of our pleading. Let us find in your Son comfort in our sadness, certainty in our doubt, and courage to live through this hour. Make our faith strong through Christ our Lord. Amen.

*A member or a friend of the family may speak in remembrance of the deceased.*

## CONCLUDING RITE

### BLESSING

Blessed are those who have died in the Lord; let them rest from their labors for their good deeds go with them.

*A gesture, for example, signing the forehead of the deceased with the sign of the cross, may accompany the following words.*

Eternal rest grant unto him/her, O Lord.

**All: And let perpetual light shine upon him/her.**

May he/she rest in peace.

**All: Amen.**

May his/her soul and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

**All: Amen.**

*A minister who is a priest or deacon says:*

May the peace of God, which is beyond all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God and of his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

**All: Amen.**

May almighty God bless you, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

**All: Amen.**

*A lay minister invokes God's blessing and signs himself or herself with the sign of the cross, saying:*

May the love of God and the peace of the Lord Jesus Christ bless and console us and gently wipe every tear from our eyes: in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**All: Amen.**

*The vigil may conclude with a song or a few moments of silent prayer or both.*<sup>9</sup>

## Wake

*It is appropriate for family and friends to gather for sharing and prayers in the church, funeral home, or family home on the day or night before the Service of Death and Resurrection. This order out of an African American worship tradition may be used for such occasions, or the service may be as informal as is desired. It may be lead by either clergy or laypersons. Acts of worship suggested for the Service of Death and Resurrection may be included or substituted for those below. The coffin may be open or closed, depending on the wishes of the family. If the deceased is a member of a fraternal or other organization that customarily holds services for its deceased members, the one appointed by that organization may wish to conduct a special service according to its customs. Plans for such services should be made in consultation with the family and subject to the approval of the pastor.*

## GATHERING

*Greetings and condolences may be exchanged with family and friends.*

## GREETINGS OR INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

*The leader may open with a brief greeting or introductory statement on behalf of the church, family, and friends, such as:*

Friends, we are gathered here to honor the memory of our departed friend and brother/sister, \_\_\_\_\_.

## HYMN

*If desired, one or more stanzas of a well-known hymn or song, such as the following, may be sung or recited:*

Abide With Me	He Leadeth Me: O Blessed Thought
Just As I Am, Without One Plea	My Faith Looks Up to Thee
What a Friend We Have in Jesus	

## PRAYER

*The leader or some other designated person may pray an extemporaneous prayer, or the following or another prayer:*

Gracious God, as your Son wept with Mary and Martha at the tomb of Lazarus, look with compassion on those who grieve, especially \_\_\_\_\_.

*Silence may be kept.*

Grant them the assurance of your presence now and faith in your eternal goodness, that in them may be fulfilled the promise that those who mourn shall be comforted through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## SCRIPTURE

*One of the following, or another scripture, may be read:*

Psalm 23	The Lord is my shepherd.
Psalm 27	The Lord is my light.
Psalm 90:1-6, 16-17	From everlasting to everlasting.
Psalm 121	I lift up my eyes to the hills.
John 14:1-10a, 15-21, 25-27	Do not let your hearts be troubled.

## WITNESS

*Family, friends, and members of the congregation may briefly voice their thankfulness to God for the grace they have received in the life of the deceased and their Christian faith and joy. Signs of faith, hope, and love may be exchanged.*

## CLOSING PRAYER OR BLESSING

*The following or another prayer or blessing may be spoken or sung:*

The Lord bless us and keep us. The Lord make his face to shine upon us and be gracious to us. The Lord lift up his countenance upon us and give us peace. Amen.<sup>3</sup>

**FACILITY DEDICATION/GROUNDBREAKING**

## DEDICATIONS

## **Building**

Creator God, you took great delight in calling forth this world out of nothing and making it a place of order, form and beauty. In forming us after your own image, you have instilled within us a desire to build and be creative as well. Today, we are assembled to dedicate this new building to the cause of peace. We thank you for its completion and pray that those who were so diligent in building it will know the gratitude of those who will work within its walls. Thank you for this symbol of freedom. May it serve always to remind us that our duty is to achieve excellence and our call is to be found vigilant and faithful in our walk with you. Amen.\*\*

Our Heavenly Father, we lift our hearts in sincere thanksgiving for the bountiful evidence of your rich blessing upon our nation. We thank you for the opportunity to serve our country, whether as airmen, as part of the civilian work force that supports our military training, or as family or community members. As we dedicate this facility, we pray that it will be an instrument of peace; and that we who are present may rededicate our energies individually and collectively to live out our nation's creed, "one nation under God, with liberty and justice for all." And now, may the blessings of almighty God rest and abide upon us all. Amen.

Our Father who art in heaven, we acknowledge that you are involved in the affairs of men. And if a little bird cannot fall to the ground without your noticing, how can we think that you are indifferent to this dedication that is taking place this morning and the persons that are involved. It is with this in mind, O God, that we come to you with thanksgiving in our hearts for those persons who through their labors have made this facility a reality. We dedicate it today as a completed building but fully aware that it cannot be a completed facility until it has been fully staffed with the personnel needed to carry out the different services that will be rendered here. We ask your blessing to be not only with those who have made this day possible but most especially let your blessing be upon those who will be involved in the future operation of this activity. They will need your strength, wisdom and patience in order to let this be a place of service for them rather than just a place of duty. This prayer has been prayed "O God" out of the faith that you have not only heard but will answer it out of Your mercy and love. Amen.

O God, by whose light we see and by whose provision we live, we thank thee for the occasion which brings us together today. We dedicate this building to the purpose of freedom, and as we dedicate it, may we do so in the spirit with which King Solomon dedicated the temple of his people. May we be more concerned to see that we are on your side, O Lord, than to convince you to be on our side. We pray, our Father, for grace to use this building in ways that shall be pleasing to thee. May it be used in the effort to keep the fountain-head of freedom open, that its waters may flow down through the earth and quench the thirst of those who starve for righteousness and long for liberty. As we dedicate this building to the preservation of freedom and the combat of false and devastating ideologies, help us at the same time to dedicate ourselves to unselfish service and to pledge ourselves to walk in the paths of righteousness. Thus may we effectively serve our fellowman, our country and our God. In thy name we pray. Amen.

O God, our greatest provider, who knows our needs before we understand them ourselves, we ask your blessings, guidance and protection upon this building project that will one day provide for the health and welfare of our airmen and their families. In the days ahead, many men and women will give us their sweat and talents to construct buildings that will benefit untold thousands in the years beyond the lives of us here today. Keep them safe and faithful in their labor, and may the work of their hands bring them pride. May future generations look back to this day of beginning and understand, and thankfully say, it was a good thing their forebearers did in providing for us. We thank you for the foresight of our leaders and planners who made this day possible. We pray in thanks and gratitude in your holy name. Amen.

O God, in the course of our busy lives, we often forget the need to renew our physical and spiritual lives. As we gather to celebrate the opening of this new facility, we pray that you would bless our efforts to provide for the relaxation and comfort of all who enjoy its use. May your presence continue to be with us in all that we do, in your name, I pray. Amen.



Dear Lord and Father of us all--you who are deeply interested in the affairs of your people--be with us now and bless this building for use as (name of new building). May the groups who meet here work to strengthen our relationships one with another. Direct us, O Lord, in all our doings with your most gracious favor and further us with your continual help. Amen.

Eternal God, we are aware of that element that you have placed in us which enables us to relax, to have fun, and enjoy those things provided for our pleasure. We are aware also Father, that such wholesome pleasure makes us better people, and enables us to perform our more serious missions in a more professional manner. For this reason, we give thanks for this (name of new building), and for the fun and relaxation it can provide. May its use truly make us better people. And, may the cause of God and country be served better because of its presence. Amen.

*BX/Commissary*

Almighty God, we give you thanks for the blessing of this long awaited moment in the life of our community. For so long, we have awaited this facility and all that it offers to us. Now, as we pause to cut the ribbon and open our new Commissary and Base Exchange, we thank you for making this dream a reality. May this facility bring a much needed boost to the morale and well-being of our community. And may each of us, with thankful hearts, rejoice at this benchmark in the building up of our base. Help us not to take this facility for granted. Bless those who will utilize this facility and those who will work within its walls. And may we, as we ought to in all things, give you the thanks and the praise for the many blessings which you have showered down upon us. By the power of your Spirit, continue to strengthen us in our work, play, families, and homes, that we might give you the honor and the glory. We ask these things in your Holy Name. Amen.

God of concrete, God of steel, God of piston and of wheel, God of pylon, God of steam, God of girder and of beam, God of atom, God of mine, All the world of power is thine. Our Father, we pause at the dedication of this commissary facility to remind ourselves that all things are ultimately the result of your creative power. We thank you for this building-for its concrete and steel-for its girder and beams that will be of service to our people that will give us this day our daily bread. Man does not live by bread alone and so we ask you to bless those who designed and worked on it, bless those who will work in it, and bless those who will come to it to meet their material needs. In thy name we pray. Amen.

## Chapel

CHAPLAIN: The community of faith rejoices today as we dedicate this chapel realizing every good and perfect gift comes from God's hands.

**CONGREGATION: WE DEDICATE THIS CHAPEL TO GOD'S HONOR AND GLORY.**

CHAPLAIN: Lord, your house is a house of prayer. May your presence make it a place of blessing.

**CONGREGATION: WE DEDICATE THIS CHAPEL TO PRAYER.**

CHAPLAIN: Lord, your house is a house of worship. May the rites and rituals celebrated here strengthen all who participate.

**CONGREGATION: WE DEDICATE THIS CHAPEL TO WORSHIP.**

CHAPLAIN: Lord, your house is a house of proclamation. May your Word be preached boldly, confidently and prophetically.

**CONGREGATION: WE DEDICATE THIS CHAPEL TO PROCLAMATION.**

CHAPLAIN: Lord, your house is a house of hope. May those who have need, the poor, the weak, the lonely and the depressed always find true concern and love within these walls.

**CONGREGATION: WE DEDICATE THIS CHAPEL TO HOPE.**

CHAPLAIN: Lord, your house is a house for all people. May young and old alike find instruction and inspiration here.

**CONGREGATION: WE DEDICATE THIS CHAPEL TO ALL PEOPLE.**

CHAPLAIN: Lord, your house is a house of peace. May those who serve here--chaplains, Chaplain Service Support Personnel, and lay persons--labor for the revelation of your peace.

**CONGREGATION: WE DEDICATE THIS CHAPEL TO PEACE.**

**ALL:** We now, the people of this chapel community, grateful of our heritage and thankful for a government concerned for the faith of its people, do this day dedicate ourselves anew to be faithful and diligent in our worship and service to God.

We, the people of this community, open wide the doors of this chapel and say to all who are weary and need rest; to all who are lonely and desire companionship; to all who sin and need redemption, come, and in our Lord's Name we bid you welcome.\*\*

PRELUDE

RINGING OF THE BELL

WORDS OF WELCOME

REMARKS

SCRIPTURE READING: 2 Chronicles 6:34-7:1

INVOCATION AND DEDICATION

RIBBON CUTTING

HYMN OF PRAISE: God of Our Fathers

God of Our Fathers

God of our fathers, whose almighty hand  
Leads forth in beauty all the starry band  
Of shining worlds in splendor through the skies  
Our grateful songs before thy throne arise

Thy love divine hath led us in the past  
In this free land by thee our lot is cast  
Be thou our ruler, guardian, guide, and stay  
Thy work our law, thy paths our chosen way

Refresh thy people on their toilsome way  
Lead us from night to never ending day  
Fill all our lives with love and grace divine  
And glory, laud, and praise be ever thine

\*\*\*\*\*

This chapel is being rededicated to the Glory of God for the people of our community. Many people and organizations have contributed creatively to make this renovation a reality. Many changes and adaptations were necessary to finish this project successfully. This beautiful facility is a house of worship, a place of education, a community gathering place for fellowship, and much, much more. Those who use these buildings will forever be grateful to the countless men and women who dreamed the dreams and made the efforts to bring it to completion.

Eternal God, gracious Creator, and merciful Lover of humanity: We gather this day in humility, offering heartfelt songs and prayers of thanks. We remember and marvel at the magnificent ways you have blessed this \_\_\_\_\_ Base community. We stand before this chapel - originally dedicated by faithful women and men in \_\_\_\_\_ - and rededicate ourselves to being a people of integrity, offering excellence in all that we do, always rendering service before self to you and our nation. May those who enter this chapel join with the chaplains and staff in providing ministry to this community. By faithfully serving in the midst of \_\_\_\_\_ Base may this chapel family nurture the souls of those who in turn prepare the future leaders of our military. Bountiful Lord, bestow your heavenly blessing upon this chapel which we dedicate to your service and the glory of your holy Name. Amen.

In holy reverence, and in confidence that God our Father will accept that which we do in his name, we now declare this building to be open for the worship of almighty God, for nurture in the truth of the Holy Scriptures; for teaching, fellowship, and service, we reverently set apart and consecrate this building, in the name of the Most Holy. Amen.

## **A Service Of Dedication To The Work Of Our Lord**

### **A CALL TO WORSHIP**

Chaplain: Come and see the works of the Lord.

**People:** HE MAKES WARS TO CEASE TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH.

Chaplain: Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth.

**People:** ENTER HIS GATES WITH THANKFULNESS, HIS COURTS WITH PRAISE.

### **HYMN:**

O God, our help in ages past,  
Our hope for years to come  
Our shelter from the stormy blast,  
And our eternal home.

Beneath the shadow of your throne

Thy saints have dwelt secure;  
Sufficient is thine arm alone,  
And our defense is sure.

Before the hills in order stood,  
Or earth received her frame,  
From everlasting thou are God,  
To endless years the same.

#### OPENING PRAYER

#### READINGS FROM SCRIPTURE

Ecclesiastes 12:9-14  
Romans 12:1-3

#### MESSAGE

#### A LITANY OF DEDICATION

Chaplain: You call us to be your faithful people;

**People:** IN FAITHFULNESS WE DEDICATE THIS BUILDING.

Chaplain: You call us to serve in your name;

**People:** IN YOUR NAME WE DEDICATE THIS BUILDING.

Chaplain: You call us to the service of your people in the Air Force;

**People:** THAT YOUR PEOPLE MAY BE SERVED, WE DEDICATE THIS BUILDING.

Chaplain: You call us to a more excellent way;

**People:** TO THE EXCELLENCE OF MINISTRY, WE DEDICATE THIS BUILDING

Chaplain: You call us to preparation for the work of your kingdom;

**People:** THAT YOUR PEOPLE MAY BE EQUIPPED TO DO YOUR WORK, WE DEDICATE THIS BUILDING.

**ALL:** SO MAY WE PROVE WHAT IS EXCELLENT, WHAT IS GOOD, WHAT IS JUST; SO MAY OUR WORK BE APPROVED BY YOU, O GOD, IN WHOSE NAME WE DEDICATE THIS BUILDING.  
Amen.

#### PRAYER OF DEDICATION

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

#### BENEDICTION

**Chaplain:** Now, let us affirm together our joy in this building.

**People:** LORD, FILL THIS PLACE WITH YOUR PRESENCE, AND EXTEND YOUR HAND TO ALL WHO CALL UPON YOU.

**Chaplain:** May this always be a place of learning and growing, a place where people meet together and find enrichment.

**People:** THANK YOU GOD FOR A PLACE TO COME AND LEARN OF YOU AND YOUR PEOPLE. THIS

IS YOUR HOUSE AND WE WILL HONOR IT BY OUR ACTIONS AND CARE. AND WE WILL HONOR IT BY OUR GRATITUDE FOR EACH OTHER, AND OUR THANKFULNESS FOR THE GIFTS OF LIFE AND LOVE WE SHARE. WE CELEBRATE THE GIFT OF THIS BUILDING, A MEETING PLACE AND A HABITATION FOR LOVE. Amen.

Come, sovereign Lord, to this time of our jubilation and so deepen us down in the vows of our faith that this house which we have built for the uses of thy glory will become, for all who declare thy praises, a gathering place; for all who wait upon thy word, a listening place; for all who have need of thy mercies, a healing place. In all seasons assemble within it the people who have made a covenant with thee by love, and draw unto it the lonely and the brokenhearted, the lost and the afraid, all who have need of sanctuary and hope. Send forth from this church ministries wrought in thy holy fire to consume the world's miseries and injustice and to give such light that many shall desire again the city of God and make the blessed resurrection their watchword. Amen. 1

## Order of Service

Call to Worship	“How Great Thou Art”	
Pastoral Welcome		Pastor
Scripture and Invocation	Religious Education Director	
Congregational Praise & Worship	“To God Be The Glory”	
Recognition of Guests		Pastor
Offertory	“Honored, Glorified, Exalted”	
Choir		
Historical Perspective		Lay Leader
“The Lord’s Prayer”		Soloist
Dedicatorial Address		Pastor
Act of Dedication	Pastoral Staff and Congregation	
Dedicatory Prayer		Pastor
Choral Response	“Forever King”	
Choir		

## The Act of Dedication

Senior Pastor Today we are gathered not only to dedicate these buildings, but to dedicate ourselves anew to the commission of the Master. These buildings, the result of the vision and sacrifice of God’s people, are but a tool to use in this great unfinished task. When we say, “We dedicate these buildings,” we mean both physical buildings and the people who with a common purpose gather for worship and inspiration in these buildings. We enter these edifices with joy, knowing they give us a greater basis for our expanding vision and commitment to

the Lord Jesus Christ, to this city, and to the world. To the eternal God our Father, Maker of heaven and earth, author and giver of life, who in the person of Jesus Christ His Son has founded the church ... “We dedicate these buildings!”

Congregation “And on this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

Youth Pastor To the three-fold development of the young person; body, soul, and spirit; to the provision of their needs for worship, fellowship, recreation and learning; to ensure the health of the young church of today and tomorrow... “We dedicate these buildings!”

Congregation “Let no man despise thy youth.”

Pastor of Pastoral Care To the ministry of church extension, reaching with the warm hand of fellowship to the sick and needy. To the motivation of saints to do the work of the ministry. To the extended welcome toward those who are new to the church fellowship and to the belief that all Christians are called to discipleship... “We dedicate these buildings!”

Congregation “And He gave some to be...pastors and teachers for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.”

Pastor of Administration To the keeping of the church and the maintaining of its buildings and assets for the purpose of facilitating the promulgation of the Gospel... “We dedicate these buildings!”

Congregation “Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honor dwelleth.”

School Administrator To the systematic development and training of all believers in the knowledge of God’s Word through formal times of instruction... “We dedicate these buildings!”

Congregation “From childhood you have been acquainted with the Scriptures which are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction and for training in righteousness.”

Children’s Pastor To the ministry of child evangelism, to the providing of learning experiences during the most impressionable years of their lives, to the end that they may become all they can be in our Lord Jesus Christ... “We dedicate these buildings!”

Congregation “Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old he will not depart from it.”

RE Director To the ministry of church administration, to the structure and organization of the church of Jesus Christ upon which we base our forecast of growth and development; to the divine injunction to be about our Father’s business... “We dedicate these buildings!”

Congregation “Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another, not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord.”

Senior Pastor To the challenge of world evangelization; to reaching the lost of the world through the preaching of the Gospel by supporting foreign missions; to the preaching of the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ as the one way of salvation. To the end that He who died upon the cross for our sins might receive from man, glory and honor... “We dedicate these buildings!” On this day, we boast of nothing, save the death, burial, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Congregation“But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end.

Senior PastorDedicatory Prayer



*Child Care Center*

Lord, we invoke your blessing upon this ceremony. We are grateful that you have blessed us with skills that can conceive, design and construct an edifice such as this for a purpose such as this - one of the signs that we are made in your image is our desire to create. We recognize that children are important to you for you said, "let the little children come unto me." We are grateful that the Air Force recognizes the importance of children in your sight. We dedicate this building to the betterment of our children and thus the quality of life on this base. Amen.

## *Credit Union*

Almighty God, all that we possess is from your loving hand. Be with your people where they work, give to all of us a pride in what we do and a just return for our labor. We thank you for institutions of savings such as this credit union which help us to provide for our families and ourselves. As we are concerned with our accounts of this life, let us always remember the account which we must give to you at the end of our life on earth. Amen.

Almighty God, builder and maker of all that was, is, and will be, teach us to use these new buildings wisely. Let us allow minds and imagination to expand beyond these walls. Show us that persons take precedence over facilities, compassion over concrete, spiritual values over spatial arrangement. Ensure for us, good Lord, that what we do within these buildings honors you, our country, the best that education offers. We dedicate these buildings in your Name, and for the purpose you hold in store for us, as individuals, as an organization, as a free nation. Amen.

*Enlisted Members Club*

Almighty God, we acknowledge you as the source of all we have and have become. We gather here today to dedicate this beautiful new facility for our airmen, NCOs and their families. In doing so, we dedicate ourselves anew for the cause of peace and freedom in our world. How thankful we are for our Air Force family of committed and loyal airmen! Grant O God your continued blessings of safety, security, and renewal for those who will enjoy this club now and in years to come. We pray in your holy Name. Amen.

*Family Support Center*

O God, you have given us many gifts in life for which to be thankful. We recognize that with these gifts you also have given us important responsibilities. We thank you for the greatest gift of all--the gift of love for one another. This family support center represents our commitment to honor the gift of love and to accept responsibility to care for one another. We ask your blessing upon this building and upon the people who will work in it. Grant that because it is here, all of our people will know a better, more fulfilling life. Amen.\*\*

## Gymnasium

Lord, we sing your praises without ceasing. You rule over all things with wonderful order, you temper the cares and burdens of our toil, and, by giving us rest and healthy recreation, you refresh our weary bodies and minds. We entreat your kindness, that this place and its facilities will contribute to leisure activities that renew the spirit and strengthen mind and body. Grant that all who meet here may find the enrichment of companionship and together offer you the praise that is your due. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.<sup>9</sup>

## Home

CHAPLAIN: What is a home? A roof to keep out the rain. Four walls to keep out the wind. Floors to keep out the cold. Yes, but a home is much more than that. It is the laughter of family members, the care and strength of happy eyes, acts of kindness, loyalty and support. It is a place of comfort when there is hurt and sickness. It is where joy is shared and sorrow eased.

**FRIENDS AND FAMILY:** We dedicate this home to family relaxation, understanding, encouragement, comfort and activities.

CHAPLAIN: The beauty of a home is harmony, the security of a home is loyalty, the joy of a home is love, the rule of a home is service, the comfort of a home is in contented spirits. The home is a place of real living.

**FRIENDS AND FAMILY:** We dedicate this home as a place of joyful conversations, harmony, and love.

CHAPLAIN: In this home is a kitchen and a table around which meals are served. The dinner table in many ways resembles an altar. Here is where the blessings of God are acknowledged and where family and friends gather to satisfy their need for food, to make plans, exchange ideas, resolve issues and enjoy one another's company. The food, in and of itself, is purely physical, but it represents human service in its use. When we realize how deeply a meal can be a spiritual and regenerating experience, we can understand something of why our Lord, when He broke bread with his little company, told them, "as often as you do this, do so remembering me."

**FRIENDS AND FAMILY:** We dedicate this home to physical renewal, to family fellowship and to spiritual memory and hope.

CHAPLAIN: Home is the one place in this world where hearts are sure of each other. It is a place of confidence. It is a place where we tear off the masks of suspicion and fear which in the world are worn in self-defense. At home we pour out the unreserved feelings of full and confiding hearts. Home is the place where expressions of tenderness are shared without any sensation of awkwardness and without any dread of ridicule.

**FRIENDS AND FAMILY:** We dedicate this home as a place of rest, refreshment and privacy.

CHAPLAIN: \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, I charge you and each of your family members to put faith in the place of friction, to practice tolerance and understanding of others. Make this home worthy of the presence of the Lord. Let Him be your guide in speech and conduct. Dedicate each day's activities to the glory of God. Reinforce the work of the Church. Be conscious of the wider fellowship of people and your unity with God. Thus, you will find meaning and happiness in your home, strength to face adversity and a foretaste of your eternal reward.

**FAMILY:** We dedicate our home and ourselves to you, O Lord. Amen.\*\*

## Housing Area

Eternal God, we readily acknowledge our dependence upon you as the continuing creator and sustainer of our world. New things are continually coming into existence - things fashioned by the hands of your people, but made from materials provided by our God, and creator. We are thankful our Father for this opportunity to share with you the creative process. It is in this realm that we see this housing area now about to be constructed. Planned and constructed by people - but originating, yes, created from materials made by you, our God. We are thankful for the farsightedness of commanders and staff whose efforts are bringing into existence these homes, and especially grateful for the improved quality of life they will provide for families in this area. Bless those who conceived the idea, those who planned, those who built, and finally, those who will live here in years to come. Amen.

*Learning Center*

Lord, we invoke your blessing upon this ceremony. We are grateful that you have blessed us with skills that can conceive, design and construct an edifice such as this - one of the signs that we are created in your image is the desire to create. Your word tell us that happy is the man who finds wisdom. Lord, we dedicate this edifice to that purpose of finding fulfillment in this life through knowledge and wisdom. Amen.



## Library

Almighty God, few expenditures are more justified, few pursuits more worthwhile than the time, energy and money expended on the expansion and modernization of a library. Next to your power, O God, there is no greater power than that of knowledge. And contained in this building are the seeds for a million new and better ideas. Libraries, like chapels, are symbols of our value system, of where we place our priorities. But symbols are meaningless unless they are infused with the fire of conviction. Dear Lord, we tell the world that we believe in God, that we believe in truth, knowledge and education. Through the resources available in this building, may the values and perspectives of tomorrow's leaders be shaped and formed. We dedicate this library to that end. And we do so in your name, O God, in whose image we have been created. Amen.\*\*

Blessed are you, O Lord God, king of the universe and greatly to be praised forever. We ask that you let your favor descend and rest on this library which we dedicate today. Let this library be a place which provides for the furtherance of the educational, entertainment, and practical needs of life. Let it be a place which provides the opportunity to increase our wisdom, enrich our lives, entertain us, and give us strength for life. Let your peace rest upon all who work and visit this library. Amen.

Lord, our God, we proclaim your majesty. In many and varied ways you continuously reveal yourself to us, and in the Bible you have handed down your inspired word. Listen to our prayers, that all who come to this library in pursuit of the arts and sciences may always be docile to the wisdom of your Word. Grant that, imbued with true learning, they will strive to create a more civilized world. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.9

## Memorial

Our Father, as we dedicate this memorial, we offer our thanks for the men and women who served our nation with distinction during a period of great peril, not only for America, but for the whole world. We remember today those who sacrificed so much in war for our country. But it is not for us here to honor them, for they covered themselves with honor by their devotion to duty in the face of great danger. Rather, we remember them and pray for that day when wars shall cease and the energies and treasures and youth of the nations will be employed to enrich the lives of all of your children on the face of the earth. Until that day comes, grant us the determination to make the hard decisions we must to deter those who would impose an alien way of life upon our beloved nation and deny our sacred freedoms under God. Bless now the ceremonies of this hour, and grant grace, mercy and peace unto us all. Amen.\*\*

Almighty God, we bow in your presence this day with the realization that you are our God, that we are your people. We give thanks today for all those who have laid down their lives in the service of our country. As ground is broken for this memorial, we dedicate ourselves to the task of perfecting your kingdom of peace among all nations. May this monument serve as an enduring witness before your people of the faithful service of those whom we commemorate. Endow each of us with courage and strength that we may affirm the ideals for which others have sacrificed and exalt the memory of their commitment to our nation. This we ask in your holy name. Amen.\*\*

Lord, thank you for your presence at the dedication of this significant historical marker. We offer our thanks for the military members and families that have served with distinction. Some have even given their lives. Today we dedicate ourselves to the work they began. Bless us as we carry forth the dream of providing our children with a more secure world in which to live. We thank you for the mutual support of the civilian community and this Air force base--a relationship that makes historical markers like this possible. Continue to bless us with your presence in our daily life and work. Amen.

Thank you, Lord, for your presence at this Senior NCO Academy/Air Force Association dedication of the Kisling Memorial. It is certainly a rare occasion that brings together ten Chief Master Sergeants of the Air Force, a congressional medal of honor recipient, and many other great leaders of the past and present--to honor one, who perhaps best of all, emulates fairness, empathy, and concern for the enlisted corp. We pray, today, that as NCO's of the world's greatest Air Force gather in those great halls of learning--each may be challenged to aspire toward those same leadership qualities that made CMSgt Kisling stand out among all great leaders. As we cast our silent gaze upon the inspiring sculpture, may we always remember to take care of our people the way he took care of his . . . housing, pay, promotions, assignments, education, and training. Each of these is still a pertinent issue in today's Air Force. And of course, we can't achieve these goals without your grace, peace, and wisdom in our lives--and without being connected with you in some meaningful way. Bless this meal, and bless us with openness to your presence. Amen.

Our Father, as we dedicate this plaque to your glory and in memory of \_\_\_\_\_, a man who was called to a great task in troubled times, we cannot help but think of the times in which we live and of the fact that so many today are looking for life without trials and work without difficulties. Remind us that oaks grow strong in contrary winds, and that diamonds are made under pressure. May we find in every difficulty an opportunity, and not give way to the pessimism that sees in every opportunity a calamity. As we reflect on how your hand has molded history and guided individuals in history, may we be bold to ask for that great hand upon our shoulder, to give inspiration and guidance in these our difficult times. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

## Memorial Park

Father, as we gather to dedicate this park in honor of the men and women of our military forces, save us from indifference lest we mock those who lie in quiet places of rest, or their comrades in whose eyes are shadowed memories of the horrors of war. Rather, let us dedicate ourselves to preserve the work they began that God's peace may yet come to all our troubled world. As we are willing to make sacrifices in war, so may we be willing to make sacrifices to ensure a just and lasting peace. Make us aware of the responsibility that rests upon us to create peace in our own hearts, in our homes, in our associations with people. Teach us that righteousness exalts a nation. Lead us and inspire us. Make us to walk in your way and grant us grace to serve you faithfully. Amen.\*\*

*Military Dining Facility*

Almighty Lord our Father, we ask for your blessing on this Consolidated Dining Facility. Let it be a place where we are nourished with your gifts as we continue in the tasks that lie ahead. That it stand in time, for every airman that comes through, as a place where your people are satisfied. Thank you for the hard work of all those making this moment possible. Always feed us Lord, with the bounty of your presence and let this place forever stand as a sign of the many gifts you desire to share with us. Accept this dedication and prayer of your children. Let it be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, Our Strength and Our Redeemer. Amen.

## Organ

Our Lord and God, we thank you for this day which you have made. We thank you for all the people whom you have loved and given us to love. We thank you for the gifts of song and organ with which we may voice our praise. Bless us, O God, and help us learn to be grateful, responsible, and loving. May we become more fully aware of and responsive to your greatest gift of all, your love made visible to us through your word. Amen.

## Plaque

We acknowledge your sovereignty, O God, over all the earth--that you have set the boundaries of the nations, that you demand righteousness and judgment, and that there will come a day when in righteousness you will judge the nations and their leaders. Because you are sovereign, we humble ourselves before you, thanking you for the freedom we have in this country and for the men and women who gave their lives to preserve it. As we dedicate this plaque, we ask that all those who pass by it might be stirred to render thanks to you for the sacrifices of those whom it represents, and the heritage they have entrusted to us. Amen.\*\*

*PME Center*

Our Lord and God, we ask your blessing as we serve in the defense of our country. In dedicating this PME Center, we recognize you as the author and source of all wisdom. In words long ago, you made known your authority when you said, "I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you shall go; I will counsel you with mine eye upon you." Today, we thank you for the desire you have placed in our hearts to excel and learn. Help all the instructors who teach in this center and the students as they study to achieve standards of excellence and display professional integrity. Grant that their knowledge will increase and their leadership will flourish. Make us worthy of those who have prepared and taught before us, and send us out grateful to share in defense of the values that have made our nation great. Amen.\*\*

## Recreation Center

Dear Lord, today we share in asking your blessing upon this new recreation center. We pray that it might be a place where the men, women and children of the Air Force can pursue their sports interests and enjoy competition. Be with all those who serve here and seek to meet the recreational needs of this base. May the fun experienced by us all symbolize how thankful we are for our MWR program. In your holy name we pray.  
Amen.\*\*

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, whose eyes are ever toward humankind and whose ears are ever open unto our cry; we invoke your blessings upon this ceremony of the reopening of our Recreation Center. We recognize that community life is of primary importance. As individuals, we need relationship and fellowship with one another. Lord, we are grateful for the skills that are evident in the finished product. Our prayer this day is that you will be glorified in the activities that bring us together as a sharing, caring and living community of friends, co-workers and yes, Lord, as a family. Amen.



## *School of Aerospace Medicine*

God, we acknowledge you as our Creator and Sustainer. We thank you for the rich history of the School of Aerospace Medicine. How you must be smiling at the contribution of this institution to the human race. We too are profoundly moved by its heritage and positive impact upon our lives and the world in which we live. In war time, graduates of this institution have faithfully and skillfully cared for the men, women and families of the armed services - from the beaches of Normandy to the Korean Peninsula, from the jungles of Vietnam to the deserts of Southwest Asia. They have cared for the sick, the injured, the diseased and the broken. In peace time, the influence of this school has impacted the quality of global healthcare - from offices to clinics to hospitals, from corporate America to foreign governments. It is fitting Lord, our Great Physician, to ask your blessing upon this new building, upon its faculty, support staff and student body. May you continue to inspire and nurture their quest for healing of body and mind. Strengthen the faculty, staff and students with the skills and resolve to provide quality care for all persons. Call upon its personnel to lead and guide this institution into the future, so it will continue to stand as the preeminent School of Aerospace Medicine in the world. Amen.

# GROUND BREAKING

*Community Chapel And Child Care Center*

O God of our fathers, the only source of life, who gives your children the desire to build to your glory and the edification of your people. We gather here today to lay a cornerstone in the faith and belief that the new Community Chapel and Child Care Center will be a special place of growth and discovery for old and young alike in generations to come. We pray your special blessing of wisdom and safety upon the builders. May your continued blessings be on (name of installation) and all who support the mission of training and being trained. In your holy Name. Amen.

*Medical Center Organizational Ceremony*

O God, our heavenly Father, we thank you for the beauty of this day and for your presence with us today as we come together to celebrate the organization of this Medical Center. We thank you for the person for whom it is named and for all the persons who have worked very hard to make it what it is today. Our prayer is that you will continue to lead and bless in the operation of this facility and that you will bless the activities of this day. Now accept our thanks for this food and bless us who partake of it and those who have prepared it. Amen.

## *Medical Facility*

Eternal God, we gather here today to break ground in the faith and belief that the new medical clinic will be a special place of health, wholeness, convenience, and comfort for those who seek medical care. We pray your special blessing of wisdom and safety upon the builders, and all who have a part in the building process. May your continued blessing be upon (name of installation) and all who support the mission of training and being trained; and may we always prove ourselves a people mindful of your favor and glad to do your will. Amen.

*New Dormitory*

Lord you fill the world with your presence and you give us happiness in this new work begun to make (name of installation) a better place to live, study, and work. Today we ask you to bless the site which we have set aside for the construction of housing for our airmen. Bless all those who have worked to provide this new dormitory complex. Protect the workmen who will build these buildings; give us fair weather that the work may proceed swiftly, so that we may gather here again shortly to celebrate the work completed. Amen.

*Rededication of the AF Chaplain Service Institute*

Lord, you who wills all that is good, and allows all that seems not, permit that our thanks today will be gratefully genuine as we recognize the dimensions of your goodness. We thank you for citizenship in a country for which freedom of religious choice is a cherished given. We are grateful for our membership in the Air Force community, composed of persons of many and diverse religious convictions. We praise you for the kinds of values and the ordering of priorities which provide renovation of a building at Air University to give training and growth to chaplains of all faiths to serve the spiritual needs of our Air Force family. We have thanked you for your goodness. Now bless this dwelling. Bless those who serve you and will serve you here - and bless us all both now and forever. Amen.

## AWARDS/CLASS GRADUATIONS



## **Air Assault School Graduation**

Bless O Lord these soldiers who have succeeded in facing the challenge of Air Assault School. Restore, refresh, and renew their bodies and souls. In all their missions may they remember the words of Isaiah: "They who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary they shall walk and not be faint." Amen.

## Awards Banquet

Lord, thank you for an absolutely inspiring evening. We have recognized dedicated service, hard work, and outstanding achievement. We take pride in recognizing those who go above and beyond what is normally expected of them. We also recognize the support system of dedicated family and friends who stand behind each recipient. May their accomplishments inspire us to meet the challenges and opportunities of these days. Dismiss us now with your blessing, and may we always look to you for our peace, happiness, and direction in life. Amen.

Good evening, Lord. Thank you for your presence at this annual awards banquet. This evening we recognize the best of the best. Each award recipient tonight did not achieve this pinnacle by scrapping selfishly to get to the top of the heap. They got here by being proven leaders and followers, leading by example, and consistently displaying selflessness and integrity. We all take pride in their achievements because we had a part in their success. Because they have succeeded, we have succeeded. Thank you for our family and friends, and all those who worked so hard to make this a stellar event. Bless now this meal, the delightful program to follow, and our time together. Amen.

Almighty God, you must have a special love for all who are gathered here this evening. We know the only reason you created our world - and us - was to share your goodness with others. You have given us that same power to share ourselves and to experience the true happiness that comes to us through that sharing. We ask you to continue to award your blessing to the beautiful people who so generously give their time and talents in serving others. Bless them with continued health of body and mind. Sustain them with the sense of fulfillment in their undertakings. We now ask you to bless this food we are about to receive and all our efforts to serve you. Amen.

Dear God our Father, we thank you for this time to share together. Bless the activities which we are participating in this evening. Bless these young people as they learn to work together and as they excel as individuals under the direction of their leaders and parents. Bless this meal in which we share together for we give thanks in your name. Amen.

O God, we thank you for letting us share in this important occasion here this evening. We are grateful for the outstanding work of this squadron, its leaders and all its people. Surrounded by friends and co-workers, trusted with responsibility, endowed with conscience, vulnerable to the demand of freedom, and blessed with all the material things we really need, we ask you to save us from goals which are too easy. Keep us sensitive to your demands that we may stretch and reach and press towards those things which make for peace and bring about dignity for the whole human family. In happy moments like these when we are permitted to see good grow from our efforts, help us to discover and appreciate both the goodness of your presence and of our own real and best selves. Now that we have touched each others lives in thanksgiving and have been filled with food and drink from your bounty, grant us your continued peace. Watch over and protect us by your love and mercy. Amen.

Almighty God – Our heavenly Father, creator of every good and perfect thing. We thank you for this occasion. We congratulate those who have been especially selected this evening for award and honors. We applaud them. Bless them O Lord, on this happy occasion. May these ceremonies be a reminder to each of us that excellence in life takes time and effort, often requires the lonely walk, and always involves going the 2nd mile. We remember also, O Lord the families, friends and co-workers who have supported those whom we honor. We are never the sole contributors to our successes. Others too have helped and may they also share and derive satisfaction in the recognition of this evening. Bless our food as we celebrate together and we thank you for those who have prepared it and served us. In his name. Amen.

O Lord, we invoke your blessing upon this gathering and ask for your continued uplift and encouragement in our lives. You have created us all in your image so that we might know that human life is precious. May we so live that we might exemplify this belief, by our words and by our deeds. Since we are created in your likeness,

we do best to treasure each other, as we seek to maximize the gifts you have bestowed upon each of us. Even in competition, may we be mindful of the value of each person, your creation. Bless, then, our strivings and bless this food and those who prepared it for us. Be with us now and evermore. Amen.

Our Father, we thank you for this occasion in which we have gathered together to pay honor to those who have set their hearts to do their best, to give their all, and to achieve excellence. In this same spirit we acknowledge that to give our all is but our reasonable service. It is our prayer that with each opportunity we would do our best to reach our fullest potential as your people. Bless these tonight who were willing to take the risks, to endure the heartaches, and to jump at opportunities afforded them in making our community what it is today. We salute them and thank you for helping them make \_\_\_\_\_ “One Proud Community”. Amen.

Dear God, tonight we celebrate with the \_\_\_\_\_ squadron for their outstanding performance and support of the Wing mission. We joyfully acknowledge the virtues which led to this honor: hard work, determination, persistence, patience, teamwork, selfless leadership and a strong commitment to duty. We pray that these virtues may characterize us all and that our lives will be enriched accordingly. Let us savor the satisfaction of our accomplishment and the opportunity of service on behalf of our country. As we share this food, we recognize that all good things come from you. Amen.\*\*

Lord, you have blessed our Academy with outstanding squadrons composed of men and women dedicated to this country's freedom, to its integrity and with commitment to peace. The men and women of one squadron are honored tonight by the Air Force Association as symbolic of all those who understand the words discipline, dedication, devotion and duty. We thank you Lord for all the members of the Air Force Association and their generous leadership and support. Lord, bless our airmen and women who this very night are on distant mountaintops, on alert pads and flying in planes, keeping vigil for us. Bless those who will be Second Lieutenants next week. They stand on the ramparts ready to assume new responsibilities. Assured of your provision, we thank you for this occasion and ask your blessing upon this banquet. Amen.\*\*

Eternal God, whose awesome power causes nations to tremble and whose tender compassion marks the fall of the tiny sparrow. We lift our hearts in sincere thanksgiving for the bountiful evidence of your rich blessings upon our nation. We thank you for the opportunity to serve our country as airmen. Bless those who will be rewarded today for their proficiency in their skills. Enable each of us, whether military or civilian, to renew our commitment to serving with efficiency and honor. As we prepare to express our national thanksgiving, help each one of us to personally give humble appreciation for your benevolent grace. Grant us the determination to individually and collectively live out our country's creed - “One Nation Under God With Liberty And Justice For All.” For the glory of your name we pray. Amen.

O Lord, we thank you for these airmen and NCOs who have dedicated themselves to superior performance in accomplishing their duties. They serve as positive role models for all of us who seek to preserve the ideals of freedom, democracy and peace. May the honors bestowed upon them today challenge each of us to serve the cause of freedom with renewed commitment and dedication. Amen.\*\*

Dear Lord, today we ask your blessing upon the men and women whom we honor with these awards. Through their achievements, they have brought credit upon themselves, this wing and the Air Force. Continue to guide them in their service to our nation and direct them in the pursuit of peace and freedom. With pride, each of us serves to defend the ideals of liberty and justice. May our efforts lead to a more secure and prosperous world--a world in which all people will live in harmony with you and one another. Amen.\*\*

Loving Father, award ceremonies symbolize dedicated service, hard work and outstanding achievement. Today, we take pride in recognizing those individuals who daily go above and beyond what is expected of them. For these we honor, we are indeed grateful. But we are also thankful for the countless numbers of people, who day by day excel in their work, yet who receive little recognition. May their accomplishments spur us on to meet new challenges and opportunities in the days ahead so that not only will others be proud of us, but we will be

proud of ourselves. Bless us now in this time of celebration. Amen.\*\*

Dear God, we give you thanks for all that we have received as your gifts. For this abundant and beautiful world - a world of infinite variety filled with sights, sounds and experiences that both awe and delight us, we give you thanks. We thank you for persons concerned about us - persons who give of themselves again and again that we might stretch, grow, achieve and realize all of the rich potential inherent in our lives. Tonight we celebrate with the \_\_\_\_\_ squadron for their outstanding performance and support of their mission. We joyfully acknowledge the characteristics which led to this honor: hard work, determination, persistence, patience, teamwork, selfless leadership and a commitment to excellence. We pray that these characteristics may persist for us all. Let us savor together the satisfaction of high accomplishment. May all our lives be enriched and enlivened by this association together. As we share this food, may we recognize the bounty which continues to come from your giving hand. In your holy name we pray. Amen.

## **Baccalaureate**

And now, our Father, filled with the joy of memories past, aware of our own potential for achievement, and alive to the hope of the tomorrows ahead, and keenly aware of the debts we owe for all we have received, we return to the concerns of our everyday living. May your presence and peace, which have been a power and a joy to all and have gone before with others, go with us as well. May your wisdom light our paths and your presence fill our lives with joy. Grant us new challenges, Grant us wisdom. Grant us courage. Grant us your peace. Amen.

## **Community College Of The Air Force Graduation**

Father, these graduates have come a long way since their first class of instruction. All have worked hard. Each has made the grade. This day represents a well-deserved reward for extraordinary efforts expended. Personal goals have been met, and the future looks just a bit brighter, because these men and women have done and given their best. Lord, as the drama of life unfolds for these graduates in the days ahead, help each one to apply their acquired knowledge to the real issues of life. Broaden their sense of justice and love, and let compassion be the hallmark of their leadership. We offer our prayer in the matchless name of Him who wants us all to succeed. Amen.\*\*

## Eagle Scout Court Of Honor

Lord God, we praise you for this special night, when a young man attains the highest honor given to a Boy Scout. Bless especially this family whom we honor, and our Eagle recipient. Bless those by whose efforts \_\_\_\_\_ has been able to reach this momentous occasion--teachers, leaders, and fellow scouts, assembled here with him. You, Lord, have challenged us to soar like eagles. You have bestowed special gifts upon us. You challenge us to work for a more harmonious, just, and peaceful world. Renew our commitment to such efforts, Lord God, on this special night, and make us grateful for your gifts of life, freedom, and the spirit to nurture and protect them. Preserve in us the meaning and ideals which will be expressed in this evening's ceremony. May they be as a light to our paths in life. And as you have watched over and blessed our Eagle conferee, so continue to bless and care for each us, forevermore. And we say together, Amen.\*\*

## Graduations

Almighty God, we ask your blessing on all of us this afternoon. If we may single out one request - we would ask you to help us realize all that this ceremony signifies:

- The opportunities afforded by our country.
- The gifts of the mind and body you have bestowed on us.
- And, the charge you have given us to make your world, our world, a better place in which to live. We are grateful for these opportunities for development within the framework of our military. We ask your blessings on all who are involved in the administration and teaching of \_\_\_\_\_. In a special way we ask you to bless and protect our graduates by helping them to make their areas better places to be and to touch the lives of those around them, especially the less fortunate. We ask these blessings with gratitude for all that you have given us. Amen.

Lord our God, the leader stands apart, for he/she is challenged to give direction rather than to merely follow the crowd and to show by his/her life that he/she listens carefully to your spirit within. Help us, Lord, in the days and years to come, to face the challenges we encounter with determination and clear insight. Strengthen us toward right ways and accepted responsibility and away from the empty popularity of the "cop out." In all ways, Lord, be our light and our source of confidence. Keep us close to you in all that lies ahead. We ask this, confidently, in your holy name. Amen.

Almighty God, we are thankful for this ceremony. We are especially grateful to all who have made this occasion possible. As we leave, we ask your blessing on all of us, especially our airmen who have worked so diligently towards this goal and their instructors who have assisted them along the way. Give our graduates a continued desire to grow intellectually, for their own personal fulfillment, and to enable them to continue working for the good of our world and mankind. Bless the staff and faculty of \_\_\_\_\_ with health of mind and body so that they can continue to assist young airmen in their educational pursuits. Guard and protect all of in our efforts to serve you. Amen.

Lord, we ask your blessing on this very special occasion. We offer thanks for the course of instruction which has increased the knowledge, skills and confidence of these graduates today. Our prayer is that these graduates may take what they have gained here and use it with honor in defense of our nation, the greatest on the face of the earth. Amen.

Our Heavenly Father, we pause this moment to acknowledge our need of and dependence upon thee. We ask thy presence to be with us in these procedures today. Strengthen these officers who will be leading others in their effort to defend the principles of freedom and the resistance of oppression. Give them a greater sense of duty to uphold the sound principles by which our nation was established, and by which it can long endure. Help these leaders always to set the right example before the men and women they command. Guide, guard, and direct them in the profession of arms, that we all might always honor thee. Amen.

O God, we humbly ask for your blessing to be upon all who are graduating today. We acknowledge our debt to all those who have with their courage and dedication made our flag fly with honor. Grant unto these leaders a true sense of direction and purpose, that they may lead in the right way. May their spiritual leadership be filled with a knowledge and understanding of thee, committed to be caring for people, and guided by a sense of what is right and the courage to do it. Amen.

Dear Lord, we are grateful for this school, and the people in it. We thank you for the people with vision, courage, tenacity and for the hard workers and those who have overcome difficulties and differences.

We thank you for those who in the past have labored without recognition; they are like the salt of the earth, which sacrifices its own identity in flavoring the food. Amen.



Our Father, the moment of graduation is here, and we ask you to share it with us. We thank you for all the things that have made this day and this ceremony a reality. For the splendid minds and abilities of these graduating students, for the enthusiasm and dedication of the faculty, for the helpfulness and concern of the staff, we give you thanks. We pray that what has been absorbed in this time of orientation may help these airmen to maintain the flexibility and creativity which their jobs will demand. Be present now and bless each of us on this happy occasion. Amen.

As these graduating students depart, we ask you, O God, add to their knowledge the humility, energy, and zeal to continue to do both the routine and the exciting to the best of their abilities. In the days, months, and years ahead of them, give them your divine gifts of patience, compassion, and the drive to excel. Give them and us the mind-set and the humility to continue to see our dependence on you, and to ask you for these and all other blessings. Dismiss us now with your blessing. Amen.

Our Father, the beginning has now been made. Give each one here patience and a spirit of cooperation that will make it easier for those who instruct and more pleasant for those who learn. Supply those qualities of mind and spirit that will enable these new students to assimilate attitudes as well as learn procedures, and so be better able to serve those who may need them. Let your presence go with us each day; make us ready and willing to do what we can with what we have; crown our efforts with success. Amen.

Our Eternal God, you who are the creator and sustainer of our universe, we pause here this day to recognize you as the source of all knowledge. Within these walls many have learned the wisdom you give to mankind and many have discovered the unlimited potential which you have placed in us all. Bless these students with a continuing desire to grow in wisdom and understanding of their world, their fellows, and themselves. Bless also their teachers who have so unselfishly shared God-given knowledge and skills. May the candles they lit in these boys and girls always burn bright to light up the darkness in our world. In your holy Name we pray. Amen.

Who taught the bird to fly and the tree upward to grow? Who taught the river to flow and the sea waves to roar? Who taught the sun to rise and the earth to grow food for the living? Who taught life the art of living and the mind to perceive things and know? Who taught man to write and compose and what drives him to feel and hope? Who organized knowledge to feed the soul and established discipline, that our behavior may be controlled? All of us are students born to be taught and to be guided to our set goals. In this graduation commencement, the students are receiving their rewards after many years of hard work. And now they are ready to face the reality of life. They used their talents well which God has given them; and therefore, they ought to rejoice in reaping the fruits of their labor. Let us thank the Lord our God, who has given us our bodies and minds, and let us be grateful to Him for His love and compassion. Amen.

Eternal God of life and truth, at this commencement season we commit to you the most precious treasure of our home and nation - these boys and girls of the graduating class. With them we thank you for the hopes and labors and sacrifices of their families, for the long expectations and devoted efforts of their teachers, and for the unstinted support and abiding confidence of this community. May your blessing go with them as they graduate on to higher grades and further education. May they look upon this day as one of the first of a series of unending graduations into ever higher experiences of wonder. Amen.

Eternal Father, we pray that your blessing may rest on these young men and women that we have come here to honor today. Instill in them a lasting desire to maintain and defend our great nation's high principles of freedom, justice, and dignity for all. Make them this day aware of the great responsibilities being placed upon their shoulders and those of their generation. Bless them with wisdom, courage, and compassion. Bless also those who have so unselfishly given of themselves to train these young men and women and to prepare them to stand at the gates of freedom. Amen.

Almighty God, we ask for your blessing for these young men and women who have completed a difficult and challenging period of discipline and training. We know that you have taught us that whatever is good must be

sought after with great persistence and effort. We therefore are grateful for these who have persevered and are now ready to serve you, their country, and their Air Force as only an airman can. Grant, we pray, that they may always bring honor to the Air Force and to themselves. Amen.

Almighty God, we gather here today to lay the mantle of responsibility and leadership on these men and women who have worked hard for many weeks to prove themselves worthy of this honor. For them we ask a special blessing that they may see in the task of building Airmen an honored trust. Guide them and grant them wisdom, honesty, patience, determination, understanding, and honor. We would not forget also those who stand beside them - their spouses and families. May their support give strength and encouragement to these men and women as they go forth now to help prepare the future of the Air Force, a service dedicated to preserving the freedom and human dignity of all mankind. Amen.

Our Father, we ask you for your blessing on these young men and women who have worked many difficult weeks and have given so much of themselves to arrive at this moment. Be their constant companion as they now take on the awesome responsibility of guiding and molding other young men and women into well disciplined and confident Airmen. Keep them always aware of the high honor and trust placed on them by the Air Force and their country. Grant also to the spouses and families of these men and women your blessing as they stand by their spouses and parents supporting and encouraging them in their honored task. In your name we pray. Amen.

Source of all wisdom and learning, we thank you for this happy occasion that brings us together as fellow airmen, leaders, families and friends. We rejoice with these graduates on this special day of achievement and celebration. We thank you for their families and the sacrifices they have made to make this day possible. We ask that you would give them joy as the fruit of their labor. Would you also give unto their leaders and instructors a sense of accomplishment for their faithful and dedicated service as leaders. Grant these graduates that they may be zealous in the causes of truth, justice, and freedom. Amen.

Heavenly Father, we have come to recognize these men and women for their achievements. They have earnestly sought to become airmen prepared to defend their country. Help them to be proud of the skills and knowledge they have gained, even as we recognize what they have accomplished. Amen.

Almighty God, we pray for your blessing upon this ceremony and those assembled here. We thank you for what it represents, the effort and time spent in training and instruction that has gone to make this day possible. May this experience make these graduates better airmen, and better people. Amen.

Our Father in Heaven. We come before thee in prayer at this graduation ceremony for those who have successfully completed this course. We are grateful for these airmen who have given of themselves in time and effort to learn the necessary skills presented in this course. Bless them, Father, for their efforts and for their willingness to serve honorably their country. As thou knowest our country needs well trained airmen to protect us from outside forces that would deprive us of our God-given freedoms. Father, bless the proceedings of this graduation ceremony. Bless these graduates with a sense of accomplishment and a willingness to receive

graciously the recognition they deserve for a job well done. Amen.

Almighty Father, we ask your blessings now upon these airmen who have completed their training. From deep within our soul we confess to mixed feelings of thankfulness, pride, and anxiety--thankful that these weeks are over, pride in ourselves that we have made it, and anxiety over what lies ahead. Grant us, Father, continued blessings in the days ahead. Humble our pride in ourselves as we look to you for strength and courage to take on the tasks of the future. Give us your peace and calm confidence as we turn over to you all anxieties which we feel. We praise you Father and offer our thanksgiving for the power and courage which you provide for us. May your grace, peace, and the knowledge of your steadfast love touch each one present at this ceremony. In the name of our Lord. Amen.

Our Father, we ask you for your blessing on these young men and women who have worked many difficult weeks and have given so much of themselves to arrive at this moment. Be their constant companion as they now take on the awesome responsibility of guiding and molding other young men and women into well disciplined and confident airmen. Keep them always aware of the high honor and trust placed in them by the Air Force and their country. Grant also to the spouses and families of these men and women your blessing as they stand by these airmen, supporting and encouraging them in their honored task. In your name we pray. Amen.

Heavenly Father, we give you thanks that we have finished the requirements of our course. Thank you for the ability to learn and develop skills. Thank you for the friendships that have developed during this time. We pray that we will never have to use what we have learned in acts of war or hostilities, but that being prepared will make us so strong as to prevent an outbreak of war. Be with us now as we celebrate our completion and then travel back to our homes. Amen.

Almighty God, we gather here today to lay the mantle of responsibility and leadership on these people who have worked hard for many weeks to prove themselves worthy of this honor. For them we ask a special blessing that they may see in the task of building airmen an honored trust. Guide them and grant them wisdom, honesty, patience, determination, understanding, and honor. We would not forget also those who stand beside them--their spouses and families. May their support give strength and encouragement to these airmen as they go forth now to help prepare the future of the US Air Force, a force dedicated to preserving the freedom and human dignity of all. Amen.

Gracious God, Lord of the universe, we pray your blessing on these graduates, who in the tradition of the Centurion know that they are men and women under authority: responsible to honor your holy name; obligated

to seek peace and pursue it in the name of humanity; sworn to uphold the laws of this land and to use their professional skills in the interest of citizenry; charged to represent their families in the being and the doing of good; and accountable to self for the satisfaction of success deserved and enjoyed. Amen.

Dear God, the Father of us all. We thank you for this graduation ceremony. We thank you for what it means both to these who have completed this phase of their military training and to those who have come to share this day with them. We thank you God for being available those many times that we had to call upon you for courage, strength, comfort, and wisdom. We pray that you will watch over these airmen as they continue their training. Give safety to these people and their families who will be traveling. We pray your blessing upon this important ceremony. Amen.

God, our Father, we ask your blessing upon what we think and say and do this day. May all our living reflect your presence and concern and goodness to those whose lives we touch in our daily work. We dedicate ourselves and our skills to the physical and spiritual wellness of your people and to the lasting benefit of the communities in which we serve. May we continually renew our efforts to view people as our most valuable resource. Help us to provide to them services that are in harmony with their dignity. May all who seek our aid and guidance and healing receive our respect and courtesy. Allow us to encourage and support by our example the spiritual and physical growth of human beings. Lord, our words and ambition sometimes outrun our abilities but not our sincerity, so hear us and answer us. Amen.

Lord God, in your word we are told to walk worthy of the vocations to which we have been called. Be with the officers assembled here as they strive to learn and excel. As leaders, may they be led by you and your word. May your grace be their sufficiency and your power the measure of their expectations. Guide each member of the staff and faculty, and cause this educational experience to be truly valuable. Lord, give each of us the strength truly to match our weakness and the faith to trust you in all things. This we pray in your holy name. Amen.

Before you O God and at the beginning of this happy celebration we pause to acknowledge you and to express our gratitude to you for life, liberty and the opportunity to pursue happiness. We ask that you bless our commandant, our speaker, and every person who helped make this graduation meaningful. Bless each student and family member with your strength and guidance. These thoughts we pray in your holy name. Amen.

Now, Father, as we take our leave from these months of work and study, as we depart for new places and new responsibilities, we ask for your blessing. Bless each graduate in their new endeavors and assignments; keep them strong in their new service of this nation and of mankind. Bless their families: Keep them close together in

love and harmony; assist them to endure the hardships which military service often requires of us. Amen.

Eternal Father, you have fashioned and created us as a people, and called us as a nation to a place of trust and leadership in the world. We honor this evening young men and women who will shortly become a part of the military community. We pray that you may bless their intentions and their commitments to the welfare of our nation. Guide them with wisdom, judgment and prudence in the careers they have chosen. Bestow upon our country's leaders, wisdom and courage, that in their leadership we may be successful in maintaining peace with justice in this our day. Bless us all, as we go about the duties and responsibilities of our lives. Amen.

Eternal God, thou art the inspirer of every true prayer, the giver of all wisdom, the source of truth, the beginning of all human freedom, and the end of all human responsibility. Look upon this community of learning. Let it remain faithful to thee and to the truth as we come to know it in thee. Keep us ever from surrendering truth or giving over freedom to those who tell us that we must fight tyranny with the ways of tyrants. Let this class be a light of truth in a world of darkness and a witness to freedom in a world where many are still enslaved. We pray now for each graduate, those present, those who have gone before, and those who are yet to come. Give us the humility which grows out of understanding and strengthen our hearts with faith, O Lord, our rock and redeemer. Amen.

Almighty God and Father, your command is over all and your love never fails. Let us be aware of thy presence and help each of us be obedient to thy will. Keep us true to our best self - guarding us against dishonesty of purpose or deed - helping us so to live that we can stand unashamed and unafraid before friends, loved ones, and thee. I especially ask your protection of those in whose love we live. Give us the will to do the work required - to accept our share of responsibilities with a strong heart and a cheerful mind. Make us considerate of those entrusted to our leadership. If we are inclined to doubt, steady our faith; if we are tempted, make us strong to resist; if we should miss the mark give us courage to try again. I ask this special blessing during this commencement program; be thou within us to strengthen; without to keep us; above to protect us; beneath to uphold us; before to direct us, behind to keep us from straying; and around about to defend us. With praise and thanksgiving Father, we commend ourselves to thee. Amen.

Father in Heaven, today marks an important milestone in the careers of these fine young people. In the past several weeks they have come a long way, over frequently rugged terrain. Yet they have learned much on this journey, about themselves and others, and have reached the goal of graduation. Help them to be wise and prudent and effective as they return to their units. Help them to balance troop welfare and mission

accomplishment; in other words, help them to be stable, inspirational, concerned leaders. We make this prayer with confidence, in your name. Amen.

From everlasting to everlasting thou art God. We praise thy name our Father, for creating us with the capacity to learn and grow. Come, and enter our graduation celebration, and make thy presence known. We give thanks unto thee for the staff and faculty who have given us so many gifts, for they have been profoundly significant to us all. As we gather this day for graduation, empower us to lead in wisdom, and to always stand for the truth. For it is in the name of the Most High God we pray. Amen.

We celebrate your kindness and generosity Heavenly Father, as demonstrated through the voice of these graduates. They are ready to accept new challenges and tasks, and we invoke your arms of mercy to surround them as they do so. We bless you for their dear families, where sacrifices, patience and love have made this day even more joyful. May all of these, your own dear children, be instruments of your peace in every place to which they now go. Bless this ceremony and all who are part of it, that all that we do may bring you honor. In our haste to do too many things as we leave this place we may often forget you. Thank you for your faithfulness, for you never forget us. Amen.

Blessed are those whose strength is in the Lord, who have set their hearts on the pilgrimage of faith. O Most High enter into this class graduation, and let it be written that “moral leadership” will direct their paths from this day forward. For it is in the name of the Most High God that we pray. Amen.

Almighty God, we pause at this time to thank thee for the heritage of this good land, for the evidences of thy favor in the past, and for the hand that has made and preserved us a nation. Today we honor these students who have completed the \_\_\_\_\_ Course. Grant to them the courage and fidelity to duty and continued fulfillment as they pursue new opportunities for service in the team. Grant to all of us a broader vision of the needs of all mankind, and a deeper compassion to fill those needs. We ask your blessings on this ceremony, and upon those who participate. Amen.

God our Creator and Heavenly Father, through our prayer this day we acknowledge your grace and your power, and we offer thanks for the many good things in life you have given us. As we celebrate the graduation of these airmen and bestow well-deserved honors upon them, we in turn thank you for the sound minds, healthy bodies and motivated wills needed to complete this difficult course. We pray for continued guidance and blessing upon these officers, cadre, and airmen as they remain diligent in their service to you and our beloved country. Amen.

Our Heavenly Father, we thank you for this festive occasion in the lives of your children. This morning the emotion of joy is present in the hearts of our trainees, drill sergeants, and officers. We celebrate the achievement of these young airmen. We hope and pray that this success will be followed by countless others. On this occasion we are reminded that with hard work and that by following directions there is success. We ask that you provide each airmen with individualized guidance and protection as they continue their military careers. During this cycle break, bless our Drill Sergeants. May they experience a renewal which will give them strength for the next challenge. We ask too, that traveling mercies be extended to family and friends as they return home after sharing this joyous event with our airmen. Amen.

Father, today hearts are light and the day these graduates have dreamed of has arrived. We rejoice with them in this achievement. However, we are mindful that our achievements are possible only through the life you have given us, through the parents who have loved and nourished us, through the host of peers and friends along life's way and the teachers and instructors who guided and molded each life. No man is a island, none are perfect and each is a witness to your watchful care and forgiving grace. With every accomplishment and privilege comes added responsibility that we can neither delegate or deny. Bless all who have stood by these we honor so faithfully and give to them an extra portion of your love. This is our prayer Father. Amen.

May the Lord be with you. May you know the strength and guidance of his hand. Airmen, may you experience the peace of his presence. People of God, may you enjoy his divine joy. Amen.

May you see your world fulfilled and merit life eternal. May your ideals persist, your heart be filled with understanding, your mouth speak wisdom, and your tongue utter songs. May your eyes direct you forward and shine with the light of learning and your countenance be as bright as the heavens. May your lips speak knowledge and righteousness, and may your steps ever hasten to the place where the words of the eternal are heard. Go in peace. Amen.

Let us pray – Father, we thank you again Lord, for young men and women such as these who stand before us today. Now Father, bless each airman and all the family members who have gathered here today. Go with them and grant them safe travel and many continued years of peace and prosperity. Thank you again, Lord, for permitting us to be a part of this great nation - “One Nation Under God, with Liberty and Justice for All.” Amen.

Our God: we pause to give thanks for allowing us to experience this graduation celebration. Thank you for granting desire and wisdom to both permanent party and these graduates over the past \_\_\_\_\_ weeks. Bless these

airmen as they go on to a new chapter in life, the staff and other personnel as they get ready for the next class, and the families of all those gathered here today. Now make us mindful of your presence in this hour. Amen.

God of all the ages, you have given us a time and purpose in all things: a time to begin, and a time to close; a time to put down roots, and a time to move on; a time to learn, and a time to apply learning with experience to bring meaning, dignity, and purpose to life. Send us from this place with a larger perspective than which we possessed when we arrived. Teach us, Author of all life, to take responsibility for ourselves, to honor and affirm others, to seek the highest and best for human life. Grant us new resources, inner strength, and maturity of spirit to face the new days ahead. And grant us your peace today, and all of our tomorrows, as we live and breathe sustained by your loving care. Amen.

God and Father of us all, your prophets told us that our young men would dream dreams and that our old men would see visions. Those who stand before us today have dreamed and seen visions too. They have trained hard and reached out toward their goals, training to become the best that they could be. Lord our God, bless them and their fellow soldiers everywhere as they are ready to guard the world's freedom and peace. Amen.

