
Prayers to the Lord

The *Reformed Review* is pleased to publish the following prayers received in response to its "prayer call":

A Prayer of Confession

Lord, we come to you knowing that we need to confess our sins to you. Our hearts and minds need the rest. As much as we'd like to deny it, we have committed sins that separate us from you. We've done things we shouldn't have, and we have not done things we should have. We are "guilty as charged." We count it an irresistible blessing to be able to come to you to confess our sins and to have our relationship with you restored. Hear us now as we bring to your throne those things we need to confess:

Brian Schutt
Carmichael, California

A Prayer of Adoration

Dear Lord Jesus, you are the Bridegroom of my soul. Your presence within me fills me with ecstasy, intense sensitivity, and fervent adoration. Blessed Lord, you live in my grateful heart and fill me with deep peace. My most Loving Jesus, please stay in my innermost being and make my life rapturous and forever in adoration of you. I love you, my Sweet Jesus, Lord of my Life.

Louisa Lucia
Escalon, California

A Prayer of Intercession

The man was leaving, Lord, to go I don't know where,
to live I don't know what important moment of his life.

Leaning towards his elderly mother,
he kissed her tenderly,

and she
kissed him even more tenderly.
Then, holding his face between her trembling hands,
she whispered:

'Go my child, I'll be with you.'

There was a long silence . . .
then she added:

'Do you believe that?'

'Yes mother,' he said.

He left.

And she, with tears in her eyes,
accompanied him from a distance.

Some time later the man told me
that it was like this
whenever he went away,
and that he was always strengthened
in times of difficulty
by the belief that he was accompanied
by his mother's love.

And as I meditate
this evening,
I suddenly realize, Lord,
that these are the words
you used
when you were leaving us
to return to the Father:
'I will be with you . . . until the end of time.'
And I'm sure that you expect us to respond
as the son responded to his mother:
Yes, we believe it.

You know that I'm weak, Lord,
and often,
in difficult moments,
I look for the support of a friendly presence.
I feel the need of a word,
of a hand to hold,
of a face to kiss,
but now I understand
that physical presence

is not necessarily the sign of real presence.

Two people can see each other,
touch each other,
and even embrace each other warmly,
while at the same time remaining at a distance,
far from each other,
separated from each other,
unless their love,
deep down,
unites them.

How many handshakes are just play acting!
How many couples,
who have slept in the same bed for ages,
are just two lonely people,
camping on one side or the other
of an impassable moat!

But I also believe, Lord,
with all my strength,
that two people
separated by time or space,
can be together,
can be united,
can live in deep communion,
if their love is alive.

I believe this of human beings, Lord,
so why shouldn't I believe it of you.

Since you love us *infinitely*,
your presence to each one of us
must be *infinite*.
Real Presence,
total presence,
always and everywhere.

Nothing can separate us from you, Lord,
nothing that comes from you,
but only what comes from us,
and above all . . .
our lack of faith.

This evening, Lord,
 you are saying to me once again:
 'I will be with you until the end of time'
 and you are asking me quietly
 'Do you believe that?'
 Yes Lord, I do believe it,
 but please increase my faith.
 Let me always live
 in your loving presence,
 you who accompany me in my daily comings and goings,
 as the elderly mother
 accompanies her son with her faithful love.
 Help me to work in your presence,
 to rejoice in your presence,
 to rest in your presence,
 because if I thought you were there, Lord,
 if I was open to the love you offer,
 I would never be alone again,
 I would never be weak again,
 and in front of you I would never be able
 to do the bad things I'm tempted to do,
 not like the little boy
 who is afraid that his mother
 will see what he is doing and punish him for it
 but like the grown-up son
 who discovers his mother's great love for him
 and then only wants to thank her for it
 through his life.*

Michel Quoist
 Le Havre, France

A Litany of Thanksgiving

Choir: Give thanks to God, all the earth,
People: **Praise God's holy name.**
Choir: Give thanks to God, all the earth,
People: **Praise God's holy name.** *(sung)*

*Michael Quoist, *New Prayers*, copyright 1990. Used with permission of the Crossroad Publishing Company.

Leader: Let us give thanks to God for ballot boxes, newspaper editorials, and open borders.

People: For all the freedoms we enjoy.

Leader: Let us give thanks to God for diplomats, treaties, and compromise.

People: For peace in a world full of war.

Leader: For police officers, street lights, and concerned neighbors

People: For safety from fear and harm.

Choir: Give thanks to God, all the earth,

People: Praise God's holy name. *(sung)*

Leader: Let us give thanks to God for St. Paul & Priscilla, St. Francis & St. Claire, Martin Luther, Martin Luther King, Mother Theresa.

People: For all the Christians who have journeyed before us.

Leader: Let us give thanks to God for the Scriptures, for the creeds, confession, & theologies, and for the songs and hymns of God's people.

People: For all good things in our heritage of faith.

Leader: Let us give thanks to God for a good creation, a redeeming Son, and a transforming Spirit.

People: For all the benefits of our salvation.

Choir: Give thanks to God, all the earth

People: Praise God's holy name. *(sung)*

Leader: Let us give thanks to God for purple and orange sunsets, bright red flowers, great gray elephants, and the vast blackness of space.

People: For all the wonders of your creative mind.

Leader: Let us give thanks to God for men and women, dark and light skin, freckles and curls, pug noses and beards, graceful limbs and ample laps.

People: For all the beautiful diversity of people.

Leader: Let us give thanks to God for Mozart, Michelangelo, and Milton, for pianos, paint brushes, and pencils.

People: For all the wonders of our creative minds, made in your image.

Choir: Give thanks to God, all the earth,

People: Praise God's holy name. *(sung)*

Leader: Let us give thanks to God for Thanksgiving turkey, mashed potatoes, cranberry sauce, and pumpkin pie.

People: For the abundance of food that sustains our bodies.

Leader: Let us give thanks to God for soft beds, warm fires, familiar chairs, and open windows.

People: For the comforts of our homes.

Leader: Let us give thanks to God for new cars, cashmere sweaters, and hot tubs.

People: **For God's goodness that flows above and beyond all our needs.**

Choir: Give thanks to God, all the earth,

People: **Praise God's holy name.** (sung)

Leader: Let us give thanks to God for running, jumping, and sleeping.

People: **For the health of our bodies.**

Leader: Let us give thanks to God for six-mile jogs, slam dunks, and hand springs.

People: **For the wonders our bodies can achieve.**

Leader: Let us give thanks to God for crossword puzzles, learning foreign languages, and plane geometry.

People: **For our healthy, strong minds.**

Choir: Give thanks to God, all the earth,

People: **Praise God's holy name.** (sung)

Leader: Let us give thanks to God for pesky little brothers, wise grandmothers, favorite uncles, and loving parents.

People: **For the families that shaped our lives.**

Leader: Let us give thanks to God for surprise phone calls, funny birthday gifts, and long talks late at night.

People: **For the communities of faith to which we belong, and the one great church that binds us all together in Christ.**

Choir: Give thanks to God, all the earth,

People: **Praise God's holy name.**

Choir: Give thanks to God, all the earth,

People: **Praise God's holy name.** (sung)

1 Give thanks to God, all the earth, Praise God's ho - ly name.

[During the spoken part of the prayer, a guitar quietly plays an A2 chord. As the people finish the last words in the spoken section, the guitar climbs from A2 to D, giving a music cue for the choir to begin the psalmic response.]

Ron Rienstra
Pella, Iowa

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