

Society  
of  
St. Vincent de Paul  
(Scotland)

Prayerbook

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## INTRODUCTION

The society's prayers enshrine all aspects of Vincentian Spirituality, and nourish our spiritual lives as they are said slowly and reflectively.

This prayer allows us to grow closer to God and to care deeply for those in need. St Vincent de Paul said "Give me a person of prayer and they will be capable of anything"

Fredrick Ozanam and his original companions were concerned about the human and social implications as they established the Society. At the same time they felt the urgent need for a spiritual foundation for their mission. The harmonious balance between prayer and activity which Vincent de Paul achieved draws its inspiration, strength and fidelity from a life of faith.

The Vincentian vocation sees itself in this 20th century of science, technology and efficiency as a humble yet authentic witness to fraternal charity and social initiative.

The poverties of loneliness, hopelessness and loss of self esteem are endemic in our sacralised society of today, so time, advice and support given with an open heart and generous spirit are the priceless Vincentian gifts we offer to people on our visitations.

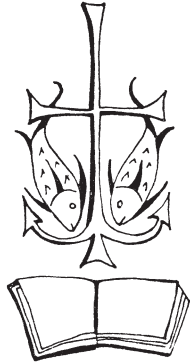
This prayer book is not intended to replace our personal and intimate conversations with God but rather to help on those occasions when words fail us.

By our prayer and action may we wrap this world in charity to fill Fredrick's vision for the poor, always remembering that the deeper we love the deeper we pray.

Sr Eleanor Rodgers  
DOC National Spiritual Adviser

# Conference Meeting

*Turn to God with Faith,  
To your own with Love,  
And to all with kindness.*





## **THE SOCIETY OF SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL - CONFERENCE MEETING**

*NOTE The Conference meeting each week should be the highlight of the week for the brother or sister of the Society. Not only should work be allotted and plans made for works of charity, but spiritual refreshment should be gained, and each person's relationship with Christ deepened. The growth in holiness of each member is essential to the Society and will give the only true dimension worthy of its work. A Conference meeting devoid of spiritual food is a poor meeting, and unworthy of the Society.*

### **Opening Prayers**

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**V.** Come Holy Spirit, penetrate into our hearts and kindle within us the fire of Your love. Send forth Your Spirit and new life will be created

**R.** and the whole face of the earth will be renewed.  
Our Father. Hail Mary.

### **Vincentian Family Prayer**

Lord Jesus, you who willed to become poor, give us eyes and a heart directed towards the poor; help us to recognise you in them - in their hunger, their loneliness, and their misfortune. Enkindle within our Vincentian Family, unity, simplicity, humility and the fire of love that burned in St. Vincent de Paul.

Strengthen us, so that, faithful to the practice of these virtues, we may contemplate you and serve you in the person of the poor, and may one day be united with you and them in Your kingdom. Amen

### **Prayer for a Fruitful Meeting**

Let us remember the words of our Lord Jesus Christ:  
“When two or three are gathered together in my name  
there am I in the midst of them.”

*(Short Silence)*

Lord Jesus, help us through meeting together to deepen our Vincentian friendship and answer the call every Christian receives to seek and find those who are forgotten, to bring Your love to the suffering or deprived. Help us to be generous with our time, our possessions and ourselves so that we may grow perfect in Your love and learn to share Your Sacrifice for others in the holy Eucharist.

**V.** St Joseph, Patron of Families

**R.** Pray for us.

**V.** St. Vincent de Paul

**R.** Pray for us.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

A passage containing some message should be chosen, read, and a few moments of silence should be allowed for reflection after the reading. A discussion of the reading can then take place for five or ten minutes.

### **Topic and Discussion**

*Some topic on one or other aspect of the Society's work can be chosen, outlined by the President, then discussed for five or ten minutes. In this way the proper motivation of the works of the Society is kept always before the members.*

### *SUGGESTED TOPICS*

- *What distinguishes the Society from other charitable societies?*
- *Are we adopting our work sufficiently to the modern world and its specific needs, especially the needs of OUR parish?*
- *Have we become TOO parochial, or do we take part in National and Diocesan activities to show our solidarity with the local Church?*
- *Are we faithful to the performance of the corporal works of mercy?*
- *“Courtesy is the sign of the grace of God” – is this true of us in our work in Church and in the homes of the needy?*
- *Is there another Conference which needs our help?*
- *Do we spread the Vincentian spirit throughout the Parish and the Diocese?*
- *Do we play our part in the life of the community as a whole?*
- *Are there sufficient young people in our Conference – if not, why not?*
- *Are we faithful in helping the Diocesan and National Council, in our twinning? Do we pray for our “twin” as well as sending it funds?*
- *Are we faithful in administering our funds, the money given by the people who wish to help the poor?*
- *Have we too large a bank balance? Are we poor enough?*
- *Do we use the common bond of charity to be truly ecumenical?*