Father God, we thank you for the special privilege of working together in the shaping of young, eager and open lives. We pray for a broader vision of the needs of those with whom we work, and a deeper compassion to meet those needs. Help us to be gentle, walking softly with one another. Help us to be understanding, lest we add to any person's burdens unnecessarily. Help us to stand for what is right, not because it may yield dividends later, but because it is right now. Help us to be as anxious that the rights of others be recognized and protected as we are that our own be established. Help us to live as a people to whom much has been given and of whom much is expected. Now, for the gifts of food and drink we thank you, and pray your blessing upon us and your presence with us at this table this day. Amen.

With grateful hearts, O God, we share in this special occasion here this evening. For all the graduates of this school, the instructors, staff and others, we are thankful. Especially tonight we are thankful that we can share in the history and heritage upon which this nation is founded. We are grateful for other leaders who have dared to pave the way of freedom for all people. Be with our speaker tonight that we may gain new insights from his words of wisdom. We ask your blessings upon this food and give you thanks for the nourishment it provides. In the Name of our Lord we pray. Amen.

The Lord bless you as you go your way. The Lord bring joy to you and your families as you have brought praise and honor upon yourselves today. The Lord - may he lift up his countenance upon you and yours in whatever places you shall soon be found, and may he bless you and the work of your hands with happiness, love and his most beautiful of gifts - PEACE. Amen.

O Lord there are times when we, like Sisyphus, seem to struggle up a never-ending mountain only to fall back again. Sages have said that this is the nature of all beginnings - the work was more a burden, the task seemed more than we could give, more than we had. In the struggle there seemed no peak at the end of the climb. But, unlike the pathetic Greek figure, we have reached the pinnacle and now we look back and think of the hours spent in pursuit of knowledge - of friendships cemented through commonality of effort - of material digested - of a task completed - of vistas beyond. O Lord, your guiding hand is evident in all your universe, and we are ever grateful for the gifts you have bestowed upon us. No greater elevation of spirit could you have provided humanity than the sense of accomplishment at the end of hard work and effort. We are humble before you; we are praising you for your works. In wisdom you have made them all and in wisdom you have given people to



know and order bits and pieces of your universe with tasks that challenge us, that overwhelm us at times, but which we learn to overcome only to look back in praise of you to know that this is the richness with which you have infused our lives. The struggle, O Lord - O my, how it is worth it! Amen.

God of truth and knowledge, by your wisdom we are taught the way and the truth. Bless \_\_\_\_\_ as they now finish this course of study. We thank you for those who taught and worked beside them, and all who supported them along the way. Walk with these graduates as they leave and move forward in life. Take away their anxiety and confusion of purpose. Strengthen their many talents and skills, instill in them a confidence in the future you plan, where energies may be gathered up and used for the good of all people; for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.<sup>3</sup>

Almighty God, we offer thanksgiving and praise on the occasion of this graduation ceremony. We share the joy and pride of the graduates who have reached this plateau in their military and academic experience. We offer gratitude for the teachers and students who have given of themselves to make this event worthy of the efforts and energy expended. We ask at this time your leadership and inspiration for each graduate. May their talents be used to help in the task of making a better world. Let us go from this place with positive thoughts etched firmly in our minds, thoughts which will convict us when we are neglectful and thoughts that will inspire us in times of testing. Hear our prayer, O Lord. In your name we pray. Amen.\*\*

Father God, be with us now as we honor these graduates. This is a time of celebration for a task completed and a job well done. We thank you for the opportunities you have given to these students and for the response they have made to better their careers by pursuing challenges commensurate with their interests and abilities. We also are grateful for the patience, understanding and concern of those who have supported them through their studies. The encouragement of family members and friends contributes so much to one's success. And now, bless this special occasion and all who are present. Amen.\*\*

Almighty God, we gather this afternoon to honor the academic accomplishments of this graduating class. We share with the graduates the joy of goals attained and studies completed. May the knowledge gained during the course of their degree programs empower them to serve our country and the Air Force with strength and determination. May you open for them new doors of opportunity, new avenues of service and new arenas of responsibility. These things, O Lord, we ask in your holy name. Amen.\*\*

Almighty God, you are the source of our life, strength, and hope. Blend the knowledge of these graduates with the experience of life to make strong our community through their wisdom. May the abilities they have begun to sharpen be used to slice into the challenges of life, bringing out the best in their lives. Bless each graduate with patience to use what they have learned. Bless their families, spouses, parents, brothers, and sisters, for the support they gave through this journey. Now, as the celebration begins, may we rejoice in the accomplishments attained by the teachers and administrators in the lives of these graduates. For it is in your name we pray, O Lord. Amen.\*\*

Our Father, we give you thanks for the dedication and achievement of those who will graduate this evening. You fill all of our lives with challenging interests and opportunities. You endow us with the capacity to enjoy the wonders of this great world. You enable us to dream and inspire us with knowledge of the mysteries of life. And now we celebrate with those whose dreams in part have become reality--with the graduates who will receive their degrees, with family members who have given encouragement and support, with administrators, faculty and staff members who are committed to higher learning, with honored guests whose public service is recognized. Renew within us, O Lord, the will to live life with vitality and strengthen us to achieve goals worthy of our ability. Accept our deepest thanks for the positive influence this university has had upon our community and state and pour out your blessing upon us all. Amen.\*\*

Almighty God, this is a good day. It is a time of celebration for these graduates, and a time of recognition for the academic achievement they have attained. Our joy on their behalf indeed is full, and we thank you for their

diligence and hard work. Their efforts have earned them the respect of parents, friends and faculty. We are proud of them. May the full potential of their training be realized through useful service to our community and world. Grant them happiness, peace and the will to meet the challenges before them. Bless this occasion. May its significance be enjoyed by all. Amen.\*\*

Dear Lord, few occasions rank higher or remain longer in our memory than our graduation from college or graduate school. Students sigh, "We made it." Parents exult with varying degrees of relief, "They did it." The last test is over, the last term paper handed in, the thesis defended successfully. It is finished. But we know it isn't. Life is one continuous preparation. Regression begins when we no longer are curious, when we no longer are awed by nature, no longer challenged to blaze a trail for our children, when our answers outnumber our questions. There is a spiritual dimension to education. When we walk with God, we are in the presence of the highest form of scholarship. May the Lord's standards encourage us to bring hope to people and renewal to the world. Let us seek these goals with tireless devotion assured of God's provision. Amen.\*\*

Gracious Lord and God, the life you have given to us is filled with treasured moments, with time and events remembered by ourselves and others. There is the moment of our birth, of our first word, and our first step. There is our first day at kindergarten, and our graduation from high school. Some of our remembered moments are filled with joy, praise, and thanksgiving. Others are filled with sorrow, pain, tears, and regret. Tonight we are gathered in honor of this year's graduating class, as they add another remembered moment to their lives. Thank you for making this moment possible. Thank you for those used by you to bring our graduates to this moment in time. We give you thanks and praise for parents, teachers, coaches, counselors, professors, pastors, and friends. And now bless us this night as we rejoice with those who rejoice. In your precious name we pray. Amen.\*\*

Almighty God who makes all things new, you have ordained that all rites of passage, like this graduation, will simultaneously conclude one phase of life, while commencing a new phase of life. So be it. Bless now, O Lord, these graduates to begin anew! Amen.

Our Father, we are taught to ask, and it will be given us... seek, and we will find... knock, and it will be opened to us. At this beginning of a new academic year, we ask for Divine wisdom... we seek understanding... we knock at the door of truth. Bless our endeavors, we pray; and grant that what we are given... what we find... and whatever is opened to us... will be employed for the furtherance of justice, unity and peace among the peoples of this earth. Amen.

God our Father, we thank you for this time of celebration and recognition, for from the time we were infants until even now, you have given us the love, the direction and the example we needed at each state of our development. We thank you for the gift of those people and institutions in whom that direction was embodied, and, Lord, we thank you for our nation, where we grew and developed that potential for leadership which is being recognized and commissioned this night. Help us now, to give you the praise and the glory, for you are Lord, now and forever. Amen.

Lord our God, be with us now as we go forth, confident in our skills, to take on our responsibilities. Help us to be worthy of the trust of our nation, and always, Lord, walk with us, and go before us, for without you we are nothing. We ask this in your holy name. Amen.

O God, we give you thanks for the gift of life and this occasion of celebration and recognition. You have created each of us with abilities and skills to share in our great adventure of living together. We especially thank you today for blessing and strengthening our military community through the lives of these men and women who have given themselves to the demanding task of developing their leadership skills and potential. Keep them strong through a belief that what each has to give is good and worth giving. Keep them humble through the knowledge that their powers and skills are limited. Keep them courageous through a strong belief in the need to defend human rights and freedom. Amen.

May the Lord God Almighty richly bless each of us today with commitment, competence, candor, confidence, and courage. May he deepen our commitment to him, to our nation, to our leaders, and to the people we serve. May he assist us in achieving competence, so that we might be fit to lead with professional excellence. May he find in us candor, openness and honesty in all our delights, with our superiors, with our subordinates, and with our fellow officers and NCOs. May he endow us with confidence, making us humbly aware of our weakness yet unquestionably sure of our strength. May he empower us with that courage which reflects both the depth of our inner strength and the extent of our unfailing trust in his power. Amen.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for life, and for the joy of living. We thank you for friends, and for the happiness they bring. We thank you for your love, and for what it means to each of us. Thank you for this food. Bless it that we might be consecrated unto you. Nourish us that we might do your will. Strengthen us that we might mount up with wings like eagles; that we might run and not grow weary, that we might walk and not faint. Lead us that we might follow. We ask it all in your Holy Name. Amen.

With grateful hearts, O God, we share in this special occasion here this evening. Mindful of the fact that because of you we celebrate this season. Tonight we thank you for all the graduates of this school, the instructors, and staff. Especially tonight we are thankful that we can share in the history and heritage upon which this nation is founded, and for our leaders who have dared to pave the way of freedom for all people. Be with our speaker tonight that we may join new insights from "his" words of wisdom. We ask your blessings upon this food and give you thanks for the nourishment it provides. In the name of our Lord we pray. Amen.

For a few weeks you have learned and have received insight on leading people. Now go, with the courage to be a different person and know God goes with you. Amen.

Our Father, we thank you for all the things that have brought us to this time--the gift of freedom, the power to choose, minds to learn, opportunities to grasp and the power to see things through. On a more personal level, we thank you for the people whose help and influence have blessed our lives--parents, relatives, wives, husbands, friends and fellow students. We also thank you for the opportunities of education which the Air Force provides and for the faculty, staff and assistants who diligently prepare and teach their lessons. Now we pray your special blessings upon these graduates. We thank you for all they have learned and achieved. May your guiding hand rest upon them as they continue their careers, and may they serve you and our country with distinction. Amen.\*\*

Our Father, thank you for the accomplishments of these graduates and the support they have received from their commanders, supervisors, families, friends and faculty members. Grant the graduates courage to exemplify moral and spiritual values. And may they utilize the skills they have learned to lead others in making the Air Force a way of life marked by purpose, dedication and excellence. Bless this occasion and our service to our country that peace might be preserved throughout the world. Amen.\*\*

O Lord, as we honor these graduates, may we live so faithfully that no failure can dishearten us, no frustration can discourage us and no fear can take away from us the joy of inner integrity. We are grateful for these men and women. For their accomplishments in their training and what they contribute to our community, we pray your special blessing upon them. Walk with them, O Lord, in the days ahead to accept the challenge of each new day, never to turn from its difficulties, never to evade its challenges and never to escape its duties. Guide us and sustain us in all our ways this day and always. Amen.\*\*

## **National Defense University Capstone Class**

Almighty God, Maker of heaven and earth, we humbly ask for your blessing and your presence this evening as we welcome these new flag officers to NORAD and the US SPACE COMMAND. We are excited to know this group of leaders will be leading our Armed Forces into the 21st Century. Grant them wisdom and courage to make decisions that will provide the security and freedom that have been bravely won and sacrificially sustained. Keep them close to their families and submissive to Thy will. On the lighter side, Lord, we ask that You be merciful to the squids from the Naval Academy this week. Grant them at least one scoring opportunity in their certain defeat at the hands of the mighty Air Force falcons. Bless now the food and fellowship we enjoy. In your holy Name we pray. Amen.

## **NCO Academy**

You have surrounded us from our earliest days with those who have taught us the meaning of responsibility and caring. We grew to realize that the world should not revolve around us, but that it could progress because of us. As we gather here today, celebrating graduation from all different phases of the academy, we give thanks for the awareness we have from that education. Awareness of the potential we have for leadership and thanks that our great nation is giving us the privilege of exercising that leadership in her service. Lord, as we gather with family, friends and companions in arms, we give you thanks and praise. Amen.

## **Officer Trainee Commissioning Ceremony**

Good morning, Lord. On this special day of commissioning and graduation, we are reminded that the completion of goals brings the challenge of new opportunities. Thank you for enabling us to give our best under pressure. We are here today because you came through for us time and time again--sometimes when we weren't even aware of it. Thank you for family and friends that supported us, Flight Commanders and staff that modeled effective leadership, and for the hard work it took to complete the program. The future looks so much brighter today than it has for many weeks! Bless us as we graduate and are commissioned. Thanks for sharing this moment with us--we couldn't have made it without you. Amen.

## **Outstanding Student Leadership Awards Luncheon**

Eternal God, today we celebrate the accomplishments of those students who have demonstrated outstanding leadership in professional education. We recognize their work and honor their achievements. The awards granted, O God, demonstrate an emphasis on qualities which make us strong-- qualities like wisdom, courage, perseverance, truthfulness, dedication, preparedness, charity and optimism. As we thank you for the leaders whom we recognize, we are equally mindful of dedicated professionals who serve without recognition, whose leadership and talents often are unheralded, yet who serve the cause of freedom and peace faithfully. We come before you as a servant people, acknowledging your high calling, thankful for the food with which you bless us and for the privilege to gather to share in this tribute. Use us as instruments of your peace. In your name we pray. Amen.\*\*

## **Pilot Training Graduation:**

O Lord, grant your blessings to the class of \_\_\_\_\_ for protection, health and excellence in all things. Support these pilots and their families that through their efforts freedom may prevail, allowing men and women everywhere to declare your glory in peace. Encourage and guide each graduate and keep them always close to you. Amen.\*\*



## **PME Graduation**

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the beauty of the earth, especially in the Spring when we see new life blossom into being and smell the fragrance and freshness of your creativity. Thank you for your promise of resurrection and for the new life which is possible for us. As we grow older, help us to grow better. We thank you for the graduates we honor today, for they have decided to grow better. Help each one to make practical use of what they have learned during this Professional Military Education so that people in their duty sections and squadrons will benefit. Bless our time together and bless each one of us as we serve you and our country. We pray in the name of our Lord. Amen.

God our Father, we are in a festive and celebrating mood this evening, having completed a block of study in our profession. We thank you for the opportunity, for the new friends and relationships you've brought to us, and for your special help during this time. Give us the patience to share what we've learned, the optimism to keep trying even in the face of rejection or failure, the courage to display our skills prominently, and wisdom to base it all on a deep faith and commitment to you, our God. Amen.\*\*

## **Ranger Graduation**

Heavenly Father, we are most grateful for the occasion which brings us together this morning, the graduation of these men from this very demanding Ranger course. As these new Rangers receive the coveted Ranger tab, may each one continue "To Lead the Way", as professional soldiers, patriotic citizens and religiously committed individuals. Together with their families and loved ones we thank you Lord for the guidance, strength and protection you provided these Ranger students these last eight weeks. We lift our minds and hearts in gratitude and ask your continued blessings of peace, freedom and prosperity for our nation. Amen.

Almighty God, we call upon your holy name to express our gratitude to you for the safe and successful completion of this Ranger course. Guide and protect the members of this class and their families, O Lord, as they go out from this place with pride, knowing that they are different people from when they entered. Temper their pride with humility, O God, and help them know that you lead the way for us all. In your name we pray. Amen.

## **Recognition**

We honor the hard work, determination, persistence, patience, teamwork, selfless leadership and commitment to excellence that led to this moment. May all those honored today continue to enjoy the sweet taste of success. Then may we all, buoyed up by their spirit, return to our daily tasks with renewed determination and dedication. Bless our beloved land, strengthen our community. Endow our leaders with wisdom. Encourage us all by your presence. Amen.

Come now, vast God, to this high occasion, to this university (college, school) that celebrates its virtues, praises its scholars, anoints its students, and crowns its honored guests. May the university (college, school) be always spokesman for the Good, the True, and the Beautiful. Around the footnotes let some flesh and humanity cling, and in the laboratories raise the question of purpose. Set loose in the classroom the wild airs of open discussion, variety, dissent, ideas old and new. Keep learning and life comrades and close. Make compassion more important than sophistication and the delighted heart more significant than a pass-ing grade. Finally, as this day exclaims itself, defend us from the clichés and gather us in love. Amen.1

## **ROTC Graduation**

O God, the Father of all mankind, we come unto thee with praise, adoration, and thanksgiving. We bless in thy name this ceremony in which strong and able-bodied people take upon themselves a solemn, even sacred responsibility of keeping the watch fires of freedom in our nation and around the world. On this Memorial Day weekend, as we remember and pay tribute to those who have made the supreme sacrifice of life itself for the preservation of freedom in our beloved America, may these who are to be commissioned in the exercise today take upon themselves the same sense of devotion and loyalty that has been traditional with our American fighting men and women throughout the history of our nation. We thank thee O God, for those who have taught and led these men and women. May their efforts be rewarded by the sincere devotion of duty of everyone. As these men and women accept the obligation as officers in the United States Air Force, may they also accept the obligation and God-given right to follow the commands of this same God upon whose principles our nation is founded. Bless also the families of these people. May their hearts swell with pride as they send forth their loved ones to be airmen of our America, and airmen of God. Amen.

## Senior NCO Academy Graduation

Let us Pray: Father, as the many years pass a strange thing happens - cream rises to the top. Today, Lord we are truly blessed - the best is among us - the cream has indeed risen. For these and their families - for all their hard work - their dedication and for their willingness to make a difference we give you thanks. As these new senior NCO's leave this facility today no doubt the words of this prayer may be forgotten, but I pray you would constantly remind them as they face new challenges - that you are with them. You will never forsake them and the cream will continue to rise. Let it be so, Lord. Amen.

Our Father - we thank you for this occasion in which we have gathered together to pay honor to those who have set their hearts to do their best, to give their all, and to achieve excellence. In this same spirit we acknowledge that to give our all is but our reasonable service. It is our prayer that with each opportunity we would do our best to reach our fullest potential as your people. Bless these today who are willing to take the risks, to endure the heartaches, and to jump at the opportunities afforded them in making our base and community what it is today. We salute them and thank you for helping them be Senior NCO's of today. Amen.

## UPT Graduation

Our Lord and God, on this special day we are reminded that the completion of a goal brings the challenge of new opportunities. We acknowledge you as the source of grace when we are under pressure to give our best. We thank you for the strength given students, families and staff during recent days of training. Help each person to continue applying the principles of discipline, preparation and integrity as new assignments and responsibilities are assumed. Grant us a proper sense of balance in our faith. Keep us aware of our dependence upon you and motivate us to use wisely and effectively the talents with which we are entrusted. We look to the past with gratitude and to the future with confidence. Guide us in your ways and in our efforts to establish peace in the world. Amen.\*\*

O Lord, the grace and beauty of birds in flight captured the imagination of the human heart. With eyes fixed heavenward, pioneers of flight have walked on the wings of the wind and made the clouds their chariots. Today, we celebrate the accomplishments of the members of (class number). With their wings, a dream has been fulfilled. We pray for your protection upon these young aviators as they begin preparation for leadership roles in our nation and in the world. Let the memories of this day live long in the hearts of each new pilot, their families, and all who have been a part of their lives. Amen.\*\*

Dear Lord, this is truly a great day in the lives of the members of Class \_\_\_\_\_ and their families. We give you thanks for the faithfulness of parents who raised these young men and women to maturity. We give thanks for teachers who influenced their thinking and molded their character. We thank you for spouses who have provided support, love, and comfort, and who have sacrificed much. We thank you for friends and peers who have provided much-needed comradeship. We thank you for instructors, commanders, and staff at \_\_\_\_\_ who have worked patiently with these new pilots, that they might come to this day with a sense of pride and accomplishment. Finally, we give you thanks for the members of this class, a group that from this day forward will be together only in spirit. They have worked and played together, and have learned the true meaning of friendship. That spirit binding them together, a spirit of service, loyalty, and devotion, is your greatest gift, O God, and for this above all else, we give you thanks. Amen.\*\*

O God, our purpose here today is to celebrate the graduation of Class \_\_\_\_\_. This ceremony represents one small step in the achievement of long established life goals, as it signifies the completion of fifty-two weeks of hard, hard work. We know, Father, that with the reception of these wings comes new and greater authority and responsibility, and the need for leadership and discipline. Give us grace and wisdom to cultivate such qualities within. In a diverse world, grant to these newest of Air Force pilots, and to all of us here, a renewed commitment to the encouragement of freedom and the upholding of justice for all people. Guide each of these graduates, and keep them always close to you. Amen.\*\*

Father, every graduation is a crossroads where we pause to reflect on past achievements, and consider the challenges of the future. Thank you for creating us with the ability to discover, to enjoy, and to employ the wonder of flight. Each graduate has benefited from this gift, and now moves on as a professional aviator, in service of our country. As each goes to his or her new base, may they find in you the wisdom, alertness of mind, and strength of body and spirit to build upon the expertise and experience they have gained here. May their skill in flight and dedication to leadership help them to maintain the physical and spiritual strengths they will need to keep peace in a changing world. We ask this in your most holy name. Amen.\*\*

Father God, there is an African proverb which says "A person is a person because of other people." We gather here today, Lord, to honor Class \_\_\_\_\_ in their rite of passage from students to pilots. As these graduates embark upon new horizons and responsibilities, may they each remember that none of us goes it alone, that we are all interdependent upon one another. Grant that those who graduate this day may be seen as men and women who serve justice, and honor their special calling as pilots in the USAF. Above all, may each be known as an aviator in the service of others, and not of self. We ask this in the name of Almighty God, Lord of the Universe and giver of every good and perfect gift. Amen.\*\*

Father God, we bow before you with joy this day. The journey has indeed been long, and at times weary, exciting, frightening, and today, fulfilling. We came from all corners as struggling, hope-filled strangers. We developed deep friendships over these days now passed. Now we depart as officers, colleagues, and Air Force pilots. Remind us, O God, of the price demanded by coveted silver wings. And yes, make us thankful for parents whose faith in us never wavered; for husbands and wives whose encouragement often made the critical difference; for instructor pilots who willingly passed on their knowledge and experience; for commanders who gave us models to strive for. And Lord, as we look around and remember, may our thoughts be with those who began this silver-winged dream, but who are not here present to walk with us across this stage. Thank you for their friendship. Bless them wherever they might be. We thank you for a country built on faith, and an Air Force dedicated to preserving freedom. May our lives be so dedicated, from this time forth, to those high ideals. In clouds of white, or sky-rich blue, keep us forever O God, in those strong and holy hands that fashioned us. Amen.\*\*

**CLASSIC/HISTORICAL**



## **Thomas Aquinas**

Give me, O Lord, a steadfast heart, which no unworthy affection may drag downwards; give me an unconquered heart, which no tribulation can wear out; give me an upright heart, which no unworthy purpose may tempt aside. Bestow on me also, O Lord my God, understanding to know you, diligence to seek you, wisdom to find you, and a faithfulness that may finally embrace you, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.\*\*

## **Karl Barth**

O Lord our God! You know who we are; men with good consciences and with bad, persons who are content and those who are discontent, the certain and the uncertain, Christians by conviction and Christians by convention, those who believe, those who half-believe, those who disbelieve. And you know where we have come from: from the circle of relatives, acquaintances and friends or from the greatest loneliness, from a life of quiet prosperity or from manifold confusion and distress, from family relationships that are well ordered or from those disordered or under stress, from the inner circle of the Christian community or from its outer edge. But now we all stand before you, in all our differences, yet alike in that we are all in the wrong with you and with one another, that we must all one day die, that we would all be lost without your grace, but also in that your grace is promised and made available to us all in your dear Son Jesus Christ. We are here together in order to praise you through letting you speak to us. We beseech you to grant that this may take place in this hour, in the name of your Son our Lord. Amen.\*\*

## **Dietrich Bonhoeffer**

In me there is darkness, but with thee there is light. I am lonely, but thou leavest me not. I am feeble in heart, but thou leavest me not. I am restless, but with thee there is peace. In me there is bitterness, but with thee there is patience. Thy ways are past understanding, but Thou knowest the way for me.\*\*

## **John Calvin**

O Lord, heavenly Father, in whom is the fullness of light and wisdom, enlighten our minds by your Holy Spirit, and give us grace to receive your Word with reverence and humility, without which no one can understand your truth. For Christ's sake, Amen.\*\*

**Glenn Clark**

Our Heavenly Father, empty us of self and fill us with thee.

## **Chaplain William B. Downey At The Preflight Briefing Of The Enola Gay**

Almighty Father, who wilt hear the prayer of them that love thee, we pray thee to be with those who brave the heights of thy heaven and who carry the battle to our enemies. Guard and protect them, we pray thee, as they fly their appointed rounds. May they, as well as we, know thy strength and power, and armed with thy might may they bring this war to a rapid end. We pray thee that the end of the war may come soon, and that once more we may know peace on earth. May the men who fly this night be kept safe in thy care, and may they be returned safely to us. We shall go forward trusting in thee, knowing that we are in thy care now and forever. Amen.\*\*

## **St Ephraim**

O Lord and Master of my life, take from me the spirit of sloth, despair, lust of power and idle talk. But give rather the spirit of purity, humility, patience, and love to thy servant. Yea, O Lord and King, grant me to see my own transgressions, and not to judge my brother or sister, for thou are blessed for evermore. Amen.

## **St Francis Of Assisi**

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love. Where there is injury, pardon. 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; not so much to be understood as to understand; not so much to be loved as to love; for it is in giving that we receive, it is in pardoning that we are pardoned, it is in dying that we awake to eternal life. Amen.\*\*



## **Thomas Jefferson's Prayer For The Nation**

Almighty God, who hast given us this good land for our heritage; we humbly beseech thee that we may always prove ourselves a people mindful of thy favor and glad to do thy will. Bless our land with honorable industry, sound learning and pure manners. Save us from violence, discord and confusion; from pride and arrogance, and from every evil way. Defend our liberties and fashion into one united people the multitudes brought hither out of many kindreds and tongues. Endow with the spirit of wisdom those to whom in thy name we entrust the authority of government, that there may be justice and peace at home, and that through obedience to thy law, we may show forth thy praise among the nations of the earth. In the time of prosperity, fill our hearts with thankfulness, and in days of trouble, suffer not our trust in thee to fail; all of which we ask through our Lord. Amen.\*\*

## **Martin Luther King, Jr**

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

## **Abraham Lincoln's Prayer For The Nation**

Grant, O merciful God, that with malice toward none, with charity to all, with firmness in the right as thou givest us to see the right, we may strive to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan; to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations.\*\*

## **Ignatius Loyola**

Teach us, 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 labor and not to ask for any reward save that of knowing that we do your will.\*\*

## **Martin Luther**

Behold, Lord, an empty vessel that needs to be filled. My Lord, fill it. I am weak in the faith; strengthen me. I am cold in love; warm me and make me fervent, that my love may go out to my neighbor. I do not have a strong and firm faith; at times I doubt and am unable to trust you altogether. O Lord, help me. Strengthen my faith and trust in you. In you I have sealed the treasure of all I have. I am poor; you are rich and came to be merciful to the poor. I am a sinner; you are upright. With me, there is an abundance of sin; in you is the fullness of righteousness. Therefore, I will remain with you, of whom I can receive, but to whom I may not give.\*\*

## **Martin Luther's Sacristy Prayer**

Lord God, you have made me a pastor in your church. You see how unfit I am to undertake this great and difficult office, and if it were not for your help, I would have ruined it all long ago. Therefore I cry to you for aid. I offer my mouth and my heart to your service. I desire to teach the people. And for myself, I would learn evermore and diligently meditate on your Word. Use me as your instrument, but never forsake me, for if I am left alone, I shall easily bring it all to destruction. Amen.

## **Gen Douglas MacArthur - An Old Soldier's Prayer**

Build me a son, O Lord, who will be strong enough to know when he is weak, and brave enough to face himself when he is afraid; one who will be proud and unbending in honest defeat, and humble and gentle in victory. Build me a son whose wishes will not take the place of deeds; a son who will know thee... and to that to know himself is the foundation stone of knowledge. Build me a son whose heart will be clear, whose goal will be high, a son who will master himself before he seeks to master other men; one who will reach into the future, yet never forget the past. And after all these things are his, add, I pray enough of a sense of humor, so that he may always be serious, yet never take himself too seriously. Give him humility, that he may always remember the simplicity of true greatness, the open mind of true wisdom and the meekness of true strength. Then, I his father, will dare to whisper, "I have not lived in vain". Amen.

## **Dwight L. Moody**

Use me then, my Savior, for whatever purpose, and in whatever way, you may require. Here is my poor heart, an empty vessel; fill it with your grace. Here is my sinful and troubled soul; quicken it and refresh it with your love. Take my heart for your abode; my mouth to spread abroad the glory of your name; my love and all my powers, for the advancement of your believing people; and never suffer the steadfastness and confidence of my faith to abate; so that at all times I may be enabled from the heart to say, 'Jesus needs me, and I am his.'\*\*



**John Henry Newman**

O Lord, support us all the day long, until the shadows lengthen and the evening comes, and the busy world is hushed, and the fever of life is over, and our work is done. Then, Lord, in your mercy grant us a safe lodging, and a holy rest, and peace at the last; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

## **Reinhold Niebuhr**

God grant us the serenity to accept the things we cannot change, courage to change the things we can and the wisdom to know the difference; living one day at a time; enjoying one moment at a time; accepting hardship as a pathway to peace; taking this sinful world as it is, not as we would have it; so that we may be reasonably happy in this life and supremely happy with you forever in the next. Amen.\*\*

## Henri Nouwen

Why, O Lord, is it so hard for me to keep my heart directed toward you? Why do the many little things I want to do, and the many people I know, keep crowding into my mind, even during the hours that I am totally free to be with you and you alone? Why does my mind wander off in so many directions, and why does my heart desire the things that lead me astray? Are you not enough for me? Do I keep doubting your love and care, your mercy and grace? Do I keep wondering, in the center of my being, whether you will give me all I need if I just keep my eyes on you? Please accept my distractions, my fatigue, my irritations, and my faithless wanderings. You know me more deeply and fully than I know myself. You love me with a greater love than I can love myself. You even offer me more than I can desire. Look at me, see me in all my misery and inner confusion, and let me sense your presence in the midst of my turmoil. All I can do is show myself to you. Yet, I am afraid to do so. I am afraid that you will reject me. But I know-- with the knowledge of faith--that you desire to give me your love. The only thing you ask of me is not to hide from you, not to run away in despair, not to act as if you were a relentless despot. Take my tired body, my confused mind, and my restless soul into your arms and give me rest, simple quiet rest. Do I ask too much too soon? I should not worry about that. You will let me know. Come, Lord Jesus, come. Amen.\*\*

## **Chaplain James H. O'Neill's Prayer At The Battle Of The Bulge**

Almighty and most merciful Father, we humbly beseech thee, of thy great goodness to restrain these immoderate rains with which we have had to contend. Grant us fair weather for battle. Graciously hearken to us as soldiers who call upon thee that, armed with thy power, we may advance from victory to victory, and crush the oppression and wickedness of our enemies, and establish thy justice among men and nations. Amen.\*\*

### **Paul's Prayer For The Ephesians (Eph 3:1421)**

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with might through his Spirit in the inner man, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have power to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, for ever and ever. Amen.\*\*

## **Mother Teresa**

Dearest Lord, may I see you today and every day in the person of your sick, and whilst nursing them, minister unto you. Though you hide yourself behind the unattractive disguise of the irritable, the exacting, the unreasonable, may I still recognize you, and say: "Jesus, my patient, how sweet it is to serve you." Lord give me this seeing faith, then my work will never be monotonous. I will ever find joy in humoring the fancies and gratifying the wishes of all poor sufferers. O beloved sick, how doubly dear you are to me, when you personify Christ; and what a privilege is mine to be allowed to tend you. Sweetest Lord, make me appreciative of the dignity of my high vocation, and its many responsibilities. Never permit me to disgrace it by giving way to coldness, unkindness, or impatience. And O God, while you are Jesus my patient, deign also to be to me a patient Jesus, bearing with my faults, looking only to my intention, which is to love and serve you in the person of each one of your sick. Lord, increase my faith, bless my efforts and work, now and forever. Amen.\*\*

## **George Washington's Prayer For The Nation**

Almighty God, we make our earnest prayer that thou wilt keep the United States in thy holy protection, that thou wilt incline the hearts of the citizens to cultivate a spirit of subordination and obedience to government, and entertain a brotherly affection and love for one another and for their fellow citizens of the United States at large. And finally, that thou wilt most graciously be pleased to dispose us all to do justice, to love mercy, and to demean ourselves with that charity, humility, and pacific temper of mind which are the characteristics of the Divine Author of our blessed religion, and without a humble imitation of whose example in these things, we can never hope to be a happy nation. Grant our supplications, we beseech thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.\*\*

## **John Wesley**

Forgive them all, O Lord: our sins of omission and our sins of commission; the sins of our youth and the sins of our riper years; the sins of our souls and the sins of our bodies; our secret and our more open sins; our sins of ignorance and surprise, and our more deliberate and presumptuous sins; the sins we have done to please ourselves and the sins we have done to please others; the sins we know and remember, and the sins we have forgotten; the sins we have striven to hide from others and the sins by which we have made others offend; forgive them, O Lord, forgive them all for his sake, who died for our sins and rose for our justification, and now stands at thy right hand to make intercession for us, Jesus Christ our Lord.\*\*



## **Anonymous Confederate Soldier**

I asked God for strength, that I might achieve, I was made weak, that I might learn humbly to obey. I asked for health, that I might do greater things, I was given infirmity, that I might do better things. I asked for riches, that I might be happy, I was given poverty, that I might be wise. I asked for power, that I might have the praise of men, I was given weakness, that I might feel the need of God. I asked for all things, that I might enjoy life, I was given life, that I might enjoy all things. I got nothing that I asked for, -but everything I had hoped for. Almost despite myself, my unspoken prayers were answered. I am among all men, most richly blessed.

## Coventry Cathedral Prayer

The hatred which divides nation from nation, race from race, class from class,  
**FATHER, FORGIVE.**

The covetous desires of men and nations to possess what is not their own,  
**FATHER, FORGIVE.**

The greed which exploits the labors of men, and lays waste the earth,  
**FATHER, FORGIVE.**

Our envy of the welfare and happiness of others, **FATHER, FORGIVE.**

Our indifference to the plight of the homeless and the refugee, **FATHER, FORGIVE.**

The lust which uses for ignoble ends the bodies of men and women,  
**FATHER, FORGIVE.**

The pride which leads us to trust in ourselves and not in God, **FATHER, FORGIVE.**

## **Cry For Help (Psalm 42:1-6)**

Like a hind crying for water, my soul cries for you, O God; my soul thirsts for God, the living God; O when will I come to appear before God! My tears have been my food day and night; I am ever taunted with, "Where is your God?" When I think of this, I pour out my soul: how I walked with the crowd, moved with them, the festive throng, to the House of God with joyous shouts of praise. Why so downcast, my soul, why disquieted within me? Have hope in God; I will yet praise Him for His saving presence.\*\*

**"High Flight" By John Gillespie Magee, Jr**

Oh, I have slipped the surly bonds of earth and danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings; sunward I've climbed, and joined the tumbling mirth of sun-split clouds--and done a hundred things you have not dreamed of--wheeled and soared and swung high in the sunlight silence. Hovering there, I've chased the shouting wind along, and flung my eager craft through footless halls of air. Up, up the long, delirious, burning blue I've topped the windswept heights with easy grace where never lark, or eagle flew. And, while with silent, lifting mind I've trod the high untrespassed sanctity of space, put out my hand, and touched the face of God.\*\*

## **Irish Blessing**

May the road rise up to meet you.

May the wind blow always at your back.

May the sun shine warmly on you face.

May the rain fall softly on your fields.

Until we meet again, may God hold you in the Palm of his hands.

## **Praise For Creation (Psalm 8)**

O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name throughout the earth, you who have covered the heavens with your splendor! From the mouths of infants and sucklings you have founded strength on account of your foes, and put an end to enemy and avenger. When I behold your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and stars that you set in place, what is man that you have been mindful of him, mortal man that you have taken note of him, that you have made him little less than divine, and adorned him with glory and majesty; you have made him master over your handiwork, laying the world at his feet, sheep and oxen, all of them, and wild beasts, too; the birds of the heavens, the fish of the sea, whatever travels the paths of the seas. O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name throughout the earth!\*\*

## Prayer For A Godly Nation (Psalm 33:10-22)

The Lord frustrates the plans of nations, brings to naught the designs of peoples. What the Lord plans endures forever, what He designs, for ages on end. Happy [is] the nation whose God is the Lord, the people He has chosen to be His own. The Lord looks down from heaven; He sees all mankind. From His dwelling place He gazes on all the inhabitants of the earth--He who fashions the hearts of them all, who discerns all their doings. Kings are not delivered by a large force; warriors are not saved by great strength; horses are a false hope for deliverance; for all their great power they provide no escape. Truly the eye of the Lord is on those who fear Him, who wait for His faithful care to save them from death, to sustain them in famine. We set our hope on the Lord, He is our help and shield; in Him our hearts rejoice, for in His holy name we trust. May we enjoy, O Lord, your faithful care, as we have put our hope in you.\*\*

## **Prayer Found in The St Thomas of Canterbury Chapel of Dover Castle**

Pray for the Church wherever she is persecuted today, and her leaders that they may be faithful and true. O God for whose Church the glorious Bishop Thomas was slain by the swords of wicked men, grant that after his example the pastors of Christ's flock may constantly speak the truth, boldly rebuke vice, and patiently suffer for the sake of Him who died for us; Who now liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, One God, world without end... Amen.



## **Prayer Of Blessing (Numbers 6:24-26)**

The Lord bless you and protect you! The Lord deal kindly and graciously with you! The Lord bestow His favor upon you and grant you peace!\*\*

### **Prayer Of Confession (Psalm 51:1-13)**

Have mercy upon me, O God, as befits your faithfulness; in keeping with your abundant compassion, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly of my iniquity, and purify me of my sin; for I recognize my transgressions, and am ever conscious of my sin. Against you alone have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight; so you are just in your sentence, and right in your judgment. Indeed I was born with iniquity; with sin my mother conceived me. Indeed you desire truth about that which is hidden; teach me wisdom about secret things. Purge me with hyssop till I am pure; wash me till I am whiter than snow. Let me hear tidings of joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed exult. Hide your face from my sins; blot out all my iniquities. Fashion a pure heart for me, O God; create in me a steadfast spirit. Do not cast me out of your presence, or take your holy spirit away from me. Let me again rejoice in your help; let a vigorous spirit sustain me. I will teach transgressors your ways, that sinners may return to you.\*\*

## Seventeenth Century Nun

Lord, thou knowest better than I know myself that I am growing older and will someday be old. Keep me from the fatal habit of thinking I must say something on every subject and on every occasion. Release me from craving to straighten out everybody's affairs, Make me thoughtful, but not moody, helpful, but not bossy. With my vast store of wisdom, it seems a pity not to use it all. But thou knowest, Lord, that I want a few friends at the end. Keep my mind free from the recital of endless details. Give me wings to get to the point. Seal my lips on my aches and pains. They are increasing and love of rehearsing them is becoming sweeter as the time goes by. I dare not ask for grace enough to enjoy the tales of other's pains, but help me to endure them with patience. I dare not ask for improved memory, but for a growing humility and a lessening cocksureness. When my memory seems to clash with the memories of others, teach me the glorious lesson that occasionally I may be mistaken. Keep me reasonably sweet. I do not want to be a saint -- some of them are so hard to live with. But a sour old person is one of the crowning works of the devil. Give me the ability to see good things in unexpected places and talents in unexpected people. And give me, O Lord, the grace to tell them so. Amen.

## **The American Soldier (SSgt Roy W. Villers, USAFR)**

I am your sons and your daughters. I come from all religions and backgrounds. I come from the BiJou Lands and the great cities. I come from the sandy beaches and the mountain high. I am your private, I am your seaman, I am your airman, I am your generals, I am your admirals. I stand guard in far away lands, on the high seas and among the clouds in the sky. I remember places called the Persian Gulf, Panama, Libya, Grenada, Lebanon, Vietnam, Korea, Iwo Jima, Normandy, Ardennes Forrest, San Juan Hill, Gettysburg, Little Big Horn, and Valley Forge. I pray that I am strong enough to deter the enemy and not have to unleash the terrible weapons of war. But if into battle I'm called I pray for the strength and courage to meet and defeat the strongest of foes. As did God's great soldiers like David and Joshua. I ask also that amidst the roar of cannon and bomb that I might hear the cries of the small and helpless and protect them till the battle is over. I ask for wisdom to guide me and to use my strength to keep people free to worship you Lord and not for personnel glory. And finally Lord, I ask that should I fall as the battle rages, comfort my loved ones at home and let them know, that I am with you Lord, and I'm okay. Amen.

### **The Lord's Prayer (Matt. 6:9-13)**

Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed by thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.\*\*

## **General Dwight D. Eisenhower**

In peace and in battle, in garrison and in combat, they have played an incalculably important role in maintaining the religious faith and the military morale of our defenders.

**Alfred Lord Tennyson: Morte d'Arthur**

More things are wrought by prayer than this world  
dreams of.

Wherefore let thy voice rise like a fountain for me  
night and day.

For what are men better than sheep or goats  
That nourish a blind life within the brain,  
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer,  
Both for themselves and those who call them fiends?  
For so the whole round earth is every way  
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.

## **An Old English Prayer**

Give, us Lord, a bit of sun,  
A bit of work, and a bit of fun;  
Give us in all the struggle and sputter  
Our daily bread, a bit of butter.  
Give us health, our keep to make  
And a bit to spare, for others' sake.  
Give us, too, a bit of song,  
And a tale and a book to help us along.  
Give us, Lord, a chance to be  
Our goodly best, brave, wise and free,  
Our goodly best for ourselves and others  
'Til all men learn to live as brother (sisters).



# SICK AND LONELY

## After Surgery

O merciful Father in heaven, you have fulfilled your promises and were with \_\_\_\_\_ in time of surgery. You blessed the surgeon with skill and safely brought \_\_\_\_\_ through this operation. O gracious Father, bring healing to him/her according to your good and gracious will. Continue to bless him/her with your care. Grant \_\_\_\_\_ patience in his/her convalescence, and let his/her thoughts dwell on your goodness that he/she may grow closer to you each and every day. Amen.\*\*

## **AIDS Patient**

Often our Father, we grow weary with worry and disappointments. We become angry. Life seems so unfair, and we seem so powerless. Where is the meaning and purpose for which we seek? To whom do we turn? We need you, Father, to walk with us through this valley. Lift our spirits. Give us courage. Fill us with hope and grant us dignity. Bring healing and comfort. Accept our acts of faith and restore our strength. Amen.\*\*

Most merciful God, you hold each of us dear to your heart. Hold \_\_\_\_\_ in your loving arms and tenderly draw them into your life, together with all who are living with AIDS and HIV infection. Assure them that they are not alone, and give them courage and faith for all that is to come. Strengthen those who care for them and treat them, and guide those who do research. Forgive those who have judged harshly, and enlighten those who live in prejudice or fear. Nourish those who have lost sight of you, and heal the spirits of those who are broken. We pray this in the name of Jesus, who suffered and died, and then rose from the dead to lead us into new life, now and for ever. Amen.<sup>3</sup>

## Before Surgery

Gracious Father, give \_\_\_\_\_ courage and strength as he/she faces surgery. Be with \_\_\_\_\_ in your goodness and protection. Give the surgeon a steady hand and the necessary understanding to do his/her task with ease and perfection. Give \_\_\_\_\_'s family the assurance that you are ever present, the keeper of our bodies and the lover of our souls. Into your precious hands we entrust \_\_\_\_\_s' well-being. Amen.\*\*

In a short time I will be having surgery, God. The nurse will give me medication, and I will begin to feel drowsy. Eventually, I will be sound asleep. Since I have no control over the situation, I commit my life into your loving care and into the skilled hands of the physicians, nurses and technicians in the operating room. They will be concerned about my well-being and do their best to repair or remove those parts of my body that need attention. Be with my family and friends who must sit in the waiting room until the procedure is over. May the time not pass slowly for them, and may they be recipients of the good news that my surgery was a success. Amen.

## Caregivers

We ask your blessing this day to rest upon us in our ministry to the sick and lonely, to those in despair and grief. Give us clear thoughts and sound judgment to face the uncertainties of this world. Show us when to speak and what to say; when to act and how to live. Spare us from doing too much or too little. Always grant us wisdom to do what is right. Amen.\*\*

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the privilege of attending to and healing your most sublime creation, humankind. Daily we welcome the newborn into your bright world. At the same time, we set a bone, treat an illness, or gently provide that special atmosphere for the dignified passing of a patient into your hands. Every day we are reminded of the majesty and miracle of human life. It is humbling, O God. Make us worthy to be your hands and eyes, caring for and restoring all those who come here in search of well-being for body and soul. In your holy name we pray. Amen.\*\*

## **For Health**

Lord Jesus Christ, Physician of souls and bodies, who makes us humble and heals us; visit with mercy your servant \_\_\_\_\_. Stretch your loving hand of healing. Restrain the spirit of weakness, cast off every soreness, every fever and pain. Lord, have compassion on your creation, for you are blessed, now and for evermore.  
Amen.

## **For The Sick**

O God of heavenly powers, who, by the might of thy command, drivest away from our bodies all sickness and all infirmity; be present in thy goodness with thy servants who suffer from sickness, that weakness may be banished and strength recalled; and that health being thereupon restored they may bless thy holy Name through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **For The Sick Or Wounded Person To Pray For Himself/Herself**

O Father of mercies and God of all comfort, look upon me and stay with me in this time of weakness and pain. Strengthen my soul and my body, and drive from me all fear, depression, resentment, and every bitter mood or evil thought. Bless the doctors, nurses, attendants, and all others whose care and skill are maintaining my life and assisting my recovery; help me to cooperate with them patiently and cheerfully. Grant that in thy good time I may be healed, and that I may not forget thy goodness to me. Finally, O God, have mercy upon those whose suffering is so much worse than my own. I ask all this through Jesus Christ my Lord and Savior, to whom and with thee and thy Holy Spirit be all honor and glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

O God, our refuge and strength, and a very present help in times of trouble, how much I need your strength and presence in my life right now. I feel weak, depressed, anxious, even frightened. I need help to face these hours and days. So I claim your promises that I will not be given any more to bear than I can handle, that your strength will be sufficient, and that my despair will give way to your peace that passes all understanding. Amen.



## **HIV Positive Patient**

O God, \_\_\_\_\_ comes to you in fear, depression, anger, denial and hurt. There is so much unknown about this virus. The future seems uncertain. The way will not be easy. But there is hope. We pray that illness will not develop and ask for your intervention and care. Be merciful to \_\_\_\_\_, his/her family and friends. Help them to deal with the results of this test from a position of strength, with realistic optimism and to find acceptance, affirmation and support from one another and you. Wrap them all in your love. Grant them courage to face the challenges of today and the assurance of your provision to face the uncertainties of tomorrow. Amen.\*\*

## **Hospital Prayer**

Bless us Lord as we watch with those who wake or watch or weep, bless us as we tend your sick ones, rest your weary ones. Bless us as we pray for your dying ones, soothe your suffering ones, give sympathy to your afflicted ones, shield your joyous ones. Bless us that we may do these things for your name's sake. Amen.

## **Hospital Visitation**

Lord, thank you that you are here. In many ways, despite the care of doctors and nurses, this can be a cold and lonely place. The sights and the sounds are not like home, and sometimes the pain makes us afraid. But you are here. You bring your comfort. And you teach us that even in the difficult and trying times life has meaning. Thank you for the hope we share. Thank you for the trained minds and healing hands which offer us care. Grant us peace, strength and health as we rest in you. Amen.\*\*

## Loneliness

Heavenly Father, as we walk through this life, we often feel alone. It is not because you are not here. It is often because others are not here or because we are distant in our thoughts and attitudes. Help us to know your love and affirmation. Help us to bring dignity to our own existence. Assure us of our worth and significance in your sight. The way may be difficult, but it is made brighter as we draw near to you. Amen.\*\*

Blessed Lord Jesus, who knowest the depths of loneliness and the dark hours of the absence of human sympathy and friendliness: help me to pass the weary hours of the night and the heavy hours of the day, as thou didst, and know that thou art with me, as thy Father was with thee; lift up my heart to full communion with thee, strengthen me for my duty, keep me constant to my trust, and let me know that however dark or desolate the hour, I am not alone, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff be my comfort; in the name of Jesus our Lord. Amen.

## People In Trauma

Almighty, loving, and compassionate God, we are troubled and disheartened by the events of the past few days. In our confusion and our need we cry out to you and we are confident that you will feel the sadness in our voices. We ask you to send your healing spirit to comfort the innocent victims of this tragedy. We pray, Lord, that the sounds of this insane and desperate horror will also ring in the ears of decent people throughout this great land; and that the conscience of this nation which we love will once again be strengthened in its resolve and its determination to bestow safety, comfort, and lasting peace upon all its children. Oh, God, bring healing to our hearts and minds. Deliver us from the evils which threaten to destroy us. Comfort our sadness. Strengthen our resolve to bring security to our families and our nation. Give to all our sisters and brothers a renewed faith and trust in you.<sup>14</sup>

God our Father, you created us out of love. Each of us is an individual with unique gifts and we serve you in different ways. And we are all created in your likeness. Today we know how fragile we are, how helpless without you. You are our strength, our encouragement and our food. You care for us with the heart of a mother for a newborn child. You wrap us in your perpetual love and mercy. Each day you lead us to new discoveries, new awareness and you are always reaching out to us, calling us to come closer, to be created again and again. Teach us to depend on you as a child depends upon its parents. Teach us to trust that you will once again bring us to safety and rest.<sup>14</sup>

Lord we come again to you with our own needs. We are brought to you by the very Spirit you have placed within us. You watch over us and you read our hearts. You sense our fears and you know the questions we want to ask. There is so much we do not understand. You have heard it all before, Lord. But perhaps not from us, not at this time. We are filled with doubt and with need. Remember us now and the people who have come with us. Bind our concerns together and make us one. Then, by your power, we will be what you make of us: A living body; a seed that dies in fertile ground; children making our way home.<sup>14</sup>

God our Father you created us and called us to experience the wonder of your love. You gave us life and you called each of us by name. Help us to make holy this holy place you gave us. You have called us to be a blessing to those who are in pain. To bring healing to a bleeding land. To make whole this people torn apart. Teach us to hope against all hopelessness. Help us to lift each other up so that in faith and in gentleness and in peace we may together renew the face of our earth.<sup>14</sup>

O God of life who has created us with hearts capable of love, may we cherish each other as gifts from God. May we encourage each other, believe in each other. May we wipe the tears from each other's eyes. May our life together be woven with gratefulness and praise. May patience and understanding bind us together as we search for order during this time of chaos. God, Most Holy, fill our spirits with faithfulness and commitment. Fill our hearts with mercy and justice and humility. Fill our souls with wonder. O Giver of gifts, who has given us joys new each day, fill our morning with the sunrise and our darkness with a million stars.<sup>14</sup>

O God of promise, enable us to live out our possibilities in spite of this tragedy. May we believe in miracles. May we dare to dream dreams. May we find rainbows in our paths. May we survive the sting of this travesty. O God of love, hold us all our days, and especially today. In the name that is above all names, we ask this blessing.<sup>14</sup>

Eternal Father, ever present source of comfort and consolation, we pray for the safety and good health of all military personnel who today encountered life threatening experiences. Every now and then, Lord, we are reminded of the risks involved in what we do. Lord, we know that there are no guarantees that bad things won't happen, for no one is spared events that act upon us - often times with no responsibility or guilt on our part. Prepare us, Lord, to accept the unexpected and the imperfection of the human world - including events beyond our control. Be with our comrade this night. Stand with fellow members of his/her unit. Be with his/her family as well as with our families and loved ones from whom we are separated. Assure them all, Lord, of our love and

concern and of your Divine Holy presence. With an attitude of gratitude for your mercy and grace. Amen.

## Person Under Extended Hospital Care

Lord, we lift up \_\_\_\_\_, asking for your continued watchcare over him/her. Today, we especially pray for patience. The routine of hospital life at times can be so frustrating. The noise in the hallways, the interruptions of sleep for tests and exams, the unwanted smells of food, the lack of independence and familiar surroundings all combine to make home seem wonderfully appealing and this room so foreboding. But most of all Lord, patience is needed because of the difficulty in waiting for the healing process to reach its end. So this day be with \_\_\_\_\_ and help him/her and all those who love him/her in coping with an extended stay in this place. Soon the experience will be over. \_\_\_\_\_ will go home to family and friends. In the meantime, grant him/her rest and the assurance of your peace. Amen.\*\*

## **Persons with Life-Threatening Illness**

Lord Jesus Christ, we come to you sharing the suffering that you endured. Grant us patience during this time, that as we and \_\_\_\_ live with pain, disappointment, and frustration, we may realize that suffering is a part of life, a part of life that you know intimately. Touch \_\_\_\_ in his/her time of trial, hold him/her tenderly in your loving arms, and let him/her know you care. Renew us in our spirits, even when our bodies are not being renewed, that we might be ever prepared to dwell in your eternal home, through our faith in you, Lord Jesus, who died and are alive for evermore. Amen.<sup>3</sup>

O God of mercy, help us to pray from our hearts this day. We do not ask so much for the reduction of our labors, as we ask for strength to do the work before us. We do not ask so much for deliverance from life's misfortunes, as we ask for an enduring faith to see us through difficult passages. We do not ask so much for relief from our own loneliness and boredom, as we ask for an ability to console the downhearted and to provide friendship to our co-workers. We do not ask for help from you because we deserve your blessings, but because we know you are a God of love too good to keep the good things we need all to yourself. Help us believe in our hearts these words of our lips. Amen.



### **Sick or Wounded or in Affliction**

Almighty and most merciful God, who has appointed us to endure sufferings and death with our Lord Jesus Christ, before we enter with him into eternal glory; grant me grace at all times to subject myself to thy holy will, and to continue steadfast in the true faith unto the end of my life, and at all times to find peace and joy in the blessed hope of the resurrection of the dead, and of the glory of the world to come; through the same Jesus Christ, thy Son, our Lord. Amen.

O Lord, I pray thee to have mercy upon all who are this day wounded and suffering. Though kindred friends be far away, let thy grace be their comfort. Raise them to health again, if it be thy good pleasure; but chiefly give them patience and faith in thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **With Those Dying**

Gracious God, you are nearer than hands or feet, closer than breathing. Sustain with your presence our brother/sister \_\_\_\_\_. Help him/her now to trust in your goodness and claim your promise of life everlasting. Cleanse him/her of all sin and remove all burdens. Grant him/her the sure joy of your salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.<sup>3</sup>

Depart in peace, brother/sister \_\_\_\_\_; in the name of God the Father who created you; in the name of Christ who redeemed you; in the name of the Holy Spirit who sanctifies you. May you rest in peace, and dwell for ever with the Lord.<sup>3</sup>

# Emergency Religious Ministration

## Eastern Orthodox

**Emergency Baptism:** If an Eastern Orthodox person is dying and wishes to receive baptism when no chaplain is available, any Eastern Orthodox Christian may administer baptism. Pour water three times on the forehead saying his/her first name and these words:

The servant of God is baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Record the name and report the facts to a chaplain as soon as possible.

If a person who is Eastern Orthodox is dying and desires religious ministrations when no chaplain is available, anyone may repeat with him/her the following prayers:

**Prayer in Time of Need:** Almighty God, Father of mercies and God of all comfort, come to my help and deliver me from the difficulty before me. I believe, Lord, that all trials of life are under your care and that all things work for the good of those who love you. Take away from me fear, anxiety and distress. Help me to face and endure my difficulty with faith, courage and wisdom. Grant that this trial may bring me closer to you, for you are my rock and refuge, my comfort and hope, my delight and joy. I trust in your love and compassion. Blessed is your name, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.

**Prayer for Forgiveness:** Lord our God, you who are good and merciful, I acknowledge all my sins which I have committed in thought, word and deed, in body and soul alike. I am truly sorry I have offended you, and I sincerely repent; with tears I humbly pray, Lord; mercifully forgive and absolve me from all my past transgressions. I firmly resolve, with the help of your grace, to amend my way of life and to sin no more; that I may walk in the way of the righteous, and offer praise and glory to the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

## Jewish

If a person who is Jewish is dying and desires religious ministrations when no chaplain is available, anyone may repeat with him/her the following:

**The Shema:** Hear O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is One.

**The 23rd Psalm:** The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul; he guideth me in straight paths for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou hast anointed my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

**The Confession for the Critically Ill:** Lord my God and God of my ancestors: I acknowledge that in your hand alone is my recovery or my death. May it be your will that I be completely healed. Yet if it be your will that I die, I shall accept my death lovingly at your hands. May my death be my atonement for all the sins, transgressions, and wrongs I have done before you. May I receive a portion of that goodness which is stored up for the righteous. Make me to know the path of life, the fullness of blissful joy in your presence at your right hand forevermore. O you who are the Father of the fatherless and guardian of the widow, protect my beloved family, whose souls are linked to mine. Into your hand I commend my spirit; you have redeemed me O God of truth. Amen and Amen.

**When the end is approaching:** The Lord is King; the Lord was King; the Lord shall reign forever and ever. Blessed be his name, whose glorious kingdom is for ever and ever. The Lord, he is God! Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one!

## **Muslim**

If there is a Muslim person who is dying and desires religious ministrations and no chaplain is available, anyone may repeat with him/her the following prayers:

**The Shahada:** There is no God but Allah and Mohammed is the messenger of Allah. Amen.

**Prayers for the Dying:** Allah is great! (repeat four times)

O God, I ask of thee a perfect faith, a sincere assurance, a reverent heart, a remembering tongue, a good conduct of commendation, and a true repentance, repentance before death, rest at death, and forgiveness and mercy after death, clemency at the reckoning, victory in paradise and escape from the fire, by thy mercy, O mighty One, O Forgiver, Lord increase me in knowledge and join me unto good.

O Lord, may the end of my life be the best of it; may my closing acts be my best acts, and may the best of my days be the day when I shall meet thee. Amen.

## Protestant

**Emergency Baptism:** If a person who is Protestant and is dying wishes to be baptized when no chaplain is available, any Christian may administer baptism. Pour water on the forehead (or immerse the person if desired, practical and medically safe), saying his/her first name and these words:

I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Record the name and report the facts to a chaplain as soon as possible.

If a Protestant is dying and desires religious ministrations when no chaplain is available, anyone may repeat with him/her the following:

**The Lord's Prayer:** Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

**The Apostles' Creed:** I believe in God the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose from the dead. He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

**The 23rd Psalm:** The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

**Prayer for the Sick and Wounded:** Lord, in your mercy behold, visit, and relieve your servant. Give him/her comfort in the knowledge of your love and sure confidence in your care. Defend him/her from danger, and keep him/her in spiritual peace and safety; through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

## Roman Catholic

**Emergency Baptism:** If a dying person wishes to be baptized into the Roman Catholic faith and no chaplain is available, any Christian may administer baptism. Pour water three times on the forehead saying his/her name and these words:

I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Record the name and report the facts to a chaplain as soon as possible.

If a person who is Roman Catholic is dying and desires religious ministrations and no chaplain is available, anyone may repeat with him/her the following:

**The Sign of the Cross:** In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**The Act of Contrition:** O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended thee, and I detest all my sins, because of thy just punishments, but most of all because they offend thee, my God, who art all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve with the help of thy grace to sin no more, and to avoid the near occasion of sin. Amen.

**The "Our Father":** Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

**The Hail Mary:** Hail Mary, full of grace! The Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb Jesus. Holy Mary, mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.



## CHAPEL RELATED

## **Catholic Youth Organization Awards Day**

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the CYO and the opportunity to be part of it. It is an instrument of your Son, Jesus, who prayed that his joy might be made full in us. We thank you, God, for showing us 'to love the good things of life as gifts from you; to create an atmosphere of good taste and wholesome recreation in which the spiritual can flourish; to integrate all of life into the resurrection of Christ so that things that once could take us from you can become instruments of salvation.' We ask you, God, to keep the flame of life and love burning in our hearts--by the grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, Amen.\*\*

## Chapel NCOIC Conference

God and Father of all, we gather in your presence today to begin our conference, aiming to sharpen our skills and deepen our commitment to service and support. In our specialized ministry, we ask special blessings. When there is tension, give us inner peace. When there is a suddenly increased workload, help us to prioritize with wisdom. When there are harsh words, we ask for patience and a peacemaker's stance. When there is panic, send us your same spirit that glided over the waters and brought order and calm. Father, we ask that as we seek to support your chaplains and people, let us always look to you for our own support, both in our work and all through our lives. Amen.\*\*

## Chaplain Anniversary

Almighty God we give you thanks for the capacity we have for remembering and for anticipating. We call to mind with both thanks and pride, the service and sacrifice of other chaplains who have gone before us, who served the nation well, and whose example and advice serve us well today. Help us today, years after our beginning, to continue to bridge the gap between the “ought” and the “is”. Help us to live in the knowledge that you have matched us to this hour in history; and that the place and time of our service to you and to our country is not random, but by your wisdom and direction. As we anticipate the future, we lay claim on your promise of inspiration, assurance, and direction. Bless the men and women of the Air Force who serve as chaplains and Chaplain Service Support Personnel and the families who sustain and support them. Bless now this food to us and us to your service. Amen.

Thank you, O Lord, for the privilege of a call to minister to airmen in your Name. Today, as we recognize the beginning of this great ministry and its continuation, we ask that you continue to provide all chaplains with a deepened sense of commitment, courage and sacrifice to serve airmen while both deployed and at home. May we faithfully proclaim you as Lord and God in all that we do and say. As we do so, grant us always your peace and assistance. We ask this in your Name. Amen.

Loving Father, God of all times and ages, Lord of all that has been, all that is, and all that is yet to be. As we gather to celebrate the anniversary of the AF Chaplaincy, we praise and thank you for all your blessings of the past; for your love and your grace and your presence in the lives and careers of those chaplains who have gone before us; for the moments and years of generous service, of shining courage, and of proud history that bring us to this day. We bless you for that future which you hold out before us; for its promises, for its challenges, and for its opportunities of service of your people and of our country. And we thank you for the present moment; for this anniversary, and for this celebration. Bless this food which we are sharing. Bless \_\_\_\_\_ and the words he/she will direct to us. And bless each one of us, in whatever way that will enable us to serve you better and bring glory to your holy Name. Amen.

## Chaplain's Last Sunday

Sovereign God, changeless in our ever-changing world, the Constant to whom we always can turn and upon whom we always can rely; we pause in our business to reestablish conscious contact with you, the Ground of our being. We praise and thank you for all of your gifts, many of which we are aware, many of which we take for granted. One of your gifts to us of which we are poignantly mindful is the gift of our friend and loved one, \_\_\_\_\_, who lovingly, ably, and faithfully has ministered to and with us in recent years. For her/his friendship; for her/his words of challenge and inspiration from the pulpit; for her/his acts of pastoral care; for the teaching, leadership, and example she/he has provided for our youth; we thank you. Grant, gracious God, that as \_\_\_\_\_ begins another ministry, she/he will do so assured of your continued presence and assured that she/he carries with her/him our love and best wishes. Thank you, God, for the fact that our lives have intersected. For we are the better and richer because our paths have crossed! Amen.13 (J. B.)

## Chaplains' Training Conference

Heavenly Father, as we gather together for the purpose of learning, help us to see that all of our learning is to give glory to your Name. Help us to use the knowledge gained at this conference to more ably and confidently minister to airmen and their families wherever we may be with them. You have equipped us all in various ways through particular gifts and abilities. May our continued learning, that will happen at training conferences such as this one, also be used to enhance our gifts and abilities to achieve your purposes. This we pray in your Name. Amen.

Great God, you have been in the process of raising up leaders from among your people since the beginning of time. Indeed, it was you in the pillars of fire and cloud who led the nation of Israel across the wilderness into the promised land. Be with these who have been called to positions of leadership. Help them never to forget that the most important asset for any leader is dedicated followers. Help us to be dedicated followers of yours. Challenge us toward that end. In your Name. Amen.

O God, we need these times of study and discipline as you well know. As we gather together today, bless and guide the efforts and directions of those who lead us. Open our minds to the truth that we may use it for the ministry you have given to each of us. As we explore together the program before us, may our needs as chaplains be met in its directions. We pray your blessings to be with each of us as we seek to continue your work. In the living Name of God we pray. Amen.

O Lord our God, in your wisdom and in your grace you have given to us a special week in which to worship, to enjoy our beautiful world, to renew ourselves and to share with one another. You have brought us through many experiences into your presence this morning. And here in these moments, at the outset of this new day, we pause--to think about you, our families, our work with one another--to think about service to our nation, the responsibilities of command, our opportunities and concerns--to think about the troubled places around the globe and dedicated people who serve our country there--to think about and give thanks for those who have put this week together, for the leadership in this room and for our privileged ministries throughout the Air Force family. Lord, with these thoughts and feelings in mind, and conscious of your blessings and mercies to us, we acknowledge our gratitude for being here. We look forward to the week's activities and are proud to be part of the Chaplain Corps. Now we pray that you would bless this conference with purpose and meaning, our free time with fun and good fellowship, and our loved ones with your watchful care. May your love, grace and peace continue to rest upon each of us this day and ever more. Amen.\*\*

Almighty and Eternal Father, you sent the Holy Spirit upon the apostles, who had gathered in the upper room, and enlightened their minds and strengthened their wills and inflamed their hearts so that they went forth with courage and confidence to proclaim your word and will. May we ask for the same outpouring of your grace in our hearts and minds this day. Direct and guide our thoughts and minds during the days of this seminar, so that influenced and guided by your grace we may be instruments to strengthen and establish the Kingdom of God on earth. May it be a Kingdom of justice and truth, a kingdom of love and peace. Amen.

Eternal God, Lord of heaven and earth, we offer this gathering to you, and ask you to bless it with your wisdom and grace. We thank you for this opportunity to be together to grow in our love and service of you and of each other. We ask you to enlighten our minds to know what is true and just, and strengthen our wills to carry out faithfully what we come to see as our duty. May all our thoughts, words, and actions be directed to making your

Name and your love better known among men for their sanctification, and their happiness here and in eternity.

Amen.

Almighty God, we are grateful for the opportunity to assemble here today and affirm the beliefs we hold in common. Even though we come from different backgrounds, we all call you Lord of Life and Eternal Creator of the Universe. Grant unto us a deeper understanding of your love and purpose in the world, and help us to affirm one another in our common quest for truth. May we be found faithful in our service to you and receive strength to minister in your Name. Amen.\*\*

## **Church Anniversary**

In this time of remembrance we come, O God, as the generations before us, to seek thy blessing and to speak thy praise. We give thanks for those who built this church by faith, for those who brought to it their hearts' anguish and their souls' rejoicing, for those who sang in it to thy glory and those who prayed in it for the sake of others, and for all that teeming life within it whereby we have learned and dreamed and hoped together. Now as we share this bread that hallows and this cup that saves, be in us a hope and a jubilation for all the days and years that lie ahead. Praise be to thy Name in this sanctuary forever and ever! Amen.1



## **Ecumenical Gathering**

O Lord, thank you for the opportunity that brings us together to explore better ways to serve those who believe in your holy Name. So we beg you: To give us the wisdom to make the right decisions in the right time. To give us the courage to carry out our duties wherever we are. To give us patience to ease our frustration and difficulties. To give us insight to avoid misjudging our fellow men. To give us power and the humility to respect one another as human beings. To give us the knowledge to understand each other at all times. To give us the proper means and methods to serve those who are in need of our help with joy and gladness. Amen.

## Hymnal Dedication

Most beautiful Savior, King of creation, we thank you for the melodies of your love, which gave us Jesus, Emmanuel. He lives and reigns over us this day - hallelujah! We thank you for the gift of music, that we can not only speak our praises, but sing "Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound," and "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name!" So we dedicate these hymnals to you, O Lord. May we sing not only about you, our God, but to you. May our songs be a response to the Love that first loved us in Jesus Christ. We thank you for the lives of these hymn writers - powerful testimonies of a living faith. We thank you for the hymns that have inspired us over the years, old and new. Help us to treasure the old while embracing the new, that we might always grow. With excitement and joy, we dedicate these hymnals today, praising you in the strong Name of Jesus. Amen.\*\*

## Installation of Chapel Officers

Here we are, God of us all, gathered at this moment to recognize these servants as our leaders, and your leaders. They present their talents to your work in this chapel not because they are perfect, but because they are aware of their imperfection, and yet, they give themselves, blemishes and all, to you and your kingdom. And for us that is quite enough. We thank you for their commitment. Grant them insight to see beyond our shortsightedness, and the courage to point out the truth in action to us. Grant them the wisdom to lead us to creative witnessing for you, and the love to reach out to us when we mess things up. Grant us the ability to accept, to follow, and to love them as we all experience the meaning of membership in your body, the church, in today's world. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, we pray. Amen.

Lord, who desires of thy church that we become a servant people and gladly give ourselves to others: consecrate to thy bold intention these officers whom we have called in thy Name, that faithfully and with a quick responsibility they will perform the duties of their office for the sake of all of us and to thy glory. May thy Spirit guide them with true counsel, keep them tolerant of human frailty, and support them when the rough places are not plain. Cause them to expect that new light shall yet break forth from thy holy Word. Bless them to us and us to them and all of us to thee in a covenant of mutual and joyous ministry to which we are led by Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.<sup>1</sup>

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open and all desires are known, cleanse our hearts by the inspiration of your holy spirit that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy Name. You have called all of us to ministry whether it be ordained or lay. Both have high and holy opportunities and responsibilities. Create within the new leaders of this chapel a renewed sense of vision and dedication that they may lead us in the pathway of righteousness and service. Amen.

Our gracious Father, you have again fulfilled your promises. You have multiplied the gifts you give to us, your Church, providing us with these servants to lead and guide our chapel's program in this new year. Help us to support them and love them, to work beside them and pray for them. Keep us close to each other by pointing our eyes to you our God whose gift of life makes our discipleship possible. All of us are helpless; we fall far short of your glory. None of us have enough love or patience, wisdom or understanding to do these ministries. Bless and fill us in our weakness; forgive and renew us when we stumble; guard and keep us along life's path. In his powerful Name we offer to you our prayer, confident that you will hear us. Amen.

*(Parish Council)* Heavenly Father; we pause in the installation of these chapel officers to invoke your blessing and to ask for your wisdom. We are grateful for the privilege to serve and we pray that in serving we will fulfill thy righteousness. Bless the work of this honored council and help each member to do their best to actualize your kingdom within this chapel. Help us to resist the temptations of pride and selfishness as we seek the good of those we serve. Give us wisdom beyond our limited knowledge, insight beyond our restricted vision, compassion beyond our finite experience; that the work you have given each of us may be a reflection of your

will which we love and for the whole community of faith which we humbly serve. For it is in your Name that we pray. Amen.

**(PWOC)** O God, our Heavenly Father, we thank you for these women who will serve as officers in the PWOC this year. Give them a keen sense of your call to ministry and of their dependence upon you for leadership and wisdom. We pray that they will not take their offices casually but may come before you, through scripture reading and prayer, to learn how to do your work. All of our new officers lead busy lives, days filled with the commerce of life. In these moments of pressure, help them to experience an extra measure of your comfort and grace. May your blessing be theirs as they faithfully serve. In the Name of Christ. Amen.

**(PWOC)** Our Father, we give you our thanks because we set this day aside to celebrate a new beginning for your daughters. Through their love of service to others they have shared their lives; in their sharing of life with others, you have touched them with your spirit and nourished their growth. Father, pour out your Spirit upon your daughters and make them strong in your love: alive with concern, warm with gentle strength, and openhearted in sharing. Their years may be few or many, as you know best, but let them be full years: years of firm faith, years of unfailing hope in you, years of responsible and unshakable love. Amen.

**(PWOC)** Father, these women come to serve you and their base community. You have set them apart into ministry as the PWOC officers for this coming year. Help each of them to use their unique gifts and abilities to glorify you. May they keep seeking your strength and wisdom through the Holy Spirit. As they light their candles of acceptance, may each one of them dedicate herself anew to you, and to her sisters in the PWOC. Amen.\*\*

**(PMOC)** Lord, here are men set aside to serve you and the base community. Guide them in their leadership roles. Teach them how to guide other men spiritually, and encourage them to new heights of service. May their light so shine before men that the world will know and glorify you, Father. Thank you for the dedication of these men. Strengthen them and give them an extra measure of your grace. We pray in your Name. Amen.\*\*

## Meetings

Ever-beckoning God, who has called us into the church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, we thank you for this local expression of the universal church. May we feel your presence within and among us as we meet on this occasion and deal with the agenda before us. May our deliberations and all of our decisions be acceptable to you, whom we seek to serve. Amen.13 (J. B.)

As we gather, gracious God, we pause to reflect on the importance of this church in our lives. For the opportunities of worship, education, service, and community it provides; for the support it offers in times of crisis and need; for the ties that bind our hearts in Christian love; we praise and thank you. May our lives be strengthened and enriched because we have been together in this time and place. We pray in the spirit of the one who is the Great Head of the church, Jesus, the Christ. Amen.13 (J. B.)

God of grace and God of glory, pour your power upon us who have accepted responsibilities in this church and who have gathered to discharge them. Grant us wisdom, grant us courage for the business of this hour and for the living of all of our days. May we ever hold before us the goals of your realm so that we will not fail others or you by what we do or fail to do. For we desire to serve you, whom we adore. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Ever-living God, who has given us the church for our instruction and inspiration, be with us as we seek to be faithful members of the body of Christ. Thank you, ever-giving God, for the gifts you have given us. May we use them in your service and to the end that your realm will come and your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.13 (J. B.)

God of Abraham and Sarah, God of Moses and Miriam, God of the prophets, and God of Jesus; we acknowledge that you are our God, too, and that we are your people. Individually, and corporately as this church, may we seek to fulfill what you require of us: to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with you. Amen.13 (J. B.)

O God, who has called the worlds into being and created us in your image as persons who can love, feel, reason, and will: may we use each of these attributes as we share in the ministry of our church. May our labors build up this body which seeks to tell the story and carry on the ministry of Jesus, who was called “The One for Others” and in whose spirit and for whose sake we pray. Amen.13 (J. B.)

God of all goodness, faithful and changeless amid all of life’s changes, our help and comfort when all else fails, and who promises to be present when even two or three have gathered in your Name; bestow upon us your Spirit so that the words of our mouths, the mediations of our hearts, and the actions of our lives will be acceptable to you, our Rock and Redeemer. Amen.13 (J. B.)

O Lord our God, guide us to be wise and open-minded in discussing matters of importance to the well-being of your Church. Direct us in our service to others. Be with us when we are in need of you, for you are our God, and to you we ascribe glory now and forever. Amen.

We thank you, O Lord our God, for your heavenly and earthly gifts which we have received from your bounty. Thank you for your love and care with which you have provided us. Thank you for giving us your blessings in this assembly in order to discuss matters of importance to you and to your Holy Church. Thank you for providing us with a responsible leadership to minister to the well-being of the community. Amen.

Almighty God, who assembles us here to use ourselves wisely and freely to extend thy purposes for good on this base and wherever human hearts have need of thee: we beseech thee to brood in our deliberations, to keep spacious and kind our trust of one another, and to cause us to see visions and dream dreams that thy holy will be accomplished among us. Give us judgments weighted by the claims of thy truth upon us and actions that bespeak the imaginations of heaven itself. Urge us always to desire with a full desire to stand against the dark

powers in our time, and ready us to declare by our works thy compassionate promises to all generations; through the Lord Jesus, our hope, our pardon, and our peace. Amen.1

## New Chaplain

Infinite God, whom we have come to know most fully through Jesus, we gather as the church which is called to be the body of Christ at work in the world today, proclaiming the teachings and exemplifying the love of Jesus. For all who have been the church in ages past and who have told the old, old story of Jesus and his love, for all who are the church now and who strive to retell and relive that story, we offer our praise and gratitude. This morning we thank you for your church that meets in this place to find inspiration, challenge, knowledge, wisdom, forgiveness, community, and channels for service. For its heritage of \_\_\_ years and for those today who labor to keep alive and pass on this heritage, we bless your Name. We especially feel the presence of your Spirit in our worship as we welcome \_\_\_\_\_ into our church family. May (he/she/they) feel the warmth of your acceptance and love through us as (he/she/they) begin a new chapter in (his/her/their) life (lives). And may our lives be fed and enriched by \_\_\_\_\_'s ministry to us. Keep us ever aware of our calling to be a church, not a club; a sanctuary, but also a springboard for service; a community in which to share both joys and concerns; a family with which to have fun but also in which to find comfort and support. Let us never forget that the church is not a building, the church is not a program, but the church is a people - and we are the church! We pray in the spirit of the one who is the cornerstone of the church, Jesus, the Christ. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Almighty and loving God, grant your wisdom, guidance, and presence on Chaplain \_\_\_\_\_ as he/she accepts new responsibilities, challenges, and opportunities for ministry. Grant those to whom he/she ministers the willingness to follow and the grace to accept his/her leadership. Bestow upon him/her the sensitivity of love, the thirst of seeking your will, and the desire to be your servant in all that he/she seeks to accomplish. May his/her life be characterized by servanthood so that those to whom he/she ministers may see you through his/her words and deeds. We thank you that you called him/her to be your servant; in turn may we be ones who share in the celebration of his/her gift to us and our gift to him/her as we serve you and your kingdom in this place. Amen.

Almighty God in whom we live and move and have our being, we are grateful that you have singled us out and interested us with a high calling. Today we especially call upon your divine wisdom to be with \_\_\_\_\_ as he/she assumes this awesome responsibility of ministry among us. May the sturdy guidance of your Holy Spirit be always present to guide \_\_\_\_\_ as he/she seeks to be a faithful and responsible dispenser of your word. Amen.

Heavenly Father, according to your purpose you have often met the needs of your people through human agency. We are pleased that you love us and trust us enough to call us into your service. We gather here at this time to install this chaplain as pastor to this congregation. We pray that the interaction of this chaplain and congregation will be happy and productive. May they give evidence of your love and leadership as they minister to their community your grace. Give to the chaplain every quality needed to lead the congregation effectively in the doing of your will daily. Amen.

Almighty God who has given to the Church the office of the holy ministry, we thank you that you have given to this chapel, congregation and community, a new chaplain. Enrich him/her and all those serving with him/her with all needful grace, that faithfully fulfilling his/her ministry, his/her labors may be blessed to the saving of souls, the edifying of your people, and the glory of your holy Name. O Lord God, the Holy Spirit, Sanctifier of

the faithful; visit, we pray, the members of this parish and community with your love and favor; open their hearts to receive your Word; enlighten their minds continually with the light of the everlasting Gospel; increase in them true Godliness; and, of your great mercy, unite them in the bonds of love and peace, that the good work that you have begun may be performed in and through him/her and reach out into the far corners of this vast community here in \_\_\_\_\_. Here our prayer, O Lord. Amen.

O Lord, my God, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; yet you have called your servant to serve in your house. To you and your service I devote myself: body, soul, and spirit. Fill my memory with the record of your mighty works; enlighten my understanding, and may all the desires of my heart and will center in what you would have me do. Be always with me in carrying out the duties of my ministry. In prayer, quicken my devotion; in praises, heighten my love and gratitude; in preaching give me readiness of thought and expression; in the counsels of the command grant me wisdom and understanding. All these things I ask in your Holy Name. Amen.

O God, from whose first fire came the light which dispelled primeval darkness and gave creation its birth; the pillar of whose fire led your captive people, Israel, from slavery into freedom; whose tongues of fire burned away a confusion of tongues and left one new people, the church, aglow with your Spirit: be present again in power to this congregation and their pastor. Grant them energy fit for the works of new creation in their life as a church and in their witness to this community. Endow them with such a holy vision that they will press always toward the promised land of freedom for all oppressed peoples. Enliven them with such faith in your immediate presence that they will speak the prayers and do the deeds that befit a newborn church. We give thanks that pastor and people have cove-nanted together this day and have agreed to make their spiritual way supporting each other and minister-ing to each other. Grant to your servant \_\_\_\_\_ such understanding and faithfulness that he/she may rightly divide the Word of truth and administer the sacraments of your grace in a fashion that will nourish the people with the very bread of life, even Jesus Christ our Lord. And grant to this congregation such commitment to their vocation as Christians that they will uphold their pastor as Aaron held the arms of Moses, and fulfill their calling to be a leaven in the growth and a light upon the path of the people of this neighborhood. We offer our prayers, as we can and as we may, in the Name and power of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.1



## **Parish Social**

Thank you, O Lord for guiding us towards achieving our goals. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to rise in the morning and appreciate life. Thank you for your heavenly and earthly gifts which you have granted us. Thank you for your love and compassion for mankind. You are a good God, and to You we ascribe glory now and forever. Amen.

## PMOC

Heavenly Father, we are encouraged by your Word which says, "Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity." We thank you for redeeming us through the sacrifice of your Son and that by your Holy Spirit you have brought us into fellowship with each other. Grant that as brothers in Christ, we may love one another with a pure heart. You have assured us that you give us all things to enjoy, and said that "every man should eat and drink and enjoy the good of all his labor." May our time of fellowship, recreation, and study be dedicated to your glory. In your Name we pray. Amen.\*\*

## Prayer for Chaplains

O Shepherd and Lord of our soul, who did look with compassion on the lost because they were distressed and scattered as sheep without a shepherd, and did admonish your followers to pray that the Lord of the harvest would send laborers to harvest where the seeds of faith had been sown; we beseech you to help us, your faithful and ministering servants, to gather where others have sown the seeds of faith. Bless us richly with your gifts that we may be clothed with your righteousness and speak your Word with power. Endow us with your Holy Spirit that we might understand your Word, confess your Name valiantly, and be kept safe from all temptations, and thus glorify your Name, do your will and lead others to righteousness. This we ask in the Name of Jesus Christ, your Son, our Savior. Amen.

Lord, grant us, the chaplains, courage to speak when others need to hear and patience to listen when others need to speak. Give us wisdom to serve the wise and simple words to serve the rest of us. Save us from our work and refresh us with the joy of play that we may be true parsons to all races, genders, and nationalities. Come (name of chaplains) be our guides. Amen.

## Religious Education

Great Shepherd, who loves and cares for us as a shepherd cares for a flock, we pause to acknowledge and praise you for the fact that all of us - no matter who we are, whatever our race, religion, ethnicity, class, or gender; in spite of our faults and sinful ways - are a part of your flock. You have created us! We are yours! Thank you! Forgive us for the times when we have strayed from your presence in words or deeds. And may our worship today inspire us to rededicate ourselves to follow you more faithfully and not to lose contact with your Holy Spirit. For you are the ground of our being, and in and from you we receive guidance and direction, strength to cope with whatever comes our way, and healing for the hurts that are a part of life. We are especially grateful this day for those of our church who have been teaching these truths to our children and youth during this church school year. We thank you for their commitment and dedication to helping their students learn about our faith - a faith that always is only one generation away from extinction if it is not taught by and caught from us and others. Hear these our prayers that are offered in this spirit of the One who also was like a shepherd to those who followed, even Jesus, the Christ. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Father, today these volunteer teachers stand before you, full of faith and excited about service. They come to share your truth with others. Give them of your love, mercy, wisdom, and grace during this coming school year. Thank you for giving them to us. Thank you for our Religious Education Director and Coordinator. Bless them in their efforts to serve you. May they seek your favor and guidance in each decision they make during this coming year. May our service to one another honor and glorify you, O God. Amen.\*\*

O God, Parent of Jesus the Great Teacher and our Parent; make us receptive to learning more about the one who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. But as we learn, make us aware that we also teach by what we say and what we do. May our worship inspire us to be more receptive learners about and more faithful teachers of the Christian faith. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Eternal God, to open the eyes of a child to the grandeur of your goodness and love, is a challenging task. Yet each time a child's understanding is broadened in relation to you, it is a most inspiring moment. And we are always rewarded for this task by the realization that we ourselves have moved closer to you through our efforts. Lord, God, bless all who give of their time and energy to bring our children closer to you. Bring each of them and their families an even deeper awareness of your presence. May they grow from strength to strength in your service. Amen.\*\*

*The following may be included as a Response to the Word or at some other appropriate place in a serve of congregational worship. During the singing of a hymn, the church school staff may gather in front of the congregation. Following the hymn, the chairperson of education or the pastor introduces the staff. The pastor then says to the congregation:*

Dear friends, let us recognize those who have responded to the call of God to become workers in the church school. To teach, to administer the work of teaching, and to support the work of teaching are ministries of Christ among us. Those called to these ministries need our loyal support and our prayers.

*The pastor prays the following or another prayer:*

Let us pray. Eternal God, you have entrusted us with the message of your power, grace, justice, and love. Provide for us your guidance, that we may be teachers and learners together. Believing that you are in our midst, we set apart those who would serve in our church school. May they serve you in nurturing the spiritual growth of all who are entrusted in their care. Bless each one gathered before us, enabling them to be channels of your grace. We pray through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.3

Lord of all the little children everywhere, we rejoice on this day that brings us here to praise thee in song and prayers. Especially we give thanks for the teachers who, standing before us, offer themselves unselfishly and

gladly that our children hear of thy presence among us, know that thy right hand upholds us, and come to care that thy love makes all life holy and good. Bless these teachers with a rich and redeeming joy in the weeks ahead. Let them carry into this gift of time and imagination our warm thanks and, even more, thy divine approval. Amen.1

## **Service of Music**

O Lord our God, who sets thy creation singing wher-ever it is touched by thy grace: we give thee thanks for the songs and sounds which tie generation to genera-tion. Through the artistry of those who compose and those who perform thou has shaped the language which opens to us that past and overcomes the loneli-ness of our time in history. We yield our thanks for this and all thy blessings, known and unknown, remembered and forgotten; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.1

## **Theme Prayer**

We are challenged, O God, as the Air Force FAMILY with the prospects for the future. We live life, however, in the NOW. Help us to understand what it means to WALK TOGETHER as we declare to others that WE THE PEOPLE are in fact the people of God. We are constantly reminded in your holy history that UNLESS THE LORD BUILDS, our feeble efforts at blueprinting the future are in vain. We are grateful for the fact that for us, MINISTERING IS A WAY OF LIVING. We know all too well what THE LORD REQUIRES of us. It is to be FAITHFUL TO OUR CALLINGS and LIVELY SERVANTS OF THE LIVING LORD. Help us in this existential moment to be PRESENT TO THE WORLD and ever ready to HEAR THE WORD OF THE LORD. In a world filled with mediocrity, Lord, we are CALLED TO EXCELLENCE. In a world filled with tension and conflict, we are asked to SEEK PEACE AND PURSUE IT. We do this as a PEOPLE WHO CARE who spend our moments and our days trying haltingly to LIVE BY FAITH. So bless our efforts and our time together, and dismiss us with your blessing now and forever. Amen.\*\*

## **MILITARY/BASE/WING EVENTS**



## **Airmen Leadership School Conference**

Lord, thank you for your presence at this conference for instructors and managers of Airmen Leadership Schools. We pray that your pervasive influence will affect our discussion of issues, evaluation of programs, and proposals of change. Help us to have productive and open discussions, be willing to accept new ideas, and be receptive to necessary and healthy change. Bless each participant with love for God, deeply held positive values, and excellence in all they do. Keep our families healthy and safe while we are away. We trust our lives to your care. Amen.

# ARMY BRANCH PRAYERS

## *Airborne/Air Assault*

Dear God, your ancient prophet has told us that, "...they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint." (Is 40:31) Flying on the wings of eagles is exhilarating. It is the running and the walking that are difficult. Teach us to wait upon you so that we might yet run the race of life, and walk the path of faith in true service to you and all humanity. Amen.

Almighty God, who has created the heavens above, and has selected from your creatures some to receive the gift of flight, grant to those who mount up as with the wings of eagles in defense of their country, the sword of righteousness and the swiftness of angels. May their descent be as lightning from above, and the strength of their arms like rolling thunder, that breaking upon the adversary with sudden fury, they may put him to confusion, for the defense of liberty, and for the increase of freedom. Amen.

O Lord our God, thou who art powerful, thou who strengthens the righteous person with courage and faith, who blesses the humble and lowly, I confess O Lord my fears and my sins before thee. O Lord, be merciful and loving to me thy servant. Be with me, my God, and give me wings like eagles so I can run and not be weary, walk and not faint. We are approaching the time that we "Stand at the Door." Give me the wisdom to know and the courage to believe that thou art always with me and so I have no fear. I ask these things in all humility in your holy name. Amen.

Father of Mercy, now, God, as we "mount up with wings like eagles" be near us. As we enter this time of danger we pray to you, O Lord, who created the universe and the very air we are about to jump (fly) through. We ask Lord, that you would bring to our minds all of the skills that we have been taught. We ask Lord, that just as you stilled the water that you still the air. We pray, O God, that we might be granted safety from hostile fire and all the devices of the enemy; and for courage so that we might perform our mission with success and honor. Finally, our Father, when this time is over, we ask that you remind us to offer up prayers of thanksgiving, so that we might remember the courage you have granted us now when we choose between right and wrong in the future. To your glory we offer this mission and this prayer. Amen.

Lord, the heavens and the earth and everything in them belong to you. We do, too--we are your own. We now place ourselves at great risk, not to test you or to tempt you, but to serve righteousness and to defeat evil. We submit our cause to you and we ask your blessing upon our soil. May we have such confidence in your love for us that we can turn our minds completely to the things we can and must control--our parachutes, our gear, and our behavior--for we know that unless we exercise authority over our fears and our excitement, our jump will not be safe. Lord, we know that you will not forget us in our aircraft or under our canopies. Neither will we forget you on the drop zone or back at home. Thanks for going with us "all the way." Amen.

*Armor Prayer*

O Lord, our God, we beseech your protection and care of the soldiers of armor. Give them courage to accept their task and skill and fortitude to carry out their mission. As they defend may you grant them the knowledge that you, O God Most High, are their shield. Amen.

## Artillery

Almighty and eternal Father of us all, we give you thanks for this evening's festivities which bring us together as members and friends of the Artillery Corps. As soldiers, help us always to be aware of our need for your providential care and protection, in the calm of peace as well as in the terror of war. We pray that you will continue to protect us as individuals, to protect the Artillery Corps, to protect our Armed Forces, and most of all to protect our nation, which we have pledged to defend with our lives. If need be, help us to walk into the valley of the shadow of death and to fear no evil because we know that you are with us, even in the face of death itself because you are our God and we are your people. We pray, O Lord, that you will bless the celebrations and the events of this evening's festivities. Bless the food which is ours to enjoy. Bless our distinguished guests and commanders. Be with us and bless us all, for it is in the name of our Lord that we pray. Amen.

## Aviation

Dear Heavenly Father, in your great wisdom and power you watch over every one of us each day. All praise, honor, and glory be given to your name. And now in the daily responsibility we have as an aviation unit, we ask for a special guidance now. We ask for a strengthened trust between our pilots, crew chiefs, and other maintenance personnel as they rely on each other to have the helicopters (planes) in excellent working condition for the safe transportation of people and equipment. We ask for a special guidance for the other personnel in the various categories of support needed to accomplish the mission; that they respond to the best of their ability. And that in the final outcome of all missions, the men, women, and machines will protect our country successfully and safely. This we pray in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## Engineer

O Lord our God, we are thankful for this occasion which brings us together as professionals and as friends. We pray that you will reinforce the ties which bind us together through the Engineer Branch as a whole and through the organizations we belong to as individuals. Grant us the faith, stamina and courage we need to carry out our mission in times of peace as well as in times of war. Bless our time together and the food that is ours to enjoy. In the name of our Lord. Amen.

## Infantry

Dear God in Heaven, bless your holy name. May your kingdom soon come, and your will daily be done on earth as it is in heaven. Help me to be grateful for today's MREs and the purified water in my canteen; they will see me through. Forgive me for the times I've not talked or acted like your son/daughter; I'll work hard on improving my language and behavior along with my light fighter skills. In every area of my life help me to really be the best that I can be. And help me not to fall for some slick lie and make a fool of myself. I know there is no better self in any substance, controlled or uncontrolled, than the one you gave me. When I'm down, lift me up. I trust your leadership above all and will by your grace, climb to glory, to the top. Amen.

Lord God, our strength for evermore, whose might does reach from shore to mountain heights to shore again, protect the soldiers who must defend the ground we call our native land. Hear us when we pray and bless their courage in the face of fear. Amen.

Heavenly Father, we ask that we would be reminded of your constant presence with us as we begin this exercise. Keep us safe from harm and strengthen our ties of cooperation and team spirit as we learn to perform our combat functions. May this training experience help us to survive and prevail on the battlefield where we may be called upon to defend our country by force of arms. Help us to remember that you are always with the righteous and will guide and defend those who call upon your name. For all the concerns in the hearts of those who are embarking on this exercise, we ask your blessing and inspiration. Amen.

O God, who gives us freedom, we accept our responsibility to defend that freedom. As we deploy on this field training exercise, we pray that commanders will exercise wisdom, NCOs will lead with a mixture of toughness and compassion, and enlisted soldiers will follow wholeheartedly. Sharpen our minds and toughen our bodies to face the long hours of vigorous training. Protect us from injury. We thank you for those who stand by to care for our families while we are away. Reunite us safely with a renewed confidence in ourselves, our unit, and you as our God. Amen.

O Eternal God, you who created the universe and guide it in its proper course, we ask that you guide us in our Field Training Exercise that we may learn as we need to learn and prepare as we need to prepare. As we begin to defend, we acknowledge you as our sure defense. Protect us now we pray. Amen.

Lord, life isn't easy in the infantry. The field is often less than ideal. It's too hot or too cold, too wet or too dry. The work is often demanding, but more often the fatigue of waiting overtakes us. Lord, provide us assurance of your presence with us in the down times as well as the battle. Help us to seek your face. When we have walked miles with rucksack and gear, may the feeling of release we experience at the removal of our loads remind us that you offer rest, an easy yoke, and a light load if we will follow you. No, Lord, life isn't easy in the infantry. Help us to continue our vigil for peace. We don't want war and we pray you will keep the world at peace. If, in your plan we must fight, may we do so in accordance with your law and for the good of others and of our nation. Thank you, Lord, for your presence with us today! In your Holy Name. Amen.

Lord, we are infantry soldiers. We know that you help us as we go about the job of protecting the citizens of our nation and the world. Keep us mindful of our responsibilities to be dedicated professionals. Often we feel discouraged and need the encouragement of your spirit. Keep us from allowing cynicism to rob us of the joys of life: family and friends, work and worship. Keep us mindful of the value you place on human life Lord. Help us to have that same respect for life. Grant us peace, Lord, in our time. Amen.



## *Transportation*

Eternal God, our Heavenly Father, we give humble thanks for your rich blessings on our country and our military services. We are particularly thankful for the thousands of men and women who have served in, and support the Army Transportation Corps and we pray your rich and continued blessings upon them. We thank you for the progress made in the Corps, for the good work of its present and past chiefs, and pray that the months and years ahead will bring continuing divine assistance. We humbly pray that, in addition to our military and technical skills, we will be enriched by the eternal and foundational values upon which our nation is structured, and by which our people are strengthened. Enable each of us assembled to renew our commitment to serving with efficiency and honor. And as we eat food together, be among us as the true bread of life; so that our collegial fellowship will not be only with one another, but also with you, dear Father. For the glory of your name, we pray. Amen.

*Ordinance prayer*

Almighty God, ruler of the universe and sustainer of mankind, we humbly entreat your favor upon this the Ordinance Corps. This corps has at its heart the finest and truly most capable men and women in the service. We ask that you would bless these soldiers and their families who support them. Grant that they would follow the unmistakable paths of honor, justice, and peace. May their efforts in promoting peace overcome those obstacles that hinder the realization of their dreams. Encourage them with your presence, enable them with your thoughts and deliver them with your strength. Amen.

## Blessing of the Food

Heavenly Father, we thank you for your many blessings upon us, for the surfeit of freedom we enjoy and for the abundance of material blessings. Help us to be truly concerned for those less fortunate and to rededicate our talent and energies to their benefit. Bless all those assembled here today. And as we eat food together, be among us as the Bread of Life. For the glory of your Name, we pray. Amen.

In this moment of quietness of reflection we pause to acknowledge you, O Lord. We thank you for all you have done, for clearing the way of obstacles we never saw, for not abandoning us when we didn't even recognize your help; for keeping the unseen hand of trouble from falling upon us. We are thankful to you for providing to our minds ideas and thoughts we never knew came from thee, and for giving unto us your love and care even when we didn't ask for it. Help us all to recover an awareness of your interest in us and your presence with us. We truly have been most favored by all the things you have given us. Help us to recognize it. Thank you O Lord, for the food and all the physical and spiritual sustenance you have so faithfully provide. In thy Name. Amen.

Dear Lord, we are grateful for the privilege of living and serving you. We thank you for the opportunities and challenges of life that make us better and more useful people. We thank you for the inspiration of love and friendships that lift us above the level of selfishness and greed. We thank you for the blessings of freedom and peace that sustain us everyday; for the happiness and laughter of life that enrich us; for the fruit and bounty of our land that we enjoy in this meal tonight. May your divine blessing continue to be upon us now and forever more. In thy Name we ask. Amen.

Gracious God, we acknowledge that you create this world and all that is within it. You give the sun and the rain, the seed and the wisdom to plant and nurture the young plants. You also demonstrate your love by providing those who prepare our food. We thank you for all this and ask you to help us act responsibly with this food, the energy gained from its nourishment, this fellowship and our relationship to those who are not so blessed. Amen.

Dear Lord, as we pause to thank you for the food, we also express our appreciation for all of life's blessings. You allowed us to have a great deal. Help us, Lord, in the midst of our affluence never to forget the source of our privilege. May the bounty of our blessing not make us little and selfish. May we guard against the use of position and power unjustly or unworthily of the trust you place in us. Thank you for systems that care for people more than things. Grant unto us wisdom in the commerce of the world that all things which thou gives us be used for your honor and glory. Amen.

We are thankful for the food you provide, O God. May we be strengthened physically as we share the meal. May our conversation and time together strengthen us emotionally and spiritually. Thank you for all the gifts of life and especially for those who participated in the preparation of this food. Amen.

O God, thank you for the critical intervention of the right friend, the right book, the right thought, the right leader, and the right place to be at precisely the right time to change our lives for the better. So many wonderful events have occurred around a table. Peace treaties are signed, world changing decisions are made, laughter and tears are shared, families develop healthy ways of sharing with the ones they love, and people who work together come to appreciate each other even more. Also, Jesus celebrated his last meal with his disciples at a table. Bless \_\_\_\_\_ who traveled so far to share this time with us. Bless this food to our use and us to useful service. In thy name we pray. Amen.

O Lord, we ask that you bless this food we are about to share for the nourishment of our bodies. May it fill us with the energy to do your will. We ask also that as we gather around this table you will bless our fellowship with one another. May our love for each other grow as we share in this time of refreshment and renewal. In thy name we pray. Amen.

O Lord, the middle of the working day is a fitting time for us to pause and seek your blessing. We recognize that we are not always grateful, generous, or good. Yet in our better moments we acknowledge how blessed we really are. It is so easy to practice one's faith in a land that's free. Therefore, may we not lightly regard the privilege of praise of the power of prayer. Deliver us, O Lord, from sins of dullness, complacency, and neglect. Fan the glowing embers of faith, hope, and love that the flames will melt the ice of indifference. Bless service members and their families everywhere. Bless this food to useful service. Amen.

O Great Provider, thank you for this meal that you have given us. Bless, we pray, the hands that have prepared it. Bless us as we eat, and may this time be not only a time to replenish our need for energy, but also a time to replenish our need for fellowship with one another and with you. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

O Lord, we airmen are trying to be faithful in carrying out our duty. As we prepare to go to war against physical forces, help us also to be ready to do battle with the evil forces within us which try to storm the very citadel of the soul. We are probably in more danger than we think! We want to be better and we will be with your help. Bless this food today. We thank you for all things. Amen.

O Lord, we thank you for this time of food and fellowship. Your giving deserves our thanksgiving. Grant us physical strength from this meal, encouragement for our friends, and spiritual nourishment from you. This we ask in your Name. Amen.

They that hunger shall eat and be satisfied, they that seek after the Lord shall praise Him; their hearts shall live forever. Bless us, O Lord, and these Your gifts of which we are about to partake, for You are blessed and glorified now and forever. Amen.

Our Father, we are mindful of those who have friends but no food...and those who have food but no friends. We thank you this day that we have both. Help us to befriend the friendless and to share our substance with those who hunger. Amen.

We approach you in reverence tonight, Lord, as we prepare to share this meal with each other. Let your presence be felt in our midst by our speech... by our appreciation... and by our respect for each other. Amen.

Bless us. O Lord, our food and drink which we are about to receive from your bounty. Bless this house and those who live in it, granting them health, peace and progress: For you are good and to you we ascribe glory now and forever. Amen.

O God our Father, we thank thee for our nation and its great heritage, for those sacred values that contribute to our greatness and for the opportunity to serve our country in defense of those values. Grant thy blessings upon our deliberations and planning this day...that they may contribute to the advancement of freedom and liberty for our nation and peace loving people around the world. Bless our fellowship as we break bread together around these tables, as we renew old ties, and as we establish new friendships. May this food and thy presence sustain us in both body and spirit. In thy name we pray. Amen.

Almighty God, our Creator, as we pause here tonight in our work and fellowship, we acknowledge, appreciate, and applaud the uniqueness of our interests, talents, and work. We are grateful that our efforts can be defined in terms of stewardship; stewardship of the well-being of our people and our organizations. Help us then we pray, better to understand and appreciate the nature and the implications of our missions and functions. Bless us as agents of change and facilitators for training satisfaction. As stewards of effectiveness and excellence, challenge us with the dignity and worth of our airmen and their families. Give to each of us generous portions of your wisdom, grace, and strength. Enable us to believe in what we do, remain confident in our objectives and abilities, to be aware of and celebrate the humanity of our people, and maintain a good sense of humor. We do thank thee for this opportunity for fellowship and the food we are about to receive. In your name and with your peace we pray. Amen.

Bless, O Lord, our food and drink which we are about to receive from your bounty. Bless this house and those who live in it, granting them health, peace and progress: For you are good and to you we ascribe glory now and forever. Amen.

Eternal Father, for the continued blessing of Heaven we give you thanks. As you feed our bodies so may our minds partake of that which is wholesome and pure. With this physical and mental nourishment grant that we may so live in a way that brings honor to our units, our country, and ourselves. Amen.

Father we give you thanks for the food, for those who planted, for those who fed, for those who harvested, for those who processed, for those who delivered and for those who prepared. We are grateful and now ask that you will bless it to the nourishment of our bodies. In the Holy Name of God we pray. Amen.

Our loving heavenly Father, who has made us and continued to sustain us, we thank you for providing this food; for every good and perfect gift comes from you. We are grateful to you, O Lord, for creating the hands that have prepared this nourishment of which we are to partake. Forgive us when we take your bounty for granted, and when we fail to remember the source of all we have and are. Make us mindful that many are starving in other countries and in our land. May we share our feast, which you have entrusted to us, so that those less fortunate may be properly nourished. May we realize that you are the giver of the more important gifts of love and salvation, which come through our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ; in his name we pray. Amen.

Lord God, Heavenly Father, bless this food which thou has given us. Help us to receive it with grateful hearts. As thou dost nourish our bodies with earthly bread, feed also our souls with the Bread of Life. Strengthen our faith; increase our love, cause us to grow in service before thee all our days. Amen.

Eternal God, we express our gratitude for life, health, opportunities for service to God and country and for the professional camaraderie we experience in our daily associations with each other. We ask your blessing on the Armed Forces, its every member, its every leader, and upon the leadership of our nation. May we work together for strength, and may the results of that strength be peace. We ask your blessing upon this food provided from your bounty. May the food and the fellowship nourish our bodies and souls. Amen.

God our Father, who feeds both the hungry and well-fed alike, in your great mercy, feed us this day in all of the areas of our lives--physical, mental, and spiritual. As we eat this food in thanksgiving, let us remember that many have little or nothing to eat. In your holy name. Amen.

Lord God, you have given us this day, and every day, more than just our daily bread. You have been loving and kind to us throughout our lives. Teach us that this meal is from your limitless bounty; so direct our lives that we learn to feed one another with the rich gifts you have given us. Amen.

Grant to us today, dear Lord, that what we eat is provided by you. Inspire us to lead thankful lives, in service to others, ever mindful of your loving care for all mankind. Amen.

Lord, for this food before us and all the food of our daily needs, we express our thanks and gratitude. For the joys of accomplishments, we offer thanks. For your divine reassurance, when we are tested in the crucible of life, we submit our thanks. Grant us, we pray our daily bread and guide us in our conduct today. Amen.

We give thanks to thee, O Christ our God, that thou hast satisfied us with thy earthly blessings; deprive us not also of thy heavenly kingdom. As thou didst enter into the midst of thy disciples, granting peace, so come into our midst and save us, O Savior. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages and ages. Amen

For this food, O Lord, and for all thy blessings, known and unknown, remembered and forgotten, we give thee

thanks. Amen.1

We praise thee, Lord, that we have bread to break and love to share and blessings to remember with thanksgiving. Amen.1

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name! For he has given us the kindly fruits of the earth to sustain us and the gift of love to renew us, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.1

Recall to us the hungry, O God, so that we learn thankful hearts for the blessing in this bread. Amen.1

Visit our table with grace, Lord Jesus, and share with us our lives, for we thank thee now for this food and every common blessing. Amen.1

Receive our thanks, heavenly Father, for all thy blessings - this food, this fellowship, our time together - and make us mindful of all who lack such daily gifts. Amen.1

## **Brigadier General Course**

Our Father, we pray especially today for this Brigadier General Orientation course. May milestones in one's life such as making general officer be a wonderful occasion for rejoicing and reflection. May they wait upon you, O Lord, that their strength may be renewed – that they may mount up as eagles – that they shall run and not be weary – and walk and not faint. Bless this daily bread, O Lord, and accept our thanks for it. Amen.

## Change of Command

Lord, thank you for your presence at this change of command. We thank you for choosing leaders with integrity, who ably lead the mission, who motivate us in our work, and ultimately promote freedom in the world by training Air Force officers. We humbly ask your blessing upon \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ as they pass between them the guidon of command. As it passes, strengthen them both in the tasks to which you have called them. Go with \_\_\_\_\_ and his/her family as they prepare for their new assignment in \_\_\_\_\_. Remain with \_\_\_\_\_ and his/her family as he/she leads the \_\_\_\_\_ to new heights of excellence. Give us the commitment to serve our new commander well. Thank you for your never ending love, strength, courage, and guidance--keys unlocking the full potential of this outstanding unit. Amen.

Today we exchange the privilege that befuddled Moses, challenged Churchill, and has driven some to amazing achievement -- Command. As \_\_\_\_\_ takes the mantle of leadership, bless him/her with keen insight, firmness of character, and a vision for the use of his/her talents. May (Base, sq, etc) be blessed. We ask now, too, for your blessing to attend \_\_\_\_\_ and his/her family. May this new era of their lives bring fresh enjoyment of your bounty, and the increasing insight of your love. Amen.

Lord our God, as we say farewell to one commander and greet our new leader, we ask your blessing on each of them. They are each about to take on new responsibilities and opportunities. Those who know them best and love them pray with us that you will inspire the best that is in them. We who have served and will serve with them ask your blessings on them, on ourselves, and on airmen everywhere who risk their lives to defend the world's freedom in the days and years ahead. Lord, inspire us to do our best each day and lead us to serve our leaders with energy, enthusiasm, and effectiveness. Amen.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, remind us as we gather together at this important ceremony, that although times may change and people may come and go, your presence in our lives and in our work remains forever sure. We offer you our thanks for the professional leadership of \_\_\_\_\_ as the commander of \_\_\_\_\_ during these past \_\_\_ years, and pray for your continued blessing upon him/her in his/her new assignment as he/she continues to show his/her concern for airmen. We also ask that your Holy Spirit rest upon and direct \_\_\_\_\_ as he/she assumes command and continues the tradition of excellence expected in \_\_\_\_\_. Inspire us all to be the best airmen that we can be, not just airmen of our country pledged to defend her freedoms, but especially airmen of our God, dedicated to the increase of your divine kingdom, wherein true freedom may be found. In our Lord's name we pray. Amen.

Lord, on this day we recognize the gift of leadership. We thank you for the leadership of \_\_\_\_\_ and the direction and guidance he/she has provided this \_\_\_\_\_. May you give him/her continued wisdom in assuming his/her new assignment. We also ask that you give the new commander \_\_\_\_\_ continued wisdom, strength, and courage to provide the leadership necessary to the airmen of this \_\_\_\_\_. Be his/her constant source of support and inspiration in the days and months to come. We ask this in your name. Amen.

O God, our calling in life has put us in very important places. Our assignment here is one of them. Give us, we beseech you, the qualities necessary to serve our country well. Strengthen us with courage, endurance, and steadfast resolve to be prepared to accomplish our mission - to deter war. Grant that our people, powers, and resources may be used in defense of freedom, justice, and order in our world. We do desire to keep a just and lasting peace. Father, we may be busy every day but let us never forget you in the dorms, field, deployed settings, offices, or in our homes. Now at this time, O Lord, especially bless, protect, direct, and guide our new commander \_\_\_\_\_, and his/her family, and may we of this \_\_\_\_\_ feel your love as we work, serve, and live together as one family. Come to our aid, Lord God of hosts, and help us always to "drive on." Amen.

O God, the weight of command is great. Be with those upon whom the mantle is cast. Give them the wisdom to know the right path, and the courage to follow that path, even in the worst of times. Be also with those of us who are called to follow. Teach us loyalty and trust. By our unity, grant us a glimpse of the unity of your



kingdom. Amen.

Loving Father, Lord of all times and people, of all that has been, all that is, and all that is yet to come. We praise you today for the many blessings you have lovingly bestowed upon us in the past, and for those we confidently expect from you in the future. For \_\_\_\_\_, our Commander, we give you thanks. We are grateful for his/her challenging leadership, his/her professionalism, his/her dedication. Thank you for his/her committed concern and authentic caring for his/her airmen. Continue to bless him/her and his/her spouse \_\_\_\_\_ in whatever future you hold for them. We ask you to grant our incoming Commander, \_\_\_\_\_, the gifts of wisdom, courage, and strength. May his/her time of command in our \_\_\_\_\_ be one of blessing for him/her and for all the airmen of the \_\_\_\_\_. And to you, Lord God, be honor and glory forever. Amen.

Lord God of hosts, you have made known your authority and given your orders for the day in your Holy Law; you have given persons authority to exercise leadership over us and have bidden us to obey them and to pray for them. We beseech you, fill our officers with zeal for the tasks delegated to them and with understanding and concern for those who, serving under them, must carry out those tasks. May they serve you with pure, exemplary lives and thereby give those whom they lead an ideal to follow. Give them wisdom to judge justly, and compassion to deal with their subordinates, so that we may be ready to follow their leadership with a willing spirit. "Those that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; and they shall march on and not faint." In our Lord's name we pray. Amen.

Our Father, as we pause during this Change of Command to give praise to you, illuminate our hearts with the warmth of your grace. We ask your blessing on our departing commander and his/her family. As they travel to a new home and assignment, give them a safe journey and excitement for the possibility of new duties. We also ask your blessing on our new Commander and his/her family. We pray the acceptance of this unit will be a challenge for ministry and leadership of these airmen. Each of us is grateful for your continued presence and guidance in our lives. Help us to be accepting of your love and strength in our lives. Amen.

Almighty God, our gracious and caring Creator, Father, we invoke your presence and your blessings upon this significant moment in the life of this \_\_\_\_\_ when the mantle of leadership is passed from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_. For the outgoing Commander, \_\_\_\_\_, we ask your continued blessings as he/she goes on to other responsibilities. For the incoming Commander, \_\_\_\_\_, we ask for wisdom and courage to make wise decisions and then for decisiveness of action. Help him/her to create an environment in which working is pleasurable and the challenges are fair and rewarding. May he/she always strive to assist every member of this \_\_\_\_\_ to grow and develop so that each can be the person that you intended that one to be. Amen.

O Eternal God, we invoke your blessings on this ceremony, those who are participants, and those who are gathered here to witness the passing of the colors. As \_\_\_\_\_ comes to the end of his/her tenure as commander, we look back and are thankful for his/her concern for his/her troops, for his/her example as a leader and for his/her loyalty to his/her superiors, his/her peers, and his/her subordinates. Lord, it has been a privilege working with him/her. Thank you for allowing him/her to come our way. As \_\_\_\_\_ assumes command, we pray for guidance for him/her. Give him/her wisdom, understanding, patience, and may he/she always be fair. Amen.

O God, we ask for your blessings and give thanks for the leadership and service of \_\_\_\_\_. Deliver him/her and his/her family safely to their new assignment. We thank you for the safe arrival of our new commander, \_\_\_\_\_ and his/her family. May he/she continue to lead this \_\_\_\_\_ with wisdom and strength. Bless the leadership of \_\_\_\_\_ and our Commander-in-Chief. Continue to guide and protect these men and women of the \_\_\_\_\_. This we ask in your divine name. Amen.

Father, you have been our helper in times past. We pray that you will continue to be our helper in these days. We thank you for those brave persons in our land who are more interested in being right than in being popular. We thank you, Lord, for our freedom - freedom to choose our religion, freedom to choose our profession, trade

or career, freedom to travel from state to state without having to pass armed border guards. We thank you for the leadership that we have experienced during the past \_\_\_\_\_. \_\_\_\_\_ has taught us lessons in honesty, honor, integrity and care for airmen and civilians alike. We pray your blessings upon him/her and his/her family as they depart our ranks for a new assignment. We pray your special blessings upon \_\_\_\_\_ as he/she assumes the awesome responsibility of commanding \_\_\_\_\_. Guide him/her as he/she leads us. Bless this land we love so much. Help us to remember that righteousness alone exalts a nation. You have blessed America in the past. You have made her rich. We pray that you will also make her good. Amen.

Holy Father, almighty and gracious God, we know so little about the breadth or the depth of your power and responsibility. Yet as your instruments, we have some small part in that greater splendor, your scheme of divine method and order. May this exchange of power, authority, and accountability be a reflection of your will. In this change of command may the mantle of \_\_\_\_\_ fall on \_\_\_\_\_ with the portion of power and divine direction that God has always shown to those servants who call upon his name and seek his face. Amen.

Holy Father, God of power and might, our limited authority and power is dwarfed in the presence of your omnipotence. In your plan for this world, complex beyond comprehension, you have given us each a personal gift to share. As each soul is different, each gift is varied. Today we plead for your direction in the application of these new gifts being presented. We also ask that the worth of the old gifts not be laid aside with the departing of their bearer. Give us wisdom to meld what we have learned with what is yet to be experienced. And we will certainly give you praise, in the name of the God who loves us. Amen.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for your presence with us today and come to you asking for your divine guidance and protection as we serve our nation. Let each one of us never forget the tremendous cost military members in our nation's history have paid for the privileges we enjoy. Your wisdom has provided us with a new leader - one to enhance our mission by providing the leadership and guidance necessary to maintain the critical balance of communications. As we speak to you in prayer, we ask that your steady hand be upon \_\_\_\_\_ as he/she assumes his/her duties. May you grant him/her the wisdom and knowledge necessary to carry out his/her awesome responsibilities fairly at all times. It is not easy to command. May we remember that as airmen, we can make his/her job more tolerable as you grant to each of us the proper maturity and attitude that we might be obedient to the one you have placed over us, so we might not make his/her task any more difficult than it is already. Heavenly Father, we have confidence in our commander and in our nation - and especially in you as we boldly make these requests trusting in you that they will be accomplished. Amen.

We pray, O Creator of the world without and the world within, asking that these moments be more than a ceremonious exercise, but rather a heartfelt expression of joy and praise for your presence among us and a sense of the possibility and purpose which your Spirit instills within our hearts. We thank you, O Lord, for the wisdom inherent in the change of command ceremony, creating within us, as it does, a sense of continuity and strength amidst change. We ask that you be with \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ whose authority to command we acknowledge, confirm, and pass on this day. Cause them to be proactive to the responsibilities granted them and yet ever aware of their humanity. Let them know that we cheer them on and are thankful for their commitment and good will. Bless them and the men and women they serve, O Lord. Amen.

Lord God, creator of the universe, our pride in past efforts causes us to stop on this occasion and give thanks. Today we celebrate past achievements and ask your support in a new beginning. May your presence, peace and care always accompany \_\_\_\_\_ and his/her family. We pray that wisdom, compassion and creative leadership will mark the command of \_\_\_\_\_. May all our people in positions of authority be sensitive to the demands of the faith we entrust to them, and the needs of people they serve. Amen.

O Lord, let your mercy be upon us, and let your love be in our hearts. Guide us to know the truth in this life, and help us in the time of decision-making. O Lord, these officers are gathered here in a moment significant to them and to us -- to change command, to pass the baton, that they may serve effectively their nation and the Air Force. Guide them to know your will at all times. Fill their mind with useful knowledge, and their hearts with

compassion. For you are good and to you we ascribe glory now and forever. Amen.

Dear Father, as the torch of leadership is passed may this awesome responsibility be coupled with your blessing and wisdom and a consciousness of your presence. May our godly and patriotic duty be performed at our highest level of expertise. Now to the only wise God who is able to keep you from falling, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, and may He keep you in the security of His presence. Amen.

Our Father God and Divine Creator, we ask for thy blessing upon this change of command ceremony. May we once again be reminded of thy concern for man and for the dignity of life that this nation and base are dedicated to preserve. Bless those who lead us with wisdom and vision and strength. Particularly bless \_\_\_\_\_ who departs for another assignment and \_\_\_\_\_ who now becomes our new commander. Grant to us all a sense of loyalty and trust in our way of life, our nation, our base, and our commander. Amen.

Heavenly Father, we ask your blessing upon all who are gathered here and pray that you be with us at this transfer of responsibilities. Inspire us with your wisdom, that we may appreciate the true nature of command and the serious consequences that flow from it. May the spirit of justice, care, concern, and dedication to duty be \_\_\_\_\_'s legacy to the men and women of his/her command. May you continue to be with him/her and his/her family as they leave to serve others. We pray your support for \_\_\_\_\_ as he/she assumes the burdens of command. May he/she feel a sense of confidence and assurance when he/she turns to you in those lonely moments of decision. Guide and direct him/her always - that justice, truth, and the quest for peace may be served. We ask that you be present to us all, that all our actions may give honor and praise to your name in which we pray. Amen.

Father of us all - we pause to remind ourselves of your presence, to render you honors, and to invoke your blessing. We are present to witness a change of command, a transfer of power. Jesus once said to a man in authority, "You have power only because it comes from God." Help us, Lord, to remember that power is your gift - that its purpose is to accomplish your will. Bless those who must command; bless those who must obey; that thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

Eternal Father, Almighty God, we ask for thy divine blessing upon this change of command. May we be aware of thy interest in such activities and thus strive to serve thee and our country with added conviction. Bless always the men and women of this base, those who command and those who carry out the commands. In the name of our Lord, we pray. Amen.

Our heavenly Father, we ask for your benediction to rest on us this day. As you have graciously preserved our nation through the years and have led us in wondrous ways, grant that we may be worthy of our high calling as a nation. Make us reverent in the use of freedom, just in the exercise of power, and generous in the protection of weakness. Inspire the men and women who direct our nation, that they may guide it wisely and well. We especially pray for our former commanding officer as he/she moves to new responsibilities and for our new commanding officer. Grant them in all their duties, your help; in all their perplexities, your counsel; in all danger your protection; in all sorrow, your peace. Amen.

Most holy and everlasting God: We thank you that you have created us, and have brought us together to share this moment. As co-workers, family, and friends, we are, by your grace, a part of this command's living history. Help us to cherish these days, not only because many well-laid plans turn out right, but also because this \_\_\_\_\_ proves itself to be a family and a team. As \_\_\_\_\_ reflects on the legacy which he/she has left, may your Spirit fill his/her heart with pride of ownership for what he/she has done that no one else could do, or do so well. In whatever lies ahead for this community, for our Air Force, and for our country, grant that \_\_\_\_\_ might look to you in every circumstance, always aware that his/her wisdom, skills, and abilities are really yours. So strengthen him/her for command that one day, he/she, too, may look back with pride and delight on his/her legacy, as one might look on his/her own child. Thank you, God, for this day, for the men and women and the families of this squadron, and most of all, for your presence, which never leaves us; in the name of the

one who loves us and has saved us, we pray, Amen.

Almighty God, we ask your blessing on this occasion, as responsibility changes hands. Look kindly, we pray, into the faces of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. Bless the families and friends who support them with the priceless gifts of love and understanding. We ask for them grace and wisdom equal to every need. And, look kindly, O God, on all of us, assembled here who do the work of this place. Keep us faithful in our duties. Make us worthy examples for those who follow. These things we ask of you, O God; the source of all courage, the fountain of wisdom, the very Prince of Peace. Amen.

Almighty and everlasting God: In the quiet of this aircraft hangar, transformed to match this moment, we gather -- co-workers, family, and friends -- to honor you, and to praise the leadership of good men. Lord, you have created us to live in relationships of authority, and so we look to you to teach us what it means to command. For, like gold, it is hard to get, hard to mold, and hard to set aside. But Lord, you know the heart of the commander, and you alone are a true and faithful ally in command. As \_\_\_\_\_ takes leave of his/her squadron through this time-honored ritual, give him/her remembrance of lessons learned, satisfaction in leadership modeled, and the promise of an enduring legacy. Assure him/her that through it all, you were his/her ally. As \_\_\_\_\_ assumes this legacy and takes command, give him/her remembrance of lessons learned, awareness of responsibilities borne for the men and women of this squadron and their families, and the promise that through it all, you will be his/her ally. With hearts full of anticipation, we ask that your presence abide with us through another passing of the baton, this celebration of command relinquished, and command assumed. This we pray through our spirit who leads us, and gives us wisdom to lead others. Amen.

And now, O God, grant that we who have gathered for this occasion may depart in safety and in peace. Preserve the tie which binds us, though we may be scattered in different directions. Lend us your mind and your standard, as we serve one another, our country and our Air Force. Amen.

And now, Lord, endow this new leadership with energy and insight, and send us on our way with strength for the journey and the challenges ahead. Bless all who celebrate this day, and give us each memories which will last a lifetime, well beyond this time and place. This we pray in your holy Name. Amen.

Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, as we begin this Change of Command Ceremony, we pause to remember that we are all subjects of your loving command. We know that leadership is best exercised when we are hungry and thirsty for your presence and guidance. We pray that you will bless \_\_\_\_\_ as he/she assumes new responsibilities as \_\_\_\_\_. Be with him/her and support him/her in this demanding task. Help him/her to have some fun and enjoyment from the deep satisfaction that comes from new challenges. We thank you also, Lord, for \_\_\_\_\_'s leadership, and for his/her spouse (and their family). May he/she have your affirmation "well done thou good and faithful servant," as he/she relinquishes his/her responsibilities here as Commander. We are grateful for how thoroughly they have given of themselves to our community, and we pray your continued blessings upon them in their new assignment. This we ask in thy Name. Amen.

Our Heavenly Father, you understand the hearts of all your children. Look with love upon us as we come before you, not without concern, but with great joy, at this moment of transition. Today we bid farewell to one commander and greet another. We give thanks for the growth and the blessing that we have had under \_\_\_\_\_ and look forward to even greater things under \_\_\_\_\_. We pray for these two commanders, for the one that as \_\_\_\_\_ hands over the colors he/she may experience the satisfaction of a mission completed, and for the new commander that he/she may be challenged to accomplish new tasks and missions. We pray also for ourselves and our nation. You know our needs individually and together. You know our hopes and fears. Speak to us and give us the strength, skill and wisdom to serve our nation as airman and citizens that need not be ashamed of our calling. Bless each of us according to our needs and use us for your glory, we pray in your Name. Amen.

We gratefully acknowledge the excellent leadership you have provided us in \_\_\_\_\_; may you continue to instill him/her with a spirit of wisdom and knowledge in his/her next assignment. As \_\_\_\_\_ assumes the

leadership of this \_\_\_\_\_, grant him/her the understanding and insight needed to command. May your spirit effectively equip him/her in every aspect. May we all continue to shoulder our responsibilities willingly and perform them to the best of our ability. Amen.

Our God and Father, you have actively been available to us for guidance and strength, and have proven to be a faithful friend. May this day be a turning point for us. May we who seek you renew our commitment in the days ahead. May we be faithful to your leadership and may our lives glorify your name. At this transition may each member of the \_\_\_\_\_ have a fresh appreciation of the roles they are carrying out for their nation; may they determine to serve both God and country well. We thank you, Lord for the leadership of \_\_\_\_\_ and how he/she has diligently worked to make this unit what it is today. Guide \_\_\_\_\_ as he/she undertakes new responsibilities. May our new commander rely on you in the days ahead as he/she carries out the awesome responsibilities of command. Meet with us now Lord, and may this ceremony remind us of our commitment to you and the country we serve; for this we ask in your strong and mighty name. Amen.

Eternal God, as we assemble here today we assemble with mixed emotions. The colors are being passed, and with their passing comes change, and change makes us uncomfortable. As we say farewell to our former commander, may we cherish the good that has marked his/her tenure. Grant that friendships established be continued. Help us to give our very best to our new commander as he/she receives the colors. Give to this new commander every quality needed to lead us responsibly and effectively. May our tradition of professional excellence be sustained and enhanced in our prayer. Amen.

Holy Father, we approach you this day with words of thanks and petition. You have been available to us through our problems and opportunities, and have constantly revealed to us your unconditional love and care. We give you sincere thanks for the leadership and commitment \_\_\_\_\_ has demonstrated as commander of \_\_\_\_\_. Guide and direct him/her as he/she moves to new duties and challenges. We ask your blessing upon our new commander, \_\_\_\_\_. May we continually pray for him/her. Lord God, you have entrusted \_\_\_\_\_ with great responsibilities. In leading us, may he/she follow your leadership. Meet with us in this ceremony we pray, and increase our commitment to you and our country. Amen.

O Lord, our God, we are thankful for this day of ceremony and celebration. We commend to your care \_\_\_\_\_ and his/her family. As they leave to take up new challenges, may your spirit of peace and care go with them. As \_\_\_\_\_ and his /her family assume command this day, fill him/her with your spirit of wisdom that he/she may lead with justice and honor. Grant all of us your grace that we may set aside our selfish interests to seek the welfare of our fellow airman, for the sake of Him who came among us to serve, in His holy Name we pray. Amen.

Almighty God, we bless in your name this occasion on which we gather to pass the torch of leadership. We recognize the value of leadership to give positive direction to people, and to cause resources to be applied where they are most effective. But, we recognize also that this is not a task given to people in isolation, but under the direction of Almighty God. For in you, our Father, rests ultimate authority. We ask your blessing on \_\_\_\_\_ as he/she passes this torch to another and your blessing on \_\_\_\_\_ as he/she takes on this responsibility, and your blessing on all who are affected by this event. Through it all, may your leadership be felt. Amen.

O God our sustainer, who has passed on the breath of life from generation to generation and who has passed on your law from century to century, and who has passed on your eternal hope from age to age, be present with us and look upon us as the command of this unit is now passed from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_. May that interchange also symbolize the transfer of care and concern, duty and discipline, character and confidence. Let the airmen who go forth from this unit be the protectors and guardians of freedom, justice and mercy as they serve proudly as if on the wings of a mighty eagle. To you who does sustain us we pray. Amen.

O Lord, guardian of all that is good and fair, we thank you for the leadership, dedication, insightfulness and

sacrifice of \_\_\_\_\_ as he/she has commanded this unit. We pray your blessing would be on \_\_\_\_\_ as he/she assumes this command and that the leadership he/she possesses will lead this unit and these airmen to even greater challenges and the tasks that lie ahead. Be with each of them in this transitioning ceremony today that the standards of this unit will remain faithful and true. Be with the airmen of this unit as their dedication to their mission and service to their country would be faithfully fulfilled. Hear us this day O Lord, we pray. Amen.

Almighty and everlasting God, we thank you for allowing each person the opportunity of accepting life as a challenge. These leaders, exchanging command today, evidently appreciate the life challenging opportunity. Dear God, we offer our thanks for the many accomplishments of the out-going and in-coming commander. Grant your blessing upon each and every family member, loved one, and friend that has supported them in this accomplishment. Keep ever before them, dear God, a desire to do their best for such a worthy cause as being a defender of freedom. We pray your grace upon the continued success of these commanders in their service to our country. In your Name we pray. Amen.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the purpose of this event; for the rich traditions it represents and the persons who make it possible. The challenges of command are immense. They demand diligent leadership, creative management, and energy-consuming effort. For the successful response of \_\_\_\_\_ to those challenges and the achievement of his/her command, we are grateful. We acknowledge and applaud the contribution of each airmen in this unit to that success. Bless now the transition \_\_\_\_\_ makes to new challenges and new responsibilities. Grant him/her and the members of his/her family, continued happiness and success. As \_\_\_\_\_ assumes this command, grant him/her the diligence in leadership, the creativity in management, and the energy in effort to be an effective commander. Grant his/her family patience with the long hours, understanding with the awesome demands, and loving support with the effort required to command. Cause each member of this unit to respond positively to his/her leadership and to foster that ever desirable sense of team. In you Name we pray. Amen.

Gracious God, our heavenly Father, grant us peace this day as we join in witnessing the Change of Command of the \_\_\_\_\_. Dear Lord we ask that you be with \_\_\_\_\_ and his/her family as they journey to their new duty station. Guide their trip and lead them safely to their destination. Bless them in their new assignment and new home in the same way that they have blessed us with their caring and selfless giving. We are sad at their leaving and place them in your loving care. Dear God we warmly welcome \_\_\_\_\_ and his/her family into our unit and family. Grant him/her the strength and wisdom that he/she will need as he/she commands this \_\_\_\_\_. Help \_\_\_\_\_ and his/her family to quickly become settled and grant them the peace and satisfaction needed to make a new place home. These things we ask in your loving Name. Amen.

Almighty God, we pray for your blessings this day. We thank you for the measure of your grace, strength, and wisdom which you have given to \_\_\_\_\_ and his/her family. Continue, we pray to bless them in the future. May you also grant your grace, strength, and wisdom to our new commander \_\_\_\_\_ and his/her family. Amen.

We have assembled here today to say farewell to one commander and welcome to another. We ask your blessings upon \_\_\_\_\_ and his/her family as they move to their new assignment. Bless them with many continued years of successful service. We further ask your blessings upon \_\_\_\_\_ and his/her family, as they assume this important command position. Help them to lead those trusted in their care. Thank you Lord, for giving us the privilege of active duty service for our country. In your Name. Amen.