## **Business**

*The business of the meeting should be carried out efficiently, as any other meeting nowadays. Minutes of last meeting, apologies for absence, correspondence received, financial report, discussion of works done and to be done, other competent business.*

### **NOTE**

*No member should talk too much, unless asked to render a report he has been commissioned to prepare: no one, not even the President, should “hog” the meeting.*

*Should any difficult problem arise, why not stop for a moment’s silent prayer on the matter, then proceed with the solution. In other words, the whole meeting can take on the form of shared prayer, with business interlaced. It should be no ordinary meeting – but a sharing of experience, ideals and practical suggestions and plans, with the spirit of charity pervading. Avoid criticism. Use the grace of the priesthood to help if the Spiritual Adviser is present.*

## **Closing Prayers**

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**Prayer to see the Eucharist  
as the source of our Apostolate**

Father, grant that communion with Christ, present in the Holy Eucharist, may impel us to love you by serving Him in our neighbour and help us to respond with open hearts to the sufferings of others, aware of the depths of our own needs.

**Prayer that we may bear witness to Christ's love**

Grant us also the grace to persevere when disappointed or distressed and never to claim that our work springs from ourselves alone, so that, united in prayer and action, we may be a visible sign of Christ and bear witness to His boundless love which reaches out to all and draws them to love one another in Him.

**Prayer for Fruitful Visits**

We thank You Lord, for the many blessings we receive from those we visit. Help us to love and respect them, to understand their deeper needs and share their burdens and joys as true friends.

**Prayer for the Canonisation of  
Blessed Frederic Ozanam**

We thank You Lord, for all the blessings that You have given to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul and to its members. By Your Divine will, You have given our founder Frederic Ozanam that wondrous title of Blessed. May we be inspired by His example of love

and service to follow you more closely. Lord, continue to bless the Society, its works and its members and grant that one day, Blessed Frederic Ozanam will be raised to the altars of Your saints.

**V.** Blessed Frederic Ozanam

**R.** Pray for us

**V.** Blessed Contardo Ferrini

**R.** Pray for us

### **Bidding Prayers**

#### **For the Pope and all members of the Vincentian**

##### **Family**

Grant the courage, peace and confidence You alone can give, to our Holy father the Pope and to those we visit, to all who help us in the work, to our overseas brothers and sisters, to any members of this Society and their families who may be troubled or in need.

*Lord hear us.*

**R.** Lord graciously hear us.

##### **For the Society**

We thank You Lord, because You inspired the foundation of our Society to help overcome suffering. Grant the Society and this Conference/Group/Council the grace of continual growth and renewal and we pray that many others will be drawn to seek membership of this Society and share in its work.

*Lord hear us.*

**R.** Lord graciously hear us.

### **For Unity**

May we accept afresh our calling to make visible our unity in Christ with all other Christians by working together with them in the service of those in need.

*Lord hear us.*

**R.** Lord graciously hear us.

### **Conference Intentions for the Sick**

#### **For Youth**

We pray that young people will grow in faith and, like Frederic and his friends, become active members of the Church and the Society of St Vincent de Paul.

*Lord hear us.*

**R.** Lord graciously hear us.

#### **For Deceased members of Vincentian Family**

Welcome into the light of Your presence those who have died and grant that one day, our friends and relatives, those we visit and our Vincentian brothers and sisters may all come together before you in the perfection of love.

*Lord hear us.*

**R.** Lord graciously hear us.

#### **For Vocations**

Lord Jesus we are glad to be your Church. You call all the baptised to “put out into the deep” taking the path that leads to holiness. Fill us with hope and make us willing to serve You. Help us to encourage and support one another and grant that many will hear the call to

serve You in the priesthood and religious life, witnesses  
in the world of today to the power of your love. We ask  
this in Your name. Amen

Hail Mary for the Sick

Hail Mary for Carers

Hail Mary for Twin Conferences

### **Veni Creator**

Come Holy Ghost, Creator come  
from Thy bright heavenly throne:  
Come take possession of our souls  
and make them all Thine own.  
Thou who are called the Paraclete,  
best gift of God above;  
the Living Spring, the Living Fire,  
sweet Unction and True Love.  
Thou who are sevenfold in Thy Grace,  
finger of God's right hand,  
His promise teaching little ones  
to speak and understand.

O guide our minds with Thy blest light,  
with love our hearts inflame  
and with Thy strength which ne'er decays,  
confirm our mortal frame.  
Far from us drive our deadly foe,  
true peace unto us bring  
and through all perils lead us safe  
beneath Thy sacred wing.



Through Thee may we the Father know,  
through Thee, the eternal Son  
and Thee the Spirit of Them both,  
thrice Blessed Three in One.

All glory to the Father be, with His co-equal Son,  
the same to Thee Great Paraclete,  
while endless ages run. Amen

In the name of the Father and of the Son  
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

### **Petition Prayer**

God our Father, You alone have the power to bestow those precious gifts of Yours which You rightly call miracles. If it be Your will, be pleased to grant such a gift on behalf of

(name of person or persons being prayed for)

We humbly ask that You grant this favour to glorify Your Holy Servant Blessed Frederic Ozanam, that it may serve to have him raised to the altars of Your saints by our Holy Mother the Church. We make this prayer through Our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen

### **To be recited on the death of a member, benefactor, person visited.**

Out of the depths I have cried to Thee, O Lord:  
Lord, hear my voice.