Almighty God, from whom we receive mercy and forgiveness, peace and love, grant us on this special day a mindfulness of your ever-presence and power. We thank you for your many blessings to us, especially for the time in which \_\_\_\_\_ has been in command. We have been affected not only by his/her military leadership and wisdom, but by his/her religious morals and personality. Give your guidance, we pray, to him/her as he/she makes this transition in command. And may your blessings be upon the family as they face the future days ahead. We pray for \_\_\_\_\_ as he/she assumes this command. While we have a mission and a purpose, we are an organization of people with emotions, needs and families. Give wisdom and an understanding heart as

\_\_\_\_\_ takes the reins of our (unit). And as he/she leads us forth in military mission, may we support him/her in our daily prayers and allegiance. You, Heavenly Father, are the source of true allegiance. And as we seek first to serve you, our missions, and our lives and peace are forthcoming. It is within that spirit of love and mercy that we invoke your presence within our lives today. Amen.

Creator God we ask your blessing upon this ceremony today as the mantle of leadership is passed from one to another. It is our hope and prayer that your blessing of preparation will be before \_\_\_\_\_ and his/her family as they proceed onto the new challenges and opportunities of their new assignment. Be with \_\_\_\_\_ and his/her family as he/she assumes the responsibilities of leadership as our commander. May their time spent here at \_\_\_\_\_ bring them joy, happiness, and contentment. Now we look to you as the source of all we are and can become. Amen.

To the Great Architect of the universe, the most wise Creator, we pray your blessing upon this occasion. Help us to look into the past for our inspiration and look forward to the future for our opportunities. Bless the out-going and in-coming commanders with your love and guidance. In your great Name we do pray. Amen.

Father, the change of command ceremony is short and the words are few but the authority of command is awesome and the responsibilities are legion. Lord, we pray your presence and guidance be with \_\_\_\_\_ as he/she assumes command of \_\_\_\_\_. Bless \_\_\_\_\_ and the family as well as they support him/her in this demanding task. And to go with the work, may they have the fun and joy of new challenges and relationships and the deep satisfaction that goes with meaningful service. We thank you too, Lord for \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and their family. As they relinquish responsibilities here and leave \_\_\_\_\_, may they receive the greatest affirmation of all. "well done - good and faithful servants." We pray your continued blessing upon them in their new assignment. In thy Name we pray. Amen.

Almighty God-our Heavenly Father-we pause as we begin this change of command ceremony-to remember that we are all subject to your commands and that life and its freedom and blessing are gifts from your hands. We thank you especially today O Lord for \_\_\_\_\_ and his/her leadership and \_\_\_\_\_ and their family and their support in a demanding task. May they have the affirmation "well done, thou good and faithful servants" as they relinquish their responsibilities to the \_\_\_\_\_. We pray for your spirit to be with \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ and their family as they now assume new responsibilities. May they have some fun and find joy and satisfaction in new challenges and relationships. This is our prayer O Lord in thy name. Amen.

O God our Creator, you set the stars in place and maintain the planets in their orbits. We give you thanks that you choose leaders from among us to stand for righteousness, lead missions, motivate us in our work, and promote freedom in the world. In these moments when we celebrate integrity, courage and sacrifice as the right stuff of Air Force leadership positions, we humbly ask your blessing upon these two individuals who pass between them the guidon of command. As it passes, let your strengthening arm attend them both. In support of command, give us thoroughness and thoughtfulness, fresh insights and seasoned experience. To guarantee America's tomorrow, we require a steady and ready defense. Give us the commitment to keep faith with those who, having run well, pass the race on to us in great expectation. In your holy Name we pray. Amen.\*\*

Our Father, as we come to this occasion today, we pay tribute to that which has gone before, and anticipate that which is to come. For \_\_\_\_\_ our departing commander, we ask your blessing and care upon him/her and his/her family as he/she assumes a new position, and the family adjusts to a new home. He/she has touched our lives, and we are the better for it. Guide him/her as he/she has guided those given to his/her charge these past years. For our new commander, \_\_\_\_\_, we ask you to bless him/her as well, as he/she and his/her family come among us. As he/she assumes command, may he/she have the wisdom of Solomon in the decisions he/she must make; the courage of David when faced with "giants in the land"; the strength of Samson to endure the daily grind; the patience of Job to deal with the ever-changing demands placed upon him/her; and the compassion of a parent with a hurting child. Bless now this occasion. In your holy Name we pray. Amen.\*\*

Lord, we thank you for this land of free people, and for our mission to help maintain its peace and freedom. We acknowledge that you have created, sustained, and blessed us with the desire to excel and achieve in the service of our country. For the excellence in mission accomplishment achieved by the \_\_\_\_\_ under the leadership of \_\_\_\_\_, we thank you. May your blessing continue upon him/her as he/she moves on to new responsibilities. Lord, we want excellence to continue here. And thus we ask that you endow our new commander \_\_\_\_\_ with the strength and wisdom to balance the needs of the mission with the needs of the people who get the job done. Grant the members of the \_\_\_\_\_ squadron team the strength of body, skill of hand, and clarity of mind to support this new leadership, that they may serve you well in maintaining peace in this land of free people. Give them the satisfaction that comes from a job well done! This we ask in your holy Name. Amen.\*\*



## **Commander's Call**

O God, you have called us to serve as defenders of civil liberty and human freedom. As we pursue peace by means of our professions, may we also in our private lives be part of your healing and help to others. Enable us each day to show forth the love which we have gratefully received from you. Amen.

## Commanders' Conference

Our Father, we pause in prayer as we begin our commanders conference. We ask that you be a part of our work and play together in these days.

In the midst of our radically changing world, O Lord, remind us that change is not new. In the words of the psalmist "we will not fear, though the earth should change - though the mountains shake and the seas roar - you are our refuge and strength O God, a very present help in trouble." In fact Lord, help us to see clearly that to live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often. Deepen, strengthen - continue to improve our own personal faith in you O God - that we may lead and steady others in the days ahead. Amen.

Heavenly Father, as we continue this commanders' conference, we thank you for the gifts to each of us which make our participation possible: health of mind and body, motivation, recognition of the need for growth and communication. We ask, heavenly Father, that you guide and direct those of us gathered here so that we may be ever conscious of the dignity and rights of the individual, while still giving full recognition to the common good. In our decision-making, help us to be true to the highest ideals of our country. Let cognizance of our own failings temper any self-righteousness. Let good judgment rule our decisions. And finally, let our thanks for your many gifts to us include sincere gratitude for the food and drink we are about to enjoy. Amen.

Our Heavenly Father, we gather as leaders of the most powerful tactical Air Forces on earth. May we be mindful, this evening, that not many years ago, before this power, the airplane was first an invisible idea, a dream, an article of faith with only a handful of believers. In these days, as we look to the future, may our strength never be found in airframes and weapons alone, but in that same willingness to think, to imagine, and to be first and foremost "People of faith, believing in your unseen and providential hand." Bless our food, O Lord, in thy gracious and loving name we pray. Amen.

Lord God, all authority in heaven and on earth belongs to you. Yet in your wisdom, you have given some to us. Make us wise and courageous stewards of this power. Be with those warriors--Generals to Airmen--who keep the watch tonight, flying satellites and manning missiles. Let them know we are grateful. Thank you for the food and friendship we now enjoy. In your holy name we pray. Amen.

## Commander's Farewell

Almighty God, we pause to thank you for the special memories and bright hopes which stir within us. It is a time to say good-bye, a time to be thankful for what has been; to say "yes" to today and to be confident of tomorrow. Because of our commander, we are able to approach this hour in a spirit of achievement and pride. We have been blessed with his/her openness of purpose, his/her simplicity of life, his/her respect for moral and spiritual values and an old fashioned love of country. May the memories of the times shared with him/her continue to inspire us all to even greater achievements and service to this organization and to our country. Bless him/her and his/her family in your everlasting care. We pray in your holy Name. Amen.\*\*

Loving Father, we thank you for enjoyable social gatherings that bring us together and bind us close within the Air Force family. We are grateful for the opportunity to praise our good friends \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. Accept our appreciation for what they have meant to us, for wise leadership and pride in professional achievement. But even more importantly, we thank you for what they have meant to us as friends and co-workers. We ask your special blessing on them as they begin new and different challenges in their next assignment. Give to them the sure knowledge of your care and a special measure of your love and peace. May all of us take pride in service to our country and to you. In your Name we pray. Amen.\*\*

O Lord our God, we come into your presence this evening with hearts full of gratitude for the time which you have permitted \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to be with us. We know that throughout the pages of history you have always raised up great leaders to fulfill your divine will. We give you thanks this evening, O Lord, for having granted the opportunity for \_\_\_\_\_ to command us. We are thankful for the leadership he/she has demonstrated to us and for the example he/she has set for us to follow. We pray that you will bless \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ as they prepare for the new mission which you have given them. Please be with us all as we seek to be a powerful Air Force under your control. Grant us the faith, stamina and courage we need to carry out our mission to be peacemakers in a terror-plagued world. Bless this evening which we have to share together and the food that is ours to enjoy. In the name of our Lord, Amen.

Our heavenly Father, we thank you for \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, two of your wonderful gifts to the Air Force community. For his/her leadership and their personal warmth and friendship we are deeply grateful. May our expressions of appreciation this evening affirm for them a sense of "Well done, thou good and faithful servants." As we give them a hearty send off and wish them godspeed. In the words of the old Gaelic blessing:  
"Deep peace of the funning wave to you  
Deep peace of the flowering air to you  
Deep peace of the quiet earth to you  
Deep peace of the watching shepherds to you  
Deep peace of the son of peace to you."

Bless this food grown and prepared by other hands and accept our heartfelt thanksgiving for all your blessing unto us. Help us always to be a blessing to others. Amen.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for those whose lives help us to better understand words such as duty, service, honor, commitment, and faith. The \_\_\_\_\_ are such people. It has been a privilege to share their friendship, to enjoy their company, and to serve with them in the accomplishment of the mission of this wing. Accept our gratitude for what they have meant to us: for wise leadership, a commitment to excellence, pride in professional achievements, and enthusiasm for life. Father, life is full of endings, but each end is a new beginning. As they start their next new beginning, bless them and guard them. May their successors, the \_\_\_\_\_, be strengthened to continue the fine tradition of leadership established here. Lord, make this a memorable evening for this special couple who have touched our lives in a marvelous way. May they leave knowing just how much they will be missed! Bless now this food, and the camaraderie of this hour. In your Name we pray. Amen.\*\*

## **Crisis Action Team**

O Lord God, we pray that we may be instruments of your peace in the days ahead. Give us a sense of Carpe Diem - to seize the day of opportunity. Guard and guide our men and women of all nations and all services as we support, prepare, travel, and begin our missions. Fill all involved with a sense of your presence, power and peace. Comfort the families and loved ones by our closeness and the inner peace only you can bring. May each base and post community insure they are not left behind alone. We pray that each country and community where our people deploy will allow your peace to come as we as a nation and NATO seek to end the chaos and the dying. Bless now our efforts in the Crisis Action Team and give us endurance, wisdom, and caring dedication for all that is entrusted to us. Thank you for your spirit with us and in us. May this be our finest hour. In thy name Lord we pray. Amen.

## Deployment

Gracious Lord, it would be easy to fill our minds with worry over all the “what if’s” we will face today. Instead, let us fill our minds with ‘why not’s’. The Wright Brothers, Mother Theresa, Columbus, Moses, Martin Luther King - they were all faced with enormous odds against them, but they didn’t look at their opposition, but looked instead at their opportunity. You were on their side just as you’re on our side. Help us to know that God plus one is a majority, and that with you beside us, O Lord, all things are possible. Lead us today, O Lord, to accomplish great things through your renewing power and strength. Amen.

Father, as we serve our nation far away from home, we have a tendency to think of you as someone who lives out there somewhere far removed from our workday world. We would do well to remind ourselves that your life did not take place in the sky somewhere way out there, but was lived out with us in the everyday circumstances of life. Even now you peer over our shoulders as we do our jobs. You stand beside us listening to our conversations, and you wait by our bedside at night waiting to see if we will talk to you. Enable us to see there’s never a burden you can’t bear, never a sorrow you won’t shape, never a trial that you’re not there. Shower your divine care upon us today, we pray in your name. Amen.

Father, every once in awhile, we are called upon to push the limit - to go to the extreme. To go a distance that makes others notice. We call the distance \_\_\_\_\_. We call the people \_\_\_\_\_. Grant these safe passage, good operating machines and fair weather. But above all, in the midst of B-1 history, we pray for your presence and your peace to be experienced by all of us, along with an anxious world. Amen.

Over the past few days, our \_\_\_\_\_ has once again accomplished a number of difficult tasks with skill, energy, and professionalism. They’re part of what makes this Wing shine - an integral part of a team. All of us together contribute to the needs of the team to accomplish the tasks assigned in our overall mission. So today I pray. Eternal Father, protect in your care all persons involved in trying to bring an end to senseless violence and death. Give guidance and safety-mindedness to all forces involved in Operation \_\_\_\_\_. Help each member of our wing this day look not only at our own direct responsibilities, but also around--to take shared responsibility for all we do. May our actions contribute to, and not deter from, the reality of peace in our world. Amen.



Today Lord, we lift up to you in prayer all our families and loved ones back at home. While we know how tough it has been for us out here, it has been equally tough for them dealing with the day to day responsibilities. In addition we know that some at home are worried about us and the world situation in which we find ourselves. Give them calm and strength and let them know that we are all right. Make the time pass quickly for them and for us until we are reunited with them at the end of our deployment.

Almighty God, our thoughts turn to you as we head for distant places. You know the future and we are confident that you will defend us from all adversities to body and soul, if we put our trust in you. Watch over spouses, children, and loved ones at home through all the days of our separation, that our return may be a blessed homecoming. Enable each of us to accept cheerfully our place of duty within this \_\_\_\_\_ and, with true devotion, attend to our appointed task as a service with good purpose. Grant us the ability to maintain good spirit until our safe return. Amen.

Almighty and Everlasting God, as we begin our deployment to \_\_\_\_\_, we are keenly aware of our feelings and emotions We are excited with a sense of adventure; we are still a little numb from the shock of physical separation from our loved ones; and we are a little apprehensive at what the future holds for us. Minister to us, Father, according to our need. Give us the strength to do our jobs, give us a spirit of co-operation

and harmony, grant to us and our families your protection, your guidance, and your peace. Amen.

Father, as these prepare to fly in the great spaces of the sky, may your presence be known to them. Maybe it will come to them by the new rays of light peeping over the horizon--maybe from the billowing of the clouds--maybe from the memory of one left behind--maybe from a friend sitting beside where only others have dreamed of being. No matter--may you be with these crews and grant them the safety net of your hands. And bring them back with a grateful sense of accomplishment. For this we offer to you. Amen.

Far from home and those I love, I find my thoughts turning to them with affectionate longing. O thou who art with my distant loved ones even while thou art here with me, who hearkenest to their prayers even as thou hearkenest to mine, bless us and keep us united in spirit until we meet again. Let my memory hold them in such loving embrace that I will be cheered by their imagined presence. Keep me under the influence of the ties that bind me to them, so that even in strange surroundings I may conduct myself in ways that do them honor. Keep me gratefully mindful of the blessings of their love and let me not give way to loneliness or despondency. Help me to bring cheer to my comrades, who like me are separated from their dear ones. For thou, God, art the Father of all; thou art the source of all love. None who puts his faith in thee need ever feel friendless or forsaken.

Father, what a great day to fly--to fly into spaces only known by other fliers. As these are about to embark on this important mission, cause them to recall their first time they were able to split the seams of your great sky. And as they recall this great high of excitement and joy somehow help them to transpose this into their flying this day. May great wonder, precision, and awe accompany them so that after they place their feet back on this earth again, they will be able to look up to You in the great beyond and say, "I've been with You, You've been with me, and I've done my best." Amen.

O God, as we prepare to embark on this mission, we ask your presence to be made known to us anew! Give us wisdom in our decisions, common sense in our actions, discretion in our communications, and openness in our attitude as we work together for the freedom of mankind. May your protective arm rest upon the shoulder of each Airman in this operation and return us all safely home. Amen.

Heavenly Father, I know thou art very near me, and in this hour I beseech thee to receive my humble confession of all the sin and wrong which I have done, and graciously to forgive me for Jesus' sake; give me courage and strength for this hour to go forward trusting wholly in thee, in that whether I live or die, I am thine, with thee in thy care, now and eternally. Amen.

Our Father, who are in Heaven, thou hast been my help and protection; I humbly give thee my worship and thanks that thou hast been with me and preserved me in safety; let me never be unmindful of these thy mercies and help me to show forth, by a life devoted to thy service, the fullness of my grateful heart; through Jesus Christ, thy son, our Lord. Amen.

O God, who art the author of peace and lover of concord, in knowledge of whom standeth our eternal life, whose service is perfect freedom; defend us thy humble servants in all assaults of our enemies; that we, surely trusting in thy defense, may not fear the power of any adversaries, through the might of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Dear God, Great God of victories past, God of strong and courageous men, I am neither of these right now. Instead, I tremble inside, though others look to me for a boldness I don't have. But as scared as I am right now, will you be my strength? Will you give me clarity of thought, confidence in my training, my equipment and my superiors, so that when the smoke of battle clears, my friends, my country and you will be proud of me? Thank you in my Savior's Name. Amen.

Heavenly Father, on a day of battle I commit myself body and soul to thy keeping. When I am in peril of life,

give me courage to do my duty. When I am tempted to sin, give me strength to resist. If I am sick or wounded, grant me healing. If I fall, of thy mercy receive me to thyself, forgiving me all my sins. Bless all who are near and dear to me and keep them in thy fatherly care. And in thy good providence, out of this evil bring everlasting peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Almighty, God, who art the author of liberty and the champion of the oppressed, hear our prayer. We the acknowledge our dependence upon thee in the preservation of human freedom. We know our strength comes not from our machines or ourselves, but from you. Go with us as we seek to defend the defenseless and to free the enslaved. May we remember that our nation, whose motto is "In God We Trust," expects that we shall acquit ourselves with honor, that we may never bring shame upon our faith, our families, or our comrades. Grant us wisdom from your mind, courage from your heart, strength from your arm, and protection by your hand. We seek your special protection for our families and friends as we perform our duty. In your name. Amen.

Dear God, today I am many miles from my family. I am busy, yet there is a part of me that is echoing and empty. There are only memories of the laughter and chatter of home. Memories of warm embraces fill my idle moments and I wonder. I wonder if all is well, if I am missed and yes, sometimes, if even you care. Then Lord, I remember you were far away from home on dusty roads and rocky hillsides. You too were caring for others, preparing to lay your life down. You understand the longings of my heart. You care. I ask, O Lord, two things this day. Be with my family that there may be love, warmth, peace and laughter in my distant home. Be with me today, that the warmth of your loving presence may soothe my troubled spirit and give me the freedom to engage my task with an eager and confident spirit. Amen.

Lord God, as we leave this place and deploy to an important destination where we can serve our nation in faith, help us to remember your words: "Fear not, for I am with you always." Give peace to our families and loved ones knowing that all of us are cared for by your power and might. Lord, grant all of us your peace and mercy. Amen.

Lord, we are grateful for the safe return of our pilots last night and throughout today. We pray that their efforts and the peace efforts of UN and NATO leaders will be a turning point in this conflict and lead to success. Protect all who are exposed to danger in defense of life and liberty and guide us in all we do for the cause of peace and freedom in the world. Amen.

## **Dining In**

Our Lord, as we gather for this Dining In, we thank you for the rich traditions of our service and the privilege and pride of wearing the Air Force uniform. We thank you for the exciting days in which we live, for advances in technology, for the dedication of our personnel, for the strong ties of our relationships and the joy of doing our jobs well. Strengthen us with this food, that as advocates of peace and freedom, we might lead with excellence, live with honor and achieve your highest goals. In your holy Name we pray. Amen.\*\*

O God, we thank you for instilling within us the desire to enjoy life as well as the impulse to call upon your name. Tonight, we are reminded of the great heritage of all our uniformed services. We thank you for the dignity this occasion provides us and for the bonds which unite us together. As we share in this Dining In, we pray that wisdom might be granted to everyone that we might remain faithful to our calling. We ask your special blessing upon the President of the United States, upon our military leaders, our Congress and all in positions of authority. And now, Father, as we recognize you as the source of all our blessings, we give you thanks for this meal. May we use the occasion to enrich our lives in mutual fellowship, drawing always nearer to you. Amen.\*\*



## Dining Out

On our sorties through life, O Lord, we know it often becomes necessary to change our flight plan, to chart a new course, to refile via another route toward our ultimate destination. Forbid, O Lord, that any change of schedule should undermine our destination to serve you and your people. Shield our eyes from superficial brilliance which might lead to broken dreams. Keep us in the flight path of duty, on a course which leads to fruitful achievements and which promises an ever abundant life. Make us great and strong in the things of the spirit. Grant to us clear minds, warm hearts and strong wills to obey the guidance of your spirit. Bless our fellowship together in this place and the food which strengthens our bodies. May our minds and hearts be at peace and in fellowship one with another. Amen.\*\*

Eternal God, director of an endless supply system, your shelves are always full. You supply our needs without forms or requests. You never have to back-order items, and what we receive is always what we need. Help us to be aware of your goodness to each of us, that we will live in a spirit of thanksgiving. We are thankful for the rich traditions of our military service, and for the privilege of wearing an Air Force uniform. We are grateful that the results of our service help to create a better world. Bless us then, this evening, that we may enjoy food, laughter, and company of good friends. "Long may our land be bright, with freedom's holy light." Amen.\*\*

God our Father, we gather this evening as people dedicated to providing the best in support and service, anytime, anywhere. We take this opportunity to thank you for having communicated yourself to us in love. Give us the wisdom, strength, and courage to carry that ideal into our own lives. Let us give ourselves unselfishly to our family when they need our love, to our friends when they need our support, to our community when it asks for help, to our country when it demands our service, and finally to you when you call us to prayer. Amen.\*\*

O God, we are grateful for the challenges and rewards of work, for the opportunity to use the ability you have given us to create a better world--a world of hope and peace. But we are also grateful for moments of joy and celebration. Bless our celebration tonight. May we enjoy the food, the laughter and the company of good friends. May we embrace life with a spirit of enthusiasm and expectation. This is the day which you have made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. Amen.\*\*

Lord, with the time-honored ritual of the Dining Out, we celebrate our distinctive traditions, our unique heritage, and our common bond. We give you thanks for the pioneers of flight who have gone before in war and peace to protect and defend our country. Tonight we gather to honor those who have stretched forth their wings in dominance of the skies. In party and in prayer, with food and with drink, we give you thanks for this splendid occasion. Amen.\*\*

O God, for these who give of their time and lives for the freedom of our country, we give you thanks. Sustain them in their work, so that whether on the flightline, in the air or in the office, your abiding presence may be known. Help us always, O Lord, to be eternally grateful for this country you have given us. May we be open to your spirit so that your peace may be shared through us to the rest of the world. Amen.\*\*

O God, we pause at the outset of this festive evening to acknowledge your presence. May the words that we speak and the thoughts that we think be acceptable in your sight. Grant us this evening the gifts of good food, friendship and laughter. Amen.\*\*

Lord, thank you for your presence at this OTS Class \_\_\_\_\_ Dining Out. We celebrate with these students the closing of one of the most formative chapters of their lives. The success of each trainee is the result of significant personal growth, a highly committed and professional commissioned staff, and the unwavering support of family, friends, and peers. But we also recognize that you have been, perhaps, the most important part of this significant emotional experience. Thanks for standing by us in times of uncertainty, confusion, self-doubt, and occasionally, even coming unglued. We also appreciate you being with our loved ones when we could not. Bless each officer trainee as each fulfills his/her dream of becoming an Air Force officer. Bless also

the entire OTS staff, friends, guests, our meal, and time together tonight. Amen.

Lord, thank you for your presence at this Commissioned Officer Training dining out. We celebrate with these commissioned officers what has been, for most, a brief but formative experience. We hope each officer will take with them a vision to serve and a standard of excellence to guide them in the days ahead. The success of each officer is a result of significant personal growth, a committed and highly professional staff, personal willingness to adapt, and hard work. We have received unwavering support of family and peers, and we also recognize that you have been an important part of this stretching experience. We now ask your blessings upon each officer as they enter their new venture of service to God and country. Bless our meal and time together tonight. Amen.

O God, this evening our attention turns to you for a few moments. We pause and wait in great expectation of your visit among us. Grant us the same anticipation as if we are waiting for an approaching aircraft to appear on our monitors. Looking, wondering, waiting... and then the arrival. What a wonder... for you truly are with us even in the great combat ranges of Wyoming. Your majesty comes forth from the great Big Horns to the wonder of Yellowstone to the uniqueness of your most blessed creation, man and woman. And tonight we gather to honor a few of these outstanding performers. Bless this mess, and the wonder of this evening. Amen.

You have told us in your word, O God, that "A cheerful heart does good like medicine." May the festive joy of this occasion help us to release tension, heal strained relationships, and gain new vigor for life. May this food we are about to receive strengthen our bodies, while reminding us of those less fortunate than we. Amen.

We came together, O God, to seek the blessings of laughter and fellowship. These we have received. Now may we go out to be a blessing to others. Amen.

Our Heavenly Father, we ask for your divine blessings upon this evening's festivities. We pray that the time we share together will draw us closer together as individuals and as an organization. May we be filled with pride because of the units and commander we serve, the country and freedom we defend, and the God - the Creator - in whom we trust. We pray that you will give our commanders wisdom, our officers and NCO's courage, and our spouses understanding to help us accomplish the mission that is ours. We give you thanks for the food and the fellowship that is ours to enjoy. We ask these blessing in your holy Name. Amen.

Almighty God, Father in heaven, we thank your for this nation we cherish. For the rich heritage passed down to us from our Founding Fathers, and for those who have so bravely defended the freedoms we enjoy and prize today. Help each one of us, and the leadership of our country and armed forces to keep a clear vision of what is right and to place our trust where it rightfully belongs -- "in thy righteousness which alone exalts a nation." Thank you, too, for the laughter, good food, and comradeship which we will enjoy. In thy holy Name, we pray. Amen.

O God, we are grateful for all your blessings. You have given us so much. We thank you for the liberties we enjoy in our land, and for all those who have, with great sacrifice, preserved for us such a precious possession. We thank you for the opportunities and challenges of life that help us to develop character, courage and conviction. Our efforts are insufficient without your help and our achievements are incomplete without your blessing. You have woven into the fabric of life your eternal design. Let our lives be the threads that brighten and beautify it. We thank you for the fruit and the bounty of our land that we enjoy in this meal tonight. May we continue in your care and keeping all our days, in thy Name we ask it. Amen.

Heavenly Father who is always ready to bless us far beyond our expectations, cause thy wonderful blessings to be on this special occasion tonight. Grant that thy goodness be abundantly evident to all who have come to this dining in/out. May the humor tonight give us a sense of being linked to one another as friends and comrades. Thank your for your steadfast love and faithfulness to us as your creation. May we enjoy this event with the purpose of having a memorable evening. In your holy Name. Amen.

Father God, I thank you for customs such as this that bring people together. Help us to be strengthened in our sense of belonging in this unit. Help us as a unit to be able to work well together. Help us to be see how you relate to each of us in our jobs and relationships. I thank you for our families who help us so much. Thank you for the airmen of this base; keep them safe, healthy, and growing professionally and personally. We invite you here, O Lord. Help our relationships: where there has been hurt, let there be forgiveness and healing; where there has been criticism, let there be words of enablement. Unto your purposes and glory, and in your holy Name we pray. Amen.

O Lord God of hosts, stretch forth the shield of thy mighty protection over us thy servants, and over the \_\_\_\_\_ in which we serve. Lead and guide us ever more by the counsel of thy goodness; strengthen us with thy might that we may steadfastly continue to be an honor and bulwark of our land, a sure defense against every enemy, and an instrument of service for the good of all. Amen.

O Lord, our God, you have given us many gifts, the least of which is not laughter. In this evening's activities we shall engage in this gift of laughter. Grant us to enter into the spirit of this gift, realizing your presence. And through our laughter and fun, help us to communicate to each other the depth of our caring. Amen.

Almighty God, we bless in your name this occasion on which we gather. As we join in the time-honored tradition of fun and fellowship, may we remember also the sanctity of the time-honored profession of the law. We recognize that the profession of law is a sacred one, for you are the giver of the law. The law of man is based upon the laws of God, and ultimately, all authority stems from God. Give unto all these gathered here who follow that profession, the wisdom, the willingness and the moral courage to practice their profession under the highest standard possible within human limitations, so that the law of man and the laws of God shall be cherished, upheld and defended for the benefit of all people. Bless this food and drink provided from your bounty. Bless us in the service of God and all people. Amen.

Dear Heavenly Father; for the loyalty and friendship that binds us together, we thank you. For the food before us, we thank you. For the rich heritage of this unit, we thank you. For the freedom of this great land preserved by the blood of our fathers, we thank you. We ask that you may find us ever faithful to our friends, wise with our resources, true to our heritage, selfless in our freedom, and ever ready to shed our blood in the pursuit of peace. Amen.

Our Father God, you are not the dark, depressing God that some characterize you as being. You are a God of purpose and intensity--true. But you are also the God of life. You celebrate the beauty of your creation with the symbol of the rising sun over the sparkling water; the eagle soaring over the snow capped mountain; the child zestfully straining to reach the fly ball; and the enthusiasm of our airmen as they celebrate festivities with their comrades. We ask your blessing upon these proceedings in view of the fact that you also understand and participate with us. Help us to become aware of your presence with us this evening and to enjoy life the way you do. Amen.

O Lord our God, we thank you for your presence as we gather here to continue the traditions of those who have gone before us in the Air Force. Keep us mindful of our past, O God, as we attempt to lead the Air Force community in the future. Bless the food which we eat, and all that we do this evening, O Lord, that we might serve you. Amen.

O God, our Father, we give you thanks for all that we have received from your hand:

- Seeing and touching
- Feeling and caring
- Love and happiness
- Friends and family
- Love and peace

- Hope and faith
- Food and drink
- A nation at peace
- A world of infinite variety

As we join in this dining out tradition, we celebrate with ritual-the memories of our past. We pause to honor those who have surrendered their lives in obedience to duty, honor and country. Enable each one of us here to see, respect and cherish the fragile beauty of life and freedom. Lord of all life, keep us humble in our successes, make us wiser through our failures. Enlarge our capacity to give of ourselves, to endure and to overcome. Always keep us open to you and to others. Be among us now to make our joy complete. We pray in your most holy Name. Amen.

Almighty God, heavenly Father, our first and abundant supplier, we pause to acknowledge your presence at this annual dining out. For your love and grace and goodness and mercy unto us in yet one more year of life, we give you thanks. We are grateful for a fall evening of fun and relaxation, a harvest home of supply, when we can sit back and be recreated through food and fellowship and ponder the fruits of our labor. It has been a good year Lord, and peace through deterrence has been secured for another year. As we wine and dine together, bless this food grown and prepared by other hands and accept our heartfelt thanksgiving for all of your blessings unto us. As you have blessed us, remind us always to be a blessing to others. Amen.

## Dinner

Our Heavenly Father, we gather as persons charged by our nation to promote and protect its interests by advancing the cause of peace and freedom throughout the world. We thank you for the privilege of so serving and pray for the gift of your wisdom in order that our achievements might be consistent with both our commission and your truth. On this occasion, we are reminded that life is much like flight. We are sojourners in this land, always looking for a more permanent place. Teach us, O Lord, to know that in all our ways there is One higher and greater than ourselves. Help us to know that as the eagle has learned to fly, so shall we soar in praise and thanksgiving for your bounty. Shelter us with the canopy of your grace and pour out your blessing upon the food and fellowship here tonight. Amen.\*\*

We are grateful, Father, that you created us in your image. We recognize our responsibility to use our intelligence, talents, and energies in ways that honor you. On this occasion, we remember gratefully those whose sacrifices have made possible this laboratory of freedom, the United States of America. We are deeply grateful for those who lived and died to preserve this land in which liberty and justice are the birthright of all. Remembering their example of sacrifice, may such memories deepen our motivation to be citizen soldiers, devoted to the ideals of freedom and equal opportunity for all. Grant us the wisdom to discover the physical and spiritual strengths necessary to maintain peace in this changing world, and the resolve to pursue these strengths. Amen.\*\*

Eternal and everlasting God, accept our thanksgiving for the creative way in which you minister to our every need. As we acknowledge your provision of strength and wisdom, we are mindful of the challenging experience of living life fully. Motivate us to look back reflectively and take satisfaction in the ideals and accomplishments of the past. And permit us to look forward with enthusiasm to those blessings yet to come. Continue to develop within us those qualities that enhance life. Grant us the privilege to come together often in a spirit of love, goodwill and mutual respect. Amen.\*\*

Heavenly Father, thank you for your plan of love. Since love has its origin in you, teach us to understand its meaning. Help us to love you with our whole heart, soul, mind and strength. Enable us to love our neighbor as ourselves. Inspire us to love in ways that are forgiving, patient, kind and faithful. May our love never be jealous or envious, never haughty, selfish or rude. Rather, may our love be marked by commitment, by sacrifice and respect. Bless our time together and the food you have given us. Amen.\*\*

Loving Father, we are reminded that we are family and especially so as members of the Air Force. We are grateful for the ties of mission and friendship which link our lives so closely together. Tonight, we thank you for our co-workers who carry on our mission of deterrence. Bless them and their families in their separation from one another. Grant us your presence and bring comfort and assurance of your divine provision. Now, Father, bless the meal before us on this occasion of fellowship and cheer. Amen.\*\*

Almighty God, Father of us all, creator, sustainer, and friend; we ask your blessing on our meeting here this evening. We thank you that you are the helper of helpers. Since we are helpers we claim you as our special source of strength and help. We thank you especially this night for those in our military service who are called to be our defenders. We are grateful for their dedication, service and sacrifice by which we remain free. This can only be expressed through our efforts to help them as we strive to make their lot easier. Lord, bless the food we are about to eat and bless us in our service. Amen.

Almighty God, we ask you to be with us this evening; all of us present have a common bond to one another and to you. That bond is our concern, especially for those in our military family. We ask your guidance and health and strength of mind and body to continue to express that concern. Bless in a special way those who have hosted this evening, our time together and the food we are about to receive. Amen.

We thank you, O Lord of heaven and earth, for enriching our souls and bodies with your love and grace. We

thank you for the drink and the food which we received from your bounty. We lift our hearts up to you; hear our prayers. Be with us. Save our nation from moral corruption. Fill our hearts with faith and justice. For you are good, and unto you we ascribe glory and earthly gifts which we have now and forever. Amen.

The world is yours, Lord, and of this we are ever mindful, as we say together: AMEN! To everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven. For us who work hard each day to complete the mission, to keep the peace, to stay the course, in the shop and in our homes, we are aware that there is a time for work. Tonight, we ask you, Lord, to bless us as we use this time for relaxation and for joy, for good comradeship, for enriching fast friendships and for making new ones. To everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven. We pray that this night be one of good cheer, one of lightheartedness and love, frolic and fun. We pray for our families and our dear ones. Watch over them and be mindful of them. We thank and praise you for giving us so many gifts - more than we can mention. But we especially praise you, Lord, for all your gifts to us - of food and drink, health and contentment, challenge and opportunities, and above all, peace. We are ever grateful that to everything there is a season, and each season is created with your blessing and in your infinite wisdom. Bless us, then, on this night as we praise you and say together again: Amen!

Our Father, we thank you for our food this evening and for the implemented process that brought it to us. May it be to us a symbol of the larger whole of which we are a part. Someone planted, someone harvested, someone transported, someone packaged, someone purchased, someone prepared and someone serves, and we, O Lord, we will enjoy it. Bless this food and the whole process or team which binds us together in a chain that makes either a good meal or ministry. Amen.

Our Father, as we rejoice in the incredible beauty and handiwork of these fall days, we give you thanks. Today, as we survey air power, may our strength never be found in airframes and weapons alone, but keep us, O Lord, first and foremost a people of faith, believing in the power of your unseen and providential hand so wonderfully displayed in the gulf and all around this day. Bless our food, O Lord. In thy gracious loving name we pray. Amen.

Our Heavenly Father, we are grateful for this evening's opportunity to break bread with our guests from \_\_\_\_\_. May our time together reaffirm and strengthen in the \_\_\_\_\_ Command those ties already so successfully developed from years of support and cooperation with the \_\_\_\_\_ Command. Lord, we thank you for our nation's spiritual, political, and military traditions and the values they represent. May our global power support structures of freedom with justice in the world. Bless our food O God—this we pray in your Holy, Just, and Loving name. Amen.

Our Father, in the beginning was the word and it was your word. Since the beginning, O Lord, it is increasingly clear how important it is to get the word out. Today, we are especially grateful and mindful of Public Affairs, those who get the word out in and beyond our military community, whose mission feeds our need for communication as daily bread feeds our bodies. Bless those who deal with deadlines and images, in facts and interpretation of facts, who inform and influence public opinion, who plan sometimes but as often respond to the latest crisis. Bless their week together as they reflect on the quality of their product and celebrate past victories and anticipate future challenges. Bless all of us in your word and to your service. And for this food we give you thanks. Amen.

Our Father, may the words of the prophet Isaiah be contemporary and instructive for us this evening. "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint." We wait and ask, O Lord, for your blessing upon our food and this time of recreation together. May it strengthen us, lift us up, enable us to walk our talk as befits a grateful people committed to power for a more free, and just, and peace-filled world. This we ask in your name. Amen.

## **Hail & Farewell**

God, you have not been ignored today! The challenges of the course have brought your Name to our thoughts and sometimes to our lips. We are grateful we can call upon you even now. Grant us grace to see ourselves and each other as you do – with compassion and not too seriously. You have blessed us through our relationships one with another. We thank you for those we honor tonight, the new friends and colleagues just arriving and those with orders to move on to the challenges of new courses -- different fairways, sand traps, water holes and roughs. Bless us now as we continue to enjoy each other, the gifts of food and conversation, and the challenges of each tomorrow. Amen.

## **Hindu Prayer Before Meals**

Let us live together, eat together. Together, let us do noble deeds and share the fruits. Let us understand each other, casting aside jealousy and ill-will. Let us all work for peace and peace alone.



## **Leadership**

We are grateful, Lord for those here who inspire us. For those with courage enough to lead us. For those with wisdom enough to challenge us. But, above all, for those with backbone enough to be themselves with us. Amen.

## Luncheon

O God, you have promised to lead us into all truth. And now at this time we call upon you to keep your promise. Strengthen us in the business we begin this day. May the beacon of our lives be true courtesy and honor. May we view our fellow soldiers in the same light we view a great painting - in the best light available. Compel us to be just and honest in all our relationships. Let reason be above suspicion. Let our word be our bond. Save us from using our personality or our position to solve our problems. Since you have all the answers make us willing to listen to you, to our commanders, to our subordinates, that whatever we do might be right and just. In your Name. Amen.

O Great teacher, come to these tables in the blessings of food and drink, conversation and laughter, smiles of recognition and new encounters. Help these men and women to grow in faith so that what they teach to others, they might live daily. Imbue them with a spirit of insight and compassion. May the food we share now nourish us into faithful teachers of your life, and sensitive proclaimers of your word. Send us forth from this place as disciples, taught by the Master, and recognized as Christians, "because they love one another." Hear our prayer, Great Teacher. Amen.\*\*

Our Heavenly Father, we gather as persons charged by our nation to promote and protect her interests, to defend freedom and advance the cause of peace. We thank you for the privilege of serving in the Air Force and pray for the gift of wisdom in order that our achievements might be consistent with both our commission and your truth. May the measure of our success be a world in which nations prosper and resolve problems without war. Grant that the representatives of our nation be leaders of conviction and integrity. And may the faith which undergirds our country guide us in our efforts to preserve the freedoms intended for all people. We pray that the experiences of our guests will be profitable and enjoyable. Together let us learn from one another that we all might be more fully prepared to serve you and our country. Now, as we enjoy the food prepared for us, may our spirits be refreshed by your presence. Amen.\*\*

We pause on this occasion, O God, to give thanks for the many liberties and freedoms which we enjoy as Americans. May we never forget our responsibilities in the pursuit of peace. Remind us anew that you are the maker and sustainer of our lives and that we are dependent upon you for both our physical and spiritual well-being. Bless us in this time together as we give thanks for our food and fellowship. This we pray in the name of all that is holy and good. Amen.\*\*

Almighty God, in this moment of meditation, we offer thanks to you for the goodness we have received this day. We ask your blessings upon all who are present and their families. Be with our nation in these days. Make us strong and great in our reverence of you, so that we may lead all nations in the way of justice and peace. Now, for the food which we are about to receive, we give thanks and ask your blessing upon it. Amen.\*\*

In these moments, O Lord, lead us to know the responsibility that is ours as leaders and workers on this base. By word, example and devotion to duty, let us become involved in the answer to the problems that confront us. Grant us strength to perform our tasks satisfactorily and a strong faith in you that will enable us to keep life's priorities in order. Accept our thanks for the food we are about to receive. Amen.\*\*

Almighty God, in your wisdom and grace, you have given to us this special occasion in which to enjoy food and fellowship with our good friends. We are grateful for the bond of friendship and support, of care and concern which makes us one spirit. Bless our nation, O Lord, as we undertake new goals to strengthen our faith, to protect our people and care for those less fortunate than ourselves. Now, let our food be blessed and our fellowship be enriched as we give thanks for your provision. Amen.\*\*

O God, our Heavenly Father, we thank you for another day of service to our country and the people of this base. Give us clear minds, warm hearts and strong wills to obey the guidance of your word. Reward us with the inner satisfaction of doing our jobs well and grant us hearts at peace with you and in fellowship with one another.

Bless now this food to the strength and nourishment of our bodies that we may better serve you and our nation.  
Amen.\*\*

Lord, grant us your blessing as we gather to share this meal in your sight. Strengthen and nourish our minds and spirits as this food will nourish our bodies. For the blessings of food, friendship and the challenges we share for our common good we give you thanks. Encourage us in our endeavors to live above the common level of life. Grant us new ties of friendship and new opportunities of service. In your name, Lord we pray. Amen.

## Military Anniversaries

(Air Force) As we celebrate this \_\_\_\_ anniversary of the United States Air Force, we are aware of the Presidential proclamation designating today as National POW/MIA Recognition Day. As members of America's Armed Forces we, perhaps more than all others, understand that freedom isn't free -- the cost is exorbitant. We honor all Americans who have defended liberty half a world away -- those killed in the line of duty, imprisoned, and missing in action -- all of whom have made extraordinary sacrifices on behalf of their country. Yet, as we celebrate our history, we embrace the future with confidence in our leadership, commitment to our profession, and faith in our God. And now, may your presence be with us about these tables. Bless this food and drink which comes from your loving hands. And to you, eternal God, in whose name we pray, be our praise and our thanksgiving. Amen.

(Air Force) Eternal God, on this 50th anniversary of the United States Air Force we celebrate a rich history steeped in courage and patriotism -- in love of God and country. During this celebration, we are mindful of those whose sacrifices undergird the freedom we so often take for granted. From the eras of the Army Air Corps, the Korean conflict, the Vietnam conflict, the Desert Storm/Desert Shield, to our present era we are constantly reminded of your unfailing presence in our lives. Names like Arnold, Spaatz, Fairchild, Chennault, Vandenberg, Twining, LeMay, and countless others -- some in our midst tonight -- remind us also of the legendary ones that paved the way for us. Leaders that taught us to be bold and creative, thus better prepared to lead this great Air Force in an environment of increasing uncertainty and accelerating change. Remind us again in our privileged work -- that the price of freedom isn't free -- but demands vigilance, service, commitment, sacrifice, and above all an awareness that you O holy One, are with us. And while our Air Force thoughts are often on finding, fixing, tracking and targeting anything that moves on the face of the earth -- remind us again that your spirit blows wherever you choose. So fixing, tracking, and targeting you, become Air Force impossibilities -- but our hope and the world's hope rests in somehow finding you, or perhaps in allowing you to find us. And so we humbly pray -- help us in our search, so the attributes of integrity first, service before self, and excellence in all we do ring true in the very core of our lives. Bless our President, our congressional leaders, our Secretary, and our military commanders with your wisdom and your presence. Bless this food we are about to eat and this anniversary celebration as we go from our golden legacy to our boundless future! This we pray in your Holy Name. Amen.

(Air Force) Gracious, all powerful God, we pause to give you thanks for blessing America and for blessing the place the Air Force has occupied in her rise to power and her vision for the future. When our forefathers established this nation by signing its original constitution 21 decades ago they could not possibly have had any concept of the eventual, international impact of their bold actions. O God, you have blessed America! Those first Americans had no model to follow. They simply aspired to create something good for them, their children, and the world. Through your abundant blessings and grace they succeeded. When the Air Force was established, fifty years ago, with the planes and the people that helped to secure liberty and freedom for the masses through the allied victory in World War II, those Air Force visionaries could not have imagined the heights and speeds their flying machines would gradually conquer. With some thinking today of changing our name to *Air and Space Force*, we realize that far from our vision fading, it is expanding at an ever quickening pace. O God, when we, in awesome wonder, consider all the worlds your hands have made, when we gaze out at the stars and are continually reminded that your power is displayed throughout the vast universe, we are humbled and deeply thankful to have been chosen to play our part in your vision. We pray that you will continue to set apart and bless the types of leaders that will continue to lead the Air Force and America on its quest to insure that the hopes and dreams voiced in our nation's constitution will be fulfilled. Dear Lord, let us always remember to give you the glory for the great and wonderful things that happened in our history, our present and our future. Amen.

(Marines) Eternal God, on this \_\_\_\_ anniversary of the United States Marine Corps we celebrate a rich history steeped in courage and patriotism -- in love of God and country. During this celebration, we are mindful of those whose sacrifices undergird the freedom we so often take for granted. From the triumph at Tun Tavern to

the victorious acquisition of the Mameluke Sword at Tripoli -- from the Mexican Halls of Montezuma to the waters of Guantanamo Bay -- from the forests of Belleau Wood to the beach heads of the Pacific to the tundra of the Cho Sin Reservoir ... US Marines were always the “first to fight” -- usually “outnumbered” -- *Semper Fidelis* ... “always faithful.” Remind us again in our privileged work -- that the price of freedom isn’t free -- but demands vigilance, service, commitment, sacrifice. Bless our President, our congressional leaders and our military commanders with wisdom. Bless this food we are about to eat and this anniversary celebration with family and friends. And may all within the sound of my voice, remember their promise to the American people -- and remain -- “always faithful.” Amen.

(Marines) Our Father, in whose name and trust we pray, we give you thanks for the blessings of liberty and freedom. We are thankful for the honor and courage of United States Marines, both past and present. We are grateful for the skill and determination of marines who have contributed to the continuation of that liberty and freedom. We are aware that those contributions have often been made at great personal sacrifice. May those same values which have made the Marine Corps strong be renewed as marines celebrate this birthday. We especially lift our prayers and thoughts for those marines and their families, and persons of other services, who are prisoners of war, and those missing in actions. Amen.

(Army) Eternal God, our Heavenly Father, in this anniversary celebration we bow in prayer, not out of habit, or mere formality, but humbly and sincerely, to claim your presence, and to honor your name. We thank you for the goodly heritage of our country, for its proud history, and noble achievements. We are grateful that the dangers which confront our nation today receive the constant vigilance and dedication of our soldiers. We thank you for the privilege of serving in, and being associated with the US Army, and pray that your rich blessings will be upon us all. Enable each of us to renew our commitment to serving with efficiency and honor. Grant us the determination to individually and collectively live out our country’s creed—“One Nation Under God, With Liberty and Justice for All.” As we eat together, please be among us as The Bread of Life. For the glory of your name we pray. Amen.

(Army) Heavenly Father, we thank thee for thy benevolent grace shown us, for thy rich blessings bestowed upon us personally, and nationally, and for the surfeit of freedom our people have enjoyed. We gratefully acknowledge the sacrifices of all military members and their families both active and retired, paying special tribute to the former POWs. We pray especially for the still missing servicemen, and for their families and friends for whom the anguish and bitterness of war are enduring realities. Bless them, O Lord. Enrich their lives with thy presence and help them in this time of need. We also thank thee for the good and helpful work of the AUSA. We acknowledge the critical importance of corporate members working with individual members, in supporting the military’s mission of defending liberty, and human dignity. May your rich blessings rest upon each member, dear Lord. And bless us, our nation, our leaders, and our fellow citizens. Direct our national dreams toward freedom for all people, and our talents, energies, and commitment towards that hope. For the glory of thy name, we pray. Amen.

(Army) Lord, we are grateful for your many blessings. We ask that you bless our presence here and our purpose for this gathering. We are grateful for the forces that defend our nation and those who actively support them. Lord, may we have a good fellowship here this evening. Bless the food for our bodies’ use as we serve and protect others. Amen.

(Army) Almighty God, Creator of nations, Lord of history, healer of souls; we thank thee for thy benevolence and grace toward us. We thank thee for the gifts thou hast bestowed, especially the most precious gift of freedom. We bow to ask for thy blessings. Be with those who suffer the pains of illness, poverty, and distress. Bless our community, and all of those who work in and with the military to make it better. May thy rich blessings be upon our national leaders, those who carry the heavier burdens of command and leadership. And may thy presence guide our thoughts and attitudes as we sit down together to eat. Make us truly thankful for these thy gifts we are about to receive. For the glory of thy name. Amen.

## **Moving From War to Peace Time**

In these days ahead, as we move from lessons learned in war to managing drawdowns in peace - as we go from the Persian Gulf to the golf course. Be with us, guide us, refresh us that having been there we may return to our places of command, better equipped to be ready, well, and spiritually whole. In thy name we pray. Amen.

## **Muslim Blessing Before/After Meals**

(Before eating) In the name of Allah!

(After eating) Thanks to Allah, master of both worlds! (this and the afterworld)

## **NCO Appointment Ceremony**

Father in heaven, we do well to remind ourselves that the times demand a commitment from each of us to accept the responsibilities of the positions we hold in life. We fill many roles. We are Air Force members. We are parents and spouses. We are members of squadrons or organizations. We are American citizens, participants in a larger society. Yet here we assume a special trust, one given to us by our nation which pledges us to defend the liberties we all love. Grant that these men and women who are here to be recognized for their achievement, and given new status among their peers, will give their very best to the Air Force, to their nation, and to their God. For it is in your name we pray. Amen.\*\*

Phillips Brooks once said, "Life is full of ends, but each end is a new beginning." Father, be with us as we celebrate a new beginning for these graduates who move on to new responsibilities. They have all made another step in their Air Force careers. All of life is a school of learning, O God. To this class's learning, add gifts of integrity, concern, a positive outlook, and the ability to lead by example. In their new status, undergird their search for that fulfillment and joy we all seek in life. Guide each of us to use the gift of our lives wisely. Give us gratitude for our blessings, and as we contemplate those blessings, may we each express that gratitude to you from sincere hearts. Be in our midst this evening, and complete our joy. We pray for your name's sake. Amen.\*\*



## **ORI Celebration**

Our Father, thank you for the success of the ORI last week. So many things went right we hardly know where to begin in expressing our gratitude. But of one thing we are certain, from the commanders in the Command Post right down to the airmen scattered in remote shops around the base, a hundred percent effort was given in achieving outstanding results. For this collective effort from men and women of every rank and from families and friends who supported them at home, we are most indebted. Now, Father, in the wake of such a remarkable achievement on the part of everyone, bless this celebration with joy and the satisfaction of a job well done.

Amen.\*\*

## PCS

Almighty God, to even the most casual observer, life is analogous to golf. We sometimes pretend to get through life acting as if we can do it on our own -- without your Divine help -- making up the rules as we play. We hook and pretend it's a draw. We slice and call it a fade. We drive the ball 250 yards...out of bounds ... compliment ourselves on the distance ... call it a mulligan and tee up again. You remind us that it isn't the expense of the club, but the swing of the man that makes the difference. The truth is Lord, in the game of life, we're all duffers in need of divine lessons. And it is a biblical truth that your ways are reflected in the lives of good people -- two of which we honor this evening. As in all great players \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ are skilled, but teachable; talented, but humble; faithful, but not self-righteous. In their daily walk and leadership, they have taught us that the real opponent in life, as in golf, is not the person standing next to us; nor even the course we play, but ourselves. True victory comes from within. And so Heavenly Father, as they have blessed us, so we ask your divine blessing be upon them. Amen.

Loving Father, life is a highway of sorts... whether walking on foot, flying by jet, or cruising on a Harley Davidson. The truth is, we are all pilgrims just passing through. \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ have shared their lives with us for \_\_\_\_\_ years. And in living, have taught us what's really important in life is not the destination but the journey... not necessarily which road we take but how we travel. Their journey has been traveled with integrity and purpose, in faith and friendship. And so we say to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_: "May the road rise up to meet you, may the wind be always at your back, may the sun shine warm upon your face, and the rains fall soft upon your fields, and until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of his hand." Amen.

As you prepare to depart this base, may you take with you many fond memories of the individuals and the experiences involved with this assignment. May your next duty station meet your every expectation, and may your work be rewarding and satisfying. May the presence of God be as a beacon of light to you throughout your life's journey. Amen.

O loving and trusting God, as we prepare for the departure of \_\_\_\_\_ from our midst, our minds are filled with the moments of past joys and sorrows that we have shared with them. We thank you, Lord, for bringing our lives together for this short while. We have been truly blessed by their warmth, love and friendship. As they depart from us, may they leave with the certainty that we have loved them dearly, and will continue that love through remembrance and hopefully through future visits or assignments together. Bless them with a safe and pleasant journey to their next duty station, and may they be blessed with loving friends and a supportive Christian fellowship at the chapel where they will worship you. In the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, we pray. Amen.

All-powerful God, you always show mercy toward those who love you and you are never far away for those who seek you. Remain with your servants on this holy pilgrimage and guide their way in accord with your will. Shelter them with your protection by day, give them the light of your grace by night, and, as their companion on the journey, bring them to their destination in safety. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.9

Our Heavenly Father, we thank you for this occasion, a time to honor and salute \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. May their short tour here remind us to number our days together, to be genuinely appreciative of relationships, and to hold precious the time we have with one another. May their immediate and total sharing of themselves with our community be an example to us all. Especially, O Lord, we thank you for their warmth, for their kind and gracious way among us. For this delightful combination of personal and professional skills in \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, we are grateful. Our prayer and best wishes go with them as they assume new responsibilities as \_\_\_\_\_. Bless this food and those who prepared it, O Lord. Amen.

Our Father, we thank you for those whose lives help us to better understand and appreciate such words as duty, honor, country, service and friendship. We thank you for those whose examples recall the best in our heritage and promote the finest ideals of the present--those who can always be counted upon to be part of the answer

rather than part of the problems that face us. It has been our great privilege and pleasure to know \_\_\_\_\_ --to share their friendship, to enjoy their company and to serve with them in accomplishing the mission of this wing. As we say farewell to these our friends, we thank you for all they have meant to us, to this base and to this command. We pray your richest blessings upon them as they continue to meet the challenges and reap the rewards which lie ahead. Keep them, we pray, in your constant care and may they know that our friendship is always theirs. Amen.\*\*

Almighty God, we turn to you now in thanks and praise for all that we are and all that we hope to be. We thank you for the meaning and purpose of this occasion and for what it represents in terms of service rendered, missions accomplished, lives inspired and freedom preserved. We thank you especially for friendships which are made and for good times which are not forgotten. We thank you that when we depart from one another, we do not depart from you. Accept our gratitude for those whom we recognize this evening. Bless them as they continue their service in a new assignment. And grant us all your peace. Amen.\*\*

Almighty God, we are sad because there are those who are completing their assignment and ministry among us, but we are glad that these times are also opportunities for new beginnings. Help us to be honest about the meaning of events and to remember the past with acceptance while looking to the future with trust. Bless now our fellowship together and us to your service. Amen.\*\*

Now these thy people depart, for places filled with apprehension, with challenge, with joy. They shall face these things neither alone, nor unloved. Bless them. Bless them as they seek answers to solve problems that shall meet them. Bless them as they prepare a new house for their home, as they prepare their hearts for fresh relationships, as they go out and as they come in. Bless them, bless them richly.\*\*

Our Heavenly Father, we lift our hearts and minds in prayer to gratefully acknowledge the bountiful evidence of your rich blessings upon us. We are especially thankful for your servants \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, and happily acknowledge their many contributions to this community, the US Air Force, and the nation. We bless them in your Name and ask that you prosper their transition to their new duties, and enrich their future with happy success. With St Francis we pray: "O Lord, make us instruments of thy peace. Where there is hatred let us bring love; where there is injury, healing, where there is sadness, joy." And may thy holy presence guide our thoughts and attitudes as we sit down together to eat, making us truly thankful for these thy gifts we are about to receive. For the glory of thy Name. Amen.

Heavenly Father, make us daily aware of, and thankful for, your great gift of life, and of all the things, great and small, material and spiritual, that sustain life, enrich it, and make it meaningful and memorable. Especially, we ask your blessing on the \_\_\_\_\_ who have become very much a part of our lives and our community. Continue to bless and inspire them, and let the spirit of considerateness, concern and community continue among us, and be preserved through the efforts of us who remain, those who will join us, but above all through your presence and blessing to guide us all. Accept now our thanks for this food, these moments of fellowship and your love which truly sustains all our lives. Amen.

Our Heavenly Father, as we gather this evening to honor \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ we rejoice that they came to us at \_\_\_\_\_ AFB as friends and leaders in the fullest and very best sense of those words. May their tour here remind us to number our days together, to be genuinely appreciative of relationships, and to hold precious what time we do have with one another. May their immediate and total sharing of themselves with the Wing and base community be an example to us all. Especially, O Lord, we thank you for their warmth, for their love and care for people. For this delightful combination of personal and professional skills we give you thanks. Continue to bless and be with them, O Lord, as they have blessed and been with us. Bless this food and those who prepared it. In your holy Name we pray. Amen.

Almighty God, we ask your blessing upon our gathering this evening to honor \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. Help us celebrate with them their past accomplishments and say farewell as they go to another place to face new

challenges and experiences. We thank you for all they have contributed to this community. As they enter a new plateau in life, we ask you to bless them and keep them in your loving care. Now Lord, let this time of good food and fellowship enrich the lives of each of us as we strive to serve you and our country. Amen.\*\*

O Lord, we are here tonight with mixed feelings. Happy to honor \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ but sorry that they are leaving our community. We are thankful for their concern, guidance and friendship. They have had a positive affect on all of us, and we are grateful that they have been a part of this community. Their influence has made each of us more caring and more responsible. Our lives have been touched. They will be missed but not forgotten. Grant them a safe trip and your continued guidance in their new assignment. Bless our fellowship, our fun and our food. Amen.\*\*

Great God, my life is filled with changes and challenges. A PCS move brings anxiety, grief, and hope. I am anxious about what lies ahead. This type of change is disruptive and stress is building, it hurts to leave friends and situations which I know well. I grieve our broken relationships. Yet I am filled with your spirit of hope and adventure. New opportunities abound with each step in my life. I trust the promise that nothing in all of creation can separate me from your love. I dare to move forward boldly, secure in your love, support and presence. Keep me mindful of your permanence in my time of transition. Amen.

We don't handle change and disruption easily, O Lord. It brings apprehension, uncertainty and frustration. We not only worry about responsibilities in our new assignment but we are concerned about personnel and family adjustment. But change is now uncertain and we need your help to let go and let your spirit work in our lives. Open our minds and hearts to the new challenges which are ahead. We trust, O Lord, that we have learned valuable lessons in our current assignment and that our contribution has had much value. We, also, trust that you will give us the strength, will and vision to be faithful in our mission to come. Amen.

O God, in whom we place our care and our trust, we pray that our journeys and travels would not carry us beyond the regions of your love, nor into the realms of despair or discouragement. Allow no ill to befall us in body, mind, or spirit. Though we may be separated from loved ones help us to remember that we are never absent from you. Keep us true to our purpose and safe in our endeavors until our journeys end. Amen.

O God, we thank you for this time of rest and relaxation from the daily routine of business. We ask that you would open the way before us, may our paths lead us to challenging and rewarding activities. Keep us in the sanctuary of your peace. Journey with us now and evermore. Amen.

Almighty God who abides with us every step along our way we especially ask your merciful care for this journey we are about to begin. You are aware of our uncertainties and apprehensions. Bring us inner peace and a new sense of excitement as we enter yet another adventure in the continuing life that you have given us. Help us to see the days ahead not as a time to be dreaded but as a time to be embraced, filled with excitement and promise. Continue to be our guide and close companion as we commit all that we are and hope to be to your care. Amen.

O God, as I begin my journey, help me to remember that you are by my side. Assist us to say goodbye to family, friends, and companions as we prepare for disconnect. Give us the courage to affirm, remember, and love as we anticipate the pain of grief and separation. Guard and protect them from all evil, and watch over them while we are absent one from another. Enable me to prepare for my arrival at a new place with new people. Let the mistakes, disappointments, and unhappiness of the past fade away in forgetfulness. When the road is long, hard, or complicated and I experience fear, discouragement, or ill, may thy rod and thy staff comfort me. I do not know what this travel may bring, but you do, Father. I do not know where my path may lead, but you do. Therefore, I go forward because it matters not if my way passes through stormy waves or glassy calm, you will be with me. Equip me, Lord, for the journey that lies ahead that I may be able to meet any task. Keep me strong in body, mind, soul and spirit, and close to you. Amen.

Lord, we thank you for being the changeless eternal one. You provide security and stability in an ever changing society. Be with those of us who are making transitions. We leave worldly security to relocate and establish new relationships. Give us peace in knowing that you go before us and prepare the way. Amen.

All-powerful and ever-living God, when Abraham left his own land and departed from his own people, you kept him safe all through his journey. Protect us, who also are your servants: walk by our side to help us; be our companion and our strength on the road and our refuge in every adversity. Lead us, O Lord, so that we will reach our destination in safety and happily return to our homes. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen. 9

Almighty God, as we come to the end of our tour on this base, our hearts are filled with gratitude and joy--for the friends we have made, for the cares and sorrows we have shared, for the victories we have won, for the good times and the fun and the laughter. We are grateful for the protection you have given to our people, especially for the safety of those who fly. We are thankful for the contribution that so many have made in so many different ways to enrich our lives. We ask your continued blessings upon these good friends. Give them steadfast hearts and strong faith that they may serve you and their country well. Amen.\*\*

Master Lord Jesus Christ our God, the true and living Way, be my companion, guide and guardian during my journey. Deliver and protect me from all danger, misfortune and temptation, that being so defended by your divine power, I may have a peaceful and successful journey and arrive safely at my destination. For in you I put my trust and hope, and to you, together with your eternal Father and the Holy Spirit, I give all praise, honor and glory, now and for evermore. Amen.

## Prayer Breakfast

Lord, you have called us to be guardians of a nation founded upon your principles. We in the military service are proud to accept the responsibility of this high calling. We dedicate ourselves to our vocation, and ask for guidance and courage in aiding all people to live with freedom, dignity, safety, and peace. Today we pray for our President and all of our national leadership. As they guide our nation, empower them to make responsible decisions based upon your will. Lord, you have blessed us so abundantly, and entrusted us with liberating truths, but sometimes we fail to live up to this high calling as a people of God. We are sorry. Forgive us. Remind us, as often as we need to hear it, that we amount to very little without you. We dedicate ourselves and this nation to your service. Use us according to your will in the name of the one true and living God, the one who gives breath and life, the one who allows nations to rise and fall, we pray. Amen.

Good morning, Lord. Thank you for your presence at our National Prayer Breakfast. As we gather to celebrate the spiritual dimension of our nation's heritage, we thank you for a land where we are free to worship in an amazing fabric of churches, synagogues, temples and mosques. We are grateful for those who have served you faithfully during our brief 200 year existence, as well as those who have given their lives defending the great principles upon which our country is founded. We also ask you to forgive us when we take our heritage for granted; when we act irresponsibly; and when we fail to walk with you as we should. Thank you for this meal we are about to share - for comfortable homes, caring family and friends, daily provisions, responsible state, local/national leaders, and opportunities to serve others. Help us to be faithful caretakers in all aspects of our lives and to give you the place in our lives you deserve. In the days ahead, give us the wisdom to work with our international neighbors in the pursuit of security and peace - so that all people may know justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with you. Amen.

Loving Lord, we thank you for the blessings--too numerous to count--which you have showered upon our nation. Help us to be worthy of your gifts of peace and prosperity. We thank you for this national day of prayer during which we pause to recall our country's spiritual roots. Enable us to embrace this noble heritage of faith as we pray in the words of our first President, George Washington: "Grant that we may hear your word with reverence, receive it with meekness, mingle it with faith, and that it may accomplish in us, Gracious God, the good work for which you have sent it. Bless our families, kindred, friends and country. Be our God, and guide us this day and forever." In your most holy Name we pray. Amen.

O Lord our God, we give you thanks for this early morning hour which gives us the opportunity to reflect upon our lives, our freedom and our faith. Bless each person here this morning and the time that we share together. Please nourish us with the physical and spiritual food of which we are about to partake. We ask these blessings in the name of our Lord. Amen.

Almighty Father, we pray that you will bless this prayer breakfast and the food that we have provided to nourish both our bodies and our minds. Help us to pause for a few moments and to realize our need for your help in our lives. We pray that you will bless this fine squadron, its commander, its officers, its NCOs, and all the airmen that work so hard to make the squadron what it is. We pray that you will give them success and that you will keep them safe. Help us all to have a good day, a bright day, a cheerful day, beginning even now. For it is in the name of our Lord we pray. Amen.

In the morning, O Lord, we lift up our hearts and prayers to you. To the one who is infinite in goodness and wisdom, we pray that you give us the courage and strength to meet the tasks ahead. Open our hearts that we might receive Divine guidance upon which to base our decisions. Teach us to be humble, patient, and loving in all our dealings with others. And now, we ask your blessing and guidance upon this activity, and offer our thanks for daily bread and for every good gift which comes to your. Amen.

Bless us, Lord, as we gather together for food and fellowship this morning. Lord, let us be about the business of being airmen today. May our lives reflect a contentment in our work resulting from a knowledge that what we

do helps our nation and our people pursue your business of peace. Keep us from striking angrily out at others who cross us by what they say or do. Keep us from allowing our feelings for others to be formed by our daily training. Let us never lose sight of our peaceful purposes. Help us to read your word as the training manual on how we should live. Guide and direct those who have authority over us: the President, the Congress, the Secretary of the Air Force, our commanding general, and all the officers and NCOs in our squadrons. Keep our nation "one nation under God." Amen.

God, early in the morning we gather together to give praise to you for your great love and care for us, your children. We know our lives are not always what they should be and we hope by your grace to do better. Take us through this day with a feeling of your presence going with us and watching over us. May the nature of our work never diminish the value of human life in our sight, because we are all created in your image, Lord. We're not perfect people but airmen attempting to keep our world at peace. Bless our efforts and help us to be true peacemakers. In your precious Name we pray. Amen.

Father, life is so full of things and situations that grab our attention and try to keep it. Thank you for a time like this when we can pause, when we can focus on you and reflect. Please forgive us for leaving you out of our day. Help us, Father, to think of you, to hear what you have to say, and to let you in. In the name of our Lord we pray. Amen.

Blessed be you, God, our Father, Blessed be you, the God of all creation. You are the giver of every good gift. For all the many gifts you have given us we thank you. This new day is another promise of your love. Each fresh beginning is your gift to us. The bread which we break together this morning nourishes our bodies. May this fellowship which we share together at this table nourish our spirits and enable us to recognize you in our presence. Live in us this day. May you be pleased with our lives today as we ask your special blessing on our friends and on our families and on all of us. To you be love, honor, and glory, this day and forever. Amen.

Our Heavenly Father, as we close this occasion on which national and military leaders here and all over the world have gathered to express their faith in God, we ask your blessing and guidance on the service to our country which we may be privileged to give. And, having asked for your guidance publicly, let us not run along, ignoring it privately. We know that a different world cannot be built by indifferent people. So add to all other gifts you have bestowed on us, the blessing of direction and drive. Give us the vision to see the sometime wide gap between the ought and the is, and even more, the determination to bridge that gap. Finally, Father, let us not imagine that the mere hearing of words and listening to prayers will suffice to achieve the righteousness that exalts a nation. Inspire each one here to seek you and find you in daily private prayer. Watch over us, Father, this day, and always. Amen.

Almighty and eternal God, whose hand has made the sun and sea and land and who made we humans for fellowship which reaches to the ends of the earth; we thank you for every gift which becomes richer as we share it and more secure as we guard it for one another. O God, we praise you for the spirit of liberty you have entrusted and established through our fathers before us. Grant that we, their children, may be worthy of the heritage and challenge they place in our care as a nation and as individuals. Lord of all, give us the grace to treasure the diversities of gifts within our nation. And, unite us as Americans, as defenders of liberty and justice for all, in your cause of righteousness, love of our neighbor, and our starving for a lasting peace. Save us from hatred, confusion and war. And yet let us stand firmly against cruel and heartless discriminations and racial or religious prejudice. Preserve us from arrogance and bigotry which lead blindly into intolerance and mindless obedience. O Lord, as a nation, and for us here at \_\_\_\_\_, a tiny molecule of your vast creation, enrich and bless our meeting of minds and hearts this morning. Help us to catch a vision of a greater destiny and the call of holy responsibility. May the moral fibers of duty, destiny and the call of holy honor, and country be seen in us in every act in every word in every thought. O God, truly bless America and us. In your holy Name. Amen.

Lord God, you graciously provide us with daily bread, and have blessed our land with peace. Your giving deserves our thanksgiving. Grant us nourishment from this time of food, fellowship, and spiritual reflection.

Amen.

Dear God, this morning, as your sun rises over the land, we pause to admire your creation and feel a part of it. We give you thanks for being with us and for giving us the vehicle of prayer by which we can commune and communicate with you. We rejoice over the equality of prayer...for whether we are President or citizen, civilian or military, rich or poor, it matters not, because you have said that all can come to you in prayer. Help us to value this gift, to take the opportunity to offer not only our thanksgiving and praise but our heartfelt cares and concerns for ourselves and others. Help us to listen in the glory of a sunrise, the raging of a rainstorm, or the peaceful silence of a blanket of snow, so that we may become aware that you move through our land and lives in many different ways. We invoke your blessing upon us, this meal you have provided, and this fellowship. And as airmen everywhere and in every land, we pray for your peace. Amen.

O God our Father, you have commanded the light to shine out of darkness and awakened us again to praise your goodness and to ask your favor. Accept now the sacrifice of our worship and thanksgiving. Make us to be children of the light and of the day, heirs of your everlasting inheritance. Remember O God, all our brothers and sisters who stand in need of your favor on land or sea, in air or space. May our lives ever praise your wonderful and holy Name. Amen.

Almighty God and merciful Father: as we and our fellow citizens join in prayer breakfasts throughout the world, we beseech your blessings upon all who have united in a spirit of genuine fellowship and brotherhood. We are grateful for all your blessings and for our liberty which is the inalienable heritage of all Americans. Continue, we pray, your protective care over our beloved country. Guard the inhabitants of our blessed land from all evil designs. Implant in the hearts of us all, a desire to work in unity for the promotion of freedom and peace. In a world threatened by discord and fear, endow our President and national leaders with the necessary understanding to successfully cope with the crucial problems of our time. Enable them to overcome the dangerous obstacles in mankind's path. Cause all nations to cease hostilities and to desire everlasting peace. Amen.

We are drawn in prayer to you, Lord, from the many and varied experiences of this week. Seeking for a right interpretation of what has happened to us, and willing to learn how to handle our lives, we are open to you. Let every act and utterance in our being together be an offering of our love to you and an acceptance of your love. May we be taught by your Spirit the implication of your love for living - today - tonight and tomorrow. Amen.

The Scripture teaches us that God's people are encouraged to declare every event as a privilege to acknowledge the presence of God. The little things of life which so often escape our attention as being of little consequence, are not so with our God, especially an event such as a Prayer Breakfast. We thank you Father God, that our refuge is in you, that you shield us from the troubles of life, and from the tensions of living. Our days are often clouded, but the sunlight is from you. Our joys are shaded, but the perfect smile belongs to you. Be praised this morning our God. Amen.

Gracious Lord, grant us your blessing as we gather to share this meal in your sight. May your presence strengthen and nourish our mind and spirit just as this food will nourish our bodies; and may you grant us true fellowship and peace. It is in praise of your Holy Spirit that we pray. Amen.

Father, as we gather around this table and share this meal together, we are reminded of your sustaining power. We pray, Father, that as our bodies are physically nourished we may nourish one another, encouraging and strengthening each other. We ask your blessings upon this food before us, upon those who serve at this time, and upon our time together. For all these we are truly thankful. In the name of our Lord. Amen.

Great God, our King, we thank thee for the light of a new day. We are aware that each day brings new opportunities and new occasions for fellowship. Strengthen us mentally and physically for the challenges of this day, and grant us the courage to live each day in unity with you and our fellow human beings. Help us to give



ourselves constantly in prayer for others around us and for the state of affairs in our world. This is our prayer for thy Name's sake. Amen.

Gracious God our Lord, who feeds the hungry. Open our hearts, minds, and lives to your loving presence in our midst. Deliver us from the twin temptations of either having heard it all before, or from never expecting to hear any new word that energizes, vitalizes, and brings hope. O great Shepherd who fed thousands with little more than a few rolls and fish, feed us today in all of the dimensions of our lives. In your magnificent Name. Amen.

Our Father, you are Lord of the nations. You have taught us to pray for all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life. Forgive us, Lord, for not always remembering to do so. We pray, Father, for all our nation's leaders, especially the President and other elected officials whose actions and decisions affect all of us. Grant them wisdom to search for solutions to problems within our nation and courage to choose the best, not necessarily the easiest solution. We pray for those who lead us on this base and all to whom the task of supervision is delegated. We pray for our nation - that you would continue to stretch forth your protecting hand over us. Father, where divisions exist within our nation that separate us by inequality or injustice, we ask you to strengthen us as a nation to correct those divisions and thus be true to the founding principles of our country and more importantly true to you. Remind us that our work is peace. Let your peace that passes all human understanding touch our lives so that peace with others will follow. As we share this meal, let us be dedicated to the task of relieving the hunger of others. Bless this food to our use and us to the service of others. Amen.

To the great architect of the universe, we give you thanks for this opportunity which brings us together. We pray your blessings upon this occasion. Bless the food, bless our soul, and bless the fellowship. In your great Name we do pray. Amen.

Heavenly Father, we would like to feel your presence this early morning. If you could deal with your servants Adam, Abram, Abimelech, Jacob, Solomon, Nathan and Joseph while they were living, perhaps you can likewise make yourself known to us at this early hour. We love our nation. We know it is held in your providence. Now with a more mature love of our country, we can also join in the prayer "God mend thine every flaw" with humility and self-sacrifice, with courage and hope and with an exciting new vision of what can be. Awaken us! Walk among us! Be our God! Let us be your people! Amen.

Our Father, we thank you for our breakfast this morning. May it be to us a symbol and reminder of the larger whole of which we are a part. Someone planted, someone harvested, someone transported, someone packaged, someone purchased, someone prepared and someone serves, and we O Lord, will enjoy it. Bless this food and all the occasions which bind us together in a way that makes for both a good meal and good relationships between our military and civilian communities. In thy holy, just, and loving Name we pray. Amen.

Acts 18:9-10; "One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision: 'Do not be afraid, keep on speaking, do not be silent. For I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city.'" We know you have many people in this city too, Lord. Our prayer is that their number will continue to increase, and their positive influence will continue to grow. Whether it be through Protestant efforts like the Luis Palau Crusade, or Catholic Charities, or the work of the Jewish-sponsored Peace and Justice Action League - Lord, multiply your people and their power in this community. We come today to pray for our city. Our city is more than streets and lights. It is more than water and power. It is the people, Lord, who provide these services. It is people in government, police and fire protection, businesses and hospitals. They all laugh and live and love and have needs. May we so dedicate ourselves to meeting those needs that our community continues its reputation for being a good place in which to live. We need your help to do that, Lord. So this morning we have come to pray, to hear your Word, to gain something of your perspective. Use our speaker, our songs, and our commitment to one another, to make us a city where you have many people. And now accept our thanks for the breakfast. We pray to you, O Lord of the city. Amen.\*\*

Lord God, during this week of national prayer, we turn to you with thanksgiving for our good fortune to live in

America--a land of freedom, liberty, justice and equality. Grant us strength to defend these ideals with resolve and determination. Bless our efforts with success, and our leaders with the courage and foresight that will lead us closer to our dream of a world at peace. Amen.\*\*

Our Father, remind us today of the good things you have given to us as a nation, and the challenge we have to share them with others in your name. We ask you to bless our President and government officials. Guide them with wisdom and fill them with vision to see the common good and pursue it. For the people of this land, uplift them with a sense of self-respect and a driving desire for justice. And for those of us gathered here, may we be thankful for our freedom, responsible in our actions and assured that you are our God, and we are your people. Amen.\*\*

Lord, we come to you on the occasion of this National Prayer Breakfast filled with reverence and pride--reverence for Almighty God and pride in our nation, our national leaders and our calling. Grant to us and all those in authority strength and vision for a better world, for "where there is no vision, the people perish." This morning we honor the memory of all those who have given their lives in the pursuit of peace--young lives, strange lands, elusive adversaries, noble causes. Idealists but not ideologues. Peacekeepers, not warmongers. Patriots all. In our zest for life, help us to be willing to lay ourselves on the line so that freedom may flourish, so that those who have known nothing but turmoil may know peace; so that the hungry may be satisfied, the naked clothed, the shackled set free; so that we may never shrink from our heritage or flinch from our commitment to the God in whom we trust. Amen.\*\*

O Lord, as we gather today in your name to celebrate the spiritual dimension of our nation's heritage, we praise you for your providence that led our forefathers and mothers to this land where they found refuge from oppression and freedom to worship. We thank you for the patriots who gave their lives defending liberty and progress. As we give you thanks for the food before us, may we also remember with gratitude the blessings of comfortable homes, caring friends, daily provisions, responsible leaders, enriching schools, opportunities to achieve and an amazing variety of churches and synagogues in which to worship. In the days ahead, may the hope contained in the American dream be extended in practical ways to every citizen. And may we work with our international neighbors in the pursuit of security and peace to the end that all people in the world may know justice, love mercy and walk humbly with you. Amen.\*\*

Eternal Father, strong to save, we need your guidance and wisdom in our country today. Save us from empty threats, from stupid acts. Help us to think. Help us to find what will work in our time. Help us to look for justice and to be responsible peace keepers. Remind us that we are people dedicated to freedom and that our true freedom is to do your will, not ours. Guide those who carry the heavy burdens of responsibility, our leaders and those who work on, above, and below the ground this day. Teach us to pray for them. We live in a land where the people decide what is going to be. Father, help us, the people of this land to pray for the right, to search for the right, to find the right, to do the right. For this we invoke your presence and blessing. Amen.

## Preflight Prayer

Our Lord, we thank you for this day and the opportunity to serve you and our country. Be with our wing as we demonstrate mission readiness and reliability. We acknowledge that you have created, sustained and blessed us, and we thank you for the desire we have to excel and achieve. Endow us with strength of body, skill of hand and clarity of mind to perform a successful mission. Grant us stamina that we might be free from physical and mental fatigue. May we know the confidence of being prepared and the good feeling of doing a job well. Remind us that perfection and success consists not in doing extraordinary things well but in doing ordinary things extraordinarily well. And bring us to a safe and successful completion of our mission. In your holy name we pray. Amen.\*\*

Almighty God, we ask your blessing upon these men who go forth this morning, not because it is their wish but because it is their duty. We ask you to be with them every step of the way and to grant their safe return. Help them to be at their very best--cautious, alert and capable in their mission--so that they may serve their country well. Amen.\*\*

Eternal God, watch over, we pray, these airmen of our country as they fly their appointed tasks this day. Lord, we thank you for them and for our other unit leaders, ground maintenance and life support personnel. Especially are we grateful for the knowledge that wherever we are, wherever we go, you are with us--to guide, strengthen and protect us. Heavenly Father, surround these crew members with your loving care during this flight. Bless their families and their loved ones. Bring them home in safety with a grateful sense of your mercy. And to you, Lord, we offer our praise and thanksgiving. Amen.\*\*

Our purpose, Lord, is to give our adversaries pause. We seek peace by being strong enough, and ready enough, to give any foe second thoughts. To that end we exercise. We line up so that we are easily counted, and launch so that we are observed to be capable. But Lord, the planes and people and risks are real. The skills of the maintainers must be genuine, lest there be equipment failure. The proficiency of the flyers must be tops, lest there be a mistake. The efforts of the supporters must be total, lest there be a weak spot. To the ends of fine tuned planes then, and well-executed missions, and superb support we dedicate ourselves. We ask you for safety, Lord. Watch over our warriors. May they "do their thing" so well, that spies will report back... "Not now. They are too strong." In the name of peace we pray. Amen.\*\*

## Promotions

O Lord God, our most gracious Heavenly Father, as we gather here on this most happy occasion, we invoke thy presence. We give thanks for \_\_\_\_\_. We are glad you sent them our way. We thank you for the wisdom of the promotion board that saw fit to select \_\_\_\_\_ for larger responsibility. Now more airmen can benefit from his/her leadership. Amen.

Holy God, Father of power and might, we who are commissioned with authority in this earthly realm seek your wisdom. We need your mind in the delegation of that power and your compassion in the administration of justice. Teach us to honor you and your precepts in all our leadership tasks. Help us to take on the added responsibility of promotion with recognition that true promotion doesn't come from the South, East, or West but from above. Let us not be lords over God's heritage but good stewards, accountable to conscience as well as those over us. Then shall we be pleasing to you, valuable to our leaders, and worthy of those we lead. Amen.

Heavenly Father, we invite you into our presence this day asking for your comfort, strength and grace to surround us. We are here with mixed emotions. We are proud and happy for our commander \_\_\_\_\_. We have learned to love, respect and honor him/her during the time he/she has shared himself/herself with each of us. Together we share in his/her joy of promotion to \_\_\_\_\_. We also share in his/her sadness as he/she leaves us. May we remember that we could never know joy if we didn't know sadness - so we invite you into our midst this day. We acknowledge your presence among us and praise you for your mighty works of creation and redemption. We thank you for the opportunity and responsibility we all share as servants of our nation. May we never lose sight of the truth that has been given us. We commend one of our own, our commander \_\_\_\_\_, to you for further service in the calling of our country. Your wise providence has again shown through in his/her selection for promotion. May you continue to grant him/her wisdom for his/her new duties, a spirit of sacrifice for the common good, and mercy and justice for the airmen placed under his/her command. Grant him/her and his/her family safe travel. For his/her integrity and caring for the welfare of others we give you thanks and for his/her touching of our individual lives we will always be grateful. Amen.

"Unto whom much is given, much is required." We rejoice today, our Father, with \_\_\_\_\_ who has been honored by promotion to \_\_\_\_\_ in the US Air Force. As you have blessed him/her with this special trust, now endow him/her with added strength and wisdom to carry out these increased expectations. Help us always to keep in perspective the blessings that come our way that as we accept the manifestations of your love and grace. We accept, also, the increased opportunities we have to serve. Amen.

O God, our help in past days and our hope for the years ahead. We lift our voice in thanksgiving and praise for this opportunity for recognition and promotion. We remember your calling, your faithfulness and your great grace toward us. Bless and establish the steps and way that you set before our friend. Promotion is of the Lord. Sufficient, O Lord, is thy arm alone. Faithful is he who calls us. In his matchless name we pray. Amen.

Eternal God, we pause to give you thanks and to recognize a very important milestone in the lives of these men and women. As they embark upon new challenges and responsibilities, may they be reminded that they are not alone. Many others have preceded them, and the examples of the past are a legacy to us all. May we remember the heritage which has been given us and continue to do our best to uphold traditions of excellence. And now may this food we are about to eat be used to nourish and strengthen us in the service of our country and the cause of peace. This we ask in your holy name. Amen.\*\*

God our Father, we are here today, ready to accept increased responsibilities. We are proud of our achievements to date, but at the same time, we're humbled at the thought of the expanded service that these responsibilities will entail. When we're tired, give us energy; when we're angry, give us patience; when we're under stress, give us balance, so that we can discharge our duties with renewed dedication. Let us be a model for those who follow us, and an encouragement to those who depend on us. Most of all, may we be an authentic image of care and concern for your people. Amen.\*\*

O God, we are thankful today for those among us who have received promotions. Hear us now as we give thanks for our blessings: for the women and men who receive recognition today; for this great land with its many opportunities; for our call to defend this nation and its people; and for the gifts of life and creativity from your hand. We pray now for your presence with us. Empower us to serve you faithfully. Renew our strength so that all we say and do may reflect your grace and glory. Amen.\*\*

## **Re-enlistment Ceremony**

With grateful hearts, O God, we share in this special occasion today. For those who are renewing their time of service in the Air Force, we pray that your blessing will be upon them. May they know that their service to their country is appreciated. O God, strengthen us in our struggle for the peace and dignity of all people. Continue to give insight and integrity to those who serve in positions of leadership. Keep us all in your care and grant us strength to serve you and our nation faithfully. Amen.\*\*

Thank you, O God, for making this day special in the lives of so many persons. For those who have given many years of dedicated service to their country, we offer you thanks. For those who are recommitting themselves to military careers, we give you praise. O God, as we break bread together today and share this time of recognition, help us to appreciate what community is all about. Enable us to recognize the riches of your created world and the countless gifts we have received as a nation. For all that has been entrusted to us, we praise your holy name. Amen.\*\*

## Retirement

Good evenin', Lord. We're mighty thankful for your presence here tonight as we honor \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. There are a lot of Yankees here who are pretendin' to look like Texans, but have mercy and don't hold it against 'em. We're all trying to say thanks to a remarkable Aggie and his/her spouse, who became a powerful leader in our nation. You know, Lord God, the contributions they have made for the security of the entire world. We all mosey around a lot safer because of the personal and professional sacrifices made by the \_\_\_\_\_. Bless them with thy love and care during these days of transition. We're thankful for the viddles, the country music and the dancin' we can enjoy tonight. You are a great God and worthy of all praise and adoration. In your holy Name we pray. Amen.

Father, we gather this morning in your house - a fitting tribute to the \_\_\_\_\_ family who have given their lives in service to you and their country. We pray you would accept this occasion as a joyful sacrifice of thanksgiving on behalf of their faithful service. May you continually hold them in the palm of your hand as new adventures unfold. May we all now sense a bountiful measure of your presence as we celebrate this ceremony together. In you home, with your people and for your glory. Amen.

Oh God our Creator, Father and Friend, we give thee thanks for the wonderful gift of life, with all its joys and responsibilities. We thank thee for work honestly done, for good health, and for the love and the loyalty of our friends. Enable us to have a strong vision of the future that is built upon the precious memories of the past. We beseech thee that our hearts may continue in service to our nation, our friends and thee, our Lord and master. This prayer we offer in thy holy Name. Amen.

Our Heavenly Father, for the brief moment invade our thoughts with a strong awareness of your presence. Give us a clear recognition of your priorities amidst the many demands upon us. Provide us with a distinct vision of what we ought to be and do and the strength to accomplish it. Open our minds to the many needs we have that only you can fill. Help us to hear your voice among all the noises that blast at us. Suffer our faith in thee never to fail, and attune our purposes in military life and mission to your divine design. We ask your special blessings on our friends, as they depart from us. Guide their footsteps along the new and uncharted paths before them. And provide them with a full measure of your care and keeping. Thank you for allowing them to pass our way. We thank you for this food. Bless us with physical, mental and spiritual health. Assure us now of your abiding love. Accept our gratitude for all the gifts that enrich our lives. Amen.

O Lord we invite you to be among us. We thank you for \_\_\_\_\_ who, retiring, has turned in his/her sword to make war no more. May he/she truly live in peace of mind and heart. We thank you for both him/her and his/her spouse who have shown us the path of the patriot and the conviction of the Christian. Thank you for sending them our way. They have enriched our fellowship and elevated our professionalism. O God, under your care every end is a new beginning. Go with our friends into their new beginning. Enrich it with joys and blessings and the fulfillments they so richly deserve. Amen.

As life makes yet another transition, O Lord, I pray that we will permit you to be active - to guide these days of change. Thank you God, for the past times of accomplishment, even for the times of difficulty and trial which eventually resulted in growth and learning. Thank you for the partners in work, and friends, who have been willing to share, to teach and to learn. And now, O Lord, let growth and learning and serving not end, but let it find yet another avenue in this time called "retirement." We pray this in your spirit, whom we trust to guide us. Amen.

Loving Lord God, creator of life, author of friendship, inspirer of selfless service, look with thy favor upon this gathering. Give to thy servants, \_\_\_\_\_, enough happiness to keep them thoughtful, enough trials to keep them strong, enough hope to keep them happy, enough failure to keep them humble, enough success to keep them eager, enough friends to give them comfort, enough wealth to meet their needs, enough enthusiasm to make them look forward to tomorrow, enough determination to make each day better than the day before. Bless

our time together this evening with good memories well shared, good food thankfully received, and good friends in thoughtful conversation. We pray thy blessing on the command and staff of \_\_\_\_\_ and all who serve beside us that decisions will be made in the larger interests of our nation and in the quest for peace for human-kind. Bless our airmen and their families, through separation and unity, and inspire us all to selfless devotion to duty and service to all. In your holy Name. Amen.

Lord of the seasons of life, we come honoring an individual who has entered our lives in various ways and will soon hang up his/her uniform to begin still another of life's seasons. His/her departure makes us reflective and grateful, Lord - grateful for youth's enthusiasm and goals toward which to work. Grateful for fellow airmen and their families who have been our teachers and our students, and who encouraged, corrected and sustained us in good times and bad. Grateful for work to do, energy and skill to do it, and the high calling of a great nation to serve the cause of peace through strength and preparedness. Grateful for your presence, Lord, even when we have taken you for granted and thought little of our need for you. Grace our tables, today, Father, with the warm conversation of friendship, the honest reflection on careers of service, the nourishment of good, and the shared concern for continued service to our county and to all humankind. In your holy Name. Amen.

Father, we thank you for these airmen, our comrades, who are retiring. We thank you for their selfless service to their country, and for their dedication and untiring devotion to duty. May they be justly proud of their accomplishments and the part they played in keeping America free. Give them a long life to enjoy the fruits of their labor. May they leave full-time service with head held high knowing that though their place on line will be filled by another, they can never be fully replaced. Amen.

Dear Lord, our God today we come before you with mixed emotions; for those who are retiring, we thank you for their lives and their great contributions to our country. We are glad for their success, but we are sad for we will miss them and their friendships as they move on. And Lord, we pray for them. There is a part of them that is rejoicing and looking forward to another chapter in their lives; but there is also another part of them that is feeling the loss of all the good things that their careers have meant. On this day give these men and women the delight of their success, and the continual promises of your blessings as they continue to be great people in the path that lays before them. May the challenges of the future give them the zest and energy to succeed even as we celebrate their success today through this ceremony. We thank you for these friends, in your Name we offer this prayer of thanks. Amen.

A lot of men and women serve with honor... a lot come and go. Their spot is soon filled and the memory fades. Occasionally an unusual person emerges whose qualities are obvious. He/she makes all of us proud of what we are because of what he/she is. Such a person is \_\_\_\_\_ soon to be retired. Some of you may not know him/her but most of you do. We pray the Lord may be with him/her... grant him/her godspeed, fair winds, and following seas. Amen.

Eternal Father, we ask for a very special blessing. A blessing upon \_\_\_\_\_ who has given years of service not only for his/her country but also for the God-ordained dream of peace in our world. Such service has meant sacrifices, chief of which has been the long separations from home and family. We rejoice with him/her on his/her retirement day. Bless the future years. May the future be a time of enjoyment and peace, filled with the presence of loved ones and friends. In your Name we pray. Amen.

Let us pray. Our Father, thank you for this moment. A time in which all of us may share together with \_\_\_\_\_ and his/her family. As they conclude their work here grant them the courage to face with confidence whatever is demanded of them in your service. No doubt they have marched for a long time praying that the drum beat of their lives matched the cadence of your will. Now may their service of the past be acceptable in your sight, enriching the present and giving hope for that which is to come. Strengthen them if they should face a post-career trauma, or a mid-life identity problem. Reassure them with the understanding that you will never forsake them. May they leave here with the full knowledge that they are greatly appreciated for all that they have done in the service our country. To this end may you richly bless them. Amen.



O God, whose word declares “to everything there is a season and a time for every purpose...a time to reap and a time to sow...a time to keep silence and a time to speak...a time to love” show us what time it is for each of us and what we ought to do to find thy will and to fulfill thy purposes for our lives. Grant to each of us here a full measure of grace and charity in our dealings with one another. May we learn that whoever would be the greatest among us must be the servant of all. Receive, O Lord, the love of our hearts and the service of our minds. This evening we gather to say farewell to two good friends, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ who have labored tirelessly on behalf of our Air Force and our community. We thank thee for their transparent spirituality, for their elevated patriotism and their witness to values that are everlasting. Help each of us to prize highly and to guard carefully the gifts which such loyalty and devotion have passed on to us, that we too when the season comes for us to leave active service may leave the Air Force better for having served in it. Come now, Lord, and be our unseen guest, blessing this food to our use and each of us to more consecrated service to you, our Air Force, and each other. Amen.

Your love for us never ends, Eternal God, even when we have hung up our uniform the last time. When we retire, keep us awake to your will for us. Give us energy to enjoy the world, to attend to neighbors whom busy people neglect, and to contribute wisely to the life of your kingdom. Finally, when we can offer nothing but our prayers, remind us that our prayers are a useful work you want, so that we may live always serving you, our hope and our true joy. Amen.

Almighty God, as we gather together for this retirement ceremony, we recognize our feelings of joy and grief; grief in parting with so much that has been a part of our daily life. Still amidst our grief there is thanksgiving for our personal growth from new experiences and challenges in the past. Especially are we thankful for the people we have met, and the peace we now celebrate knowing we have given our best. We ask your blessings on us who are gathered here, that your blessings may go with the retirees as they enter into new challenges and adventures of life. May your presence continue to guide them in life and protect them. In your holy Name we pray. Amen.

O Lord, our God, we are grateful and proud to have this opportunity to honor these retirees. They have taken the uniform off their backs but so often it is still in their blood. Today they are no longer active service members, but their hearts and minds are alive with thoughts and experiences which made their duty desirable. While there may be the exchanging of war stories, O Lord, let there also be grateful spirits for challenges conquered, for the commitment of comrades in arms to each other in the crucible of conflict. O God, we remember those of our friends and comrades who made the ultimate sacrifice, who would have been proud to stand in the ranks of these retirees. May their names, now etched in granite walls and stones, live on in our hearts and flesh. Continue to grant health and happiness to these American heroes. And may they do more than just fade away; let them continue to celebrate life with faith, in a God who continues to care for them and confidence in a country which is grateful for their contributions to freedom and for all people. Amen.

Father, we ask your blessings and guidance upon each of these airmen and their families as they make their transition from the Air Force into civilian life. Please go with them and continue to demonstrate your love and care for them. We are grateful for their dedication, their sacrifices, and their hard-work while they served our country. Where they face decisions--give them wisdom, where they face travel and relocation--give them safety, and finally, dear God, give them pleasant days as only you can provide. Amen.

Almighty God, in whom we live, move, and have our being, we acknowledge your presence in our midst as a comrade in arms retires this day. We are thankful, Lord, for the many years of dedicated military service, rendered by \_\_\_\_\_; as well as the various talents and abilities utilized during this command in leading \_\_\_\_\_ to new horizons of caring and harmonious work. It is our prayer that the embers of the fires of memory of both professional and personal friendships established while here would remain aglow in the years to come. Lord, we ask that you go before \_\_\_\_\_, and his/her family, preparing the way for them as they proceed to the new challenges and opportunities of leadership in the civilian community. May your blessing now rest upon us and

those who have fought the good fight and finished their course of military service this day. Amen.

O Lord, as we gather today to honor these men and women who retire this day, we give thanks for them. We thank you for the dedication and loyalty that has enabled them to overcome the demands that have been placed on them - demands that have led them to far-away lands, often without family and at times into combat with those who sought to dominate us. We thank you for their example of dedication, courage, conviction and professionalism. We thank you also for their families who never failed to support and love them even in the midst of the most difficult times. And now, Lord, as their time of service to their country draws to a close we ask your blessings on them. As they begin a new phase of their lives, go with them and hold them and their loved ones in the palm of your hand. And may we, who go on in the service of this great land, continue to uphold the high traditions of our service just as they did. In your Name we pray. Amen.

Heavenly Father, this is a great occasion for your servant \_\_\_\_\_. The milestone of retirement is like a great door that opens to new ventures, new challenges, new opportunities, new satisfaction. For all the contributions of our \_\_\_\_\_ in uniform, a patriot, a friend - we give you thanks. May his/her future path be smooth and all burdens be light. May his/her joys be many and may he/she go with God. Amen.

Our Father, we pause in the celebration of our common tasks to thank you for our sharing together in ministry. We especially thank you for our dear friend who has touched our lives and many others. We remain appreciative for chaplains who touch the lives of lonely, troubled persons and have enabled your grace to come alive in their lives. Go with our friend and his/her family as new challenges are faced and new memories are created. Always remind us that we have a high calling to serve you throughout our lives. May we do so in joy, peace and love. Amen.

Eternal God, you hold the times and seasons, endings and beginnings, in your hands. Bless \_\_\_\_, who now enters a new time of life. We give you thanks for tasks accomplished, for the joys and pains woven into the fabric of his/her years. Give \_\_\_\_ the guidance of your Holy Spirit. May days no longer filled with old obligations be free for new activities and associations. May fears and uncertainties about the future be transformed into quiet confidence. May each new day be received as a sacred trust and lived to your glory; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.<sup>3</sup>

Almighty God, Our Heavenly Father, author of every good and perfect gift, we thank you for \_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, one of your very good gifts to the United States Air Force. On behalf of family, friends and fellow airmen from around the world we celebrate this evening with \_\_\_ and \_\_\_ after \_\_\_ years of outstanding service to our nation. May these days of closure and transition overflow with good memories of their Air Force career and the deep satisfaction of a job well done. Continue to bless them in their assignment to civilian life as they have so richly blessed those in blue with whom they have served. Thank you for our daily bread, O Lord. In thy holy, just, and loving Name we pray. Amen.

Almighty God, Our Heavenly Father, author of every good and perfect gift, we pause, today to thank you for \_\_\_\_\_, one of your good gifts to the United States Air Force. We give you thanks, not only for those gathered here, but on behalf of the friends fellow workers who have served with him/her over his/her \_\_\_ years of outstanding service to our nation. Rare and unique is the pilot who has been responsible for flying the heart beat of the free world with the call sign Air Force 1. May these days of closure and transition overflow with good memories from an Air Force career and may he/she have the deep satisfaction of a job well done. Continue to bless \_\_\_\_\_ in his/her new assignment to civilian life as he/she has so richly blessed those in blue with whom he has served. For this food and those who prepared it, we give thanks. This we ask in thy holy Name. Amen

Almighty God -- we thank you for this evening, and for this occasion, a chance to honor and salute an outstanding individual, \_\_\_\_\_ and his/her spouse. May the events of this evening contribute to a warm and satisfying sense of closure to a truly distinguished career. They have given themselves fully and unselfishly to their nation and the United States Air Force, and to friends and fellow airmen for \_\_\_ years. As they transition

in the immediate days ahead, may they be assured of the greatest blessing of all, "Well done -- good and faithful servants." Bless this food. We thank you for it, O Lord. Amen.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, draw near to us in spirit and in truth as we celebrate \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_ years of ministry in the United States Air Force. Indeed, Lord, they have been a light to the world, a couple set upon a hill, a lamp that has stood and given light to all in the house, Protestant, Catholic, Orthodox, Jew, male and female, black and white, and the stranger in the midst, a light wherever in your world they have served. May this retirement ceremony provide an appropriate sense of closure for \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. But may it also be a continuing witness to the light that has come into the world, the very light they have borne witness to throughout their career. Lord, our words and music, tears and laughter, can never sum up years of ministry and moving. But we do pray that as \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ and their family look back on these years, they will have a clear sense of your providential hand in their lives. May that faith and trust that has sustained them thus far, only grow and deepen in the future. We love them. Lord, we thank you for them, and we rejoice with them today. In your Name we pray. Amen.

Heavenly Father, this is a great occasion for your servant(s) \_\_\_\_\_. The milestone of retirement is like a great door that opens to new ventures, new challenges, new opportunities, new satisfaction. For all the contributions of \_\_\_\_\_, we give you thanks. May his/her future path be smooth, and all burdens be light. May his/her joys be many and may he/she go in peace with God. Amen.\*\*

O Lord, today we recognize \_\_\_\_\_ and offer thanksgiving for the service he/she has given to the Air Force, our base and his/her squadron. O Lord, bless \_\_\_\_\_ and his/her family as they experience this special passage in their lives. Grant him/her confidence, peace and direction during this time of transition, and equip him/her to meet the challenges of the future. Help each of us to be responsible in the present and to prepare for tomorrow. Open our eyes so that we may see your design for our lives, and how we may continue to serve you and our community effectively. Amen.\*\*

Almighty God, we are gathered here this day to pay tribute to a member of our Air Force family who has faithfully served his/her country and its people for many years. As we participate in this ceremony, we are again reminded that everything we have is a gift from you. The gift of loyal service, of camaraderie, of hopes and joys and much more. For all of this, we are thankful, and especially for the contributions of the one we honor today. We ask your blessing upon him/her as he/she departs from active duty. Continue to enhance his/her life and ours, as together we serve our country and its people. Amen.\*\*



Eternal Father, it is with thankful hearts that we lift our prayer to you on this significant occasion. We thank you for the life, the skill, and the numerous achievements of \_\_\_\_\_. Today as we honor him/her, we are mindful of his/her devotion to duty, his/her faithfulness to his/her calling, his/her dedication to our country and his/her efforts to lead people toward you with an ecumenical spirit of respect. We ask your special blessing upon \_\_\_\_\_'s new ministry. May his/her leadership be strong and his/her ministry fruitful in this new and challenging responsibility. Now may your blessing also rest upon all of us who are left behind to serve this base and this nation. May we be steadfast in our love and life, our devotion to freedom, our intolerance of evil, our dedication to justice and the pursuit of peace. Amen.\*\*

Our Father and our God, in your wisdom and in your grace, you have given to us this special week in which to plan, listen and enjoy each other and to share with one another our knowledge and memories. You have brought us through many experiences into your presence this evening. We thank you for this day of high tribute to your servants \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, for the hidden powers, the invisible strength, the spiritual grace and the

motivation of public service which has flowed from their lives into the lives of others and made the world richer. We give you thanks for the dignity and example with which they have borne the joys and the pains of leadership, and we pray that you bestow upon them now the blessings of good health, hallowed memories and the affection of family and friends. How grateful we are for the opportunity of sharing their lives for the past \_\_\_\_ years and for all that they have meant to this community. So, dear Lord, give to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ a portion of your blessing and your grace for the years ahead. Now make sacred our fellowship about these tables and bless the food that has been prepared for us, for we pray in your holy Name. Amen.\*\*

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, this evening we have been blessed with good food, good friends and good fellowship. To thee, Eternal One, we are grateful. Tonight we express to you our deepest gratitude and thanksgiving for this special occasion in which we honor \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. We thank you for their long and devoted service to our nation and to the Air Force. May your blessing be upon them as they assume new and important duties in the civilian world. Grant, O Lord, your most precious gift to them, the gift of peace, and give us all the will to proclaim its message to the people of the earth. Bless our beloved nation that it may always be a stronghold of justice and freedom. May contentment reign within its borders, and health and happiness within its homes. Strengthen the bonds of friendship among the inhabitants of all lands, and may the love of your name hallow every home and heart. Amen.\*\*

Dear Lord, we come to this occasion tonight with mixed emotions. We think about change. We think about friendships. We think about new beginnings. Tonight we rejoice with \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ as they reflect on many happy years in the Air Force. We, along with the total Air Force, are grateful to them for the years they have given in service to America. This base, these surrounding communities, this state and our nation appreciate their loyal, dedicated service to peace and freedom. Thank you for letting us be the recipients of their leadership. Continue O Lord, to bless them with your love and guidance as they move to their new home. May their home always be the place of warmth and love which has enriched our lives throughout these past years. Thank you for letting us share their friendship. Bless this time we share tonight and the love of this moment as we enjoy this meal together. Amen.\*\*

Oh God our Creator, Father and Friend, we give thee thanks for the wonderful gift of life, with all its joys and responsibilities. We thank thee for work honestly done, for good health, and for the love and the loyalty of our friends. Enable us to have a strong vision of the future that is built upon the precious memories of the past. We beseech thee that our hearts may continue in service to our nation, our friends and thee, our Lord and master. This prayer we offer in thy holy name. Amen.

Our Heavenly Father; for the brief moment invade our thoughts with a strong awareness of your presence. Give us a clear recognition of your priorities amidst the many demands upon us. Provide us with a distinct vision of what we ought to be and do and the strength to accomplish it. Open our minds to the many needs we have that only you can fill. Help us to hear your voice among all the noises that blast at us. Suffer our faith in thee never to fail and attune our purposes in military life and mission to your divine design. We ask your special blessings on our friends, as they depart from us. Guide their footsteps along the new and uncharted paths before them. And provide them with a full measure of your care and keeping. Thank you for allowing them to pass our way. We thank you for this food. Bless us with physical mental and spiritual health. Assure us now of your abiding love. Accept our gratitude for all the gifts that enrich our lives. Amen.

O Lord we invite you to be among us. We thank you for \_\_\_\_\_ who, retiring, has turned in his/her sword to make war no more. May he/she truly live in peace of mind and heart. We thank you for both him/her and his/her spouse who have shown us the path of the patriot and the conviction of the Christian. Thank you for sending them our way. They have enriched our fellowship and elevated our professionalism. O God, under your care every end is a new beginning. Go with our friends into their new beginning enrich it with joys and blessings and the fulfillments they so richly deserve. Amen.

As life makes yet another transition, O Lord, I pray that we will permit you to be active - to guide these days of change. Thank you God, for the past times of accomplishment, even for the times of difficulty and trial which eventually resulted in growth and learning. Thank you for the partners in work, and friends, who have been willing to share, to teach and to learn. And now, O Lord, let growth and learning and serving not end, but let it find yet another avenue in this time called "retirement." We pray this in your spirit, whom we trust to guide us. Amen.

Loving Lord God, creator of life, author of friendship, inspirer of selfless service, look with thy favor upon this gathering. Give to thy servants, \_\_\_\_\_, enough happiness to keep them thoughtful, enough trials to keep them strong, enough hope to keep them happy, enough failure to keep them humble, enough success to keep them eager, enough friends to give them comfort, enough wealth to meet their needs, enough enthusiasm to make them look forward to tomorrow, enough determination to make each day better than the day before. Bless our time together this evening with good memories well shared, good food thankfully received, and good friends in thoughtful conversation. We pray thy blessing on the command and staff of \_\_\_\_\_ and all who serve beside us that decisions will be made in the larger interests of our nation and in the quest for peace for human-kind. Bless our airmen and their families, through separation and unity, and inspire us all to selfless devotion to duty and service to all. In the name of Christ our Lord. Amen.

Lord of the seasons of life, we come honoring an individual who has entered our lives in various ways and will soon hang up his/her uniform to begin still another of life's seasons. His/her departure makes us reflective and grateful, Lord - grateful for youth's enthusiasm and goals toward which to work. Grateful for fellow airmen and their families who have been our teachers and our students, and who encouraged, corrected and sustained us in good times and bad. Grateful for work to do, energy and skill to do it, and the high calling of a great nation to serve the cause of peace through strength and preparedness. Grateful for your presence, Lord, even when we have taken you for granted and thought little of our need for you. Grace our tables, today, Father, with the warm conversation of friendship, the honest reflection on careers of service, the nourishment of good, and the shared concern for continued service to our county and to all humankind. In the name of Christ, Amen.

Father, we thank you for these airmen, our comrades, who are retiring, we thank you for their selfless service to their country, and for their dedication and untiring devotion to duty. May they be justly proud of their accomplishments and the part they played in keeping America free. Give them a long life to enjoy the fruits of their labor. May they leave full-time service with head held high knowing that though their place on line will be filled by another, they can never be fully replaced. Amen.

Dear Lord, our God today we come before you with mixed emotions; for those who are retiring, we thank you for their lives and their great contributions to our country. We are glad for their success, but we are sad for we will miss them and their friendships as they move on. And Lord, we pray for them. There is a part of them that is rejoicing and looking forward to another chapter in their lives; but there is also another part of them that is feeling the loss of all the good things that their careers have meant. On this day give these men and women the delight of their success, and the continual promises of your blessings as they continue to be great people in the path that lays before them. May the challenges of the future give them the zest and energy to succeed even as we celebrate their success today through this ceremony. We thank you for these friends, in the name of Jesus, we offer this prayer of thanks. Amen.

## **ROTC Encampment**

Almighty God, we pray your blessings upon these men and women as they begin their encampment. Guide them in their training. Inspire them with a sense of mission and commitment. May they achieve their goals and experience your protection in completing their assigned tasks. Grant them faith in themselves and you to serve with distinction and honor. Amen.\*\*

## **Security Police**

Lord, you have called us to be guardians of a nation founded on your principles. Whatever our tasks as Security Police men and women, we do them to serve you and our nation. We are proud to accept the responsibility of this high calling. We dedicate ourselves to our vocation, and ask for guidance and courage in aiding our people to live with dignity, in safety and peace. We know that true security comes from your presence, so we pray with the Psalmist: "You bless those who obey you, Lord; your love protects them like a shield." Use us O Lord, as shields for your people, reflecting your security and peace.

Almighty God, we ask that you grant us a deeper appreciation of the efforts of the police officers we honor this week. For their dedication to our security, order and peace, we give you thanks. May they be encouraged in their work which benefits us all. Help us to grow that spirit of community that will make their job both easy and fulfilling. And now may our fellowship together and your blessing upon this occasion bring a renewed sense of joy to each of us. Amen.\*\*

## **Senior NCO Academy Invocation**

Lord, thank you for your presence at the beginning of our Senior NCO Academy Class \_\_\_\_\_. We ask that you will be a central part of the next month and a half. Bless us, our seminar leaders, and the staff of this fine institution. Help us keep our focus during this intensive learning laboratory. Please keep our families safe at home during our absence. Thank you for the awesome privilege, responsibility--yes, even calling--to train the finest senior NCO's in the world. Surprise us with your presence as you give us everything necessary to meet all of life's demands. We trust our lives to your care. Amen.



## **Squadron Officers School**

Father, we have rested our minds and bodies. Hopefully, we have renewed our relationships with family and friends. Now, it is time to focus our minds and energies on the task which lies ahead. With new fervor, let us teach, counsel and shape the lives of those young women and men whom you have placed in our charge. Lord, for some gathered here, the holiday break was a time of stress and sorrow. Perhaps family get-togethers did not produce the joy and harmony anticipated. Others worry over finances or marital strains. Whatever the cause, Lord, heal the messes in our lives. I pray now for guidance that we would live up to the calling of officership. May we seek to be truly honorable men and women who can stand before you in judgment with no fear and no regrets. In all things, be merciful to us, O Lord. In experiencing your mercy, may we learn to be merciful to each other. All these things and many more we pray in your holy name. Amen.

Lord, the life you give each of us is full of new beginnings. Each one brings new opportunities to learn, to succeed, or even to fail. Help all of us gathered here to make the best of this opportunity we call Squadron Officers School. Let this be a new beginning which will positively affect individual careers and personal lives. Teach afresh and anew your eternal truths: that we should love one another; that working together is always better than working against one another; and that the battle is not with someone else, but rages on within each of us. It is this battle in which we seek your help. Lord, heal all wounds which these officers may have left behind. Whether there be rifts with families, friends or fellow Air Force members, heal them and place the minds of all squarely on the task which lies ahead. For all these things and many more, we pray to you, Father. Amen.

## Staff Meeting

Lord, in our daily efforts to do well and succeed at our jobs, we sometimes make mistakes. All of us do. Teach us that the biggest mistake of all is trying to cover up our mistakes or blame others. Let us be big enough to own our mistakes that we may grow and learn from them. We thank you, Lord, that when we do fall short, you are there to pick us up, strengthen us, and restore our confidence and faith. Amen.

Dear God, we've heard a lot about milestones lately. And that's good because it is good to recognize accomplishments and keep track of them. It keeps people motivated to continue to do a good job and to be careful and safe while doing it. We ask you, Lord, to keep us aware of our spiritual milestones as well--those stops along our spiritual journey. Keep us steady and strong as we travel along to reach our ultimate goal and fulfillment in you. Amen.

The Apostle Paul in a letter to Timothy said "Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life." With that thought in mind I pray: Dear God, we expect to pass through this world but once. Any good thing, therefore that we can do, or any kindness we can show to any fellow traveler, encourage us to do it now! Let us not defer nor neglect it, for we shall not pass this way again. With an attitude of gratitude for the challenges and blessings of this day. Amen.

The Psalmist said: "I lift up my eyes to the hills--where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the maker of Heaven and Earth." Lord, you are more eager to help us than we are to ask you for help. May we never get to the point where we feel we can make it on our own in life, but give us a deeper awareness of our need for your help in all we do. We need your guidance, strength, forgiveness, and grace. Teach us to open our hearts to your presence and receive your help. Amen.

Sometimes, Lord, in the hustle and bustle of the day, the many meetings, work details, tele-conferences, message preparation, the list goes on and on, we may feel lost somewhere in the big picture--forgetting that our individual effort adds to the overall mission and the beauty of the big picture. Help us to remember Lord, that our worth is not determined by our show of outward strength, or the volume of our voice, or the thunder of our accomplishments. It is to be seen, rather, in terms of the nature and depth of our commitments, the genuineness of our purpose, the quiet courage of our convictions, our capacity to accept life on life's terms and our willingness to continue growing up. It is with gratitude that we receive the challenges and blessing of this day. Amen.

Lord, as we come to the close of another day, we offer you thanks for your many expressions of your love for us this day and for the opportunities we have had through our worship experiences to express our love for you. We are grateful for our leaders on this base who support us and encourage us to nurture our faith and who lead the way by their example. We pray your love will inspire us every day to do that which is right and good; to help us look beyond ourselves that we may continue to encourage and support each other. Amen.

As the commanders and senior staff of the \_\_\_\_\_, we spend our days saying come and people come, and go and people go. Let us never lose sight of the spiritual aims and values that underlie and justify our authority. Remind us, when and if we need it Lord, to stop controlling things beneath us and to begin worshipping the one above us by whom we all ought to be controlled and commanded.

## **Stars And Bars Invocation**

Yours, Lord, is the world and it is because of this that we the inhabitants pray. To everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven. Tonight's season is one of tradition. So it is we celebrate with ritual the memories of our past. Never forgetting those who have surrendered their lives in obedience to duty, honor and country. Tonight, we ask you to bless us as we use this time for relaxation and for joy, for good comradeship, for enriching past friendships and for making new ones. To everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven. We pray that this night be one of good cheer, one of light-heartedness and love, frolic and fun. We pray for our families and our dear ones. Watch over them, Lord, and be mindful of them. We thank and praise you, for giving us so many gifts--more that we can mention. But we especially praise you, for all your gifts to us--of food, drink, health and contentment, challenge and opportunities, and above all, peace. We are ever grateful that to everything there is a season, and each season is created with your blessing and in your infinite wisdom. Bless us, then, on this night as we praise you and proclaim, Long Live the Grog Bowl!! Amen.

## Unit Activation/Deactivation

Creator God, out of nothing, you commanded and the world came to be. Out of chaos and darkness you brought order and light. Today, this unit is officially activated, and from nothing, may a unit as steadfast and enduring as your world, emerge. Out of confusion of personnel and equipment issue, may an orderly and functional unit be molded. May the brightness of a smile bring light from the darkness of the anxiety of each member of this organization. May the need which birthed this unit be fulfilled by it. May the need for your eternal Spirit be realized in each of us who make up the unit called humanity. Sustaining God, may this \_\_\_\_\_ sustain and maintain the cause of freedom and peace for your world. May your spirit sustain and maintain the cause of freedom and peace within the human soul. Amen.

Almighty God, we bless in thy name this occasion for which we are gathered, to activate \_\_\_\_\_. Much honor has been bestowed upon this unit in decades past, but may we of the present never rest on the laurels of past glory, but may the airmen of this unit live, work, and if need be, fight with honor and integrity to win for themselves a place in present as well as eternal history. Our Father, we pray thy strength and wisdom upon those placed in positions of leadership; we pray thy strength, willingness and perseverance upon those who follow. And may we all follow well the divine leadership of Almighty God, that we may serve well both God and country. Amen.

O Lord, you are the God of hosts, stronger than us who are members of our country's armed forces. Make us prepare so well to defend our country that we will eliminate the need to do so. In serving our unit may we render service to you. Make us loyal to our families in spite of separation. Keep us devoted to you in the pressures of our duties. Help us to lead others to you by our example to our comrades in arms. Amen.

Today, we stand before you with head and spirit bowed. To think that such a proud unit that has accomplished so much in the defense of this nation is about to be deactivated is painful. We hurt when we think of the loyalty to and sacrifice on behalf of the \_\_\_\_\_. What can we say, Lord, to ease the feelings which rush through our being? Then we remember, that in every mission you were a part--we called on you for help and you were always there. Help us to remember that you are here, too, and as always, your presence with us in the unknown future, is your ceaseless gift to us. Thank you, Lord of Hosts, for the victories of the past, and yes, thank you, Lord, for the victories you will bring to being in the future. Amen.

Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, we come before you with a true sense of pride, gratitude and humility. We thank you for your care and protection of the personnel assigned to this wing. For missions accomplished, for heroism displayed and devotion to duty, each member of the wing has brought great credit upon himself, this unit and the United States Air Force. People of principle and leadership, they have demonstrated through their dedicated efforts the ideals which have helped mold and make our country great. We also remember on this occasion those from this wing who have made the supreme sacrifice. We entrust them into your love and care, knowing that you are doing better things for them than we can imagine. Gracious Father, as the colors of this wing are retired, we place ourselves and what we are about to undertake in your hands. Defend us day by day with your heavenly grace; strengthen us in our trials and temptations; give us courage to face the perils that may beset us; and finally, bring us in safety to our journey's end. In your presence and in your name we pray. Amen.\*\*

## Unit Training

Let us pray. May it be your will, Lord, that we depart under your protection. May our journey to \_\_\_\_\_ and back be safe, with no harm to anyone, no mechanical problems, no traffic problems, but with good weather and high spirits. Help us, Lord, to work together as one team, even as we strive for personal and wing excellence. When we are tired, give us strength and energy. When we are frustrated and angry, give us patience. Give us wisdom to solve problems in advance, to pay attention to details, and to communicate clearly with each other. While we work in the peace of the night, keep us all in good health, Lord, safe from harm, injury or illness. Please protect and care for our families at home whom we love and we'll miss; watch over them and keep them safe. In your name we pray. Amen.

O God, who led the children of Israel with a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night; lead us safely during our upcoming FTX. Remind us that as we train so we will perform in combat. Keep safe our families. Guard us as we work or patiently wait, that freedom may ring throughout our land. Amen.

## USAF Academy Ring Dining Out

Lord, we invoke your presence and your blessing on all of us this happy night. A wedding ring is a sign and symbol of love, commitment, and loyalty. So too, Lord, are the rings of the Class of \_\_\_\_ a sign of love of country, commitment to the Air Force, and loyalty to the principles of freedom, integrity, honor and patriotism. Bless, Lord, the cadets who have earned these rings. May they wear the Academy ring with pride but also with humility. We ask your blessing upon us all this night. Amen.\*\*

Heavenly Father, what a happy night this is. Thank you for this outward symbol of inner dedication--the rings of Class \_\_\_\_\_. Bless these cadets with your love and all who uphold and sustain them--family, friends and dedicated faculty members. We are grateful for their achievements and for your presence in their lives. Amen.\*\*

## **Wing Exercise**

We pause today, O God, recognizing that you are our God, and we are your people--that you are the source of our strength and being. As we plan for this exercise, grant safety to the personnel of this wing and help them to attain the high standards they are capable of achieving. Give to the members of the various squadrons gathered here the right mind to refine those skills which insure readiness, reliability and success. Grant us the faith, the disposition and the courage to perform required tasks to the best of our ability so that we may be worthy of the highest commendation. This we ask in your holy name. Amen.\*\*

## **SPECIAL NEEDS AND PERSONS**



## **A General Intercession**

O Creator Lord, who wills wholeness of spirit and health of body for all your children: hear us, we pray, as we offer intercession for all who stand in special need of your blessing. For those who are chronically ill, to whom no hope of bodily strength can be given - bless them with your presence and the strength of spirit to rise above their reasons for despair into a higher hope; for all who seek in earnest and do not find you - teach them to see your hand in the common things around them, and your face in the face of Jesus Christ; for all who lack food and shelter - may our daily comforts chafe us and move us to share more and more; for those whose special needs we know (whom we recall in our hearts before you). Visit them as they have need; through the ministry of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.1

## **A Prayer for Study**

Most blessed Lord Jesus Christ, my God: Send down the grace of your Holy Spirit to endow and confirm my spiritual powers, so that I may increase in instruction through study and thereby glorify you, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and for evermore. Amen.

## **A Prayer When in Need**

O God, my help and aid in distress, merciful to your creation, look down on me and deliver me from this difficulty that besets me. I acknowledge and believe, O Lord, that all trials of life can make me stronger providing I stay close to you, for I am the work of your hands. Grant me your divine strength to endure my problems, for you are my only hope and refuge, my relief and my comfort. I trust in your infinite love and compassion. Blessed is your Holy Name: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and for evermore. Amen.

## **Before Studying God's Word**

Master, you who love mankind, illumine my heart with the pure light of your divine knowledge; open the eyes of my mind that I may understand your gospel teachings; and implant in me the fear of your blessed commandments, that trampling down all sinful desires, I may enter a more spiritual manner of living, both thinking and doing only those things that are pleasing to you. For you are the light of my soul and body, Christ our God, and to you I offer glory, together with your Father who is from all eternity, and your all-holy, and good, and life-giving Spirit, now and for evermore. Amen.

### **Blessing During Pregnancy (Both Parents)**

Gracious Father, your Word, spoken in love, created the human family and your Son, conceived in love, restored it to your friendship. Hear the prayers of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ who await the birth of their child. Calm their fears when they are anxious. Watch over and support these parents and bring their child into this world safely and in good health, so that as members of your family they may praise you and glorify you through your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, now and for ever. Amen.9

### **Blessing During Pregnancy (Mother)**

Gracious Father, your Word, spoken in love, created the human family and your Son, conceived in love, restored it to your friendship. Hear the prayers of \_\_\_\_\_, who awaits the birth of her child. Calm her fears when she is anxious. Watch over and support her and bring her child into this world safely and in good health, so that as members of your family she and her child may praise you and glorify you through your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, now and for ever. Amen.<sup>9</sup>

## **Blessing for the Conception or Adoption of a Child**

God our creator, by your love the world is filled with life, through your generosity one generation gives life to another, and so are your wonders told and your praises sung. We look to you in our love and in our need: may it be your will that we bear (adopt) a child to share our home and faith. Loving God, be close to us as we pray to love and do your will. You are our God, nourishing us for ever and ever. Amen.<sup>9</sup>

## **Blessing of a Bridge, Highway, Street, Railway, or Airport**

O God, you are never far off from those who serve you; with fatherly protection you always guard those who trust in you. By your grace be the guide going before those who use this (bridge, highway, street, railway, airport) and be the companion to sustain them on their way. By your favor protect them from adversity, so that they may arrive safely at their destination and accomplish what they set out to do. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.<sup>9</sup>



## **Blessing of a House**

Lord, be close to your servants who live in this home and ask for your blessing. Be their shelter when they are at home, their companion when they are away, and their welcome guest when they return. And at last receive them into the dwelling place you have prepared for them in your Father's house, where you live for ever and ever.

Amen.9

## **Blessing of an Airplane**

Lord our God, you make the clouds your chariot and walk on the wings of the wind. Grant that this airplane, built by human skill and talent, may make its flights in calm weather. Keep those who travel on it unharmed and bring them safely to their destination. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.9

Lord our God, you walk on the wings of the wind and the heavens declare your glory. We bless you and proclaim your greatness in all your works. In the richness of your wisdom you have empowered us to create great and beautiful works. Grant, we pray, that this airplane will serve to spread your praises and contribute to the well-being of those who fly in it. Through your blessing may its pilots and crew operate it with prudence, so that its passengers may reach their destination happily and safely. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.9

## **Blessing of Any Kind of Technical Equipment**

Blessed are you, Lord our God, and worthy of all praise, for you have provided for the perfecting of your creation through human labor and intelligence, and you show your own power and goodness in the inventions of the human race. Grant that all those who will use this equipment to improve their lives may recognize that you are wonderful in your works and may learn to carry out your will more readily. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.<sup>9</sup>

## **Blessing of Tools or Other Equipment for Work**

In your loving providence, O God, you have made the forces of nature subject to the work of our hands. Grant that by devotion to our own work we may gladly cooperate with you in the building up of creation. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.<sup>9</sup>

## **Faith**

Increase our faith, Lord... increase our faith. It is so easy to forget, like a piece of sand on the beach, or a drop of water in the ocean, a moment in eternity, to be absorbed into what we are and what we do. So easy to be so involved in the gift that we sometimes forget the giver. Help us not to forget. Amen.

## **For a Good Witness**

Gracious God, we pray that the good news of thy gospel may prosper in us and through us. Grant us freedom from all anxieties, and especially from those in which we confuse personal uncertainties with religious doubts. Release us from all false occupation with ourselves, from all graceless response to others, from all disregard of serious questions, from all need to prove others wrong to show ourselves right. Grant us increasing maturity in outlook and action, so there may be space for thy serenity and thy vigor to control us more and more. Keep us in a quiet mind, in a willingness to be prompted by thee, in a confidence that rests on thy promise. Thus may we bear, without self-consciousness, a good witness to thy gospel for which we daily give thee thanks. Amen.1

## **For a Larger View of Life**

O God of light and love, who calls your children to return from their mad strife and love one another as you have loved them: grant us both to hear and to heed that call, to set aside the enmities that eat at our souls, and to give our whole selves into your hands and thus into love. Through our prayer and praise grant us a new heart fit to adore your glory and able to overcome both great trials and petty annoyances. Thus may we come to that larger view of life in which we will be free of hatred and strong to walk in the way of your love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.<sup>1</sup>

## **For a Separation**

O Lord of our common life, who preserves the bonds of understanding and affection we have with one another, we pray for each other and for the community between us. Especially now, as we take leave for a time, we pray for each other's safety and welfare. Bring us together again, we pray, our community unbroken by tragedy or death; and through all times, whether together or apart, bind us to one another by our common love for you and your Son Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.1



## **For a Spirit of Thanksgiving**

Gracious Lord God, from whom we have all the blessings of this life - our daily bread, the love of friends, comforts, challenges, good work and zeal to do it, the shouts of children, the wisdom of elders, the power of healing in our bodies, the capability of growth in our minds, and chief of all thy blessings, thine own love made unmistakable in thy Son: hear us as we praise thy name and offer thanks to thee for all these blessings, as well as for the number of those which are so close to us that we do not think of them. Help us, we pray, to thank thee daily and so to grow in a spirit of thankfulness that we become daily more able to rejoice in thy blessings. Amen.1

Gracious God, when things go badly we invoke your name and implore your help, knowing we are at the boundaries of our own strength. Help us also to call upon your name when all things go well and, by the giving of our thanks, to remember your gracious care for us and for all people. So by our thanksgiving preserve us from thinking that we redeem ourselves. We pray in the name of our only Redeemer, Jesus Christ. Amen.1

## **For Courage**

Teach me, O Master, the courage with which thou didst face thy every duty and trial, the consecration with which thou didst make thy every sacrifice, that heartened by thy blessed example, I may never waver in duty, danger or sacrifice, but as a good soldier of the Cross be enabled the better to serve the country that I love; who livest and reignest for evermore. Amen.

## **For Divine Protection**

O God, who are the author of peace and lover of concord, in knowledge of whom standeth our eternal life, whose service is perfect freedom: Defend us, thy humble servants, in all assaults of our enemies; that we, surely trusting in thy defense, may not fear the power of any adversaries. Amen.

## **For Family Life**

O God, who has brought us into life by your creating power, and sustained us by your love: hear our thanks for the bonds of family life. We confess that we have sometimes been a trial to each other as we have been to you. Yet we worry one another because we love one another, just as your love for us has been laced with pain. Grant us joy and delight in the knowledge that we have our families, that the roots sprung in child-hood will nourish us our life long, and that whether near each other or far apart we will carry within us the confidence that comes from strong loyalties and deep loves. We pray in the name of him who addressed divine majesty with a family name and called you Father, even Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.1

Thou Parent of our first parents: receive our thanks for the supports of family life. As you have made your own love known through the image of a family in joyous Bethlehem and a larger family at tragic Golgotha, so we remember your love and lean on it in moments of celebration and moments of trial. Keep our minds and hearts alive to the manifold ways you minister to our needs through the family bond, in which you have created and nurtured us, admonished and comforted us, as you did your own Son, in whose name we pray. Amen.1

O God, our God, who has fathered us in the rejoicings of heaven and mothered us with affections from the womb of time itself: we hold before thee all those dear to us, near or far away, who have need of thy mercy and thy strength. Keep alive in our families the touch of hands, the hospitalities of love, the festivals of praise, the hopes and memories of all generations, and the exchange of peace. And so fill our homes with trust that our windows open on the world and our doors fling wide to minister to the lonely and the stranger. As we are thy family, help us to be family to one another. Amen.1

## For Forgiveness

Lord our God, you who are good and merciful, I acknowledge all my sins which I have committed every day of my life, in thought, word and deed, in body and soul alike. I am truly sorry that I have ever offended you, and I sincerely repent; with tears I humbly pray, Lord; mercifully forgive me all my past transgressions and absolve me from them. I firmly resolve, with the help of your Grace, to amend my way of life and to sin no more: that I may walk in the way of the righteous, and offer praise and glory to the Name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

O Lord our God, in your goodness and love for mankind forgive me all the sins I have committed today in word, deed, or thought. Grant me peaceful and undisturbed sleep. Send your guardian angel to guard and protect me from all evil. For you are the guardian of our souls and bodies, and to you we send up glory, to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

A fleeting thought now nagging, I am disturbed by what I said, by what my colleague may have heard. Should I call...? A fleeting thought now nagging, weighs heavily on my heart. I should call..., but how shall I find the words? I remember you said that in moments of trial, you would supply such words. Help me not to defend myself, but to defend our communication with communication. Thanks be to you, O Great Builder of bridges through faith, you who span our caverns of misthought, you who arch across our divides of granite faces, you who suspend yourself as our newfound joy. Thank you who repairs our crossings!\*\*

## **For Hope**

God of hope and God of glory, may the vision of a new Jerusalem infect us and move us to begin its building in our own lives and in our own society. Make us firm and clear against all arguments from despair - that our enemies are less than human, that the poor are poor because they are lazy, that military force is the only language nations understand, that all other leopards will never change their spots. Grant us, Lord God, a deep understanding that we were not born to die but to begin, to interrupt the flow of despair, to start some-thing new for love's sake. We pray in the name of him who came to make all things new, even Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.1

Lord, nothing worth doing is ever really completed in one lifetime. So, we must be men of hope. Nothing worthwhile makes complete sense at any particular moment of history. So, we must be men of faith. Nothing we do can be accomplished alone. So we must be men of loyalty. Grant us hope, faith, and loyalty. Amen.

## **For Neighbor - Love**

O Lord God, we praise your name for all the rich variety that is found in the human family, your chil-dren. We thank you for the different songs by which we sing our joys and sorrows to one another, for the different languages in which we speak our hopes and hungers, for the contrasts of color and stature and sex which catch our eye and make us want to know each other. Glory be to you for the many faces and voices of our family! Now teach us to treasure our differences, great God, as evidence of the endless richness of your love for this world. We pray in the name of our Lord, the Jew who praised a Samaritan; who interceded for an adulteress; who ministered alike to Jew and Gentile, slave and free, men and women, and was not afraid of the wealth of your love. Amen.<sup>1</sup>

## **For One in Dire Extremity**

Merciful God, though we mumble or are struck by a great silence, receive our prayer for thy servant \_\_\_\_\_ who is sick unto death and in pain beyond endurance. In all that he/she may suffer be thou round about him/her as a strength to withstand the shattering hours, as protector against the terror in the night, as companion in all the dark passages. Give to us who watch and wait the deep consolation of thy love, and according to thy promises take unto thyself this thy son/daughter; through Jesus Christ who healeth all our diseases. Amen.1



## **For Patience**

A sign by a nurse's station in a hospital said: "Lord, give me patience and give it to me now." Sometimes, Lord, our patience wears thin--whether it be with others, ourselves, or circumstances. Work with us to exercise the patience we do have and give us more. We thank you, O Lord, for not losing patience with us - for being compassionate and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in love. Amen.

Sometimes, Lord, my ambition exceeds my effort. I want to know without learning. I act without thinking. I want to have without trying. Time runs out and I am left with little. I ask again, for patience and perseverance. How badly I need these two things but, why tell you Lord? You know me better than I know myself, but it feels better Lord, just telling you anyway. Help me, Lord. Amen.

## For Peace

Most merciful Lord, in whose kingdom lion and lamb lie down together: grant to the nations peace and a desire to preserve the same. Give those in authority patience in negotiation and a largeness of spirit to seek true justice through accords. And so touch the minds and hearts of us all that we may be free of hatred and misunderstanding. So may peace be left with us, your peace be given us. Amen.1

O God the Father of the Prince of Peace, look with patience as well as judgment on those who, in all earnestness, nonetheless feed the fires of war. Let nothing hide from us the terror, the tragedy, the despair of war, nor let our honorable motives cover the blasphemy against thy love in every injury and every death visited upon men, women, and children in the name of high principle. O Lord, may we be servants of your peace, not only by our opinions but also by our actions; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who took upon himself our violence that we might have peace in our hearts and in our communities. Amen.1

Almighty God, you who are the Father of all the people of the earth, we pray that you will keep us from the cruelties of war and civil disorder. Lead us in the way of peace. Teach us to put away all bitterness and misunderstanding, all hatred and prejudice, that we may draw together as one Family of God, and live always in the fellowship of the Prince of Peace, to whom we give glory, honor and thanksgiving, together with our, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Almighty God, thou who hast created us, each and everyone. Thou who has known us throughout our world and history. We do acknowledge thy presence here today and in all of our yesterdays, as we pause to remember and commemorate this day to those who sacrificed their lives in hopes of a better world for our tomorrows. Amen.

As the peoples of this great world struggle, the military has been called upon to defend, to protect and to rescue. The causes are monumental. The price is beyond measure. Heroes who lie in silent graves no longer fear the sounds of battle. Loved ones in distant towns no longer await with trepidation word of their earthly fate. While their lives have been spent, we here commit ourselves to live our lives in service, ensuring their sacrifices are everlasting. Amen.

While struggles continue around our world there are those who continue to bravely serve the causes of freedom, justice and peace, bringing honor to those we remember today. Give to us gathered here courage to offer renewed commitment to bring about and maintain that same peace to which those whose death we do commemorate did pledge themselves. Amen.

May the steadfastness of the soldier inspire those who lead and rule to lay aside selfish and unholy political motives. May we witness from city to town, village to country, nation to nation the beating of spears into pruning hooks and swords into plowshares until this fertile world shall bloom with the spring that gives life forever more. Lead us, O Lord, by the light of your presence and will, that working together with all people of good will, we may find and establish an everlasting peace. In the name of the Lord. Amen.

Grant peace to the world, and may it be your will to bring healing to all humanity. Renew our vision of the time when violence and terrorism will no longer plague us, when justice will reign supreme throughout the world, when love and compassion will prevail in every human heart. Lead us, O Lord, by the light of your presence, that working together with people of good will, we may find the way to an honorable and lasting peace. Amen.\*\*

We pray that someday an arrow will be broken, not in something or someone, but by each of humankind, to indicate peace, not violence. Someday, oneness with creation, rather than domination over creation, will be the goal to be respected. Someday fearlessness to love and make a difference will be experienced by all people. Then the eagle will carry our prayer for peace and love, and the people of the red, white, yellow, brown, and black communities can sit in the same circle together to communicate in love and experience the presence of the

great mystery in their midst. Someday can be today for you and me. Amen.3

Heavenly Father, we pray for your help in this hour. Give us your guidance, that we may follow you, give us your strength, that we may work for you, give us your love, that we may enjoy doing your will each day. Give us peace ... that all men may live in brotherhood. May we be one in heart, one in mind...one in Spirit with you...to serve you and our fellow man in a more faithful and fruitful manner. Amen.

## **For People in Poor Nations**

O Lord, who cares for all, and who gives us liberty to pray for those whose needs we know: we pray for those who live on lands unable to support them decently. Perfect in them and in us that spirit of mutual respect and common concern which can yield a more perfect division of the world's blessings, to the benefit and joy of all, and to the end of a more perfect harmony among the peoples. Amen.1

## **For Purity**

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy Holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **For Racial Justice**

Grant us, O God of many splendors, so to learn from and be encouraged by your Son that we will be servants of your love in all things. Help us to stand more firmly for justice and reconciliation among the races of the earth, and not in opinion only, but also in action and commitment. Grant us such compassion that we may see in the disadvantage of those who suffer discrimination in jobs or homes, schools or courts, that their wounds are ours also, since we are one flesh in Christ. And strengthen us to seek the healing of their circumstance with the same constancy we see in your Son, who suffered freely for our healing. Amen.1

## **For Refugees**

Lord God, we pray for all the bombed out, burned out, driven out, relocated, wondering, wandering, unwilling pilgrims in this world. Forgive us for our part in uprooting them. Restore their lives, renew our commitment, and make us partners with them in the rebuilding of their farms and cities, their homes and lives. We pray in the name of the Son of man, who had no place to lay his head. Amen.1

## **For Renewed Dedication**

Lord Jesus Christ, we pray for a new vision of your love and a new dedication to your will in our daily life. Grant that we may have no lower estimate of humanity than you showed by your passion on the cross; and seeing anew how precious is the life you created in us, grant us the courage to measure ourselves by the stature you have given us. May we never feebly concede to cynicism or despair. Keep alive in us such spiritual courage that our eyes may not wander from the cross, though all about us brood on the prospect of an empty heaven and a soulless humanity. And grant, O Lord, that we will not think ourselves more virtuous than we are, neither imagine ourselves less precious than you have regarded us. Amen.1



## **For Stewardship of the Earth**

O Lord God of all creation, who made this world a garden and appointed us its stewards: help us so to care for your earth that it may produce good fruit and plenty. Keep us from preoccupation with convenience and our own gain, so that we will not despoil this garden and deprive others of its enjoyment. Keep us daily mindful of the hungry, Lord, and of the fact that they need not be so. Let us never forget that we have our abundance at the cost of others' privation. So may we dedicate ourselves to making your earth a place of justice as well as of plenty. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, in whose name we are commanded to break bread with all. Amen.1

## **For Team Spirit**

God, our Father, give us all a sense of cooperation. Help us realize that we can't exist alone. Make us sense our basic unity of purpose. Help us see that individual welfare is intimately tied to the welfare of the whole group, and that the whole group depends upon the well-being of the individual. Help us see this -- and above all help us to live out this insight. Amen.

## **For the Birth of a Child**

O God, as a mother comforts her children, you strengthen us in our solitude, sustain and provide for us. As a father cares for his children, so continually look upon us with compassion and goodness. We come before you with gratitude for the gift of this child, for the joy that has come into this family, and the grace with which you surround them and all of us. Pour out your Spirit. Enable your servants to abound in love, and establish our homes in holiness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.3

Gracious God, in whom all things have their beginning, and in whom we find our own true end: we give thanks for the safe birth of your new servant and for the joy he/she has brought to his/her family. We give you thanks for the hope and promise and protection with which his/her life is surrounded now. And we take with joy that reminder of the grace that has attended each of us from our beginning until now. As we give thanks for his/her birth, receive as well our thanks for the promise of new birth given to all in Jesus Christ. Help us to trust in you and enjoy your presence as we acknowledge with wonder the perpetual novelty of your love. Amen.1

## For the Church

O God, who has set us in the world as an ensign people: we pray for the church and for its witness to your covenant with all peoples. Grant that having acknowledged ourselves as bound into her body, we may take part in her task of being handmaid to divine grace. Teach us to speak the truth in love with our neighbors, to honor all things excellent, to bear our responsibilities with integrity, and to enter into the sufferings of others. So may the knowledge of your healing love be set forth in our lives, and through us your church be renewed. Amen.1

O Lord our God, who has spoken your word with power in the person of Jesus Christ: grant to your church the power to speak your word faithfully through its life as well as its doctrine. Let it be your instrument of holy discontent wherever the world is shoddy, unjust, or calloused against your mercy. Make of it a herald of your kingdom, speaking from the authority of your promise that your word, having gone forth with power, will not return to you empty. May your church be a haven for the lonely, a fortress for the oppressed, and a servant at all times both of your truth and of your covenant; through Jesus Christ, the rock on which we stand redeemed. Amen.1

God of life and love, we lift our hearts to you in praise and thanksgiving. We bless you for the goodness and beauty of creation, for the rhythm of sunrises and sunsets, for the patterns of color and texture of growing things that sustain our hope in the abundance of what is to come. We bless you for the landscapes of our lives, for our successes and failures, for the friends and enemies who weave a mosaic through our horizon. We praise you for all your works. We ask for grateful hearts and a spirit of generosity. Free us from being stingy with our words of praise and affirmation and our acts of forgiveness. Open us to the abundance of life and love you set before us.12

God of the day and of the night, God of the world's cares and concerns, give us the desire to discover you in our lives. We want to be near you, to believe in you and love you as you believe in and love us. We know that you are with us constantly and that you wait to be noticed in the events of our world. Touch us now with your love so that we will be mindful each day that we are restless because we have not yet rested in you. Lead us to your generous heart. Amen.12

O God of mercy and love, I come before you today, aware that I have indeed failed to be all you created me to be. I know that I have sinned and that my sins have hurt my neighbors, myself, and you. I open myself now to your endless mercy, without which I am powerless, and invite your divine power to fill me so my heart will be more loving and my sins less frequent. Thank you for loving me without end. Amen.12

O Lord our God, who fashioned the church from a scattered band of disciples and gave it power to endure: we pray now for that same moving band of uncertain but hopeful people, the holy catholic church in all its branches. We ask that it be grafted anew to your will for this world and for our time within it. May this fellowship be free enough to live for the world, not just in the world. May it become a sign of your kingdom of justice, peace, and love. Quicken its life, we pray, so that men and women everywhere may look upon it and, seeing its vitality and purpose, come to understand better their own and common destiny; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.1

O gracious Father, we humbly beseech thee for thy holy Christian Church; that thou wouldest be pleased to fill it with all truth, in all peace; where it is corrupt, purify it; where it is in error, direct it; where in any thing it is amiss, reform it. Where it is right, establish it; where it is in want, provide for it; where it is divided, reunite it; for the sake of Him who died and, rose again, and ever liveth to make intercession for us, Christ Jesus, thy Son, and our Lord. Amen.

## **For the Hungry**

Lord God of all creation, we pray for the hungry, those a world away and those in our own cities and rural slums whose suffering accuses us and denies the provision you have made for us all in this ample world. Constrain us in our use of the world's goods, we pray, and give us new wills and new ways to reach out toward those who need us. We pray through him who is the living bread which came down from heaven, even Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.<sup>1</sup>

## **For the Lonely**

We pray especially at this time, dear Lord, for all those who, by reason of sickness or circumstance, feel themselves separated from the love and care of the people around them; or who, by reason of doubt and desperation, know the lonely exile of hours and days empty of hope. By holy mysteries we cannot name let thy healing presence brood among them so that they find again, and with a certainty, that thou art for all of us healer and true companion, sustainer and comforter. Overcome their anxieties with that compassion which causes the lame to walk and the blind to see, even the love of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.1

## For the Nation

Come, sovereign Lord, to all occasions of prayer and praise for our country. Keep our celebrations honest as we recall the past, compassionate as we judge the present, and lively as we engage the future. Set loose in the land the wild and wonderful airs of open discussion, dissent, difference, ideas old and new. And in all things uphold us as a people bound to one another and to thee by trust that arises out of high purposes and love that flourishes in shared dreams; through Christ our Lord. Amen.<sup>1</sup>

O God, whose mercy is over all the nations: go with us now into the uncertainty and the promise of the years that lie before all of us. Turn the hearts of this people away from the uses of force, the illusions of wealth, the contagion of prejudice, and the rule of selfishness. Make us a servant people, following the way of our Lord Jesus Christ. Persuade the nation to lose its life that it may find its soul, and open us to all the weathers of the world that we may learn again to love all people. Amen.<sup>1</sup>

Almighty God, who hast given us this good land for our heritage: We humbly beseech thee that we may always prove ourselves a people mindful of thy favor, glad to do thy will. Bless our land with honorable industry, sound learning, and pure manners. Save us from violence, discord and confusion; from pride and arrogance, and from every evil way. Defend our liberties; preserve our unity; fashion into one united people the multitudes brought hither out of many kindreds and tongues. Endue with the spirit of wisdom those to whom in thy name we entrust the authority of government, to the end that there be justice and peace at home, and that through obedience to thy law we show forth thy praise among the nations of the earth. In the time of prosperity fill our hearts with thankfulness, and in the day of trouble suffer not our trust in thee to fail; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Almighty Father, we ask that you stand by our side in righteousness and guide us in your wisdom. We pray for our president and other members of government that they may seek your wisdom and knowledge as they serve the people of this great nation. To this end we seek your blessing on our guest \_\_\_\_\_ as he/she continues to serve. In thy name we pray. Amen.

Our Father, we pray for this land. We need your help in this time of uncertainty, when men who can fight together on the field of battle seem strangely unable to live together at home. Help us to see that all true Americanism begins by being faithful and obedient to your word. We pray that all over this land there may be a return to the principles of these men and women who trusted in God as they faced the perils and dangers of the frontier. People not alone in crossing the continent, in building their cabins, in rearing their families, in eking out a livelihood. You blessed their efforts; you have blessed America. You have made her rich. By your grace we pray that you will make her good. Make us, the citizens of this land and members of the Armed Forces, want to do the right things. Make us have right attitudes. Make us willing to seek moral objectives together, that in united action, this nation may be as resolute for righteousness and peace as she has been for war. Bless this land that we love so much, Our Father, and help her to deposit her target, not in armies, navies, air forces, and material resources, or in achievements of the human mind, but in that righteousness which alone exalts any nation, and by which alone peace can finally come to us - this we ask in that name which is above every name. Amen.

Look graciously, O Lord, upon this land. Where it is pride, subdue it. Where it is need, supply it. Where it is error, rectify it. Where it is default, restore it. And where we hold to that which is just and compassionate, support us. Amen.<sup>3</sup>

Almighty Father, we ask that you stand by our side in righteousness and guide us in your wisdom. We pray for our president and other members of government that they may seek your wisdom and knowledge as they serve the people of this great nation. To this end we seek your blessing on our guest \_\_\_\_\_ as he/she continues to serve. In thy name we ask. Amen.

O God, here we have expressed gratitude for our nation's ideals, let us go forth to praise them in speech, codify

them in law, and translate them into deed. As they turn our eyes from the successful to the struggling, give us the grace to remember that these ideals did not come to us without price, and will not survive without sacrifice. Amen.<sup>6</sup>

God of our fathers and our God, who hast made and preserved us a nation, we thank thee for this good land which thou hast given us for our heritage. For the statesman's wisdom, the airmen's devotion and the toil of hands and brain by which we have become strong and great, we give thee thanks. For the home and the chapel, for the school and the government of free people under thy sovereignty we give thee thanks this day. In the crucial days in which we live, keep ever before us the vision of our founding fathers--of a people dedicated to justice, righteousness and truth--a nation under God whose citizens' highest incentive is to serve others. Make us fit for our times, correct what is wrong, confirm what is right, spare us from idolatry of the past and the fear of the future. Enable us to cherish all that is holiest in tradition and to welcome all that is healthiest for the new world which is yet to be. Be especially with the youth of this land wherever they may be--in institutions of learning, on missions of mercy around the world, in the Armed Forces--guarding them in moments of temptation and strengthening them in hours of peril. Lift all consultations for peace into the higher order of the kingdom. Be with the members of this command, keep us faithful to high principles and to excellence. Bless us in our efforts to conserve ideals of duty, honor and country, to create and nourish new objectives for freedom and to keep our spiritual sinews strong. And to thee shall be all praise and glory, world without end. Amen.



## **For the Poor**

Heavenly Lord, whose Son was among the meek of the earth and called them blessed, who took as his own the burden of poverty and deprivation: grant us, and all who by thy blessing are cast among the rich and powerful peoples of the world, to recall thy poverty, to make common cause with the wretched of the earth, and so to use what we have that we keep our sensibility for others' needs. Lord God, thou hast granted us a share in the glories and joys of this world. Help us, we pray, to become instruments of others' enjoyment of the same; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who came among us that we all might have life and have it abundantly. Amen.1

## **For The Sense Of God's Nearness**

Sustain in us, O God, the continual awareness of thy presence, and thy overruling providence in our lives. Renew in us the joy which comes from the knowledge of thy nearness, and grant that with steadfast hearts we may meet the anxieties and trials of our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **For the Sick**

Merciful God, who has born the suffering of your children and who stands with us, whether hidden or revealed, when our time of suffering comes: be with all those who are sick in body, mind, or heart, and especially those known to us (whom we remember in our hearts before thee \_\_\_\_\_). Grant them healing, and where there cannot be healing grant them strength to bear their burdens in the confidence of your never failing love; this we pray in the name of Jesus, our great Physician. Amen.1

## **For the Unemployed**

Creator God, who has given us the gifts both of work and of rest: we pray for the unemployed, for whom the want of work is not rest but anxiety. May their plight be continually on our hearts, and our minds be turned to find for them new tasks and opportunities. Preserve us, O God, from equating our own happy industry with virtue, and their enforced idleness with vice. And lead us toward the day when all will have needed work and the sense of dignity it brings; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who has called us to labor together in his vine-yard. Amen.<sup>1</sup>

## **For the Unfulfilled**

O God our Creator, who knows our nature and our needs, and has called us to a new estate in Christ, where all our work is praise and service: hear us as we pray for those who have no work to do. Keep them from despair and help them to find the place where their hand can be useful and their self-esteem restored. We pray for all who take no joy in the work they have been given to do, whose days are a drudgery and whose spirits are wearied. We pray too for those who know their work only as the way to private gain. Teach them how to take joy in serving as you have joyfully served both them and us in Jesus Christ. For all of us, may our work become a place of sharing and a time of praise. Amen.1

## For Those in Authority

Sovereign God, we pray for all those in positions of authority. Give them a new range of vision fit for their estate, a new courage to call forth the highest rather than the meagerest loyalties of those they lead, and a new spirit of self-transcendence that they may withstand the temptation to measure their actions by selfish benefit. And help each of us, in our covenant with them, to support their best desire to serve the common good. Amen.1

O God, our Father, we recognize you as the sovereign ruler over all the nations, to whom all powers of earth must one day bend the knee. Forgive us when we in pompous pride play the fool and pretend to be the 'captain of our ship and the master of our fate.' Forgive us when we, who are in positions of leadership use our power to gain advantages for ourselves. Remind us this day and always that if we are to be the greatest, we must become the least; and that if we are to be masters we must become the servant of others. May we possess a zeal for justice, and righteousness, while always being ready with compassion for those who are weak. Create in us the will to do your will so that we may do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with our God. Amen.

O God, our Father, searcher of hearts, help us to draw near to thee in all sincerity. May our faith be filled with gladness and may our worship of thee be in spirit and in truth. Strengthen and increase our admiration for honest dealing, clean thinking, and suffer not our hatred of hypocrisy and pretense ever to diminish. Encourage us in our endeavor to live above the common level of life. Make us to choose the harder right instead of the easier wrong, and never to be content with a half truth when the whole can be won. Endow us with courage that is born of loyalty to all that is noble and worthy, that scorns to compromise with vice and injustice and knows no fear when truth and right are in jeopardy. Guard us against flippancy and irreverence in the sacred things of life. Grant us new ties of friendship and new opportunities of service. And finally, that thou wilt most graciously be pleased to dispose us all to do justice, to love mercy, and to demean ourselves with love, humility, and temper of minds which are the characteristics of thee, the divine author of our most blessed faith. All this we ask in the name of the great friend and master of all mankind. Amen.

Heavenly Father, I am in need of your guidance so very much for the job I have been commissioned to do. Lead me, Lord, so I can lead the airmen in my command properly and wisely. I long for their friendship--I guess everyone wants most of all to be liked--but I know that I need most of all their respect and their obedience. I know that sometimes they resent the ground I walk on and the air I breathe and that at times they feel I am most unfair and completely unreasonable. For there are times almost every day at first, when they feel ready to drop of exhaustion, and I push them even harder; and at times when I seem to magnify and pick on the slightest weakness or disorder and impose the severest penalty. Father, sometimes I want to get right out there and carry their load and take the brunt of the punishment I prescribed. But I know they have to learn to take it. Someday their very lives may depend on it. But, Lord, make me a good leader--that I can push these men and women without pushing them too far; that I can maintain discipline without being unfair; that I can instill the strict obedience of respect rather than of hate-filled fear. Help me to respect each person as a valued human being. I ask one more thing, heavenly Father: Watch over my airmen! Protect them! Keep them unharmed in spirit as well as in body. And let me, Father, regard the life of each one of them as highly as my own. Amen.



## **For Those Who Suffer**

Before the throne of thy grace, O Lord, we would lay the cares of our fellows. To all those who are bereaved of their loved ones, give the assurance of thy victory over death; to those who suffer from incurable diseases, grant such love of thee as will free their minds and spirits of the bonds of self-pity; to those who endure life under tyranny, grant the dream of freedom and a zeal to pursue it, even at a cost; to those who find no meaning in their lives, grant such self-knowledge and knowledge of thee as may dispel the mists of despair. We ask these boons in the name of Christ, in whom thou hast promised us every grace. Amen.1



## **For True Prayer**

When we turn toward you, O God, we confess that it has often been in habit or in desperation, only rarely in adoration or thanksgiving. Hear us now as we bring you our prayers with thanks for your never-ending patience, for your promise to hear us whenever we pray with honest intent. Grant us, then, not many words but a whole heart, not much praying but true prayer. Amen.<sup>1</sup>

## **For Wisdom**

Lord, we never seem to have enough time. We rush and rush from one activity to the next... one experience after another. There never seems to be enough time... time to finish... time to be with... time to listen... time to write. Time is a perishable gift -- the hours are too short... the days are too short... our lives are too short. Tonight, Lord, I ask not that you give me more time... or time to do this or do that... but the wisdom to do well whatever you want of me in the time you have given me. Amen.

## **Gratitude**

Lord, we never forget to ask you for those things we need in life, but we confess we do sometimes forget to thank you after you have given them to us. Forgive us when we take your blessings for granted. Stop us and remind us each day that “every good and perfect gift is from above” and may our words and lives be a reflection of our gratitude for all you have graciously done and continue to do for us. Amen.

## **Hard Times in the Air Force**

Dear Father in Heaven: Today several young airman spoke to me about the hard times they were having with Air Force life. I reminded them, Lord, of the old Greek fable of Aesop: There were two frogs who fell into a pail of milk. One immediately concluded that the situation was hopeless and drowned. The other decided to keep swimming, keep paddling, keep churning. It was he, obviously, who found himself floating on a pad of butter. Father, with Your grace help all of us to rise above the frustrations and discouragements of the day and face a joy-filled tomorrow. Amen.

## **In Time of Racial Strife**

Gracious Lord God, whose justice cannot be turned aside and whose peace will prevail at last: grant us both justice and peace in the racial strife that besets us. We pray for the gifts of a calm spirit and a clear mind for all those caught in the midst of the drama, and especially for those who face each other across the borderline of custom and change. Keep the tension from issuing in tragedy, and so guide thy people by thy Holy Spirit that our present afflictions will soon pass and a new era of dignity and opportunity be established for all. Amen.1

## **In Time of War**

Gracious God, who has commanded us to love our enemies: grant that in this absurd world so absurd a command will be disregarded no longer. As you have justified us all by your love and have no need to hear us justify ourselves, grant us resolve to press the claims of peace first upon ourselves, and then upon those whom we have wronged and who have wronged us. O Lord, before the momentum of hatred passes our power to control it, grant us peace and a time of rebuilding. Amen.1

## Loss of Pregnancy

Life-giving God, your love surrounded each of us in our mothers' wombs, and from that secret place you called us forth to life. Pour out your compassion upon \_\_\_\_\_. Her heart is heavy with the loss of the promise that once took form in her womb. Have compassion upon *Names of father and/or other family members*. Their hearts are also heavy with the loss of promise. They *grieve* the death of the hopes (*they*) *she* anticipated, the dreams *they* (*she*) envisioned, the relationship (*they*) *she* desired. Give *them* (*her*) the courage to admit (*their*) *her* pain and confusion, and couple that confession with the simplicity to rest in your care. Allow *them* (*her*) to grieve, and then to accept this loss. Warm *them* (*her*) with the embrace of your arms. Knit together (*their*) *her* frayed emotions, and bind (*their*) *her* heart(s) with the fabric of your love for *them* (*her*). In the strong name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.<sup>3</sup>

Lord, we do not understand why this life, which we had hoped to bring into this world, is now gone from us. We only know that where there was sweet expectation, now there is bitter disappointment; where there were hope and excitement, there is a sense of failure and loss. We have seen how fragile life is, and nothing can replace this life, this child, whom we have loved before seeing, before feeling it stirring in the womb, even before it was conceived. In our pain and confusion we look to you, Lord, in whom no life is without meaning, however small or brief. Let not our limited understanding confine our faith. Draw us closer to you and closer to one another. Lay our broken hearts open in faith to you and in ever greater compassion to one another. So raise us from death to life; we pray in Christ's name. Amen.<sup>3</sup>

Ever-loving and caring God, we come before you humbled by the mysteries of life and death. Help us to accept what we cannot understand, to have faith where reason fails, to have courage in the midst of disappointment. Comfort *mother's Name*, who has lost a part of herself, and *Names of father and/or other family members*. Help *them* (*her*) to see the hope of life beyond grief. Through Jesus we know that you love all your children and are with us always. Let us feel that presence now as we seek to live in faith, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.<sup>3</sup>

## Love

St Augustine once said: "God loves all of us as if there were only one of us to love." Lord God, we praise you for your love which knows no bounds and for making your love known to us in countless ways. Help us to be people who can accept your great love and who can offer that love to others. In your love, watch over us and keep us safe. Be with those we love at home and keep them in your constant care. Amen.



## Ministry with Persons Going Through Divorce

God of infinite love and understanding, pour out your healing Spirit upon \_\_\_\_\_, as he/she reflects upon the failure of his/her marriage and makes a new beginning. Where there is hurt or bitterness, grant healing of memories and the ability to put behind the things that are past. Where feelings of despair or worthlessness flood in, nurture the spirit of hope and confidence that by your grace tomorrow can be better than yesterday. Where he/she looks within and discovers faults that have contributed to the destruction of the marriage and have hurt other people, grant forgiveness for what is past and growth in all that makes for new life.

[Heal *children's names*, and help us minister your healing to *them*.]

We pray for [other] family and friends, for the healing of their hurts and the acceptance of new realities. All this we ask in the name of the One who sets us free from slavery to the past and makes all things new, even Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.<sup>3</sup>

## **On Establishing a Home**

To live with thee, O Lord, is to be at home with ourselves. Now be with us, we pray, as we dedicate this place as home for \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. Bless those vagrant, personal things of taste and choice that put the mark of these particular people upon it and make it theirs. May it be a place of shelter and protection, of rest and healing, of warmth and hospitality. And may thy embracing love be seen and felt in all the celebrations, daily chores, hard decisions, and shared glories that will occur here. As it will become the store-house of blessed memories, make it also a place for growth in grace. We pray in the name of him who has prepared a place for us, in whose house are many mansions, even Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.1

## Parent's Prayer

O Heavenly Father, make me a better parent. Teach me to understand my children, to listen patiently to what they have to say and to answer all their questions kindly. Keep me from interrupting them or contradicting them. Make me as courteous to them as I would have them be to me. Forbid that I should ever laugh at their mistakes or resort to shame or ridicule when they displease me. May I never punish them for my own selfish satisfaction or to show my power. Let me not tempt my child to lie or steal. And guide me hour by hour that I may demonstrate by all I say and do that honesty produces happiness. Reduce, I pray, the meanness in me. And when I am out of sorts, help me, O Lord, to hold my tongue. May I ever be mindful that my children are children and I should not expect of them the judgment of adults. Let me not rob them of the opportunity to wait on themselves and to make decisions. Bless me with the bigness to grant them all their reasonable requests and the courage to deny them privileges I know will do them harm. Make me fair and just and kind. And let me, O Lord, be loved, and respected and imitated by my children. Amen.

## **Personal Prayer: "Jesus Help Me!"**

In every need, let me come to you with humble trust, saying: "Jesus help me!" In all my doubts, perplexities, and temptations, "Jesus help me!" In the hours of loneliness, weariness, and trials, "Jesus help me!" In the failure of my plans and hopes, in disappointments, troubles, and sorrows, "Jesus help me!" When others fail me, and your grace alone can assist me, "Jesus help me!" When I throw myself on your tender love, as brother and savior, "Jesus help me!" and never forsake me. When my heart is cast down and I see no good come from my efforts, "Jesus help me!" When I feel impatient and my cross irritates me, "Jesus help me!" When I am ill and my head and hands cannot work, and I am lonely, "Jesus help me!" Always, always, in spite of weakness, shortcomings of every kind, "Jesus help me!" and never forsake me. Amen.

## Prayer (Children)

Let us pray. O God, our heavenly Father, grant that these children (persons), as they grow in years, may also grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that by the restraining and renewing influence of the Holy Spirit they may ever be true children of thine, serving thee faithfully all their days. So guide and uphold the parents/sponsors of these children (persons) that, by loving care, wise counsel, and holy example, they may lead them into that life of faith whose strength is righteousness and whose fruit is everlasting joy and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen<sup>3</sup>

Father, my life seems so uncertain. The more I press ahead to find my future, the more I seem bound to the past. Teach me to live in the present. Your Son walked this earth for just thirty-three years, but it was enough. Teach me to use my years like He did, as golden tokens of your love. Amen.\*\*

God, I want to talk to you, because I know you want me to. I thank you for your love so kind. Help me to love others all the time. I praise you for you are so great, and on your goodness I do wait. I am a sinner, God, I do admit, forgive me now as I silently sit. God, please help my neighbors who suffer. Help them to be strong when life gets tougher. God, I give my life to you, because I know you want me to.\*\*

## **Prayer for an Inauguration**

(B, C, and D may be used or omitted according to circumstances but A and E are always used.)

(A.) Almighty and eternal God, you have revealed your glory to all nations. God of power and might, wisdom and justice, through you authority is rightly administered, laws are enacted, and judgment is decreed.

(B.) Assist with your spirit of counsel and fortitude the President of these United States, that his administration may be conducted in righteousness, and be eminently useful to your people over whom he presides. May he encourage due respect for virtue and religion. May he execute the laws with justice and mercy. May he seek to restrain crime, vice and immorality.

(C.) Let the light of your divine wisdom direct the deliberations of Congress (and especially of \_\_\_\_\_) and shine forth in all the proceedings and laws framed for our rule and government. May they seek to preserve peace, promote national happiness, and continue to bring us the blessings of liberty and equality.

(D.) We pray for \_\_\_\_\_, the governor of this state, for the members of the legislature, (especially \_\_\_\_\_), for judges, elected civil officials (especially \_\_\_\_\_), and all others who are entrusted to guard our political welfare. May they be enabled by your powerful protection to discharge their duties with honesty and ability.

(E.) We likewise commend to your unbounded mercy all citizens of the United States, that we may be blessed in the knowledge and sanctified in the observance of your holy law. May we be preserved in union and that peace which the world cannot give; and, after enjoying the blessings of this life, be admitted to those which are eternal. We pray to you, who are Lord and God, for ever and ever. Amen.<sup>9</sup>

## **Prayer for Households**

God of life and love, we lift our hearts to you in praise and thanksgiving. We bless you for the goodness and beauty of creation, for the rhythm of sunrises and sunsets, for the patterns of color and texture of growing things that sustain our hope in the abundance of what is to come. We bless you for the landscapes of our lives, for our successes and failures, for the friends and enemies who weave a mosaic through our horizon. We praise you for all your works. We ask for grateful hearts and a spirit of generosity. Free us from being stingy with our words of praise and affirmation and our acts of forgiveness. Open us to the abundance of life and love you set before us.<sup>12</sup>

## **Prayer For Nurses**

O God, from this moment on we begin a new direction on our journey through life. We have determined within ourselves to reach toward the high goal of “healing.” Help us to continually realize that “healing” is colored by many shades and occurs in multifaceted ways. Help us also to realize that those in need of healing are “whole” beings with needs on many levels of existence. May we always offer healing to them with dignity, respect, and compassion. O God, open the awareness within us that through our own innovative means, using our mere human hands that “healing” can indeed occur. Perhaps that healing may take on the shade of holding a dying person’s hand or standing with a family member in a lonely corridor while awaiting news of a loved one. Yet, O God, help us to grasp moments like these within our profession with the realization that we have the rue capacity to become healers. Amen.



## **Prayer for Parish Council**

Ever-living God, you gather us together as the parish of \_\_\_\_\_ to carry the Gospel of Christ to all people. Bless the members of this parish council. Let your Spirit enlighten their minds and guide all their actions that they may be renewed in faith, united in love, and bring to fulfillment the work of your Church to your greater honor and glory. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.9

## **Prayer For Social Justice**

Almighty and eternal God, may your grace enkindle in all of us a love for the many unfortunate people whom poverty and misery reduce to a condition of life unworthy of human beings. Arouse in the hearts of those who call you Father a hunger and thirst for social justice and for fraternal love in deed and in truth. Grant, O Lord, peace in our days; peace to souls; peace to families, peace to our country, and peace among nations. Amen.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who created us in thine own image; Grant us grace fearlessly to contend against evil, and to make no peace with oppression; and that we may reverently use our freedom, help us to employ it in the maintenance of justice among men and nations, to the glory of thy holy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## Prayer of Blessing - Students/Teachers

*With hands extended over the students and teachers, the celebrant says immediately:*

Lord our God, in your wisdom and love you surround us with the mysteries of the universe. In times long past you sent us your prophets to teach your laws and to bear witness to your undying love. You sent us your Son to teach us by word and example that true wisdom comes from you alone. Send your Spirit upon these students and their teachers and fill them with your wisdom and blessings. Grant that during this academic year they may devote themselves to their studies and share what they have learned from others. Grant this through Christ our Lord. Amen.9

Lord God, your Spirit of wisdom fills the earth and teaches us your ways. Look upon these students. Let them enjoy their learning and take delight in new discoveries. Help them to persevere in their studies and give them the desire to learn all things well. Look upon these teachers. Let them strive to share their knowledge with gentle patience and endeavor always to bring the truth to eager minds. Grant that students and teachers alike may follow Jesus Christ, the way, the truth, and the life, for ever and ever. Amen.9

## Prayers for Community Gatherings

O Holy One, whom we call by different names because we are a diverse people, but who has called us to live together in community, respecting the uniqueness and gifts of each and every person; grant your presence among us as we share in this significant occasion. Give us ears that hear one another, voices that speak the truth in love, minds that make sense out of confusion or disorder, and hearts that seek to fulfill your purpose. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Creator and creating God, you who have the whole world in your hands, we claim to be one nation, under you, and that you are the One in whom we trust. May the words we speak and the actions we take while we are together reflect what we profess. Amen 13 (J. B.)

Eternal Spirit of the universe, we gather as an organization committed to making our community, nation, and world better places in which to live. Bless us, we pray, as we meet this day. May our presence and participation inform, enrich, and inspire our lives and also challenge us anew to live out the principles and vision that we share in common. Amen.13 (J. B.)

God of our forebears. God of our mothers and fathers, and our God; we are mindful this day of the heritage left by those who founded and those who were a part of this community in years gone by. May we not take for granted what we have been given, and may we be responsible citizens who strive continually to make liberty and justice a reality for all. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Fountain of life, light, and truth, you have so created us that we realize in the depths of our beings that none of us is an island and that none of us wants to walk alone. We have experienced that our hearts are restless until they rest in you and in one another. Therefore, we thank you for all who have assembled in this place and pray that our being together will enhance each of our lives. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Source of all existence and Sustainer of all the worlds that are, make us aware that even though you are a High and Holy God you also are a God who is present within and among us. We are aware that you have called us to love you and one another, and we pray that you will remind us anew that love, to be love, must be expressed in action. Thus, may our being together inspire us to put our love into practice through lives of service to all whose lives touch ours. Amen.13 (J. B.)

All-encompassing God, whose we are and whose ways are to be reflected in every realm of life; grant that we will not think of you and be concerned to do your bidding only when we are in our houses of worship. Even as we meet as a civic body may we acknowledge that we are not the masters of our fates and the captains of our souls, that we are not owners but stewards of the gifts of life, and that we are the freest when we align our wills with yours. May this be reflected in what we do and say in the moments to come. Amen.13 (J. B.)

## Prayers for Guidance and Help

Concerned and caring God, how much I need the assurance of your presence and help. I am tired and discouraged. I feel weighted down by the burdens of my life. So inscribe within my heart the words of your prophet: "Have you not known? Have you not heard? God is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. God does not faint or grow weary; God's understanding is unsearchable. God gives power to the faint, and strengthens the powerless. Even youths will faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted; but those who wait for God shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint." Mindful of this promise, I now can deal with this day! Amen.13 (J. B.)

Great God of Hope, I pause before you because I know that you will hear my prayer. At this difficult time in my life I need assurance because I am anxious, direction because I am drifting, energy because I feel empty, love because I feel lonely. Open my heart, Holy One, to the empowering and refreshing breath of your Spirit. Open my eyes, enlightening One, to the paths I should take. For you, O God, are my refuge and strength, and a very present help in trouble. This I have learned especially through Jesus, the Christ, my Savior, in whose spirit I pray. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Great and Gracious God, who taught me through your child Jesus that I am to love you with my mind as well as my heart, soul, and strength; thank you for the privilege of asking, questioning, and even doubting what I have been taught. As I struggle with my faith, may I move ever closer to the truth which sets me free - the truth I experienced in the one who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, even Jesus, the Christ. Amen.13 (J. B.)

## **Sadness into Joy**

Eternal Father, ruler and guardian of our lives, we beseech you to turn our sadness into joy and our failures into success. By the discipline of duty, teach us self control. By the lessons of frustrated love, guide us to a holier relation with others. By the insight of loss and sorrow, open to us the doors of understanding. By the gall of pin-pricked pride, drive us to truer, humbler estimates of ourselves. In the spotlight of reason, drive us to think more clearly as we ought. Father, take the miseries of our lives and create from them your divine and holy mercies...that we may find in each morn a day's dawn for service and a day's time for soul-growth. Amen.

## **Start of School Year**

Lord God, we invoke your blessings on all gathered here as we begin another school year. It is a special moment of reflection and anticipation for our students. As a moment of reflection, it is a reminder of the quality of service that has brought this class to this place today. Thank you for their sense of duty and for the hard work that has brought them to this point in their careers. We also thank you for all those whose support, guidance, and friendship enabled these airmen to stand here this day. As a moment of anticipation, we ask you to enlighten their minds and strengthen their will so that they may gain all that can be learned from this educational environment. Grant them the courage to draw on their own experience and personal skills to enrich the instruction given. Finally, guide them through this time in such a way that they will accomplish all they can for their own growth and the strengthening of the defense of our beloved nation. Amen.

At the beginning of a new school year, O God of wisdom, we offer thanks and praise for the gift of new beginnings and for the opportunity to learn and to wonder. We pray for teachers, students, and staff that this year might be rewarding for all. Be with us as we face the challenge of new tasks, the fear of failure, the expectations of parents, friends, and self. In our learning and our teaching, may we grow in service to others and in love for your world, through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.<sup>3</sup>

## Time of National Concern

O God, thank you for all our citizens who have honorably served their country. We honor and remember those who gave their lives in battle or in training such as those who died at the hands of terrorists, and others such as the crew of the Challenger. Help us to comprehend the unexplainable “why.” But Lord, there are some we can’t account for, those who may yet be prisoners and those who are missing in action. We humbly pray for them. For those who are alive, we ask that you bring them home. We pray for the families who wait and hope. Strengthen them in their vigil; suffer their courage and faith in thee never to fail. Provide your comfort and strength to all the families who have lost their loved ones. For those comrades in arms who are missing, we do so need to be able to make an end of it that the long night of darkness might be over. Help us, Lord, to never forget the value of the ultimate sacrifice, the giving of life, for the sake of others. We ask that you guide, guard and bless all our airmen, for you are our God and we are your people. Accept our moment of silence as the heart felt prayer for those we honor. Amen.

O Lord, who is ever present and always loving I ask for strength and courage in this moment and for the task before me. Courage I request and not protection, I know that with your power I am able to do all things. My witness is born and my faith increased not by safeguards, but by a willingness to face any danger with your divine presence. Strength I request and not a lightening of my burden, for I know that others will look to me for thy ability to transform human life. Through your strength, not only will I gain the ability to face difficulty, but others will be strengthened even in my midst. This petition is made in the name of Him who faced death and the burden of the cross victoriously, Jesus Christ. Amen.

“Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted”... We come to you in this hour, O God, in solidarity with our fellow airmen and families of the thousands who acknowledge our loss and our grief in this tragedy. We come to grieve, but also to honor the memory of those fallen friends who served with us in the common good and mission to preserve the freedom and security of this our beloved land. We give you thanks for their honored and faithful service to our nation and to the cause of peace in the whole world. You promise comfort for those who mourn. Claiming that promise, O God, we come to you with prayerful assurance that you will comfort, heal and restore the families and all who grieve the loss. Thus in the sure and certain hope that you have conquered death, give us courage to continue in life. Comfort our hearts, give us your light and help us to press on to do our duty, knowing that the eternal God is our refuge, and that underneath are the everlasting arms. In your name we pray, O Lord, Amen.

O Lord in whom we live and move and have our being, our times are in your hands and our future is in your providential care. When life is uncomplicated we tend to trust our own initiatives and direction - in times like this we are disoriented and react in sheer terror and disbelief. Once again we are reminded that we cannot handle our problems and are thrown back on the resources of our faith. Lead us, Father, through the confusion and chaos of this moment to trust in your mercy and care. Increase our faith so that it is not only sufficient for this trouble but for all the events of our lives. Amen.

Almighty God, Father of all mercies and source of all good, we lift our nation to you in this time of distress. In times like these Lord, help us to see your ways. Be with those who are (afflicted, injured, captured, missing) God, and with their families and loved ones, giving them strength and courage during this time. We want to follow the way of peace in this time Lord, show us that way. But if peace be not possible, then we ask that you grant protection and success to our Armed Forces as they perform their difficult and dangerous duties. Hear our prayer, O Lord, and grant our nation wisdom. Amen.

O God, despite the tragedies and terrors of our times we hold on to our faith in your good will toward us as your children. We sometimes wonder if what is happening is punishment for some forgotten transgression. Reassure us of your forgiveness for our unremembered weaknesses and errors and may we use these moments of tribulation and trouble to reaffirm our faith in your goodness. Help us to bear the heartaches and griefs of one another and keep faith with each other recognizing the strength of unity of purpose and resolve in the face of



these present dangers. May we indeed be "one nation under God dedicated to the principles of liberty and justice for all" and in defense of those principles, be prepared to dedicate our lives, possessions, and sacred honor to your care against whatever the future holds for us as individuals and as a nation. Amen.

Lord, how amazingly quiet and peaceful your house is today. While we worship in tranquillity the world is jarred by the strife of warfare. Comfort our distress and cause us to trust you; we don't know what tomorrow holds, but we know you, and you hold tomorrow in your hands. We pray for the many families who mourn the early deaths of their sons and daughters and husbands and wives. May the grief they are feeling be turned into peace. Amen.

God the Father, origin of divinity, good beyond all good, and fair beyond all fair, you are the source of calmness, peace and concord. Put an end to the discord that separates your people and lead us back to the unity of your abode that may show some similarity to your divine nature. Amen.

## To Become a Better Person

Dear Lord, help us to overcome our fears of today, and to look to you from whom comes our strength. Teach us to love our enemies, and to trust in you, for you have told us that you will always be there when we need a friend. Lord, we carry a heavy burden upon our shoulders and as long as we have you to lead and guide us our burdens will be light. Lord, protect us from the evil that prevails from day to day. Watch over our loved ones and protect them while they rest at night. Keep them safe as you have kept us and when it seems they can't bear it any longer give them the strength to go that extra mile of the way. In thy name we pray. Amen.

Lord of life, we love you, but not enough. We look for you, but just barely. We listen for you, but at the same time make a lot of noise. We try to understand - if it doesn't change us more than we like. Lord of life, draw us closer to you. Make it easier for us to be what you want us to be. Help us to make it easier for the one beside us to change into their better self. Help us all catch on to you so we interfere less with your work in our lives. When we find we are wrong, make us willing to change. And when we find we are right, make us fit to live with. Amen.

Lord God, before we ask you to take our whole lives into your keeping, just give us enough faith to live with you the very next moment - and then the next, and the next. Before we ask you to build up our confidence in the whole human race, just give us enough courage to trust the next man we meet - and then the next, and the next. Before we ask you to make a complete success in our entire life's work, just help us put our honor into the next task we undertake - and then the next, and the next. Before we ask you to make us popular or esteemed by all, help us mirror your way of life the next time someone takes a look at us - and then the next, and the next. Before we ask you to make us complete masters of our fate, just help us handle the next situation we face, - and then the next, and the next. Amen.

Lord, what we have done, we feel has been done well. Where we may have failed we ask forgiveness. What may be yet undone, give us the strength to pursue and for what lies ahead for us, give us the hope to succeed, the wisdom to perceive, and if need be, the humility to accept. Amen.

Our Heavenly Father, I watched a friend putting together a puzzle today. Carefully he examined each piece and first put together the outline. As the pieces filled in the center, the beautiful picture began to take form. Help us to discover the outline of our life, that we may discover the beautiful picture you have designed for us as the pieces come together. Sometimes the pieces didn't fit; carefully my friend replaced them with other pieces; but he didn't throw the others away. Help us to recognize the pieces of our life that don't fit because we have made wrong choices; grant us grace to carefully select others that do. Let not problems, or troubles, or struggles beat us down; but only point up the need to look to you more honestly for help in our choices; and to trust you that you want only good things for us. The puzzle wasn't finished when I left; there were pieces yet to be placed. O Father in Heaven, tonight we commend to your care the unfinished pieces of our life; trusting only in your goodness and your love; and thereby - finding peace in our time. Amen.

O God of Peace, You have taught us not to be anxious in our living. Release us from feeling frenzied about our commitments. Free us from the burden of our many fears, so that we may place our whole trust in your wise care and be at peace in the sure knowledge of your love. We offer our anxious hearts to you for the healing of faith. Through Christ, our living Lord. Amen.8

## **Victims of Domestic Violence**

Let us begin with a moment of silent prayer... Lord we ask you to be with \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ today as they struggle with violence and pain in their lives. We ask you Lord to watch over them and to keep them safe from all danger and fear. Help them Lord to be strong in this time of trial and to take care of each other. We pray that peace will once again be a part of their lives and that you will be with them as they resolve this situation. Grant them a beginning of a new life, a life free from violence and pain. Bless them with your love and presence. We ask this in Christ's name. Amen

## When Disaster Strikes

Ever-present God, to have struck so close to home, disasters such as the \_\_\_\_\_ that devastated neighboring communities on \_\_\_\_\_ abruptly reminds us that none of us knows what this day or tomorrow holds for him or her or friends or neighbors. The same natural laws and processes that the vast majority of time result in happiness, health, and life are the same laws and processes that sometimes result in tragedy, illness, and death. We pause today to recognize that we are finite and that although we have relatively little control over the quantity of our lives we have great control over the quality of our lives. Therefore, may we be concerned not only about how long we live but also with how we live. We recognize, too, that life contains the difficult, the uncertain, and the unexpected. But life also contains the strength and constancy of your love and presence that do not remove obstacles but that enable us to cope with and get through them. Thank you for life! Thank you for your love! Amen.13 (J. B.)

Loving God, constant during the changes of life, our refuge during the storms of life, our strength in times of tragedy, our hope when we feel desolated and devastated, who does not desire or will that any of your children should perish, we gather this day as a congregation in special need. You know the shock and trauma that have been ours since learning of the tragic event that affects our church family. We cannot believe that \_\_\_\_\_ is dead, but we know that we must face the reality that no longer will she/he be physically present among us. Compassionate God, we pray your blessing on all who grieve and suffer, all persons and families whose lives have been touched by death, especially \_\_\_\_\_. Motivate us to reach out and touch \_\_\_\_\_ and others in some concrete, helpful way. Enable us, too, to be more appreciative of the life that is ours. Since we do not know what either the present or the future holds, may we use wisely each day that dawns. May we not pave our way with so many good intentions. Rather, stir us to speak those words of love and gratitude, to give those embraces of warmth and caring, to offer our apologies and forgiveness, to do those acts of kindness, now - not later. And with the poet Whittier, may we affirm: "Within the maddening maze of things, when tossed by storm and flood, to one fixed trust my spirit clings; I know that God is good! I know not where God's islands lift their fringed palms in air; I only know I cannot drift beyond God's love and care. I know not what the future hath of marvel or surprise, assured alone that life and death God's mercy underlies." Amen.13 (J. B.)

Dear God, you are the ruler of wind and sea. You delight in those who trust you and wait upon your presence and direction. Grant us, Lord, the assurance that when news from home depresses rather than rejoices our hearts, we can cast all our cares upon you for you care for us. From Airman Basic to Chief Master Sergeant - you care for us; from 2nd Lieutenant to General - you care for us. We ask, Lord, that a special portion of your grace be upon the \_\_\_\_\_ family and all in this Wing who have received news of illness, death, or other family challenges. Assure them, Lord, of your continuing care - mercy - peace - and grace. Amen.

O God, you divided the waters of chaos at creation. In Christ you stilled storms, raised the dead, and vanquished demonic powers. Tame the earthquake, wind, and fire, and all the forces that defy control or shock us by their fury. Keep us from calling disaster your justice. Help us, in good times and in distress, to trust your mercy and yield to your power, this day and for ever. Amen.3

## When War Seems Imminent

Heavenly Father, it's the eleventh hour. Peace seems so far away, and war so near. What else is there left to do but pray? Like children playing on the rim of a volcano, we seem precariously poised on the edge of world conflagration, not knowing where to turn, or when, or how to save ourselves and our world. We pray earnestly for our leaders--our President and all those who work for peace. But we turn most of all to you, our God, not out of weakness but strength. Help us to know your will at this critical hour, and to be part of its fulfillment. Empires come and go; nations rise and fall; governments wax and wane; leaders rise to prominence, then vanish into obscurity. We play our own small part on the world stage, then pass from view. How transitory, fleeting, and frail is mankind, his institutions and his toys. But you, O God, are the same yesterday, today, and forever. Help us to live today and tomorrow wholly committed to that which transcends the present, even this grave present moment of our history. May we mean it when we pray, "Your kingdom come; your will be done, ... for yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever." And in that, O God, may we find our peace. Amen.\*\*

## Young Person's Prayer

Father, Jesus is supposed to be my guide in this life. Why is he so hard to see, sometimes? Could it be that, because I try to live life my own way rather than his, I have problems? Does it matter what I do anyway? Some people say you are only love. Are you limited to one emotion? I'm not! If I reach out for Jesus, will he change me much? Here I am, Lord, take what you want. I haven't done much with my life so far. I really would like to see what you can do with me through Jesus. Thanks. I do love you. Amen.\*\*

## RELIGIOUS EVENTS

## **Baptism**

As by thy mystery, most gracious Lord, thou hast used this brimming water to bring to this child the promises of heaven and revealed again the freshness of Eden among the things of earth, so we pray thee to encourage him/her day by day and year by year toward thy goodness. Keep round about him/her thy holy love that he/she may enter life lovingly; teach him/her thy mercy that he/she may handle life mercifully; engage him/her by thy truth that he/she may grasp life truthfully. In all ways be to him/her guide and protector that he/she may awaken to daylights of hope and go to sleep in the sure faith that the universe itself rests on thy compassion; in the name of Jesus who blessed and delighted in all children. Amen.1



## **Bat Mitzvah**

May He who blessed our ancestors, Abraham, Issac and Jacob, Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah, bless \_\_\_\_\_. who has come to this bat mitzvah with reverence for God, the Torah and mankind, to thank God for all the good which has been hers since the day of her birth. May the Holy One, praised be He, grant her long life. May she be at one with the Lord her God, studying His teachings and walking in His paths. May she prosper in all her worthy endeavors and find favor before God and man. May her parents rear her to womanhood induced with love of Torah and the performance of good deeds. May they be privileged to bring her in joy to the wedding canopy. And let us all say: Amen.

## Confirmation

We beseech thee, most bountiful God, to be in our prayers this day that, in its spirit of quiet jubilation over thy gift of these young people, we may pray aright for thy love, strengthening and sustaining them all the days of their lives. And we ask that they shall know the time of their visitation; that increasingly they shall learn the things which make for peace; and that, like Jesus, they shall embody in their flesh and hearts patience before their suffering, sure delight in each day's revelations, and abiding faith in thy presence always among us to heal and to renew. Keep them and us aware of the victories that come with trust; through Christ our Lord. Amen.1

Creating and loving God, we pause in your presence on this day of Confirmation - the day when \_\_\_ of your children make promises to enter into a covenant with you and this church. Our prayer this day is one of gratitude and petition. We offer our thanks for these young people soon to be confirmed and for their families. We thank you for the time and energy these youths have invested to prepare themselves for this hour when they consciously and publicly accept the Christian faith as their way of life and when they become official members of the church - the body that seeks to carry on the mission and ministry of Jesus, the Christ. We pray that they will take seriously the commitment they make this morning and that their families and we their friends will offer our support and encouragement to the end that they will feel this to be a day of spiritual significance and not simply the fulfillment of a social custom. May these confirmands not forget, but be faithful to, their confirmation vows. But, O God, our prayer also is one of confession. We who are members of your church confess that we often forget or take lightly the vows we took and the promises made when we embraced the Christian faith and became a part of a local expression of the body of Christ. The activities of our daily living and our being faithful members of the church often have been less than exemplary. Forgive us, and as once again we hear promises made and vows accepted, may we reaffirm them in our hearts and rededicate ourselves to being more faithful and effective witnesses of your presence and love in our world. Amen.13 (J. B.)

## **Ecumenical Occasion**

O our one Lord, who calls forth one faith and names us all in one baptism: we pray for the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church - for Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox, evangelical and liberal believers who in their several ways give testimony to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. As we share one Teacher and Savior, let us share one spirit and purpose as well, so that the new humanity you are bringing to light will be seen in our common praise and our steadfast love. We pray in the name and for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.<sup>1</sup>

## Wedding Prayer

As you stand under the huppah pledging your love and lives to each other, may we pause for a moment to ask God's blessing on your union. May the love you feel for each other extend as well to the God of Israel and the people of Israel. Your marriage is a part of the plan of creation, which stated from the very beginning of time that men and women are to live together in love and companionship. And from this union new life and new creation will emerge. Seen in this context, we petition the Holy One to protect and shelter you, and give you both the greatest measure of happiness available to His children. May God's mercy extend as well to your parents and relatives, loving family members who are assembled today to share in your great joy. We also ask a special blessing for your friends who are a part of this happy ceremony. May their friendship endure and deepen as you advance on life's paths. We finally ask the good Lord to be kind to us and to give courage to the children of mankind to create a safe and sane world--one in which your love and marriage can grow and express its fullness undisturbed by the winds of distress and unhappiness. May you go from strength to strength, serving the God of our fathers, carrying out his ways and walking in his paths. Amen.\*\*

God, who declared for holy love when Eden sang: anoint with generous blessing this man and this woman who, by a spacious trust in thee and one another, risk themselves together in the freedoms of marriage. Gather them to the lovely seasons of the flesh, to the awakenings to each other's dreams, to an awe before all mysteries given and received. Sing in their home the music of hospitality and true peace, and let them bring their shared affections to all life around them. Give them a patience in their time of stress and a gentleness toward the angers that would destroy them. And so deepen them in faith toward thee that theirs shall always be a household filled with praise; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.1

Lord God, we give thanks for the promise of this moment and we pray for \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ that they may be strengthened always to keep the covenant which they have made. May they be a blessing and a comfort to each other, the sharers of each other's joys, consolers to each other in sorrow, helpers to each other in all the chance and change of this life. May they encourage each other in their highest goals. May they trust each other and, trusting you as well, address their life with courage. May they not only accept but give affection to one another, and together have affection and consideration for those who come under their roof and into their circle. We join in prayer with those who are absent from us but present in spirit, and ask that the inspiration of this hour be not forgotten; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.1

Most gracious God, we give you thanks for your tender love in making us a covenant people through our Savior Jesus Christ and for consecrating in his name the marriage covenant of \_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. Grant that their love for each other may reflect the love of Christ for us and grow from strength to strength as they faithfully serve you in the world. Defend them from every enemy. Lead them into all peace. Let their love for each other be a seal upon their hearts, a mantle about their shoulders, and a crown upon their heads. Bless them in their work and in their companionship; in their sleeping and in their waking; in their joys and in their sorrows; in their lives and in their deaths. Finally, by your grace, bring them and all of us to that table where your saints feast for ever in your heavenly home; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.3

**WORSHIP RESOURCES**

**Prayers for the Liturgy**

## Invocation

Engage us, O Lord, among all the signs, visible and invisible, which discover thy presence among us, so that, illuminated by thy grace, we shall enter into each day's circumstance empty of our pretensions, unafraid of our fears, and alert to every new possibility. As you intend us to be open to all the seasons of the soul, empower us to give of our heart's love generously to all who need us. Help us to honor the goodness in others, and keep us faithful to every thought and act that works against the evil one; through Christ our Lord. Amen.1

O Eternal God, in whose law we find our guidance, in whose love we find our healing and our joy, in whose will we find our goal: do thou so rule over our spirits in this hour that we will go from our worship with the freedom of those whose trust is in thee and who need have no more anxiety for themselves. Teach us to take our delight in thee, to stay our pride in what we own and what we have done, and to count the doing of thy will to be our only glory. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, in whom we see true humility and obedience. Amen.1

O God of light eternal, in whose love and power the world took shape, and we were born, and our lives are lived, and we die: grant us now that silence of the heart in which we can recall that we are never separated from the love which created us, nor from the love that surrounds our suffering. Bring us now into thy presence, and let us be strengthened there. Amen.1

Come, Sovereign Lord, and awaken in us those needs of flesh and soul, of loss and hope, of wound and healing which we must cry out before thee, for our own sakes and for the sake of all peoples. Be that leaping grace, that generosity of spirit by which we care anew for what happens to the human race. Make us sensible to the ache and anxiety in the world and open to the cries for help. Let our prayers shape what we will do to mend, overcome, and make new. And Christ be with us all. Amen.1

Come, Holy Spirit, into the prayers we cry out for the sake of all peoples, for their healing and for their salvation. Overcome our little faith and empower both our words and our silences with that love that loves without anxiety. Brood and sigh in us the grievances and sorrows, the ache and the loneliness of all those near and far away who need our intercessions. Take us out of ourselves and into their need. Give us the trust which knows that, beyond our asking is thyself -- gathering, comforting, and healing. Amen.1

Gentle Lord, find in us this day whatever desires to handle life with a joyous desire. Put our arms around the sad ones that they may be comforted. Let our eyes love the unloved ones that they may become again part of the human family. Give into our hands the healing touch whereby fevers cool, brokenness mends, fears vanish away. And in thy name help us to take our-selves and others through the dark passages of death in the sure hope of a high and holy resurrection; through Christ our Lord. Amen.1

Deepen within us, O God, the sense of your presence and refresh us with your power. Give ease to our hearts by bringing us close to things infinite and eternal. Grant us dignity by taking us under your care. Humble us by revealing our shortcomings and exalt us by manifesting yourself as our Counselor and Lord. Help us always to impart strength and joy to those whom you have sent us to serve. Amen.\*\*

Our Father, for the gift of life and for all the blessings you bestow, we are grateful. Grant that as we worship, we will experience your grace and be challenged by your presence. Strengthen us and lift us to new levels of spiritual understanding. May our joy be made full in the assurance of your love and eternal provision. Amen.\*\*

Almighty God, we come together today to celebrate the life which you give us through Jesus, our Lord and Savior. Help us, in this worship hour that we may experience your abiding presence, be uplifted by your joy and empowered by your love. May we depart revived, seeking to share your glory. Amen.\*\*

Heavenly Father, we praise you and thank you for the peace of the night and the challenge of the new day. In our

worship of you, fill us with your Spirit, touch our hearts with your love and renew our minds through your word. Remind us of your unfailing love and cause our lives to glorify your name. To the glory of Jesus we pray. Amen.\*\*

Our Father, we enter worship confessing your righteousness, your excellence and your sovereignty. We praise you for your mercy and grace. We trust in your love and faithfulness, and we accept with outstretched arms the gift of life you freely give through your Son, Jesus Christ. Bless us in worship. May your name be praised now and evermore. Amen.\*\*

Gracious and holy God, we come to you because you have first come to us. We know you because you have revealed yourself. Give us this morning hour of worship a new sense of your Spirit breathing through us. Lift our hearts with the wings of song, heal our souls with the balm of prayer, enliven our minds with the words of scripture and interpretation, and newly enable us to dedicate our strength, our substance, and our service to your work in the world. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Ever-present, ever-loving God, who seeks to mold us after your will so that we will bear the image of you, our Creator; may our worship today result in our being pliable people who, aware of our sin and shortcomings, rededicate ourselves to follow more closely the example for living found in Jesus, the Christ, in whose spirit we pray. Amen.13 (J. B.)

We have come to this place, O God, because it has been dedicated to your worship and because it is replete with reminders of you, the Holy One, who created us. We have come, not because we must but because we may; not out of fear but out of love; not to bask in our merits but to be buoyed by your acceptance, love, and mercy. Be within and among us, we pray, as we now worship you in spirit and in truth. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Holy God, Creator of all, whose will and ways we have found incarnated in the life of Jesus; keep us ever mindful that we are to follow the Christ but worship you. For it was to you, O God, that Jesus gave his allegiance as he grew in wisdom and stature and in favor with you and others. May this service inspire us to do the same. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Faithful God, our refuge and our strength, a very present help in trouble, our help in ages past and our hope for years to come; there are times in life when we need to be reminded that you never will forsake us and that you somehow will give us strength for the living of each day. May our worship this morning indelibly stamp these truths on our souls. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Nurturing God, Source of life, light, love, and truth; we approach you with expectancy and joy this day as we come to worship you. We know that as a parent loves a child, you love us. So may this hour motivate us to be childlike - loving, trusting, honest, and accepting - but not childish - self-centered, petulant, and immature. Amen.13 (J. B.)

God of the universe, Creator of all of earth's people: take away our myopia and remove our blinders as we worship you today. Improve our hearing so that we might hear the cries of your children who are less fortunate than we, and challenge us anew to respond to the words of your child Jesus, "As you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me." Amen.13 (J. B.)

Creator and Creating God, who called the worlds into being and created us in your image; we confess that we often mistreat the world you have given us and forget that the setting for our span of life is your world, not ours. May our worship today motivate us to be better residents and caretakers of your earth and rivers and seas and sky. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Creator God, who has put a song in our hearts and who desires that we live in harmony with one another: may our worship gladden our spirits and motivate us to strive for a closer walk with you as we enter the path of this



new week. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Compassionate Creator, who has given us voices with which to praise you, minds with which to seek you, hearts with which to love you, and lives with which to serve you, we gather this day to worship you in spirit and in truth. Renew us, refresh us, invigorate us, challenge us, inspire us, so that we may enter this new week assured of your love and comforted by the knowledge that your abiding presence within will enable us to face whatever comes our way in life. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Great, gracious, and gathering God, you have called us to be your people in this particular time and place. Thus, we have come to this house of worship desiring to see you more clearly, love you more dearly, and follow you more nearly. May we do so not just week by week, but day by day! Amen.13 (J. B.)

From our separate neighborhoods and communities we have gathered this day, O God, to affirm that no matter who we are or where we live or what our status of life, we are your children. Thank you for loving us and caring for and about us. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Caring Friend, whom we cannot love unless we love one another, and whom we cannot serve unless we serve one another; may our worship this day impress upon us that just as the cross is incomplete until the horizontal intersects the vertical, our relationship to you is incomplete until our lives meaningfully intersect the lives of those with whom we live and work and play and pray. Amen.13 (J. B.)

O God, Fountain of life, from whom flows more blessings than we can enumerate; we pause at the beginning of this new week to put ourselves in touch with you, the source of our spirits. Flood our lives with a sense of your presence, and keep us caught up in the current of your buoying love. Amen.13 (J. B.)

O God, you have been our help in ages past. But you want us to live in the present, and you are our hope for the future. Thank you for this day and for all of our tomorrows. For today is the first day of the rest of our lives. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Eternal God, you have called us into your church to be your people in this time and place. We have accepted your call, but often we forget our mission. Forgive us, renew us, and motivate us to go forth and be the church - active, functioning, contributing, loving members of the body of Christ whose lives make a difference! Amen.13 (J. B.)

Come in, and refresh us, renew us, restore us. May our worship remind us that the gifts of your abiding presence, your continual love, and your sustaining strength enable us to face every day of our lives, no matter what they may bring. For this we praise and thank you. Amen.13 (J. B.)

O God, we have come to this sanctuary, not just to be observers or to be entertained, but to join others in worshipping you. So open our minds and spirits that we might be aware of your presence in our midst. In this hour may we reflect on your power and goodness, seek forgiveness for our failures and wrongdoing, discern how we should live, and renew our commitment to follow you. Then may we go forth to love and serve you by loving and serving one another. Amen.13 (J. B.)

For voices with which to praise you, for hands with which to serve you, for minds with which to know you, and for hearts with which to love you, we thank you, O God. May our worship this day inspire us to a higher plane of living so that we will become more fully the persons you want us to be. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Good, great, and gracious God, who rejoices with us in our times of joy and is our refuge and strength in times of trouble, we have come to worship you in spirit and in truth and to reflect on your purposes for our lives. May the hymns we sing and the music and words we hear inspire and challenge us more closely to approximate the life of Jesus, in whose spirit we pray. Amen.13 (J. B.)

We gather, O God, to worship and praise you for all that you have given us. You love us just because we are, not because of who we are. You have blessed us because you are gracious, not because we have earned your grace. May this hour spent with you and one another motivate us to be more fully the people you intend and want us to be. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Caring Creator, ever within as well as around us, our constant companion as we traverse the hills and valleys of life; we gather in this place seeking to reestablish conscious contact with you, the ground of our being. Melt us, mold us, fill us, use us - for your sake, for Christ's sake, and for the sake of others. For it is in loving that we are loved, in giving that we receive, and in serving that we are served. Amen.13 (J. B.)

God of Abraham, Sarah, Moses, and Jesus, and our God, too; we join the procession of those who down through the ages have sought to serve and love you with heart, soul, mind, and strength. We thank you this day for your ancient but timeless laws that offer guidelines for our daily living. Forgive us for the times we have disregarded them, and may we do a better job of following you day by day. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Caring creator and persuasive presence, whose love surrounds us, whose strength supports us, whose truth enlightens us, and whose spirit guides us; you have given us a pattern for daily living in Jesus, the Christ. For his life and teachings, for showing us the way, and for the revelation that you are always with us, we offer our heartfelt thanks. Forgive us for the times we have turned our backs on the example of Jesus, and make us more like the one in whose spirit we pray. Amen.13 (J. B.)

We have come to your house, O God, to worship and sing your praise. For you are the loving source of our lives who calls us to love you by serving others. And your indwelling spirit strengthens and enables us to face this new day and week in the hope and assurance that you will enable us to face and contend with whatever comes our way. For being our creator and sustainer, thank you! Amen.13 (J. B.)

Ever-present God, who always is within and around us and who gives us courage for the living of each day; we gather to praise you for guiding and upholding our lives. Make us more keenly aware of your still, small voice that calls us to be the best we can be and reminds us that we never walk alone! Amen.13 (J. B.)

Loving and merciful God, who has called us to be your servants in the service of others and who has given us talents enabling us to serve; forgive us for those times when we have buried our gifts and thus failed to be there for others and to do what we could have done to make ours a better world in which to live. May our worship today inspire us to say, "Here am I, God," and then to go forth to live in the manner of the Christ, whose name we profess. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Sovereign God, vaster than our minds can fathom yet as intimate as love itself, we gather to profess that you are our God and we are your people. Forgive us for at times forgetting whose we are and thereby denying the relevance of your will and ways. Claiming your forgiving grace, we rededicate ourselves to following more faithfully and fully the life and teachings of Jesus, the Christ, in whom we see you most clearly and completely revealed. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Eternal God, who loves each of us as a parent loves a child, we pause to remember your amazing grace and your perennial and protective presence. You indeed are our refuge and strength and present with us both in good and in difficult times. Because you love us and always are with us, in gratitude we rededicate ourselves to following Jesus' commandment to love you with heart, soul, mind, and strength, and our neighbors as ourselves. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Loving, living God, we have come to this place dedicated to your worship because we seek to have our lives refreshed and renewed. Sometimes we need to be reminded that we are to do what is right, that we are to speak

the truth from our hearts in love, that the words we say are not to hurt or slander, and that we are to do no evil to others. Forgive us for the times when we have failed to live in this manner in the past week, and enable us to do a better job of living and loving in this new week that lies ahead. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Ever-present source of life and strength, we pause now to become aware of your spirit that always is around and within us, just waiting to be recognized and affirmed. Forgive us for not accepting your power when we are powerless and your assistance when we fall or fail. May this hour with you and your people refresh and renew us so we better can live each day that is ours. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Holy, gracious, and everlasting God, we gather to sing and speak your praise. You love us as a parent loves a child. When we are weak you offer us your strength. When we are brokenhearted you offer us your comfort and healing. When we stumble or fall you offer to help us. When we sin you offer us your forgiveness. For being our help in the past and our hope for the future, we offer you our thanks. Amen.13 (J. B.)

You have called us, O God, to worship you in spirit and in truth, and we have gathered for this purpose. Open our eyes to the beauty of the world you have created; open our ears to your still, small voice that seeks to influence us; open our hearts to your amazing grace and forgiving love. Being thus reminded of your greatness, your guidance, and your goodness, may we seek to live as did Jesus, the Christ, in whose spirit we pray. Amen.13 (J. B.)

O God, who comes to us as creator, refuge, and fortress, we remember you this day as shepherd - one who cares about who we are, where we are, and how we are doing. You are our shepherd who knows our joys and our sorrows, our gifts, and our needs. Lead and guide us this day and throughout this new week. As sheep follow their shepherd, may we follow you, as did Jesus, the Christ, who also was like a shepherd and called people to follow him. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Creator and loving God, who desires to turn our weeping into joy and our mourning into dancing, who stays with us during the dark nights of our souls until we experience the light of life once again; we give you thanks for your constant love and powerful presence. May our worship today remind us of our call to follow you by showing love to you and others, as did Jesus, the Christ, in whose spirit we pray. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Creator God, Fountain of Life, whose constant presence, amazing grace, and law of love nurture and sustain us each day; we have come to recommit ourselves to you. For in and through you is life that is both abundant and eternal. You have called us to be your people; so we respond by asking you to melt us, mold us, fill us, use us, so that our lives will more closely approximate the life of Jesus, the Christ, whose we are and whom we seek to serve. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Eternal, ever-present God, we pause in your presence to thank you for being within and around us throughout life. When we are weak, you are to us like a rock. When we are buffeted or endangered by life's events, you are our fortress. For hearing us, for delivering and saving us, we are forever grateful and therefore have come to praise and honor you, as did Jesus, in whose spirit we pray. Amen.13 (J. B.)

## Adoration and Praise

Praise to our Lord God who, in the beginning, sends forth the light over all that is, as well as gives breath to the peoples who stand or run on the earth. Praise to our Lord God who arises before us and keeps in love the days of our lives, who holds also by a great tenderness the sadness of the cities and the works of the nations. Praise to our Lord God who intends us for rejoicing in his presence and therefore teaches us ways of compassion to overcome evil and gestures of trust to disarm fear. Praise to our Lord God who makes death to die and gathers everyone at last into paradises no one can name. Praise to our Lord God! Amen.1

Praise the Lord, our God who is everywhere yet has no place, our God who carries time as a very little thing yet who fulfills all time, our God who allows motion and chaos and varieties beyond name yet who so manages that the universe abides. Praise the Lord, our God who sends the snows and the melting rains and the awakening spring, the long sun of summer, fires in the clamorous fall, our God who permits our histories, our God who summons the nations. Praise the Lord, our God who intends us, informs us, and sustains us forever. Amen.1

Let us be glad in the ways of the Lord who presides among stars yet teaches the human heart, who gives the seasons that both flesh and nations shall know their sad moralities, who authors the mystery of our freedom and risks the divine love among our human choices, who intends that each one shall go without fear and that all shall share the music of the deep heavens, who gathers us to learn together who we are in the presence of the Most High. Let us be glad and truly rejoice in the ways of the Lord who is our health and our salvation. Amen.1

Praised be our Lord God who daylight by daylight provides us airs for breathing, skies for dreaming, and sceneries of small streams and fields with many birds to teach the eyes. Praised be our Lord God who has set us now among the great colors of the seasons where-fore we may inwardly dance among any troubles and outwardly rejoice in the new sun. Praised be our Lord God who has given us much always of compassion for our daily ills, a solace that he intends us to give also to others. Praised be our Lord who saves us at the hour of our death, a mysterious happening which is the nature of his love. Praise! Praise! Praise! Amen.1

Holy, holy, holy is the visible world and the children who walk and run upon it, and they who, lifting up their eyes, behold the sun's journey and hold out their hands to the rain's fall. Blessed before all is the Lord who, out of mysteries and divine imaginings, spins in the dark and the reaching spaces of this earth, whose rivers wander and roll to the seas, whose valleys sound and resound with great silences, whose mountains are the mountains of rejoicing, whose hills are the hills of hope. It is the Lord who awakens us, who gives us this day and this season. Amen.1

How good it is to praise you, O elusive one, you stride down the other side of heaven, you in our kitchens, you now under the green trees turning toward the autumn! May our breath praise you as we sigh; may this gesture and that in love and hope praise you; may our tears for others praise you; may our loneliness praise you; may our listening praise you... world without end. Amen.1

## Confession

Sovereign Lord, thy righteousness over us, thy goodness before us, and thy love among us magnify the thousand ways, blatant and devious, we have wasted our lives on that which does not satisfy. We admit sadly that we have too often given our substance and our purpose to capture the mirage and our affections to the things which perish. So we cry pardon for our idolatries and mercy upon our frailties, desiring in our hearts to know those holy, true ways by which the days of our lives shall deepen down in the wellsprings, the unsullied grace, the original joy; through Christ our Lord. Amen.1

Lord, who neither betrays nor condemns and who desires in us only a loving heart: we have been traitorous toward thee and turned each to our own way; we have been quick to judge and slow to forgive; we have given of ourselves cautiously. So we yield to treacheries small and great, settle for trivia, and embrace shadows; so we cry our need. Open to us your always new way where, with patience and hope, we may trust the world to your governance and turn our faces once more toward your holy mysteries that renew all things in every hour. Amen.1

Keeper of the universe, creator of life, guardian of our deaths: one and all, we have raged against the heavens, wasted our substance and the gifts given, feared our mortality. Avoiding timelessness, we have become enslaved to time. Careless with means, we go corrupt toward ends. Strangers before death, we are not at home with life. Therefore, great Lord, recall us to the majesties beyond our words, and turn us again to handle with awe the lively world we did not earn; through Jesus Christ who has dominion over death. Amen.1

Lord of all souls everywhere and in all times, we admit to sins, great and small, obvious and subtle, by which we destroy others - those near and dear to us, the peoples far away, the neighbor close by, the stranger in our midst. We acquire rather than share, demand rather than give, avenge rather than pardon. We put other gods before you and learn to live comfortably with what is meaningless and false. As we are ashamed, pity us; as we are aware, strengthen us; as we see through the idolatries, forgive us. Return us to your-self that we may live without fear and seize our days with exultation. Amen.1

Almighty God, whom we are called to love with our whole heart, mind, soul, and with a bold strength: we know well that we are often heartless toward the misery of others and mindless toward thy purposes for good, that our souls wither among our machines, that our strength has gone from us laboring after that which does not satisfy. By our luxury the hungry are sent empty away; for the sake of our comfort the innocent perish at home and abroad. As of old, we kill the prophets and anoint the fools. Help us, great Lord, to deplore in ourselves the evil that so wantonly destroys; and provoke in us for the sake of all people those inward changes which support life, encourage liberty, and make possible the pursuit of happiness, Amen.1

Most gracious Lord, we confess that in ways devious and hardhearted we have worked against thy purposes for an open and loving world. We have profited at the expense of the poor and glossed over the immoralities of the marketplace. We have claimed special rights and privileges which we have denied others. We have forgotten history. Surely we have need of a great repentance. Therefore we beseech thy pardon and the blowing of thy Spirit through our lives that we may be set free from our bondage to greed and live our days with understanding hearts. Amen.1

Lord God, whose mercy is everlasting and whose love surpasses our understanding: we confess that we have been uncertain and faithless servants. We have set our hearts on our own comforts and have ignored the burdens that others carry. We have seen our brothers and sisters hungry or hurt or poor or lonely and have not tried to help them. We have grown patient with injustice and tolerant of war, so long as we have not been their victims. We are sorry for our callousness, and pray for new hearts to see our neighbors' needs and new strength to meet them; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.1

O wondrous hope, God of the promise, on whom we rely for life and its meaning: we confess that we have

sinned against you by abandoning hope, by failing to hear or accept your promises, by relying on ourselves to be both the source and the object of our own faith. Forgive us, we pray, and once more open our hearts to your mercy, our minds to your promise, our hands to our neighbor in need. Restore us to faith in your providing care and your guiding love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.<sup>1</sup>

Eternal God, we confess that we have praised you with our lips but have not glorified you with our lives. Have mercy on us, we pray, for our brief faith that fades under pressure, for our quick enthusiasms that just as quickly die, for the hopes we proclaim but do not pursue. Forgive us, Lord God, and give us new trust in your power, that we may live for justice and tell of your loving-kindness by our acts as by our words; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.<sup>1</sup>

Lord God, we confess that we are not ready for your kingdom of love and peace to be established among us. We still turn away from others' suffering; we still postpone caring for your gift of creation; we still tolerate war and take too lightly the burdens of making peace. Forgive us, O God, for our unreadiness. Awaken us once more to your presence among us, and make of us signs of the coming victory of your mercy; through Jesus Christ, the child of your love and the brother to our hopes. Amen.<sup>1</sup>

Lord, do not let us do more if in doing less we might do better. Do not let us acquire more if in living with less, we might know thee better. We are easily swayed by size, equating quantity with quality, wealth with security and applause with popularity. Forgive us for spreading ourselves thin for the sake of appearance. Permit us to mend our ways lest we miss the baby in the stable, the lad in the carpenter's shop and the Christ on the cross.

Chaplain: Friends in Christ, let us now confess our sins before our loving Lord, trusting in his mercy and sure of his restoring power. Lord God, your people have been called to lives of joy and celebration.

**Congregation: But we live in the midst of death and sorrow.**

Chaplain: Our world is rife with tension and hatred.

**Congregation: Our world lives in bondage and sin.**

Chaplain: We have all had a part in it. We have sinned through indifference, arrogance and idolatry.

**Congregation: We have loved the world, rather than you.**

Chaplain: We have sought advantage rather than charity. We have loved prestige rather than servanthood.

**Congregation: Our relationships abound in brokenness. We strive for the good, but our sin is ever before us.**

Chaplain: Have mercy on us, Lord.

**Congregation: Have mercy on us.**

Chaplain: Create in us clean hearts.

**Congregation: And renew right spirits within us.**

Chaplain: We have been to this place before. We have knelt here and asked forgiveness.

**Congregation: And we will be here again.**

**Unison: Lord God, in the midst of our imperfections, your grace sustains us and brings us always home again as sons and daughters. Give us pardon and peace for the sake of him who loved us and whose sufferings have overcome our world of sin. Amen.\*\***

Almighty God, Father and Creator of all humankind, help us your creatures to reflect your joy, peace, and love. Often we have failed to be effective representatives for you in our daily lives. Forgive us when we are contrary or disobedient to your divine guidance. Help us to stand tall as your people, and give us the strength that comes from you alone. Unto you, the one who is able to keep us from falling and who presents us faultless before the throne of grace, we give thanks and praise forever. In your name we pray. Amen.\*\*

Almighty God, we confess that we are often swept up in the tide of our generation. We have failed in our calling to be your holy people, a people set apart for your divine purpose. We live more in apathy born of fatalism than in passion born of hope. We are moved more by private ambition than by social justice. We dream more of privilege and benefits than of service and sacrifice. We try to speak in your name without relinquishing our glories, without nourishing our souls, without relying wholly on your grace. Help us to make room in our hearts

and lives for you. Forgive us, revive us, and reshape us in your image. Amen.4

Almighty and merciful God, we know that when we offend another, we offend you. We are aware that we have often allowed the shadow of hate to cloud our souls, hiding the light from our unseeking eyes. We have said unpleasant and hurtful things to our brothers and sisters when they failed to live up to our expectations. Grant that we might find that spark of love that ever burns within us, the love that you have shown to us even when we failed you. Fan the embers of that love until it roars again in flames of love, peace, and reconciliation. Forgive us our sins and help us to forgive those who have sinned against us. Lead us into new life through your Son Jesus Christ, who died for the sins of all. Amen.3

Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, who of thy great mercy hast promised forgiveness of sins to all them that with hearty repentance and true faith, turn unto thee; have mercy upon us; pardon and deliver us from all our sins; confirm and strengthen us in all goodness; and bring us to everlasting life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## *Thanksgiving*

For the new day and its visible weathers that teach our flesh and alert us to the stretch and pause of the very universe, we give thee thanks, O God. For the morning which has broken our darkness both without and within and opened us to the new possibilities, we give thee thanks, O God. For the day's procession, its landscapes, varieties, intentions, tastes, silences, and dreams, we give thee thanks, O God. For thyself touching, anguishing, persuading, exposing our very being into life and life eternal, we give thee thanks now and forever. Amen.1

O Lord our God, whose beauty is everywhere around us on such a morning, whose holiness lays hold of our hearts and minds through what we see: we give wholehearted thanks for the joys of this life, asking only that we be permitted to remember them when darker moments come and your promising presence is shadowed. We are grateful for the ties of love in our families, for the roots and tendrils that have fed our freedom, for the tensions and disagreements that have made us measure our accountability, for the caring circle within whose safety we are called to grow in faith in you and love for one another. Amen.1

O Most High, from whose bounty we are fed, by whose hand we are guided, and by whose love we are renewed every day: grant us a thankful spirit for all the blessings we know and use - for food enough and to spare, for shelter and the comfort of our quarters, for the gift of reason and the bonds of love. May we never take for granted these supports of daily life, given to us out of the vastness of your love, and granted with the expectation that we will be good stewards of what we have. Amen.1

Generous Lord, who brings us again to the summer dreaming, who unlooses us in the green pastures and beside the still waters, who allows us the lolling sun for a season and lends us the miracle of trees: find in us now a rejoicing among the tastes and the sounds, the flights and the returnings, and encourage in us those gestures of the mind and flesh whereby, over and over, we make of the hours a thanksgiving and of the years a constant praise. Amen.1

Gracious Lord God, whose glory is nowhere more visible than on our own landscape now, whose earth cannot help but praise you both in its living and in its dying: hear our prayers of thanksgiving. We remember with gratitude the many daily blessings that sustain us: a letter in the morning mail; a conversation that got somewhere; an idea that struck fire in our imagination; the fact that we did not have to worry whether there would be food on our tables; the fact that no bombs dropped on our village today. O God, by your love and your mercy may it be that all our brothers and sisters everywhere will be able to give thanks for gifts like these. Amen.1

Gracious Lord God, by whom our roots are nourished and our life is sustained, we praise your name for your presence that never fails, even when we have failed you. We give thanks that by your love we know love and are able to love; that by your justice we are able to know what justice requires of us; that by your peace we learn what we must do to be peacemakers; that by your forgiveness we know both how to give and how to receive the forgiveness that can bind up this world's wounds and heal our divisions. Confirm in us a never failing trust in your love, your justice, your peace, and your forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.1

O Lord our God, hear our prayer of wonder and thanks for all the bounty which is ours to sustain life and adorn it - an abundance of food, comfort in our homes, friendships and duties, failures that have humbled us and successes that have reassured us. Preserve us, we pray, from losing our sense of wonder and gratitude for all that we have, and from being ungenerous toward those who have little goods and great needs. Bind us to the company of men and women throughout time whose thankfulness has kept alive their charity. Amen.1

O God, we praise thee and thank thee for thyself who takes an acorn and makes it a tree, sets air over us and daylight and the large pictures of each season, gives us the walk and run of the body, the mind's radar, and the heart's insatiable dreams. We praise thee and thank thee for thyself who gives us the gifts we do not earn and the strength we do not have and the forgiveness we do not deserve. Unto thee be all glory and honor, dominion



and power, world without end. Amen.1

O Supreme Lord of the universe, you fill and sustain everything around us. With the touch of your hand you turned chaos into order, darkness into light. Unknown energies you hid in the heart of matter. From you burst forth the splendor of the sun and the mild radiance of the moon. Stars and planets without number you set in ordered movement. You are the source of the fire's heat and the wind's might, of the water's coolness and the earth's stability. Deep and wonderful are the mysteries of your creation. Amen.3

Merciful Lord, you forgive the sins of all those who ask and turn away from their sins. Create in us new and contrite hearts that will acknowledge all of our wrong doings. Help us to keep our eyes on you and not on the world that we sometimes love too much. Forgive us when our lives do not always show you to the world around us. Show us how to be really concerned about other people with whom we come into contact in our daily lives. We pray for those who are sick both physically and spiritually. We ask for your touch and leadership in their lives. Teach us to love them in the same manner you have loved us. We ask these things in the name of the one that sets us free to love and to care. Amen.

As the Cherokee prayer says, "May the soft winds of heaven blow softly upon this house, and may the Great Spirit bless all who enter here." O Lord, we thank you for our home--home where we spent our childhood, and now home where we go back to as adults at the end of a busy day and a busy week. Bless those who make up our home. Our home gives us a rest stop from our busy past as we go forward along the path of life. It gives us shelter from the storms of life. It serves as a springboard for the future. It is the place of transmission of values from generation to generation. May our home truly be a "haven of blessing and a place of peace." Amen.

## Intercession

We beseech you, most merciful God, for all peoples everywhere and for their health and for their hope and for their good. We desire with longing hearts that the blind see, the lame walk, and the dead arise in the blessed resurrection. We ask that troubled minds be restored, that hatreds between persons and nations be done away, that those shaken by fears learn again to trust you in all times and places. And finally we beseech you to help us all in the changing landscapes of body and soul to discern the ways that stand against confusion, the clearings in the chaos; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.1

Lord God, hear us as we pray for others - those in any distress of body, mind, or estate, those who are anxious for their lives, those who do not know where their daily bread will come from. Preserve in us, we pray, a sense of stewardship for that part of the world's wealth over which we have control. May we use it always for your purposes of love and justice. May no selfishness of our own make us callous toward those in need, no greed make us resent those whose poverty lays claim to our conscience and our goods. Amen.1

Sovereign Lord, enter with thy grace this time of our intercessions. Inform them with an abiding compassion for all this day who are in any need or trouble, those who are anxious, those who are in despair, so that in thy strength we may become instruments of thy healing, bearers of thy peace. Hear thou the cries of all the lost across the world and hold in mercy the peoples everywhere who are torn by warfare, pestilence, or fear. Even so, for us in our weakness, be thou a guide against all our confusions and a true refuge against all our hours of desperation. Blessed is thy name. Amen.1

Come, O magnificence, to this occasion of our prayers. Hear us for the sake of all peoples everywhere - for sick that they be healed, for the lonely that they be comforted, for the lost that they be found. Persuade in us every desire to build up rather than to tear down, every impulse to enfold rather than to break apart, every intention to be for rather than to be against. And as a church make us to be sanctuary, hospital, hope - a community to save, heal, and give promise; through Christ our Lord. Amen.1

Vast Lord, we beseech you for all the peoples everywhere and for all the needs hidden and manifest, that afflict them and us - the aches and fevers of the body that they may be healed, the mind's terror that it shall be removed far from us, the heart's loneliness that it shall be comforted. As you are just, bring your righteousness against all within us that damages or disdains life, and your jubilation to all that upholds it. As you are merciful, persuade us to the ways of compassion for each other and for all persons far and near; through Christ our Lord. Amen.1

Gracious Lord, we beseech thee for all peoples in all times and places, desiring to believe and hold in our hearts that every one counts in thy mercy. We pray for people we have never seen that their thirst be assuaged, their hunger fed, their wounds healed, their very souls given cause for rejoicing. And we pray that we shall always be compassionate as we look out upon the needs of humanity or look inwardly to our own needs. Pity us our frailties of body and spirit whoever we may be. Defend us from the evil, the terror, the darknesses that fear the light; and so we pray for everyone; through Christ our Lord. Amen.1

Dear God, let the sickness be healed, the death wish go from us, and the peoples come alive again. Let your word of hope sound in the cities and the voice of your mercy comfort the towns. Make us all teachable that we may learn again and again what things come first, what truths endure, what actions are worthy of your grace. Give us this day bread, joy, and vision; and so we pray for all; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.1

Tenderest Lord, we pray for all who are sick, deprived, or grieving (and especially for \_\_\_\_\_). The discomfited come to you, O God; the grieving seek your comfort; those deprived of their sustenance look to you for justice and restoration. Be all in all, we pray - a presence of love to those in pain, a strength to the bereaved, a vindication to the oppressed. By your loving justice fill our deepest needs, those we know and those we cannot name. And to us all bring the promise of the risen Lord that we will never be left without a comforter. Amen.1

## Petition

Almighty God, who gathers us into thy church that by hymns we may praise thee and by prayers make known to thee our needs and our care for the several needs of peoples everywhere: bless us now with that grace which moves us from words to works. And whether we are silent or mumble, whether we are eloquent or groan, let there be in us always a mighty hope for the healing of all the lands, for the days when joy shall prosper, and for the hour when the nations shall know and practice peace. Amen.1

Vast God, let it be yourself breaking through our prayers that what we cry out for the sake of the whole world may carry a divine intention. Make us aware that as we know in ourselves the aches and torments of body and soul, so do all peoples everywhere. Stand us against the chicaneries of raw power, the limp falsehoods, the folly of little minds who pretend to lead. Give us that restlessness of being which always cares that the given joys of life flourish. And urge in us every strength to act out with and for others whatever we know and feel of thy presence among us; through Christ our Lord. Amen.1

Come, brooding and majestic Lord, and inform the desperate mystery of our prayers. Set in our strengths your strength, in our loves your love, in our hopes your hope. Hear our cries for the sake of all peoples every-where, for all those who have gone before us and for all those who will come after us. As you are the guardian of the universe, so keep this fragile earth from breaking and dispersing. Teach the nations and those who lead nations the things that make for peace, and help us to know the time of our visitation. Walk in our neighbor-hoods; through Christ our Lord. Amen.1

O Lord, be with us so that we feel thee like hands upon us; uphold us so that we know thee like strength beneath us; go with us so that we have thee like love within us. Be for us in our goodness and against us in our evil. Keep us from all things shallow and unholy, and move our wills to seek the deep being of thyself. Protect us from all times and places that destroy and deceive, and give us grace to show the justice and mercy to all people that we would ask for ourselves. Make fruitful our prayers; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.1

Come to our prayers, great Lord, that in them we may speak boldly for the needs of one another and seek thy presence and thy strength for the mending and re-newal of the bent world. Make of us a church whose very sighs, public and private, are for our own lives to heal, to gather in love, and bring hope. And keep us a people open to all the varied weathers that brood in human hearts and souls, that in us, by thy grace, the lost and the lonely and the fearful may find a solace and a clarity and a new beginning, even Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.1

O Lord, we pray for all those who are tossed about and helpless in the world - the victims of war and catastro-phe, whose lives have been scored by the loss of loved ones; the pleasure seekers, who are the captives of their own appetites and the victims of desire; the mentally ill, whose anguish and fear are inescapable, whether waking or sleeping; the poor and impover-ished, whose powers and labor are exploited by the rich. Help of the helpless, do thou abide with them, comforting them with thy love, and with thy wrath quickening the hearts of those who can change the conditions of life which bind them. Amen.1

## The Lord's Supper

How holy this feast in which Christ is our food: his passion is recalled, grace fills our hearts, and we receive a pledge of the glory to come.<sup>9</sup> - *Thomas Aquinas*

Come, Holy Spirit, and make in us a holy preparation for this food of earth and heaven set before us. Let the loaf and the crusts bespeak both the feast and the famine. Let the cup running over wound us for the sake of those who thirst. Cause us to be nourished by such grace as was given before the foundations of the world that, as we are saved, we may go forth to save; and give into our hands the drink of rejoicing whereby, with Christ, we overcome our death. Amen.<sup>1</sup>

Almighty God, who calls us to this feast where mercy is enfleshed and love spilled endlessly: so let that mercy embody us that day by day we take into ourselves the world's sorrow, and so let that love burn within us that we spend ourselves to heal the world's brokenness. Give our prayers the spaciousness which includes all sorts and conditions of people, and urge in us every desire to do what our words beseech. Make known to us in this holy food the timeless meanings of thyself; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.<sup>1</sup>

Alas, great Lord, we are that people who have set our hearts after vain things and labored for the bread which does not satisfy. We have neglected the deep heavens thou hast placed in our own hearts, and we have neither proclaimed thy glory in the daylight nor meditated upon thy mercies in the night watches. We are hungry for life in the midst of plenty, and our souls are parched. Grant us, then, thy pardon that we may dare to take unto ourselves the bread and cup of thy salvation, that hereafter we shall hunger after righteousness and thirst only for thy grace; through Jesus Christ who invites us to this feast. Amen.<sup>1</sup>

Almighty God, we confess that we are a fluttering people, both for and against you, both desiring and not desiring your merciful judgments, both hoping and despairing that you will invade us. We live haunted by the world's violence and the nations' pride, and we know, to our sorrow, our part in crippling others and breaking the peace. We ask for pardon for what we have done and left undone and will do again, and we beseech you that this feast of wound and forgiveness will become in us a healing of our sins, a deepening down, an opening out, even the way of Jesus Christ our risen Lord. Amen.<sup>1</sup>

Let us hold thanksgiving at Christ's feast, and give praise for bread that shows how heaven is bound to earth and for wine that reveals how earth is held in heaven. And let us heartily rejoice that here, in visible things, God comes among us that we shall be healed of those invisible sicknesses of soul and mind that have afflicted us. Especially let us be glad that in this hour we have a foretaste and promise of the timeless joy prepared for all peoples from the foundation of the world. Amen.<sup>1</sup>

Help us, great Lord, because the nations still rage in their folly, the people's eyes are blind, and the liberator has become the oppressor. Convert those who govern us from the wrong uses of power, the small and large tyrannies, the practice of the big lie. Cause us to feel in our bones the sorrows of the whole bent world, and persuade us to the healing. As you give us yourself in this bread of hope, this cup of mercy, so may we give ourselves to those who are without hope, to those who cry mercy; in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Amen.<sup>1</sup>

*Prayer Before the Sermon*

O God, whose mercies are in, under, over, and beside all things and peoples: let thy Word move among the words spoken in thy name this day that they bear, though brokenly, the mark of thy truth, its fire, its vast intention. And persuade in the minds and hearts of all who hear a new desire to let thy truth break forth clamorously and with compassion in our homes, our neighborhoods, and our world. Amen.1

God of all truth, let thy word fall upon us like a rough and cleansing wind, dispersing our sins, scattering our vanities, uprooting our indifference that, shaken loose from our illusions, we shall be open to thy love and overtaken by thy truth, even Jesus Christ our Logos and our Lord. Amen.1

Awaken us, O Lord of the universe, to hear in our hearts the true needs and longings that are there that, as thy holy Word is preached, we shall take its healing unto ourselves and go forth to live as people held in thy major promises, alive to all the promptings of heaven itself, and inwardly earnest to declare thee on the streets where we live. Amen.1

## Benediction

Go forth into the world in peace; be of good courage; hold fast to that which is good; render no one evil for evil; strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak; help the afflicted; honor all persons; love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit; and the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.1

God Almighty, bless us with the Holy Spirit; guard us in our going out and coming in; keep us ever steadfast in thy faith, free from sin and safe from danger; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.1

May the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, rest upon us, and upon all our work and worship done in his name. May he give us light to guide us, courage to support us, and love to unite us, now and forevermore. Amen.1

Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope, and in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.1

Go now with the peace of God resting upon you. Go with the love of Christ dwelling within you. And depart with the presence of the Holy Spirit abiding in your heart, mind, and soul. Amen.\*\*

The Good Master said, "You are the light of the world. Let your light so shine that all who see you will give glory to your God. You are the salt of the earth." Go season all of life with the love and mercy of God. Amen.\*\*

Lord of Heaven and Earth, from the days of Moses until this gathering today, you have formed a people in your own image. Continue to bless us with your wisdom and guidance. May we serve you with our every desire, and by our actions, show how much we care. We ask this in the Lord's Name. Amen.\*\*

God our Father, the many blessings you give to us always exceed the expression of our human longing, for you are much greater than our hearts. Direct each thought, each effort of our life, so that the limits of our faults and weaknesses may not obscure the vision you have for our world. Continue to help us Lord, with all the duties of the coming week. We ask this in the Lord's Name. Amen.\*\*

May God bless you with every good gift from on high. May he keep you free and holy in his sight at all times. May he bestow the riches of his grace upon you, bring you the good news of salvation and always fill you with love for all people. Amen.\*\*

May almighty God keep you from all harm and bless you with every good gift. May he set his word in your heart and fill you with everlasting joy. May you walk in his ways always knowing what is right and good until you enter your heavenly inheritance. Amen.\*\*

May the God of all consolation bless you in every way and grant you peace all the days of your life. May he free you from all anxiety and strengthen your hearts in his love. May he enrich you with his gifts of faith, hope and love, so that what you do in this life will bring you eternal happiness. Amen.\*\*

May almighty God bless you in his mercy and make you always aware of his saving wisdom. May he strengthen your faith with proofs of his love so that you will persevere in good works. May he direct your steps to himself and show you how to walk in charity and peace. Amen.\*\*

May the Lord bless you and fill you with peace. May the Lord watch over your journeys and keep you safe. May the Lord fill you with joy. May the Lord keep you in his care and make you secure, for the blessings of God are the source of our peace, happiness and security. Amen.\*\*

O Lord, we thank you for your spirit of peace and pray that you will impart to us strength to accomplish your purposes with honor and integrity. May your presence protect us and our families from all harm and danger until we meet again. Grant us these blessings we ask in your holy name. Amen.\*\*

**Interfaith Benediction**

May the Lord bless and keep us; may He grant us strength to live through troubled times; may He fill us with grace equal to every need and his peace which passes all understanding; may he grant us the wisdom-and the will-to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with him; and my he surround us with his love, and lead us in the paths of everlasting life. Amen.



## Prayers for any Sunday

O God, our eternal contemporary, who loves us as a mother and father love their child, we pause in your presence with feelings of awe, gratitude, expectation, and at times even bewilderment. Because you are infinite there is much about you that we finite beings cannot comprehend. But because you are like a parent there is much about you that we can understand. We know that you want for us the best but that at times you cannot prevent our experiencing the worst. We know that you want us to love and serve you but that we have the freedom to rebel against you. We know that you hurt and ache when we are experiencing pain or grief. For loving us enough to let us be persons instead of puppets, for walking with us and holding our hands when life's roads are rocky or steep, for crying with us and rejoicing with us, accept our gratitude. Thank you, God, for being our creator, our guide, and our friend. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Eternal One, we have come to worship and praise you for being all that you are. You are Love. Because you love us we know that we are of value and worth. We are OK! Remind us again that our calling is to love you in return by sharing your love with others. You are Truth. The meaning of life and the world is to be found in you. But we sometimes forget that you are our God and we are your people. And we seek life's ultimate meaning in the lesser gods that sometimes beckon. You are Forgiveness. When we confess our sins you respond with your amazing grace that enables us to put that past behind us and to begin again. You are Strength. Your power is latent within us just waiting to be tapped. To do so is to find that we are able to do more than we realize or than we thought we could. For this we are grateful. You are Consolation. Hurt, pain, and despair seem indigenous to our lives. But you directly, and indirectly through our loved ones and friends, bring us comfort and lead us through the shadows of life until we are back in the sunlight again. Thank you! We pray in the spirit of your incarnation, Jesus, the Christ. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Well, God, another week has passed and a new one begins. So at this juncture we want to interrupt our personal, family, and business routines long enough to spend a special hour with you and your friends. In fact, Creator God, we do not view this hour as an interruption. Rather, we feel it is vital to our lives. For here we are challenged to think about a Supreme Being, not just lesser gods; absolutes, not just relativities; ideals, not just ideas; persons, not just things; quality of existence, not just quantity; what is right, not just what is expedient. So while we are here enable us to listen to, evaluate, and to be motivated to leave this sanctuary and live this new week in such a way that the Christ will be reflected in our words and actions. Amen.13 (J. B.)

God of this and every day, the smell of the grass after the rain, the iris blooming in our gardens, the singing of the birds, the smiles on the faces of our families and friends remind us of how great you are and how good life is! So on this your day we have come into this setting to acknowledge and praise you for your presence in our world and in our lives. For it is your presence that enables even storm clouds to have silver linings and that enables us to find joy even in the midst of despair. We thank you, Fountain of life, for our faith - a faith that makes a difference in our lives. For ours is a faith that provides an example and pattern for daily living. Our faith challenges us to ponder the life and teachings of Jesus and therein to find suggestions for our lives - such as to love rather than hate, to serve rather than use, to be involved rather than apathetic, to give as well as receive. Today we profess this faith through the words we speak and sing and by our presence here. Forbid that our profession will cease at the conclusion of this hour. Rather, may the remainder of today and this new week find our professions translated into actions as we go about the living of each day. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Great, gracious, and giving God, we glorify you because of who you are and whose we are. You are our creator, the ultimate source of life and love and the other blessings we sometimes take for granted, such as the abilities to see a waterfall, hear an infant, taste warm bread, touch an animal, and smell a rose. We have been created with a God-shaped vacuum within us, and we drift aimlessly and hopelessly on the sea of life until we invite your spirit to fill the vacuum, thereby giving us the buoyancy and stability needed for us to move toward the goals we have set. For offering to bring our lives order from chaos, wholeness from fragmentation, hope from despair, forgiveness from guilt, self-worth from self-loathing, generosity from selfishness, caring from apathy; thank you, Redeeming One. Walk with us as we enter this new week. By your grace enable us to see

possibilities rather than problems, windows of opportunity rather than closed doors, persons rather than things, life rather than mere existence. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Ever-calling, ever-beckoning God, who accepts us as we are but who also knows the persons we can become, we pause in our worship to share with you our feelings of gratitude, contrition, and resolve. We are grateful for your acceptance and love that enable us better to accept and love ourselves. For only when we do so can we accept and love others. We thank you as well for the other innumerable blessings we enjoy: family, friends, health, food, shelter, talents, church, nation, coping power. When we reflect on who we are because of the gifts we enjoy we become more mindful of whose we are. Yet, we confess that too often we fail to live as though we are yours. Thus, for our willful sins and failures both of commission and omission as well as for our unthinking and unintentional wrongdoings, we ask your forgiveness. May our having been in this place this morning and having shared in words and music that speak of you give us the resolve to enter this new week more sensitive to the fact that you have called us to be your children, your servants, and your witnesses. Although we are free to shut our ears to and turn our backs on your calling, may we, in love that is a response to your love for us, say, "Here am I, dear God, use me!" Amen.13 (J. B.)

O God, whose eye is always on the sparrow and on us because we are special and precious in your sight, we confess that our view of you and the world in which we live sometimes is warped and filtered by what we see through the eyes of ABC, CBS, NBC, CNN, and Fox. For so often these and other media deceive us into thinking that human life is cheap, that the end always justifies the means, that violent actions bring prompt results, and that more and bigger always are better. Thus, we thank you for this hour and this place that help us put life back into proper perspective. For here we are confronted by your word and reminded that our lives should be focused on what is true honorable, just, pure, lovely, and gracious. Here we are reminded of and can feel again the strength with which you fill our lives - strength that enables us to cope with whatever comes our way. Thank you for our church, loving God, because it calls us to worship you, refocus our lives, and then to leave your sanctuary and go out to live the fully human and humane life you created us to live - a life patterned after the one who knew you more completely and saw you more clearly than has any other person - Jesus, the Christ, our Savior. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Eternal God, who is one and universal, creator of all - red and yellow, black, brown, and white - we pause to worship and praise you. Loving God, you are known by different names and worshipped in different ways. Yet, you are the God of east and west, north and south. We gather today to confess that we and others have not been the best of your children. We have let race and nationality and culture and sex and age and forms of government and the resources of our planet divide and create barriers among us. We have forsaken the ancient teachings of the prophets Isaiah and Micah and continued to rely on violence or warfare to settle our differences. Your forgiveness, therefore, is needed by all of us, wherever we live in your world. Gracious God, whom we have come to know and love through the one who was called the Prince of Peace, may negotiations occur so that lives will not be lost on the battlefields, in the air, and in cities, towns, or villages anywhere in the world due to war. For we know that you desire that we love and have concern and compassion even for those who may be our enemies. As we pray for the needs of our world, we also pray for the needs of our individual lives. Forgive our sins; calm our anxieties; strengthen our resolve; keep us faithful, hopeful, and helpful as we go about the living of this new week. We pray in the spirit of the one who said, "Lo, I am with you always." Amen.13 (J. B.)

Eternal, ever-present God, creator of the world and giver of life to all who dwell therein, Parent of all nations and races, as the sun's warm rays call forth a blossom from a bud, so your still, small voice calls forth the best that is in us. Thus, this morning we pause in your presence - attracted by the warmth of your love and desiring to have our lives remolded so they better will fit into your will and ways. Forgive us, gracious God, for forgetting that you can help us transform and remake our lives. Our hatred can be turned into love, our ingratitude into thanksgiving, our insensitivity into feeling and caring, our anxiety into confidence, our pessimism into optimism, our stress into release from tension, our intentions into deeds, our apathy into action, our parochialism into universal concern, our myopia into farsightedness, our prejudice into tolerance, our penchant for doing evil into a penchant for doing good. Make us aware, therefore, of the areas of our lives in

which changes are needed. And with your leading and inspiration, enable us to address ourselves to this task. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Eternal Spirit of the universe, who began the process of creation and thus is the source of our very lives, you who are to us like a loving father and a compassionate mother; we your children pause, in reverence to praise and thank you for the gift of life. For talents to use, for the freedom to choose; for the capacity to cope, for the blessing of hope; for loved ones for whom we can care, for others with whom we can share; we express our gratitude. We confess, O God, that at times - in fact, too often - we do not use our lives wisely. We let our talents rust or go to waste. We fracture relationships. We hurt others by what we do or say, or fail to say or do. We go against what our conscience tells us is right. We are myopic, thinking only of ourselves or our immediate world. We selfishly accumulate but do not give out of gratitude to those whose need is apparent. Forgive us, forgiving God. And on this, the first day of the rest of our lives, help us to begin to right the wrongs and repair the damages that have created barriers between ourselves and you and ourselves and others. Thus, gracious God, our prayer at the beginning of this new day and week is that we will be better children of yours and better brothers and sisters of one another. Amen.13 (J. B.)

## Prayers For A Retreat or Christian Conference

### *Responsive Reading*

**Leader:** God created a world filled with reflections of God's glory, and in it God placed treasures untold. God studded the world with sweet-flowing fountains and traced it with long-winding streams. God carpeted the world with soft-rolling prairies, and columned it with thundering mountains. God graced the world with deep-shadowed forests, and filled them with song.

**People:** **In the midst of this world we have been born and claimed by God's holy purpose.**

**Leader:** Then God called unto a thousand peoples, and summoned each to a special place. They came from the ends of the earth; the north and the south, the east and the west, each bearing a gift, a hope, and a dream. The glow of adventure was in their eyes, and in their hearts the hope of dreams fulfilled.

**People:** **We are those people and our dreams continue to guide us. We gather to respond to the summons that we have heard from God in these days.**

**Leader:** And out of the bounty of the earth, and the labor of women and of men; out of the longing of the heart, and the prayer of souls; out of the memory of ages, and the hopes of the world, God fashioned a people in love, and blessed them with God's purpose.

**and service to this place of sharing, growing, and caring. May God continue to claim our purposes**

**People:** **We are those people, drawn from our places of worship until at last God's and our purpose are the same. Amen.14**

### *Responsive Reading*

**Leader:** In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said, "Let there be light".

**People:** **God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning...**

**Leader:** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God.

**People:** **All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all the people.**

**Leader:** In the fullness of time, the Word became flesh and lived among us in Jesus Christ of Nazareth.

**People:** **We have heard of our creating God and the Word become flesh because scribes, prophets and apostles, and women and men of faith have preserved their experiences of our great God throughout the ages through story and the written word.14**

### *Responsive Reading*

**Leader:** The Church was recreated on the Day of Pentecost. New energy was realized by believers as God's Spirit visited them in a powerful way. As a result, their mission was focused and they began to spread the Good News of God's love for all peoples.

**People:** We too have experienced a visitation of God's Spirit this week. Through study, new friendships, sharing ideas, and enjoying the beauty of this place, our mission in God's great kingdom is being focused.

**Leader:** We will return to our places of service, all important to the ministry of our chapel communities. With renewed strength, we anticipate the joy yet to be experienced in our corner of God's kingdom.

**People:** We give thanks to God for the journey thus far. We have received new gifts this week and with hopeful hearts and renewed dreams we are better prepared to serve in God's kingdom.14

## **Interfaith Service**

(UNISON) We come to you our God because you are the same from age to age. When we listen to you there is always something new, something surprising, something startling in what you say to us. Sometimes we are shaken; other times we are hurt. Still we know we must listen. In listening, we find that your word is always a living word and that the task you put before us is always a contemporary task. Amen.

Unto God's gracious mercy and protection we commit you; the Lord look upon you with his favor, and fill you with all spiritual benediction and grace, that in this life, and in the world to come, you may be partakers of God's eternal peace. Amen.

## **Ecumenical**

Go now into the world with the light you have received. Go, so that love may be known and peace on earth may truly come into the hearts of all people. Amen.

## **Christian Blessing**

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ free you for service; may the love of God cast out our fear and give power to our lives; and may the fellowship of the Holy Spirit enable you to live on the cutting edges of life, serving our Lord. Go in peace! Amen.



## Christian Worship

Eternal Lord, you have always existed, and still you are the creator of time and space. You live and move within all times and all spaces, even beyond time and space. You have made us to be your own and have given us our very life and being. Thank you, dear Father, for letting us wake up to such an exciting time in the history of your world. Today, O God, we are thankful for Jesus Christ, who lives in us. We recall that he healed the sick, taught the uninformed, preached to the uncommitted, counseled individuals in trouble and spoke about the shortcomings of political and religious leaders of his day. May we as followers be shaken out of our comfortable pews in the church. Help us to evaluate our present lives as students or whatever our vocation may be in terms of our commitment to Christ. May we devote ourselves fully to the tasks before us, knowing that we serve you through all our efforts. Whenever we think of those who are sick, hungry, imprisoned, one who is not our best friend, may we hear the voice of Christ saying: "Truly I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you did it to me," Help us, Lord, to discover the uniqueness of each person we meet. Touch with your love those places in our world where needs are so apparent, but prevent us from thinking that we are not also in need. Give your church the vision to risk great things for your kingdom and your people. Calm the nervousness of our world by giving direction to our rulers. Help us to affirm our oneness by our common service to each other and to the world. Continue, dear Father, to strengthen us in our everyday needs. We offer to you all the prayers and petitions of your people in the saving name of Jesus Christ, who has taught us to pray the prayer he taught his followers to pray .... OUR FATHER ...

Our God and Father, through the turmoil of this world you are always able to come to us with your peace. In the midst of every adversity you offer to us your strength. In our most helpless hour, you point us to a time when all will be well because we will be with you. We believe in you, O Lord, and we are grateful for every evidence of your love. Help us in our unbelief, lest in foolish despair we fall away from you. Father, our human nature is very much with us. We are oppressed by the knowledge of our failings. Come with your power and health to the great multitude of our misfortunes, that those who in poverty struggle to stay alive, may be given your assistance; that those who are the victims of flooding and snowstorms will be given rest in you; that those who are hospitalized and ill may have new measures of strength and the will to endure; that those who live under the cloud of difficult relationships may have patience and understanding. Touch with your love those places in our world where needs are so apparent, but prevent us from thinking that we are not also in need. Give your church the vision to risk great things for your kingdom and your people. Guide the leaders of all people in every place, governors and mayors and judges. Remember your church and your people and all who would serve in the name of Christ. Enable us, O God, to see more clearly the extent of your gift to us in Jesus Christ. Spur us to gratitude, that we may care more for him and his concerns than we do for the number of other things which clamor for our attention. May he abide and rule in our hearts as our Lord and Savior. It is in his name that we pray this prayer which he gave his followers to pray....OUR FATHER ....

Teach us how to pray Lord. Teach us to move beyond bowed heads and closed eyes to really offer ourselves to you. Teach us how to quiet our minds so that we may hear with you the cries of our own hearts. Teach us how to give thanks, Lord. Help us to move beyond our false sense of self-sufficiency and pride, and simply be grateful for all we have that we did not earn or deserve. And, if we find nothing for which to be grateful, if we don't feel like giving thanks today, then forgive our arrogance and shortsightedness. Teach us how to pray for others. Give us enough faith to commend to you those who are sick, those who are lonely, those who are afraid, those who are sorrowful, those who are angry, those who are dying even as they live. And if we have no one to pray for or care about, if we do not see the need of the child whose only playground is a city street filled with glass, or the Lebanese family whose home is burned to the ground, or the African mother who sees her starving child - if we can't pray for them - then, Lord, have mercy upon us. Teach us to pray for ourselves. Help us to see ourselves in relation to the life of your Son, Jesus Christ, so that we may discover truth and meaning to life. Teach us that our prayers are not only a matter of words, but that they are also a way of life. In the name of Christ, our Lord, we pray. Amen.

Lord, we have come to this magnificent and holy place to pray. If we are self-righteous in our thoughts or

actions, shake us out of our pride. If we are selfish, make us to see and really appreciate the need in the world around us. If we hold others in contempt, don't reject us, but help us to confess our sin and be open to your forgiveness. Father, we are often a bewildered people who die in the midst of life, somewhat like the grass which withers in the field. Make us realize day after day that you give us life with full abundance. Help us to know that you do not leave us like broken pieces, but you make us whole. Father, help us to really see. Enable us to see your Son in others - in their wholeness and in their pain, in their goodness and in their sinning, in their joy and in their sorrow, in their acceptance of us and in their rejection. Help us to have a vision to see what it means to be your body among the aged and the lonely, the hurt and the suffering, the selfish and the unduly ambitious. Help us to have enough vision that we may see the whole crowd that lives on this beautiful planet we call "Earth," and that you have called us somehow to share it in peace. O God, we wish to see more, and for this we need the vision called faith. Heal us of our brokenness and sin. Heal us of our indifference to things of your Spirit. Heal us of our selfishness and lack of love. Help us to see you and to believe. Help us to adore you through Jesus Christ, our beloved Lord and Savior. Amen.

# LITANIES

*Affirmation (from Psalm 46)*

Chaplain: Through the upheavals of life, in spite of the [crisis] of the moment.

**People: The Lord is our refuge and our strength.**

Chaplain: Even in our doubt, and especially in our recovery from this tragic [event];

**People: God is all-faithful and all-wise.**

Chaplain: Though our world seems to be crashing in on top of us; though our unanswered questions erode and shake the foundations of our faith;

**People: The Almighty is still our refuge and our strength.**

Chaplain: Even when we are too numb to know what to do; even when we are too afraid to do what we know we can do;

**People: God knows us and will help us.**

Chaplain: When we are awash with tears, when we are flooded by our emotions;

**People: The God of Jacob, forever, is our refuge and our strength.**

Chaplain: Whether afflicted, devastated, oppressed or terrorized;

**People: Our refuge and our strength will never desert us.**

Chaplain: The thunder of history's past storms has been defeated by God's mighty acts;

**People: The Exalted One's whisper shouts in the midst of today's thunderous storm: Be still and know that the Lord is with you.**

Chaplain: The Lord Almighty is with us.

**People: The Lord, our refuge and our strength, is here with us now, and forever and ever. Amen.14**

## **Sounds of the Sacrament**

(Read from left to right)

We call upon God      **And we wait**  
We are still            **And we wait**  
We are silent          **And we wait**  
We wait for the sounds of God **And the sounds of the sacrament**  
The breaking of bread **And the gushing of wine**  
The pain of sorrow    **And the pulse of hope**  
The strain of kneeling **And the trauma of prayer**  
The echo of our name **And bread in our teeth**  
A cup on our lips      **And breathing at our side**  
A voice in our faces   **"The Body of our Lord"**  
A power in our ears    **"The Blood of our Lord"**  
As we wait for the sounds of God      **The sounds of the sacrament**  
The breaking of bread **And the gushing of wine**  
Sounds in the distance **And the vibration of human lives**  
The crackle of fear     **And the murmur of distrust**  
The scramble for rice **And the tearing of garbage**  
The shuffle of withered limbs **And the breaking of brittle bones**  
The shiver of pregnant mothers    **And the scream of a motherless child**  
The trickle of goats milk **And the sigh of rich tourists**  
The growl of empty bodies **And the splash of spent blood**  
The breaking bread      **And the gushing of wine**  
The snarl of a bullet    **And the snap of a trigger**  
The squeal of angry flames **And the cough of choking rooms**  
The whisper of desolation **The silence of a lifeless field**  
The breaking of bread **And the gushing of wine**  
The bleeding of a lamb **And the breaking of a womb**  
The death of a lamb    **And the breaking of a tomb**  
The beginning of an end **And a world that has healing**  
The taste of a mystery **And a God who has feeling**  
In the breaking of bread **And the gushing of wine**  
The bursting of joy      **The bubble of children's faces**  
The dancing of willows **The surprise of open lives**  
The shout of mountains **The laughter of a second**  
The leap of our spirit    **The swirl of celebration**  
We will listen to God    **And the celebration of God**  
In the breaking of bread **And the gushing of wine**

## Thanksgiving

Response (R/) **We thank you Lord!**

As we gather in your name today: R/  
As we seek for new meaning in life: R/  
For all that you have given: R/  
For all that you have withheld: R/  
For all that you have permitted: R/  
For all that you have prevented: R/  
For all that you have forgiven us: R/  
For all that you have prepared for us: R/  
In the spirit of Abraham, for faith: R/  
In the spirit of the Pilgrims, for food: R/  
In the true spirit of America, for freedom: R/  
For those who have been kind to us: R/  
For those who have prayed for us: R/  
For those who have died for us: R/  
For life, and light, and sight: R/  
Finally, for family, friends, and fellowship: R/

Chaplain: It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto the name of the Most High. Offer unto him the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and utter the memory of his great goodness.

**People: And our mouth shall show forth thy praise.**

Chaplain: Almighty God, our heavenly Father, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift, we call to remembrance thy loving kindness and thy tender mercies which have been ever of old, and with grateful hearts we would lift up to thee the voice of thanksgiving. For all the gifts which thou has bestowed upon us; for the life thou has given us, and the world in which we live:

**People: We praise thee, O God.**

Chaplain: For the work we are enabled to do, and the truth we are permitted to learn; for whatever of good there has been in our past lives, and for all the hopes and aspirations which lead us on toward better things:

**People: We praise thee, O God.**

Chaplain: For the order and constancy of nature; for the beauty and bounty of the world; for day and night, summer and winter, seedtime and harvest; for the varied gifts of loveliness and use which every season brings:

**People: We praise thee, O God.**

Chaplain: For all the comforts and gladness of life; for our homes and all the blessings of home; for our friends and all the pure pleasures of social intercourse; for the love, sympathy, and good will of men:

**People: We praise thee, O God.**

Chaplain: For all the blessings of civilization, wise government, and legislation; for education, and all the privileges we enjoy through literature, science, and art; for the help and counsel of those who are wiser and better than ourselves:

**People: We praise thee, O God.**

Chaplain: For all true knowledge of thee and the world in which we live, and the life of truth and righteousness and divine communion to which thou hast called us; for prophets and apostles, and all earnest seekers after truth; for all lovers and helpers of mankind, and all godly and gifted men and women:

**People: We praise thee, O God.**

Chaplain: For the gift of thy Son Jesus Christ, and all the helps and hopes which are ours as his disciples; for the presence and inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, and for all the ministries of thy truth and grace:

**People: We praise thee, O God.**

Chaplain: For communion with thee, the Father of our spirits; for the light and peace that are gained through trust and obedience, and the darkness and disquietude which befall us when we disobey thy laws and follow our lower desires and selfish passions:

**People: We praise thee, O God.**

Chaplain: For the desire and power to help others; for every opportunity of serving our generation according to thy will, and manifesting the grace of Christ to men:

**People: We praise thee, O God.**

Chaplain: For all the discipline of life; for the tasks and trials by which we are trained to patience, self-knowledge and self-conquest, and brought into closer sympathy with our suffering brethren; for troubles which have lifted us nearer thee and drawn us into deeper fellowship with Jesus Christ:

**People: We praise thee, O God.**

Chaplain: For the sacred and tender ties which bind us to the unseen world; for the faith which dispels the shadows of earth, and fills the saddest and the last moments of life with the light of an immortal hope:

**People: We praise thee, O God.**

Chaplain: God of all grace and love, we have praised thee with our lips; grant that we may also praise thee in consecrated and faithful lives. And may the words of our mouths and the meditation of our hearts be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, our Strength and our Redeemer. Amen.

Leader: Lord, when did we see you hungry?

**People: We're thankful for the bread you gave to the multitudes. We're thankful for the body that was broken for us. We're grateful for the hungers which make us aware of our need for you. Make us aware that we are responsible for a hungry world.**

Leader: Lord, when did we see you thirsty?

**People: We're thankful for that water that was made wine. We are thankful for the water of life you bring to us. We are thankful for the thirst which brings people to you.**

Leader: Lord when did we see you a stranger?

**People: We are thankful for your ministry to Zaccheus, the woman at the well, Levi and Mary of Magdala. We are grateful for your forgiveness and love. We are thankful for your church where we need not be strangers, but fellow citizens with the saints and all your household of faith.**

Leader: Lord, when did we see you naked?

**People: We're thankful for the dignity of our faith. We thank you for the clothing you wrap around us. We thank you for the belief that all of us have real worth. We are grateful that you take the prodigal back.**

Leader: Lord, when did we see you sick?

**People: We are thankful that in our brokenness, you come as our healer. We are grateful that you are the Great Physician for the human family.**

Leader: Lord, when did we see you in prison?

**People: We are thankful that while we were yet far away from you, you come to set us free. We rejoice that we have freedom to move, to live, to find our own uniqueness. We thank you for coming to us in our bondage and setting us free.**

Liberated Love (1 Corinthians 13)

Chaplain: Set your hearts on the more important gifts. Best of all, hear the following way: **People: I may be able to speak the languages of people and of angels, but if I have not love, my speech is no more than a noisy gong or a clanging bell.**

Chaplain: I may have the gift of inspired preaching; I may have all knowledge and understand all secrets; I may have all the faith needed to move mountains, but if I have not love, I am nothing:

**People: I may give away everything I have, and even give up my body to be burned, but if I have not love, it does me no good.**

Chaplain: Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous, or conceited, or proud; love is not ill-mannered, or selfish, or irritable; love does not keep a record of wrongs:

**People: Love is not happy with evil, but is happy with the truth. Love never gives up: its faith, hope and patience never fail.**

**Unison:** Love is eternal!



## 23rd Psalm

Leader: The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside the still waters; he restores my soul.

**People: We turn to you, O God, for restoration of body, mind and spirit. Save us from restless activity that consumes energy for no purpose. Shepherd us into sources of renewal and strength.**

Leader: He leads me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

**People: We turn to you, O God, for a sense of direction in life. Teach us to walk in the paths of right relationships with others. Keep us from walking into dead-ends and other hurtful ways.**

Leader: Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff shall comfort me.

**People: We turn to you, O God, for confidence and hope even in the midst of suffering and death. Save us from grieving without hope, from growing old without growing wise. Teach us to find comfort in comforting others.**

Leader: You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

**People: We turn to you O God for power to overcome hostility and evil. Save us from bitter thoughts and selfish ambitions. Teach us to live as women and men who are forgiven, who care for others.**

Leader: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

**People: We turn to you O God, for a renewal of gratitude. Teach us to appreciate our blessings and to share our gifts in the spirit of your eternal love.**

All: Amen!

## Lord's Prayer

Chaplain: Our Father who is in heaven, and yet among us, hear our prayer: HALLOWED BE THY NAME.

**People:** Hearing the mockery with which your people both bless and abuse your name, we ask, O God, that in our homes, our schools, our offices, our work places, throughout our land, that your name may be spoken in reverence and love.

Chaplain: Help us to praise and honor you, O Lord. THY KINGDOM COME.

**People:** Seeing the hate of the world, we realize that we have desecrated this earthly kingdom. Even from the beginning the blood of our citizens has been shed on the fields of battle.

Chaplain: We need, O God, the peace and the light which come only through your kingdom. THY WILL BE DONE ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN.

**People:** Remembering the long history of our human pride and self-centeredness, we realize that never have your people fully obeyed your will.

Chaplain: Help us, O God to hear and obey your voice. GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD.

**People:** Appreciating the blessing of fields and plains rich with the fruits of prosperity and plenty, we humbly beseech your continued grace. We know, dear Lord, that the resources of this planet come from your hand.

Chaplain: Help us, O God, to use your gifts wisely. FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES AS WE FORGIVE THOSE WHO TRESPASS AGAINST US.

**People:** Realizing that hate is never conquered by war, we pray that the love of Christ will draw all people into your family.

Chaplain: Help us, O God, in all we do to forgive and to love each other. LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION.

**People:** Feeling the pressures of our society for material gain, conformity, and all that would separate us from your love, we ask your guidance into the way of service to you and all people.

Chaplain: Be with us Holy Spirit, to keep our hearts from sin. BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL.

**From the evils within and without, almighty God, deliver us. Remembering all those who have labored faithfully in your kingdom, we join our hearts with theirs and with you, FOR THINE IS THE KINGDOM, AND THE POWER AND THE GLORY, FOREVER AND EVER. Amen.**

*Life of Dr Martin Luther King, Jr*

Chaplain: During the course of history, God has chosen men and women to serve him in a special way. Such a servant was Dr Martin Luther King, Jr, whose life and love we now commemorate.

**People: We are thankful for the life, love and work of our brother, Martin. We are inspired by his life and his dream of freedom for all people everywhere.**

Chaplain: In Christ, God has given us peace. He has given us his nature. We know him as the God of peace, life and love.

**People: God, our Father, help us to destroy prejudice that turns us against one another. Teach us that we are all the children of your love, whether we are black, brown, red, yellow or white. Encourage us to live together as brothers and sisters.**

Chaplain: We are thankful that the Spirit of the Lord anointed a man who preached good news to the poor, who rejected segregation and embraced liberation, who prophesied the greatness of his people in the struggle for the freedom of all people.

**People: We thank you, Lord, for people, the crowning touch of your creation. We ask you to guide us to a new realization of our responsibility in having dominion over all other forms of life.**

Chaplain: We give thanks, O God, for life and for all our material blessings. May we be led to a new awareness of third world people and their needs.

**People: Lord, may we so live as our brother Martin lived, that others may be curious to know from what source we draw the inspiration of our life, and, after seeing our good deeds, go and do the same. Amen.**

## Greeting

Chaplain: Good morning! God has given us this time together. What shall we do with it?

**People: Let us sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done wonders. The Lord has revealed his salvation, displayed his triumph to the nations.**

Chaplain: Let us give him thanks ... more than thanks. He has given us Jesus, his Son. He makes us new creatures. We are the family of God. We are his body among the human family.

**People: Clap your hands ... shout to God with loud songs of joy. Praise him with a blast of trumpet. Praise him with the sound of strings. Praise him with rhythm and dancing. Praise him with violins and flute. Praise him with the ringing of bells. Praise him with the clashing of cymbals.**

Chaplain: Let all living things give praise to the Lord. Praise the Lord!

## Celebration

Chaplain: Good morning! We have come together in our worship to celebrate.

**People: God is here; let us begin our celebration.**

Chaplain: Let us celebrate the guidance of the Father who provides for all of our spiritual needs.

**People: Let us celebrate the continuing presence of God's Spirit.**

Chaplain: Let us celebrate all of life, with its new experiences which brings us opportunities for Christian growth each day.

**People Let us share the joy of our salvation.**

Chaplain: Let us share the joy of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Chaplain: We are here to celebrate the gospel of Jesus Christ.

**People: We celebrate because we know the gospel is good news.**

Chaplain: God did not send his Son into the world to condemn us but to save us.

**People: We believe this with all our hearts. We receive this truth with joy and hope.**

## Discovery

Chaplain: Praise God for the morning! We have come together to worship.

**People: Yes, we have come to worship the living God in the beauty of this chapel.**

Chaplain: We are not here to escape the world. We are here as a caring, faithful community.

**People: We are here to get a new perspective on the world, to discover God's view of it. We are here to think more deeply about God and his world.**

Chaplain: Let us consider ourselves in relation to God, to God's world about us; then let us respond accordingly.

**People: Let us praise God for what we have discovered in his world, in our neighbor, and in ourselves. Praise God from whom all blessings flow.**

*For the Church and the World*

Chaplain: Let us pray for the Church and for the world. Grant, almighty God, that all who confess your name may be united in your truth, live together in your love, and reveal your glory in the world.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.** *Silent prayer.*

Guide the people of this land, and of all the nations, in the ways of justice and peace; that we may honor one another and serve the common good.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.** *Silent prayer.*

Give us all a reverence for the earth as your own creation, that we may use its resources rightly in the service of others and to your honor and glory.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.** *Silent prayer.*

Bless all whose lives are closely linked with ours, and grant that we may serve Christ in them, and love one another as Christ loves us.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.** *Silent prayer.*

Comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind, or spirit; give them courage and hope in their troubles, and bring them the joy of your salvation.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.** *Silent prayer.*

We commend to your mercy all who have died, that your will for them may be fulfilled; and we pray that we may share with all your saints in your eternal kingdom.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.** *Silent prayer.*

We offer these prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.5

## **World Communion Sunday**

O God, we join with our sisters and brothers around the world in remembering Christ's sacrifice for us. For the opportunity to eat and drink together and for the life we have received, we give you thanks and praise. In the abundance of your many gifts, grant us grace to fill one another's lives with love. Redeem, restore and remold us until we are made new. Transform our daily bread into the bread of life, and the cup that we drink into the cup of salvation. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.<sup>3</sup>



## World Day of Prayer

O Great Spirit (*Gitchi Manitou, Most Awesome of the Awesome*), whose voice we hear in the winds, and whose breath gives life to all the world, hear us. We come before you as your children. We are small and weak; we need your strength and wisdom. Let us walk in beauty and make our eyes ever behold the red and purple sunset. May our hands respect the things you have made, our ears be sharp to hear your voice. Make us wise, so that we may know the things you have taught your people, the lessons you have hidden in every leaf and rock. We seek strength not to be superior to our brothers and sisters, but to live in harmony with ourselves and all of your creation. Help us to be ever ready to come to you, so when life fades as a fading sunset, our spirits may come to you without shame. Amen.<sup>3</sup>

O God of Shalom, we have built up walls to protect ourselves from our enemies, but these walls also shut us off from receiving your love. Break down those walls. Help us to see that the way to your heart is through the reconciliation of our own hearts with our enemies. Bless them and us, that we may come to grow in love for each other and for you; through Jesus Christ. Amen.<sup>3</sup>

## **Gospel Extravaganza**

Our Father, we thank you for this evening of gospel extravaganza. We thank you for gospel music that has brought us this far by faith, trusting in your Holy name. For gospel music that has been a balm in Gilead - curing our sin sick souls. For gospel music that has given voice to the agonies of our hearts with songs too deep for mere words. For gospel music that has enabled your people to march through oppression and persecution with prayer and praise on their lips. For gospel music to sing of brighter days and promised lands and to overflow our empty cups. May our offering of music this evening, O Lord, be acceptable in thy sight, may it set our toes to tapping, our hands to clapping and our voices to shouting the glory of your holy and saving name - in Jesus name we pray, who died that all might have the joy of which we sing. Amen.

## Christian Pastoral Prayer

O Lord, invest us with a sense of the eternal. Spare us from being people concerned only about ourselves and what is best for us. Rather, give us a vision of the real world, the struggling masses, the poor, the hungry, and the lonely. Make us good enough and strong enough for the age in which we live. Let goodness and mercy follow us all of our days that we may abide with you forever. Amen.\*\*

Our Father, this morning we approach you in a spirit of praise and thanksgiving, for you have blessed us with steadfast care and affection. Before us you have spread good gifts. You have fed, healed, clothed and taught us. You have lifted our spirits and given us hope in ourselves and others. You have equipped us for tasks in ways that have surpassed our highest expectations. Your forgiveness has relieved us of guilt, and your commitment to our welfare has affirmed our worth. Always you make us feel wanted, for your love shadows us wherever we go. Your door is open to us day and night, and in your presence we find significance simply in being, no longer bound by the requirement to prove our value or importance. We thank you for blessing us and above all for giving us your Son, Jesus Christ, who offered himself for all that through him we might have everlasting life. But we remember that you have called us not simply to enjoy the blessings of life, but also to employ our gifts to help others. We are here this morning as your people, called out of the world, that together we might join our resources for your glory. Your call is not only to privilege but to responsibility as well. You call us to use our influence to make this world a better place in which to live. To that end, we now dedicate ourselves and pray that our efforts will succeed. Accordingly, may glory, honor and majesty be yours now and forever. Amen.\*\*

With joyful hearts, we lift our voices in prayer and thanksgiving to you, Almighty God. As we pause to think on spiritual matters, we are lost in wonder, love and praise. Give us a faith that trusts you to care for your creation and one which remains constant whatever the circumstance experienced. Help each of us to know that we are your people and that you have given us minds to know your laws and to discover your resources. Daily impart to us strength to live with integrity and courage. Lord, help us to remember not to fill our lives with the things that are good to the exclusion of those things which are best. Renew our minds and hearts as people bound to you in covenant. With you may we find a spirit of forgiveness and reconciliation, of worship and truth, so that we may bear witness to your love and the transforming power of Christ. Amen.\*\*

Guide us, O God, amid the changes of our world, that in everything that happens, we may experience tranquility within for having sought you out, and having remained steadfast in your will. As the prophets of old entered into your presence, even so may we enter your presence by centering our lives on things eternal. Grant to us eyes to see, hearts to feel, and minds to perceive the glory of your presence. Call us again into relationship with you, and help us to affirm through the lives we lead, the fundamental truths of your kingdom. May each of us treasure the revelation of your word in our hearts. May we each affirm the lordship of Jesus who is the Christ, the savior of the world. May we each remain open to the leadership of your Holy Spirit, and may we each praise you, from whom all blessings flow and to whom all devotion is due. We do not know you as we should. We do not serve you as we would. But thanks to you, O God, for your grace abounds more than our sin, and your love more than our commitment. Forgive us our sin, and renew our spirits that we might stand before you free of the burden of guilt. Thank you for your mercy which enables us to live life in expectation and joy. May the certainty of your presence and the promise of your ultimate triumph inspire us to serve you, now and forever. Amen.\*\*

Our Father, we praise you, for you have made known your salvation to the ends of the earth, and revealed your righteousness to the nations. Throughout the world, we see evidence of your power. Lord, as our world changes, and new alliances are forged among nations, lead us to align ourselves firmly with you. May that be our top priority, for in union with you we gain the perspective necessary to impact the world positively with the good news of your kingdom. This good news, embodied in your Son, our savior Jesus Christ, is itself revolutionary. The scripture declares, "In Christ, old things are passed away, behold all things are made new." Lord, as the old passes away and the new emerges before our eyes, among the nations of the world, remind each of us that you can indeed make all things new, that you are "wonderful counselor, mighty God, everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords." May every eye see and every mouth confess that it is you who

forgives our sins, who heals our diseases, redeems our lives, and crowns us with love and compassion. It is you who satisfies our desires and replenishes our strength like the eagle's. Thank you, O God, for your peace and salvation. In these days, when the winds of change blow strong, make us mindful of your power among us, and like the Psalmist, may we "worship you with gladness, and enter your gates with thanksgiving." For we know that "your love endures forever, and your faithfulness through all generations." Amen.\*\*

Lord God, we thank you for the glory of spring. The world seemed cold and bleak and dead, but you have renewed the face of the earth with the living green grass, the beauty of flowers, and the singing of birds. Do an even greater thing for us, O God: renew our spiritual lives. If our lives seem barren and desolate, let the beauty of your love save us from despair. Make a springtime in our wintry natures. As the grateful earth yields to the sun, to the healthful winds and rains, may we yield ourselves to your spirit. O God, we thank you for all things and persons that have enabled us to go on when we felt like giving up; for a word of encouragement, a word of sympathy, for those who love us, for those who pray with us; for a sense of duty which keeps us going when everything else seems gone; for faith which burns in our hearts however dimly; for hope which all the world's darkness cannot overcome; for joy that seeks us through our pain. O God who has made of one blood all nations of people, receive the prayers we offer for an anxious and troubled world. Send your light into our darkness and guide the nations as one family into the ways of peace. Strengthen in us day by day the gift of understanding. We pray in your holy name. Amen.\*\*

O Lord, through the centuries you have revealed yourself in the magnificence of the world you've created, and also in personal revelations to your people. We must admit that we want to be swayed by sensational "happenings" and dazzled by miraculous technology. As we humans find explanations for more and more natural phenomena, we confess we want something spectacular from you. We want something sensational. We want to be swept away with cosmic-scale action. We want impressive divine intervention. Forgive us our insatiable appetite for proof. Forgive us our presumption, vanity, and conceit, for glorying in our knowledge and technology. Help us to see your majesty as Lord of creation. And then help us to stand in awe of your love for planet earth, such that you sent us not only a divine visitor, but your own dear Son to dwell with us. May we be led to seek your glory in him, and through him, to find all that we can know of you. In his name we pray. Amen.\*\*

Father, we know that you would rather see a sermon than hear one. Let us be living words of love and holiness, and do not let our hearts miss your message for us today. Fill our hearts with the will to obey you. Strengthen the weak. Heal the sick. Enlighten the perplexed. Bring peace to the distressed soul, the troubled family, the nations in conflict. Convict us of our sins, yet remind us again that each of us is so precious to you, that you forgive quickly, for such is the power of the cross of Jesus. Death could not keep him, and now he lives and reigns forever! Hear our prayer, all the while overlooking our short-sightedness and forgiving our lack of faith. In the name of him who taught us to pray, saying "Our Father.... Amen."\*\*

Eternal God our Father, we thank you for this day's rest, in which we lay aside our daily tasks to relax our bodies, refresh our minds, and strengthen our spirits. We thank you for this day's worship, in which we lay aside our cares and anxieties to concentrate our every thought on you alone. We thank you for your church, for the fellowship we enjoy within; for the teaching which is given to us from your word; for the guidance for life which we receive. Abide now in strength, O God, with those who serve your church. Let the church truly be your body in the world. In your name, let us speak your Word, and in your power let us lift up the weary and comfort the sorrowing. Grant to each that which is most needed, and grant to all of us a full measure of your love, that we may share it with others, including those who do not know you. Make us patient and confident as we await the answers to our prayer. Amen.\*\*

God, we thank you that you are not without a witness in any land, nor is your voice silent in any tongue. All over the earth there are people like ourselves, humbly and earnestly lifting up their hearts to you on behalf of our troubled and turbulent world. Teach us to be still and know that above the noise and tumult, you are God. We thank you for our country and for what it means in hope for all nations. We pray for the leaders of our nation,

and for those of all nations. We ask you to grant divine wisdom to them in the fateful and far-reaching decisions they must make. Bring to our people the unity which comes when people seek to do your will. Build in us the inner strength which alone can make us strong. Make us free from the bitterness that weakens and divides. Give us insight to know that every honest struggle after justice and truth is in reality a striving to do your will, and is therefore supported by more than human power. Grant all things needful to our chapel family. Strengthen and confirm the faithful, visit and relieve the sick, bless and protect the children, arouse the careless, recover the fallen, restore the penitent, and bring us all to be one with you. Amen.\*\*

## **Christian Prayer Of Stewardship:**

Chaplain: This is a joyful, happy day.

**Congregation: We have come to celebrate our oneness in Christ.**

Chaplain: The Christ who gives us all we have.

**Congregation: The Christ who gives himself freely to us.**

Chaplain: Friends, have you come to promise him your faithfulness?

**Congregation: We have. As he has given us all things, we acknowledge our dependence upon him and now return to him the fair measure of his gifts.**

Chaplain: He has given us a world to love.

**Congregation: We pray that we may live compassionately in his world.**

Chaplain: He has shown us the way in the life of his Son.

**Congregation: We pray that we may faithfully follow him.**

Chaplain: Friends, let us lift our voices in song.

**Congregation: Let us sing a song of praise to our God.\*\***

Almighty Father, most gladly we say today that we are not our own. Many hands have gone into the fashioning of our lives, and much love and tenderness have been poured upon us to bring us to this day. Not human love alone, O God, for your divine care and guardianship has been much with us. We are what we are because you are mindful of us, and because you have created and re-created us. It is impossible that we should live only for ourselves. You are calling us to be stewards of your bounty, saying to each of us, "Freely you have received, freely give." Amen.\*\*

**POW-MIA Service**

PRELUDE AND PROCESSIONAL

\*POSTING OF COLORS

\*INVOCATION

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

PRESIDENTIAL PROCLAMATION

HYMN

SCRIPTURE READING

PRAYER OF REMEMBRANCE

LITANY:

Leader: God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

**People: Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be moved, and though the mountains be toppled into the depths of the sea;**

Leader: Though its waters rage and foam, and though the mountains tremble at its tumult.

**People: The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our stronghold.**

**(Ps. 46:1-4)**

SPECIAL MUSIC

MESSAGE

\*HYMN

\*RETIRING OF THE COLORS

\*SOLO TRUMPET

\*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE AND RECESSIONAL\*\*

(\*congregation Standing)

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PRELUDE

\*POSTING OF THE COLORS

\*NATIONAL ANTHEM

\*INVOCATION

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

PRESIDENTIAL PROCLAMATION

HYMN

LITANY:

Leader: Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful, for I have taken refuge in you;

**People: In the shadow of your wings will I take refuge until this time of trouble has gone by.**

Leader: I will call upon the Most High God, the God who maintains my cause.

**People: For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his faithfulness endures from age to age. (Ps. 57:1-2; 100:4)**

PRAYER OF REMEMBRANCE

SPECIAL MUSIC

ADDRESS

\*CLOSING HYMN

\*RETIRING OF THE COLORS

\*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE\*\*

(\*Audience Standing)

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INVOCATION

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

PRESIDENTIAL PROCLAMATION

INTRODUCTION OF SPEAKER

ADDRESS

FLY OVER (Optional)

AWARDS PRESENTATION (Optional)

RETREAT

NATIONAL ANTHEM  
LOWER FLAG  
FOLD FLAG



## CONCLUDING REMARKS

## Prayer Of Proclamation

Lord God Almighty, this morning we acknowledge you as the God who abides with us. We acknowledge you as the God who abounds in love, mercy and grace. We acknowledge you as the God who is always about, above, and abreast with us, guiding us so that your will may be done in our lives. We praise you Almighty God because you are never absent in our lives, but you are always with us. We thank you most awesome God that your truth is absolute and guides our path each and every day of our lives. Amen.

Lord God Almighty, this morning we acknowledge you as the God who forgives and absolves us of our sin. We acknowledge you as the God of grace which is always abundant and always available to us each and every day of our lives. This morning we accept your forgiveness and grace, and acclaim you as Almighty God, creator of heaven and earth. We praise you because you accommodate our needs and make us whole. We praise you because you accompany us and keep us in one accord. May your will be done in our lives this day. Amen.

Lord God Almighty, this morning we acknowledge you as the one who balances our lives in the midst of many demands for our time and talents. Continue to have your hand upon us we pray. This morning, band us together by your Holy Spirit as the family of God, and make us one in spirit. Banish any cause for division among us, and surround us with your banner of love. Oh merciful God, forgive us of our sins and bathe our hearts clean, that we might stand pure before you. Let your word always be a beacon of light to our path as you guide us day by day. Amen.

Thank You Lord, for calling us together this morning. Guide us as we serve and worship you. And now, as we are in the midst of your presence, calm our spirits, care for each need that is upon our hearts, and give us your peace which passes all understanding. Increase our faith this morning, so we may have full confidence, that you are in charge of every circumstance, and every situation in our lives. As we celebrate the Lord's Supper, change our callous hearts, cancel our sins, cleanse us anew in your forgiveness, and fill us to capacity with your Holy Spirit. We celebrate you this morning, and praise you for your faithfulness in our lives. For you stand alone as the one true God. Among all others there is no comparison, and never shall be. Amen.

## **Unison Prayer**

Dear God Almighty, we know that you alone determine the steps of a righteous man. Now we ask that you direct our paths, that we might walk in your light. Extend your hand, and uplift those that are discouraged, those that are downtrodden, and those that are downhearted. Take away our doubt, and increase our faith, so that we might stand on the firm foundation of your Holy Scripture. Knit our hearts together this morning, and develop unity among us as your family. Help us to support, encourage, and care for one another. Cease any division that is in our midst. We depend on your grace, on your forgiveness, and on your mercy in our lives. Amen.

Dear God Almighty, this morning we extol you as a most excellent God, as the one true God. We elevate our praise and worship to your throne in heaven, and express our love for you alone. Help everyone that is here, to enter into your holy presence, and experience your grace, love and mercy. Encircle those that are hurting with your arms, engulf them in your love and tenderness, and give them strength to endure. And now embolden us as your ambassadors. Strengthen our resolve to be evangelists of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Help us to be your hand extended in our community. Make us living epistles for your glory, honor and praise. Enable us to share the good news everyday, everywhere to everyone. Amen.

## Items Of Faith

## Nicene Creed

We believe in one, God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven; by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshipped and glorified. He has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

## *Apostles' Creed*

I believe in God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord; Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in he Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

## Jewish

I am a Jew because the faith of Israel demands no abdication of my mind. I am a Jew because the faith of Israel asks every possible sacrifice of my soul. I am a Jew because in all places where there are tears and suffering the Jew weeps. I am a Jew because in every age when the cry of despair is heard the Jew hopes. I am a Jew because the message of Israel is the most ancient and the most modern. I am a Jew because Israel's promise is a universal promise. I am a Jew because for Israel the world is not finished; men will complete it. I am a Jew because for Israel man does not yet place man and his unity above nations and above Israel itself. I am a Jew because above man, image of the divine unity, Israel places the unity which is divine.

Edmurd Fleg

## *Pillars of Islam*

1. I am a Muslim.
2. My religion is Islam.
3. Islam means “submission to the will of God”.
4. Muslims believe that there is no god but Allah (God) and that Muhammad is the universal and last messenger of God.
5. There are five pillars of Islam
  - a. There is no god but God (ja ilaha illa Allah). Muhammad is the Messenger of God (Muhammad Rasool Allah).
  - b. The Prayers (the Salah).
  - c. The Fastings (the Sawm).
  - d. The Almsgiving (the Zakah).
  - e. The Pilgrimage (the Haj).



## **Muslim Belief**

1. I believe there is no God but Allah.
2. I believe that Muhammad is the Messenger of God.
3. I believe that God sent before Muhammad many messengers and that he revealed to some of them Divine Books to guide their people to the right way.
4. I believe in the Angels of God.
5. I believe in the after-life and the day of Judgment. I believe in the reward for good believing people in the day of judgment, and the punishment of wrongdoers in the day of judgment.

**Gloria Patri**

Glory be to the Father and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end, Amen.

*Doxology*

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise Him, all creatures here below, praise Him above, ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*The Lord's Prayer*

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

## **Gideons Sunday**

We rejoice at your word, our Lord, as one who discovers a hidden treasure. Your word is sharper than a two-edged sword--it penetrates our thinking in unexpected ways. Your word is a mirror, revealing to us our true selves. Your word is an ointment, healing our damaged emotions. Your word is like a familiar chair and a refreshing drink, which calms our anxieties. Your word is the food we need to do your will. Your word is our map when we lose our way. And your word enables us to worship you in Spirit and in truth. May our service be saturated with your word, and may we choose to hide it within our hearts. This we pray in the name of the living God. Amen.

**Ecumenical Retreat Thoughts and Prayers**

*The Challenge of Imitation*

## Meditation

Sit in a quiet place and allow yourself to relax and become peaceful. Close your eyes and meditate on the words of Jesus: “Truly I tell you, if you say to this mountain, ‘Be taken up and thrown into the sea,’ and if you do not doubt in your heart, but believe that what you say will come to pass, it will be done for you” (Mark 11:23).

Think about the mountains in your life: the loneliness, anger, exhaustion, or depression that needs to be moved; the self-doubt or disillusionment, emptiness or boredom, shame or fear that undermines your peace; your painful relationships or complex problems. These are all mountains of oppression, as are the social injustices of bigotry, poverty, and war. Meditate on the promise of Jesus that if you have faith and not doubt, you can move these mountains with God’s help.

Breathe deeply. With each slow breath, recite one of the following affirmations to yourself until you have repeated all seven:

1. God is within me.
2. God is beside me.
3. God is before me.
4. God is behind me.
5. God is above me.
6. God is below me.
7. Because God is all around me and within me, I can move mountains.

Repeat this exercise of breathing and meditation until your mood becomes serene and confident and you feel ready to live out your faith in action.<sup>2</sup>



## Prayer

I pause to listen for your voice, O God of mystery and might. You speak words I need to hear - words of challenge as well as assurance, words of critique as well as affirmation. The silence of these moments invites you into my spirit anew. I sense your presence in the air I breathe, the beauty I see, the quietness I feel within. My depths are full of you, O lover of my soul. In seeking you, I follow my bliss; I journey into unexplored realms of power and possibility. Thank you for faith that moves mountains; may it be mine. Thank you for walking by my side and picking me up when I fall. You are there in my loneliest moments, my hardest relationships, my darkest fears. You never withdraw from me, O God of hope and wholeness. Help me imitate you. Take me from passivity to involvement, from slumber to awakening. May I not be a spectator but a participant in life, and may my path find me always walking in the footsteps of Jesus, my Lord. Amen.2

*The Challenge of Honesty*

## Meditation

Take a moment to clear your head and imagine you are alone in a rowboat on the open sea at night. It is pitch dark. You can see nothing except a faint light beaming from a lighthouse on the shore. You try to row toward the light, but the boat is too encumbered by emergency provisions to traverse the waves. You have no choice but to throw your food, water, clothing, and medical supplies overboard. Having done this, you row ahead, guided by the light, until you reach the safety of shore.

Similarly, excess inner baggage keeps you from moving toward the light of God. These unseen encumbrances are anything that prevents you from loving and worshipping in spirit and truth. Being controlling or perfectionistic, lazy or prejudiced, insecure or judgemental, negative or quick-tempered, proud or hateful - these destructive actions and attitudes maroon your spirit on a turbulent sea blanketed in darkness. Only by acknowledging our sins and shortcomings can we let go of them and progress toward love and light.

Spend some time in self-examination. Look at your life and honestly assess which of your personal qualities are most harmful to yourself and others. What baggage of yours must be thrown overboard so you can move toward the light? Remembering Jesus' words, "The truth will make you free," meditate on where you need to change and grow.<sup>2</sup>

## Prayer

Radiant and righteous God, the light of your truth shines in my depths; no darkness can extinguish it. Because of your love for me, I can be honest about my shortcomings without rejecting myself. Secure in your presence, no waves of fear discourage me; no winds of anxiety defeat me. I continue my journey toward integration, stronger than all opposition. For every awakening of truth you have inspired in me, I give thanks. These awakenings have loosened the chains of my bondage. In discovering that your acceptance goes deeper than my inadequacies and sins and shame, I have found a mysterious joy. Yet I confess, O God, that my dishonesties and evasions stifle this joy, and I am afraid to let them go. Complete honesty seems unfamiliar, threatening. I prefer the comfort of my chains. It is easier to live in denial than to acknowledge my own inner darkness, to blame than to accept responsibility, to wear a mask than to be real. Help me to change, faithful God. Confront me with all that is false and inauthentic in me, that I may cast it out by your power. Guided by your grace, may I find the truth that sets me free. Amen.<sup>2</sup>

*The Challenge of Nonconformity*

## Meditation

Meditate on your baptism. Picture in your mind the water that was used to symbolize your union with the death and resurrection of Christ. Your faith promises you the forgiveness of your sins and new and eternal life in God. Your baptism also commissioned you for ministry in Christ's name.

Use these moments to broaden these meanings. The water is also your conscience. It calls you to keep faith with yourself, to stand against the crowd. Think about Paul's words, "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God - what is good and acceptable and perfect" (Rom 12:2). Honestly admit the ways in which you are still a conformist; let God's healing presence show you where you need to change. Envision yourself bravely following Christ, stepping to the beat of a different drummer, even in the face of persecution.<sup>2</sup>

## Prayer

O God of the inner voice and upward call, who urges me to forsake convenience and embrace conscience, hear my prayer. I come not expecting miracles but seeking strength. Life is both beautiful and terrible; it inspires and overwhelms me. That's why I need you, dear God, to see me through, and you never fail me. When I rejoice, you share my celebration. When I weep, your heart breaks along with mine. I thank you for your unfailing presence. But I want more of you, Lord. Not in earthquakes, wind, or fire, but in whispers of grace do I find you. Sometimes I feel alone. To escape my isolation I follow the crowd. Fitting in consoles me; I need to be part of the group, for you created me to love and be loved. I am not ashamed of my need for relationships, but I confess how easily I compromise my values in order to be accepted. Keep me truer to myself, O God. May I not "go along to get along" but seek first your kingdom. Remind me of Jesus in the Jordan; let me go with him there in my spirit every day. Rekindle in me the meaning of my baptism, that I might be cleansed afresh by its water and challenged anew by its witness. Amen.<sup>2</sup>

*The Challenge of Freedom*



## Meditation

Use the image suggested by John of the Cross in your spiritual practice. Your relationship with God is like the relationship between a burning piece of wood and the flame that engulfs it. Total combustion symbolizes mystical union, the goal of the spiritual life.

Mediate on the flame of a candle or, in your mind, envision God as fire. Your attachments are like wood that refused to be consumed; they prevent you from becoming one with the flame and its promise of illumination and freedom. As each attachment surfaces, explore what unmet spiritual need underlies it.

Surrender these needs to God. Ask for help in accepting the barrenness of not having them met. Become aware of how idolatry can arise from the wilderness within. Explore ways in which grace can sustain you, and find inspiration in the biblical sayings Jesus used to resist temptation. You may want to focus your mediation by repeating a phrase such as “May your love alone kindle the flame of my desire, O God.”<sup>2</sup>

## Prayer

From the bondage of addiction to the freedom of faith, I flee to you, O God. I come acknowledging my enslaved desire; I need deliverance. Rather than wanting you above all things, I let other gods seduce me. I am attached to people and possessions, ideas and agendas, activities and rewards. The problem is my emptiness: I try to fill it from the outside rather than from within. In the wilderness of unfulfilled yearning, I easily succumb to temptation. Only in your presence, gracious God, do I find the strength to resist. You give me courage to face my barrenness. Because you love me, I can stop running. Rather than fleeing into unhealthy relationships and destructive behaviors, I can rest in you. Take me deeper into your rest, I pray. When I am tempted by attachment, remind me of the cost of giving in. May I seek fulfillment not in fleeting satisfactions but in lasting faith. Direct my passion toward you and away from false gods. Fill my emptiness with your presence, until my heart becomes an altar and your love the flame. Then I will know you fully, even as I am fully know, and in this knowledge, I will rejoice. Amen.<sup>2</sup>

*The Challenge of Friendship*

## Meditation

Be present to God in solitude. In the stillness remember friends who have touched your life. Welcome them into your heart as you meditate. Recall times of laughter and tears, adventure and discovery, sharing and caring.

Savor the memories. Experience again the warmth and acceptance and togetherness you felt. Perhaps some of these people live far from you; others may have died. Yet they are part of you, and you are part of them. Thank God for each person. Love came to you through them; they are gifts to your soul.

Meditate on how your friends have helped you encounter God. Celebrate the spiritual qualities in them that you admire, and ask God to cultivate these qualities in you. Affirm that your friends are more important to you than wealth or possessions, success or status. Remind yourself that you are only as isolated as you choose to be. You have much to give others if you would seize the opportunity to do so. Begin by asking, "How can I be a better friend?" Reach into your center and find integration as you express love inward, outward, and Godward.<sup>2</sup>

## Prayer

Befriending God, who in Jesus Christ invited me into intimacy, I come to you longing to love and be loved. I wait for you in silence. Your voice speaks in my depths, calling me by name. You knew me before the world began, and you know me now. Even when others exclude me, ignore me, reject me, you receive me as your own child, precious in your sight, secure in your embrace. I thank you. Because of your love, I can be alone without being lonely. I do not bemoan my isolation but celebrate the solitude of this moment. You are always seeking me, assuring me of your presence. When I am centered in your acceptance, I am free to love without dependency of addiction. Help me to share this love in true friendship, I pray. Deliver me from the self-centeredness that alienates me from you and others and myself. May I not only bring your presence to my relationships but find it in them as well. Amen.<sup>2</sup>

*The Challenge of Contentment*

## Meditation

Close your eyes and imagine you are standing beside an old well. You are hot and thirsty. In order to get water from the well, you must lower the bucket. But the rope is too short. It will only lengthen as you expel unhealthy yearnings from your inner life, allowing you to dip your bucket in the deep water of contentment and drink from it. Be attentive to your breathing. Each time you inhale, pray the word, "I need you, O God." Each time you exhale, name some destructive desire from which you wish to be freed. Here are some examples:

I need you, O God; I don't need wealth.

I need you, O God; I don't need power.

I need you, O God; I don't need success.

I need you, O God; I don't need youth.

I need you, O God; I don't need sexual ecstasy.

I need you, O God; I don't need a perfect job.

I need you, O God; I don't need a perfect marriage.

I need you, O God; I don't need perfect children.

With each cycle of inhaling and exhaling, imagine the rope lengthening. When you have rid yourself of perfectionistic longings, your bucket will reach the water of contentment, which is the water of God. Drink and be satisfied.<sup>2</sup>

## Prayer

Giving and forgiving God, in you I find everything I need. You provide day and night, sunshine and rain, food and shelter, grace and peace. Why do I look elsewhere for contentment? Abundant life begins and ends with you. Without you I could gain the whole world and still be poor. My material blessings come from your hand. So do my cherished relationships and my inner awareness of your presence. I thank you for all you have given me and for what you have made me. My problem is that I want perfection; I am intolerant of flaws. Rather than celebrate the good I have, I bemoan the best I lack. Reveal to me my ingratitude and failure to love. Help me embrace the disowned parts of myself that I might be easier on others and find peace within. Purge perfectionism from my heart. Remind me that to find contentment I must rest in you; I must accept what I cannot change and allow myself to be molded in positive ways by negative experiences. Only by surrendering to you does this molding begin. May I surrender anew here and now, and may I find contentment in you this day and always. Amen.2



*The Challenge of Wholeness*

## Meditation

Find a quiet place and take a few moments to enter into a reflective mood. Seat yourself in a reverent position and close your eyes. Celebrate your union with God in Christ. You and your Creator are no longer strangers; you are part of each other, bonded in love.

Savor this gift in your spirit and use the acronym “LUFA” to remember the phrase, “I am Loved, Understood, Forgiven, and Accepted in Jesus Christ.”\* Move deep inside yourself. Let your most intimate concerns enter your consciousness. You may be concerned about your mistakes, failures, health, sexuality, appearance, intelligence, marriage, friendships, addictions, inadequacies, fears, losses, or insecurities. As you contemplate each of these, breath deeply and affirm, “I am Loved, Understood, Forgiven, and Accepted in Jesus Christ.” God’s presence will help you cope. Receive this presence by applying the LUFA phrase to whatever turmoil you feel. Surrender to wholeness and grow in integration.<sup>2</sup>

*\*This idea originated with Leslie D. Weatherhead, pastor of City Temple in London during WW II.*

## Prayer

Into your presence I come, inviting God, not because I must, but because I may. My soul thirsts for you. I am empty unless filled with your Spirit, anxious unless calmed by your peace, lost unless guided by your word. Receive me once more, O welcoming Savior. Cast me not away from your presence, though I understand little of your ways. I want easy answers; you prefer that I live the questions. I crave fulfillment; you call me to faith. I expect immediate results; you teach me to wait. Grant me a deeper perspective, O Lord. May I see my inner opposites not as annoying inconveniences but as catalysts of growth. Remind me that true integration is not freedom from struggle, but life in your presence. Let me not settle for less. Deliver me from the perils of leisure without labor, pleasure without accountability, happiness without character. Instead, awaken your kingdom within me - the kingdom beyond race or class, age or sex, language or nation - that as an instrument of your peace, I might find peace in my heart. May wholeness be my goal, not only for myself but for the world, and may love be my guide. Amen.<sup>2</sup>

*The Challenge of Adventure*

## Meditation

Bring the storms of your life to God in silence. Your storms are the struggles, problems, or crises that weigh heavily on your mind and heart. They may involve your relationships or your finances, your work or your health, your addictions or your sexuality, your moral choices or a host of other concerns. It is tempting to panic in the midst of these. Your first response may be to curse the storm, to resent having to deal with it. But no amount of cursing or resentment will make it go away.

As you come to God with the storm raging within you, ask for the grace to see it as an important passage on your spiritual journey. Meditate on what can be learned from it, on how you can see the storm as an adventure rather than a trial. Allow yourself to feel the storm's unfairness and to grieve. But also try to see how it might be a blessing in disguise. When you feel God's presence, you will find the calm at the eye of the storm. Finding this eye is the challenge of your inner work. Persevere in your meditation, believing that calm can be found if you wait long enough and listen attentively enough.<sup>2</sup>

## Prayer

I come to you in this sacred moment, O God of every time and every place. Each day reminds me of my need for you. I need you in my doubt to restore my faith. I need you in my emptiness to fill the void. I need you in my turmoil to center me in peace. You do not disappoint me. When clouds gather on the horizons of my soul, your Spirit gives me courage. I seek this courage now. Many storms are brewing within and around me; they cause me to fear. I am more like the disciples than like Jesus: I panic. Life's sea is so great, and my boat is so small. If only I could remember that my problems call me to adventure. You go with me into every situation. Even when my bad choices land me on the rocky shoals of brokenness, you do not desert me. Your love never fails. Remind me that good can come out of the worst circumstances. Teach me the lessons I need to learn from my struggles, that I might grow in character and hope. Deliver me from the illusion that this growth comes easily. By accepting pain as inevitable, may I render suffering optional, and may I be in the storm without letting the storm be in me. Amen.<sup>2</sup>

*The Challenge of Acceptance*

## Meditation

When acceptance is deeply rooted in us, we learn the difference between what we can change and what we can't. This knowledge opens a new world to us - the world of serenity. This world must be entered again and again.

With your eyes closed, imagine a wardrobe closet like the one C. S. Lewis describes in *Chronicles of Narnia*.

See yourself open the door of the wardrobe and step through it into an illuminating scene of beauty, peace, and joy. Entering this world, you leave behind anxiety and grief. Step through the wardrobe from alienation to love. Step from rejection to approval, from exhaustion to rest. God awaits you. Jesus said, "I am the gate" (John 10:9) Stepping through is coming home.

Use the following benediction to help accept your wounds and stay in the new world of serenity:

Everything I need I have.

Everything I am I accept.

May I find peace in God.

May I let go and love.<sup>2</sup>



## Prayer

O you whose thoughts are above my thoughts, and whose ways are above my ways, I seek you. Only in your presence do I let down my guard. Your acceptance frees me to be who I am. No more hiding. No more pretending. I can rest in your love. Through my life often seems out of control, I need not fear, for you are with me. I see no cloud by day nor pillar of fire by night. Yet your Spirit witnesses to my spirit that I am not alone. Embrace me once more, gentle God, and calm the clamor within me. I am tired of being dissatisfied. Trying to fill my emptiness on my own terms exhausts me. I've had enough of hurrying and worrying and striving. Slow me down, Lord. May the mind that was in Christ Jesus, the mind of patience and peace, also be in me. Teach me to change what I can and leave the rest to you. Dig the well of acceptance deep within me, that I might love you and others fully, having first loved the brokenness in myself. Amen.2

*The Challenge of Self-Giving*

## Meditation

Create an image in your mind of your favorite musical instrument. Without such instruments, music remains a theory, a silent possibility unable to express itself. So it is with God's love: if not expressed by human instruments, it remains hidden and unknown.

Meditate on the ways God can speak through you. You are an instrument created to play love's redeeming and liberating melodies. By imitating God's self-giving in Christ, you make love concrete. Each time you lend a helping hand, contribute to a worthy cause, stand up for a moral ideal, or otherwise use your gifts and resources to improve the lives of others, you become an instrument of God's peace. Using the prayer of St Francis of Assisi to focus your meditation, open yourself to God's presence and surrender to the ideals that the prayer celebrates: Lord, make me an instrument of your peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; 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; it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.<sup>2</sup>

## Prayer

Giver of all good gifts, I marvel at your generosity. Each refreshing morning, each blazing sunset, each cool mist in the deep woods comes from your hand. I do not take this for granted; the world is full of wonder because of your provisions. I stand in awe of your goodness. Though life can be both wonderful and awful, both full of grace and full of pain, it is all yours, loving God. You include everything in your embrace. Embrace me, too, I pray. I want to feel close to you, as close as I feel to my own breath, to my own heartbeat, to my own most intimate thoughts. When you reveal your presence deep within me, I know I am part of your good creation. You have given me so much - eyes to see, ears to hear, a heart to feel, a mind to think. I have been blessed with material abundance and spiritual riches in Christ. Teach me to share, O God. Show me what I have to give, and help me to offer it to others in love. Cleanse my heart of ulterior motives. May I imitate you in my relationships, wanting another's happiness more than my own, giving not to receive but to celebrate your presence within me. I open myself to you in this moment, that I may not love in needy or addictive ways, but in the freedom and self-giving that your Spirit inspires. Amen.<sup>2</sup>

*The Challenge of Resurrection*

## Meditation

Close your eyes and cover them with your hands. As you do this, you will shut out all light. Let the darkness symbolize death. Meditate on the truth that death is part of life, inevitable but never final on the spiritual journey. As winter precedes spring, and as night turns to morning, death gives birth to resurrection life. You have probably experienced the death of relationships, dreams, ideals, loved ones, mental or physical abilities, beliefs, and many other things.

As you meditate in the darkness, reflect on your losses and ask God to help you accept them. Move deep within yourself. Feel your feelings. Allow yourself to grieve. Ask for the strength and grace to let go of what you cannot change and get on with your life. Wait patiently in the stillness, letting it speak to you of hope and healing.

When ready, remove your hands from your eyes while keeping them closed. Be present to the light that now shines into your darkness. Meditate on the ways God is bringing forth new life out of the deaths you have experienced, and present the unsundered parts of yourself to God for transformation.<sup>2</sup>

## Prayer

O God of the eternal sunrise and the invincible springtime, I am alive in you. Fully alive. Because of your Spirit's presence within me, I need not fear death. Yet I do fear. I tremble when I contemplate the death of a dream or a cherished relationship, the death of a beloved friend or a part of my own body or soul. Death devastates me. It brings confusion to my mind and anguish to my heart; it makes me weep. O God of resurrection, I cry to you in my vulnerability and woundedness. I easily forget that the old must die in order for the new to be born. Rather than embrace the birth process, I shun it in the hope of avoiding its pain. Even when old ways of thinking and feeling and acting no longer work, I cling to them because they are familiar and comfortable. Teach me the truth of the seasons, O God. May I remember that there is a time for birth and a time for growth, a time for maturity and a time for death, just as the year progresses from spring to summer to autumn to winter. Make me attentive to the seasons of my spirit. Help me listen to each emotion and show reverence for each mood I feel. Remind me amid darkness and death that resurrection will eventually come, bringing light and warmth, as surely as the spring melts winter's ice and snow. I need a springtime and an Easter, O God, not once a year, but every day. Lead me toward transformation. Come to me now and awaken an alleluia in my heart. I wait for you in hope. Amen.<sup>2</sup>

## **Church Gathering**

Creative source of all being, whose way, will, and love were personified in the life of Jesus of Nazareth whom we call the Christ because he was willing to live as a beacon whose light would attract people to you, we, your children, have come to rededicate and renew our lives in this hour of worship. We gather as the church, members of a community of faith committed to being the body of Christ that tells the story and carries on the ministry of Jesus. We gather here in this sanctuary as a specific body. We thank you for this community of people who have covenanted to love you with heart, soul, mind, and strength and our neighbor as ourselves and to carry on the work of the Christ in and through this local congregation. We thank you, too, for this day on which we can discharge one of our responsibilities as members - that of reviewing, assessing, and expressing appreciation for the work accomplished in your name in the year just past and for the privilege of making decisions that will affect our future. May we as a church be even more what we are called to be: a sanctuary where we are fortified for the living of daily life, seekers who gather to learn more about you and ourselves, and a people who scatter to carry on your work and to be the church in our community and world. Amen.13 (J. B.)



## **Remaining In Touch With Ourselves**

A transistor, Lord, makes it possible to hear more composers in a day than the composer heard in a lifetime. An art gallery gives us more masterpieces in an hour than the artist saw in a year. Magazines provide more news in ten minutes than medieval man discovered in ten years. But, we wonder... are we gaining touch with the world at the expense of losing touch with ourselves? Guide us, Lord. Amen.

## **Active and Quiet Times**

Lord, we must do more than imagine what you are saying to us... we must listen to you speaking to us in our lives and I the world... through every event... even the most insignificant. Active we must be, yes... but still also from time to time quiet enough to hear your voice. Amen.

## **Love From the Heavenly Father**

Dear Heavenly Father, open my eyes and my heart to your love. Remind me that no matter where I am or how far away from loved ones, you are always there ready to love, ready to care. Lord, through your love I find strength, and with that strength I have courage. Courage to stand steadfast in your ways, to trust in your love and to follow you. I praise you Father; I love you. Amen.

## **Commitment and Dedication**

“Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money down into the temple treasury. Many rich people threw in large amounts. But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a fraction of a penny. Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, ‘I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything - all she had to live on’.” (MK 12:41-44)

Heavenly Father: May we learn a very important principle for daily living from this sterling example of commitment and dedication. May we understand that self-fulfillment and self-worth are not measured in dollars and cents, when we drop all that each of us has to offer into your treasury in order to be placed at your disposal. May we learn not to be distracted by others who give much without sacrifice, but understand how you are pleased not with amounts - but the level of commitment from the heart. Give us the spiritual eyes to see and to put this principle into operation in our life - beginning today. Amen.

## Lord God and Neighbor

“Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: ‘Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?’ Jesus replied: ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment.’ And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.” (MT 22:34-40)

Father: May these words be our standard for living. May we understand that in order to experience the fullness that life has to offer, we must surrender our heart, soul, and mind wholly unto you. And may we grow in the awareness that deep and meaningful relationships can also be our life experience as we love our neighbor - our families, friends, those who live around us, our co-workers - as much as we love ourselves. May we understand how much of our daily struggle and strife can be eliminated if only we put such teachings into practice in our personal lives. Amen.

## **Aware of God's Presence**

Almighty God, you do contain all that is grand and glorious. How can we fail to see your handiwork in the beautiful setting of the sun? How can we fail to feel your presence in the warmth of family and friends? How can we fail to experience the offer of your love wherever we turn? Father, we ask your forgiveness for our blindness, our blindness which prevents us from seeing your presence and doing your will. As this day draws to a close, we beseech your Holy guidance and support that we may go forth in the morn to serve your Holy Name. Amen.

## **Slow Me Down**

Talking to you Lord is easy; listening is what's really hard! My mind gets cluttered up with the noise and confusion and activity. I shut you out or turn you off. Maybe I'm just afraid of what I am likely to hear. Today, Lord, slow me down, make me quiet, shut out all sounds and distractions and speak to me, Lord. Speak and let me listen. Amen.

Slow me down, Lord. Ease the pounding of my heart by the quieting of my mind. Steady my hurried pace with a vision of the eternal reach of time. Give me, amid the confusion of the day, the calmness of the everlasting hills. Break the tensions of my nerves and muscles with a soothing music of the singing streams that live in my memory. Teach me the art of taking minute vacations - of slowing down to look at a flower, to chat with a friend, to pat a dog, to read a few lines from a good book. Slow me down, Lord, and inspire me to send my roots deep into the soil of life's enduring values that I may grow toward your love which created me and all that exists. Amen.

## Daily Prayer

Teach me, Lord, to be sweet and gentle in all the events of life: in disappointments, in the thoughtlessness of others, in the insincerity of those I trusted, in the unfaithfulness of those on whom I relied. Let me put myself aside: to think of the happiness of others, to hide my little pains and heartaches so that I may be the only one to suffer from them. Teach me to profit by the suffering that comes across my path. Let me use it: that it may mellow me, not embitter me, that it may make me patient, not irritable, that it may make me broad in my forgiveness, not narrow and overbearing. May no one be less good for having come within my influence. As I go my rounds from one distraction to another, from time to time let me whisper a word of love to you, O Lord. Amen.

Father, we thank you for your presence and action in the world in the midst of conflict and division. We know it is you who turn our minds to thoughts of peace. Your spirit changes our hearts: enemies begin to speak to one another, those who were estranged join hands in friendship and nations seek the way of peace together. Your spirit is at work when understanding puts an end to strife, when hatred is quenched by mercy and vengeance gives way to forgiveness. For this we should never cease to thank and praise you. Amen.



## Morning Prayer

O God, you are our refuge when we are exhausted by life's efforts, bewildered by life's problems, or wounded by life's sorrows. You are our strength when our tasks are beyond our powers, and when duty calls for more than we have to give. As we pray to you today, we come seeking refuge and strength. Help us to trust your love and power, to discover your wisdom and peace. Give us patience with ourselves and others. To your glory and honor, we pray. Amen.\*\*

God of this new day and every day, for the rest and sleep I have experienced, for the gifts of yesterday, and for the potential and possibilities of today, accept my thanks. Awaken me once again to your presence within and around me. May the words that come from my lips and the actions that stem from my hands and mind reflect my heartfelt resolve to live and love as did Jesus who is the light of the world, the Christ, in whose spirit I pray. Amen.13 (J. B.)

To you, O God, who separates the light from the shadows, I offer my gratitude for the dawn of this new day. Forgive me for what I did or neglected to do yesterday that failed to reflect your will. Strengthen my sensitivity to the needs of those whom I will meet in these coming hours, and may my life brighten the way of all whose paths cross mine. Amen.13 (J. B.)

Creator God, who in the past has been my refuge and strength and the one in whom I have put my trust, may I continue to be aware of your love and presence throughout this new day. Since I am not perfect, as I go about today's tasks deliver me when I despair, fortify me when I fail, humble me when I become haughty, love me when I lose, sustain me when I slip, save me when I sin. Thus surrounded and undergirded by your Spirit, enable me to cope with whatever comes my way. Amen. 13 (J. B.)

Thank you, living and loving God, for the gift of this new day! As my eyes open and refocus, as the muscles of my body stretch and resume functioning, as my mind begins to reflect on the activities and opportunities that await me in the coming hours, I realize once again just how precious life is and how grateful I am to be alive. Yes, thank you, gracious and giving God, for this new day! Amen.13 (J. B.)

It's morning, O God, although it is difficult to discern because the day is so dark and dreary. The rain pelting my windows makes me want to crawl back into bed, pull the covers over my head, and wait for the sun to break through the clouds. But, O God, may the rain remind me of the blessings that you shower on my life. For family, for friends, for food, for faith, for forgiveness, for fortitude, thank you! Amen. 13 (J. B.)

God of light and sun, God of this and every day: before beginning the tasks, confronting the challenges, and enjoying the opportunities that lie before me in the coming hours, enable me to center and focus my life on you, the source and ground of my being. As I move through this day may the decisions I make reflect who and whose I am. May I, like the psalmist, affirm that you are my God and I am one of the people of your pasture and the sheep of your hand. Thus, I offer my prayer and desire to live this day in the spirit of the one who is the Good Shepherd - Jesus, the Christ. Amen. 13 (J. B.)

Gracious and guiding God, who has given me a mentor and example for living in Jesus, I pray that you will give me the courage and will to see more clearly, love more dearly, and follow more nearly the Christ, day by day. Today, therefore, may I be sensitive to the needs of others and in some way respond to them; may I be kind and loving in all that I do and say; and may I reflect the image and spirit of Jesus who was called "The One for Others" because he sought to serve rather than to be served. Amen.13 (J. B.)

## **Morning Prayer of Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow**

O Lord, grant me to greet the coming day in peace. Help me in all things to rely on your holy will. In every hour of the day reveal your will to me. Bless my dealings with all who surround me. Teach me to treat all that comes to me throughout the day with peace of soul, and with the firm conviction that your will governs all. In all my deeds and words guide my thoughts and feelings. In unforeseen events let me not forget that all are sent by you. Teach me to act firmly and wisely, without embittering and embarrassing others. Give me strength to bear the fatigue of this coming day with all that it shall bring. Direct my will, teach me to pray, pray you - yourself in me. Amen.

## Night Time Prayer

O Lord, our Lord, you are mighty. Come and be with us. Keep us safe from the grasp of the enemy. And send your angels of grace to be our shield and strength. Let your blessed peace be with us always. We trust in you through Jesus Christ our redeemer. Amen.

O God, as this day closes, humbly I thank thee for all that it has brought me; for its joys and also for its trials. Grant that my deeds may show that I am worthy of thy favor. Strengthen me, O God, that I may love thee with all my heart, with all my soul, and with all my might. Pardon, O Father, my shortcomings and help me to overcome them. Grant me the strength to forgive all who may have wronged me, and give me the courage to seek pardon of all whom I have offended. O God, who neither sleepest nor slumberest, heal me and I shall be healed. Spread thy tabernacle of peace over my home and all who are dear to me, and over all thy children. Amen.

As the shades of night draw around me and darkness enfolds me, as my body and mind prepare for a few hours of rest and refreshment, I pause to thank you; inexhaustible God, for the blessings of this day. For life itself, for the people with whom I have shared this day, and for your presence within me, thank you. May I express my gratitude for not having to walk alone by being there for someone else tomorrow. Amen. 13 (J. B.)

It has been a long day, and I am tired and ready for bed, O God. The fact that you are tireless, timeless, ever-present, ever-giving, ever-gracious, and ever-loving reminds me anew that you are my God and I am a finite being who relies on you, the source of my being. As I close my eyes and relax these tense muscles of my body, as I place in your loving care the worries and concerns that have been mine this day, grant me sleep so that I will awaken in the morning strengthened and renewed to face the challenges and opportunities of tomorrow. Amen. 13 (J. B.)

God of all times and places; God of the day and night; God of the sun, moon, and stars; and my God; I offer my gratitude for the gift of this day now drawing to its close. For the good experiences that were mine, for the pleasure found in unexplained places, and for the opportunities to serve you by serving others, accept my thanks. But, gracious God, I confess that I did and said what I should not have, and I left undone much that I might have said and done. Forgive me, and in your mercy strengthen me to be a better person tomorrow than I was today. Amen. 13 (J. B.)

O God, my help in ages past and my hope for years to come, before sleep concludes this page in my book of life, I want to reflect on what I have written today. As I do so I find that I like much that I read, but there are some lines I wish were not there. Forgive me for those, merciful God. Trusting in your forgiving love, enable me to say with your apostle Paul, "Forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." In his spirit I pray. Amen. 13 (J. B.)

Guardian of my life, who blessed me with the gift of another day, I praise you as did the psalmist who sang, "I will bless God at all times; God's praise shall continually be on my mouth...I sought God and God answered me, and delivered me from all my fears. "Where can I go from your spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there; if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there. If I take the wings of the morning and settle at the farthest limits of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me fast." In this knowledge and assurance, grant me a restful sleep, and may I awake refreshed and strengthened to serve you by loving and serving others. Amen. 13 (J. B.)

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me as I prepare for a time of rest from the labors of this day. Guard me throughout the night so that I might feel renewed and have a deepened resolve to live tomorrow as you would have me live. Amen. 13 (J. B.)

O God, my eternal contemporary, whom I love because you first loved me, as this day dies and the blessing of

rest awaits me, my thoughts and prayers turn to those I love and whom I know love me. For all of the ways in which they have brought me joy, satisfaction, and fulfillment, thank you! Because the love we share is so important to me, beginning tomorrow may I say each day to at least one of my loved ones, "I love you." May my verbal or written contract with those I love reveal that for me love is a verb. I pray in the spirit of Jesus, whose life and teachings show me how to love. Amen.13 (J. B.)

## **General Invocation for Celebration**

Almighty God, you are shrouded in mystery, yet, out of the greatness of your love, you have revealed yourself to us through benevolent leaders, courageous prophets, nurturing mothers, sensitive fathers, loving neighbors, moral nations and our own inner voices. As a lover of praise and celebration you have revealed your essence in a powerful way to many peoples and nations in their times of joy. Draw close to us this evening as we come together to have fun. Guide our minds and hearts to savor the company of one another as we look back over the many months and years of caring and working together. Lord, touch each man and woman in this room with your Spirit of peace that they might find true peace in themselves, offering peace to a troubled world. In your everlasting name we pray. Amen.

## **The Soul of Man**

The soul which thou, O God, hast given unto me came pure from thee. Thou hast created it, thou hast formed it and thou hast breathed it into me. While the breathe of life is within me, I will worship thee, sovereign of the world, in whose hands are the souls of all living and the spirits of all flesh.

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Praised be his name, whose glorious kingdom is for ever and ever. Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God with all my heart, with all thy soul and with all thy might.

## **Confidence In God**

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want, He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; He leadeth me beside the still water. He restoreth my soul; He guideth me in straight paths for His name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou hast anointed my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever. (Psalm 23)

## **God's Protecting Care**

Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel: "My way is hid from the Lord. My cause is passed over by my God?" Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? His discernment is past searching out. He giveth power to the faint; and to him that hath no might He increaseth strength. They that wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint. (Isaiah 40)



## **God's Infinite Love**

Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all benefits of Him who healeth all thy diseases, who encompasseth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward them that revere Him. As a father hath compassion upon his children, so hath the Lord compassion upon them that revere Him. (Psalm 103)

## The “Essence” Of Judaism (From The Talmud: Makkos)

Six hundred and thirteen commandments were addressed to Moses--three hundred and sixty-five prohibitions corresponding with the number of days in the solar year, and two hundred and forty-eight positive commands corresponding with the number of limbs, in the human body. David came and reduced them to eleven principles. (Psalm 15): Lord, who shall sojourn in thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell on thy holy mountain? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh truth in his heart; that hath no slander upon his tongue, nor doeth evil to his fellow, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbor; in whose eyes a vile person is despised, but he honoreth them that fear the Lord; he that sweareth to his own hurt and breaketh not his word; he that putteth not out his money on interest, nor taketh a bribe against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved.

Isaiah came and reduced them to six (Isaiah 33).

Micah reduced them to three (Micah 6):

It hath been told thee, O man, what is good, and what the Lord doth require of thee: Only to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.

Subsequently, Isaiah reduced them to two (Isaiah 56).

Then came the prophet Habakkuk and reduced the commandments to one (Habakkuk 22): The righteous shall live by his faith.

Unite our hearts, O God, to fear thy name; keep us far from what thou hatest; bring us near to what thou lovest; and deal mercifully with us for thy name's sake. (Talmud: Berachos)

Praise the Lord, to whom our praise is due. Praise be the Lord, to whom our praise is due, now and forever. Hear, O'Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is One. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words which I command thee this day shall be in thy heart. Thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thy house, when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be for frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the door posts of thy house and upon thy gates. Amen.

I give thanks unto thee, O live and ever enduring King, because thou hast mercifully restored my soul unto me; great is thy faithfulness. Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe. Thou hast sanctified us with thy commandments and has set upon us the ordinance of wearing fringes. Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who hast sanctified us with thy precepts and commanded us to occupy ourselves with the study of the Torah. Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who hast chosen us from among all peoples by giving us thy Torah. Blessed are thou, O Lord, giver of the Torah. Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who has provided all my needs. Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who removest sleep from mine eyes and slumber from my eyelids. O my God, the soul with which thou didst endow me is pure. Thou didst create it and fashion it; thou didst breathe it into me and thou preservest it within me. Thou wilt reclaim it from me, but thou wilt restore it to me in the life to come. So long as the breath of life is within me, I give thanks unto thee, O Lord my God, and God of my fathers. Master of all works, Lord of all souls. Blessed art thou, O Lord, who dost restore the soul to the dead. Amen.

Blessed are thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe. Thou weightest down my eyes with the bonds of sleep, my eyelids with slumber. Lord my God, God of my fathers, may it be thy will to lay me down in peace, and to raise me up again to peaceful life. May evil thoughts, disturbing dreams and base imaginings not trouble me, but grant that my couch be serene before thee. Lighten my eyes again that I sleep not the sleep of death, for thou givest light to the apple of my eye. Blessed art thou, O Lord, whose glory gives light to the whole universe. Amen.

## **Praise Of God (Ashray)**

Every day will I bless thee; and I will praise thy name for ever and ever. Great is the Lord, and highly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable. One generation shall laud thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts. The glorious splendor of thy majesty, and thy wondrous works, will I rehearse. And men shall speak of the might of thy tremendous acts; and I will tell of thy greatness. They shall utter the fame of thy great goodness, and shall sing of thy righteousness. The Lord is good to all; and his tender mercies are over all his works. The Lord upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth up all those that are bowed down. The eyes of all wait for thee, and thou givest them their food in due season. Thou openest thy hand, and satisfiest every living thing with favor. The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and gracious in all his works. The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth. (Psalm 145)

## God's Power And Grace

Eternal is thy power, O Lord, thou art mighty to save. In loving kindness thou sustainest the living; in the multitude of thy mercies thou preservest all. Thou upholdest the falling, and healest the sick; freest the captives and keepest faith with thy children. Who is like unto thee, Almighty God, source of salvation? Praised be thou, O Lord, who hast implanted within us eternal life. May God be gracious unto us, and bless us; may he cause his face to shine toward us; that thy way may be known upon earth, thy salvation among all nations. (Psalm 67)

## **Meditation and Prayer**

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy Holy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **Christian Orthodox Prayer**

Thou who at all times and at every hour, both in heaven and on earth art worshipped and glorified, O Christ God; long-suffering, plenteous in mercy and compassion; who lovest the just and showest mercy to those who are hardened in sin; who callest all people to salvation through the promise of good things to come. Do thou, the same Lord, receive also our supplications at this present time, and direct our lives according to thy commandments. Sanctify our souls. Purify our bodies. Set aright our minds; cleanse our thoughts; and deliver us from all calamity, wrath, and distress. Surround us with thy holy angels; that, guided and guarded by their host, we may attain unto the unity of the faith, and unto the comprehension of thine ineffable glory. For blessed art thou unto ages of ages. Amen.

## **Personal Prayer: "I Am!"**

I was regretting the past and fearing the future. Suddenly my Lord was speaking: "My name is I AM." He paused. I waited. He continued. "When you live in the past, with its mistakes and regrets, it is hard. I am not there. My name is not I was." "When you live in the future, with its problems and fears, it is hard. I am not there. My name is not I WILL BE." "When you live in this moment, it is not hard. I am here. My name is I AM." Amen.

## **Prayer Before Studying God's Word**

Lord, cleanse me of my sins and have mercy on me. You have created me; have mercy on me. There is no way to measure my sin; have mercy on me. Lord, forgive the many times I disobey you. Master, I bow down before your cross and glorify your resurrection. Lord, when I sin in what I say and do, have mercy on me because of your great compassion.

Illumine our hearts O Master, who loves mankind, with the pure light of thy divine knowledge; open the eyes of our mind to the understanding of thy gospel teachings; implant also in us the fear of thy blessed commandments, that trampling down all sinful desires, we may enter upon a spiritual manner of living, both thinking and doing those things that are pleasing to thee. For thou are the illumination of our souls and bodies O Christ our God, and to thee we send up glory, to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and for evermore. Amen.



## **A Christian Prayer for Any Occasion**

Thou who at every season and every hour, in heaven and on earth, are worshipped and glorified, O Christ our God, who are long-suffering, merciful and compassionate; who loves the just and shows mercy upon the sinner; who calls all to salvation through the promise of blessings to come; O Lord, in this hour receive our supplications, and direct our lives according to thy commandments. Sanctify our souls, hallow our bodies, correct our thoughts, cleanse our minds; deliver us from all tribulations, evil and distress. Compass us about with thy holy angels, that guided and guarded by them, we may attain to the unity of the faith and to the knowledge of thine unapproachable glory, for thou are blessed unto ages of ages. Amen.

## **Prayer for the Intercession of Our most Holy Theotokos - Mother of God**

Most holy Lady, Theotokos (Virgin Mary), by your holy and all-powerful prayers remove from me, your humble and burdened servant, despair, forgetfulness, lack of understanding, and negligence, and take away all unclean, crafty, and blameworthy thoughts from my smitten heart, and from my darkened mind; quench the flame of my passions, for I am poor and lost; deliver me from many cruel recollections and undertakings, and set me free from all evil actions; for you are blessed of all generations, and the name of your most honorable Son, and Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ, is glorified now and for evermore. Amen.

**Prayer to the Virgin Mary (Theotokos - Birthgiver of God)**

Rejoice O Virgin, Theotokos, Mary full of grace, The Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. For you have borne the Savior of our souls.

## **Prayer to Guardian Angel**

Holy guardian angel, do not depart from me, a sinner, or allow me to be overcome by the enemy. Give strength to my weak hand, and set me on the path of salvation. Forgive me when I offend you, and protect me in the coming day, that I may not anger God by sinning. Pray to God for me that I may come to fear him and become a servant worthy of his great kindness. Amen.

## **The Jesus Prayer**

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

## **The Trisagion Prayers**

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. (3 times). Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

O most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse us from our sins. Master, pardon our iniquities. Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for thy Name's sake. Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy. Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

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

## **Who Really Calls and Sends?**

Since we cannot make the journey backward into innocence, help us go forward into wisdom. Since we cannot begin again from the beginning, help us to go on faithfully from here. Since we cannot turn ourselves by our own willing, do thou turn us toward thee. Amen. 7

## **Wintery Sunday**

O God, we come to worship this morning confessing that the weather just about has us down. This winter has been nearly too much for us. The snow, ice, and cold have caused us to be depressed, discouraged, discourteous, and short-tempered. We have found ourselves being crabby, unloving, and unlovable. We gather, therefore, recognizing our need for the warmth of your presence and the community and support of one another. May our lives be renewed by our worship, and may we find strength to meet the challenges of this new week, Amen.13  
(J. B.)



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## FOREWORD

Prayer constitutes a significant dimension of ministry for the United States Air Force Chaplain Service. The occasions which call for prayer vary dramatically in their scope and emphasis. With the exception of denominational worship services and programs, the audiences before which we pray represent the pluralistic environment of the Air Force.

The diversity of religious expressions present in the military dictates consideration and sensitivity to individual and corporate needs. By respecting the dignity of religious conviction, opportunities are opened to emphasize spiritual and moral values necessary for living life with hope.

The values emphasized through prayer are among those filled with promise for Air Force personnel, because they evoke feelings and thoughts of the heart, responses affecting perceptions of spiritual significance. Through prayer, people reach out to God, and, in turn, are met by God at their point of need.

The expressions of prayer included in this book/disk are indicative of the quality and style of prayers offered by the United States Chaplain Service personnel. May the standards established serve to inspire creative thought in formulating prayers that bring encouragement and assurance to people of faith.

## PREFACE

The purpose of this book/disk is to provide the Air Force Chaplain Service with a resource of prayers relevant to the varied occasions they encounter in military ministry. While the disk is not inclusive of all the prayers individuals are asked to offer, a wide assortment of meditations were selected for publication from all those submitted to the USAF Chaplain Service Institute Resource Division for review. Prayers were written by USAF, Army, and Navy chaplains, as well as by Chaplain Service Support Personnel. Many are from commercial sources.

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The prayers and worship resources selected for publication are intended to supplement existing books of worship available to Air Force chaplains and Chaplain Service Support Personnel. Thus, the Book of Prayers is not an official endorsed guide consisting of prescribed prayers. Chaplain Service personnel are urged to use the prayers at their own discretion, in part or in whole. With the exception of the prayers classified under "Classic/Historical Prayers," and those copyrighted, indicated by a footnote, individuals may modify the published prayers or add additional ones for personal use. Indeed, the Book of Prayers was published on disk with just such a purpose in mind.

Many of the prayers published were edited to the standards established by the USAF Chaplain Service Institute - Resource Division. In instances where the editorial prerogative of the Resource Division was exercised, every effort was made to retain the original thought and emphasis of the author.

Prayers included in the book/disk are representative of all those submitted for consideration. Each prayer forwarded to the Resource Division was read carefully. Of those submitted the majority were selected for inclusion. Every attempt was made to include at least one prayer from each individual making submissions. Due to the alphabetical arrangement of most of the prayers in the original *Book of Prayers*, a decision was made to integrate the hundreds of new prayers among the old, instead of simply compiling them as an addendum to each chapter. Thus, there is no "new" section of this edition. Old prayers are indicated by two \*\* at the end of each prayer. Some prayers from the first edition were re-edited, some chapters were also re-arranged, and new graphics were added to the old, throughout the text.

We extend our sincere thanks to all who took time to submit prayers for this expanded second edition of the *Book of Prayers*. We sincerely hope the new disk format will be a great help to you and your ministry. May this book/disk continue to bless, enrich, and extend the ministry of the USAF Chaplain Service.

The USAF Chaplain Service Institute - Resource Division

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## Guidelines for Lay Prayer at Base Events

Be sensitive to the fact that people from a wide variety of faith traditions are likely to be present.

Be aware of the nature of the event and plan your prayer accordingly.

Be specific in what you pray for so that it will speak meaningfully to the issues surrounding the event.

Be timely, not rushing through but also using an economy of words.

Be prepared either by writing out the prayer in advance or by making mental notes of what you will want to say.

Be faithful to God by praying in a manner consistent with your own faith.

Be a servant, recognizing that praying for others is a profound act of service.

## Lay Prayer in Christian Worship

### Questions to ask:

What is the liturgical tradition of the service? Traditions vary in their expectations on the degree of formality with which prayers are delivered, and the specific content of the prayer.

Where does this prayer fit into the worship service? Many prayers, such as invocations and prayers of confession, function in specific ways and are generally not interchangeable.

Is lay prayer appropriate in this instance? Some prayers, such as those involving the sacraments, are reserved for the clergy in certain traditions.

What are the issues in the life of this worshipping community? Deployments, deaths, celebrations, chapel and base activities are among the events which will be widely felt in the community and which may need to be addressed in prayer.

What elements of prayer need to be incorporated into this specific prayer? Prayers can include praise, thanksgiving, confession and petition.

Where am I in my journey of faith? Prayer in worship is both communal and personal, and it should reflect the faith commitment of the one delivering it.