Let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.

If Thou O Lord wilt mark iniquities; Lord, who shall endure it?

For with Thee there is merciful forgiveness: and by reason of Thy law, I have waited for Thee O Lord. My soul hath relied on His word: my soul hath hoped in the Lord.

From the morning watch even until night, let Israel hope in the Lord.

Because with the Lord there is mercy and with Him plentiful redemption  
And He shall redeem Israel from all her iniquities.

**V.** Eternal rest give unto him/her/them O Lord

**R.** And let perpetual light shine upon  
him/her/them

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

## Prayers During The Day

*The secret is to “tune in to God” as you can throughout each day. Things around you and people will help. See something beautiful and think of God, thanking Him for His creation. See people and see Christ in them, marvel at His goodness, treat them as you would treat Him, and thank God for another reflection of His glory.*

*Situations will arise when prayer comes easily: in trouble, in temptation, in a difficult situation.*

*PRAY for this almost constant awareness of the presence of God around you – then you will pray hundreds of times each day.*

*Mere suggestions are noted here: some of your prayers will be the time-worn ones, others will be spontaneous if you are in that kind of mood; this Prayerbook may help you fill in some specific need – but only brief outlines are given – guidelines.*

### **Morning Prayers**

- 1. Thanks be to God for being alive today!*
- 2. A prayer of offering*
- 3. A thought and a resolution for the day. Sometimes to listen regularly to a radio programme helps the habit of early morning worship.*
- 4. Is daily Mass and Communion beyond you – or twice-weekly?*

**PRAYERS BEFORE AND AFTER MEALS,  
PRAYERS WHEN PASSING (OR NOT PASSING)**

*A CHURCH, PRAYERS FOR INSPIRATION OR IN A TIGHT CORNER, PRAYERS AT THE SIDE OF THE SICKBED. Ask God to enlighten you when and how to pray.*

### **Night Prayers**

1. *A review of the day and examination of conscience. What about that resolution made? What about the Achilles heel, your special weakness? How often have you turned to God?*
2. *Some of the older prayers, to Our Lady, for a happy death, for particular people who need prayers.*
3. *A little sorrow, adoration, thanksgiving and a few petitions.*
4. *“Sleep is death’s young brother”. Sleep each night as though you were really ready to enter heaven.*

*BUT please do not restrict yourselves to morning and night prayers and grace before and after meals. The HABIT of prayer is not really a difficult one to form, if you have the will, and constantly ask God to help you form it. It is not impossible to live constantly in the presence of God – try it and see.*

*Some people are helped greatly by EJACULATIONS – the Holy Name, invoking the saints, especially those for whom you have a special admiration. The names of saints are all around us borne by other people.*

*DEVOTIONS – to the Sacred Heart, to the Rosary, to Our Lord in the Tabernacle, to the saints have been a great help to people throughout the ages. Have you one?*

*Your dealings with other people will bring you into constant contact with Christ, for EVERYMAN is Christ to you – and you must treat him accordingly. “As often as you do this to the least of My brethren, you do it to Me.”*



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*Let us but raise the level of religion in our own hearts, and it will rise in the world. (Newman)*

# Thoughts and Prayers for Particular Occasions

*To pray is to search for a way in which I can respond to  
God's love for me.*



## HOSPITAL VISITATION

### *THE QUESTION*

*Body broken: spirits low: pride hurt: independence lost: worried about those at home: worried about work: what does the future hold? why had God asked me to suffer? how long will it last? will I ever be the same again?*

### *THE ANSWER*

*Bodies can be mended, spirits raised: humility is truth and a great gift: gracious dependence, cheerful victimhood: God will provide for the present, and the future is in His hands: Christ suffered more and wishes you to share His suffering: never will He allow you to suffer beyond your strength: never the same again? no, BETTER through suffering: more dependent on God's strength: greater sympathy and compassion for others in future: now a smaller but soon a bigger person will emerge from suffering.*

### **The Prayer**

O Lord, best sufferer of all time, help me understand the sufferings I am about to witness around me.  
Teach me to offer the help most needed,  
to say the right things,  
to sympathise and console,  
to strengthen and encourage,  
to say the word of comfort and cheer.  
Teach me to spread Your love in this place of sickness,



to listen to suffering,  
to explain suffering,  
to reassure and turn pessimism to optimism,  
to see You in suffering humanity,  
You, crucified You,  
You at Your best, You at Your strongest.  
These are poor souls, yet privileged and noble souls,  
these are called to imitate You more intimately.  
These are Your special friends.  
Give me strength to pass on some strength to them.  
Use me as the instrument of Your love,  
and enrich and ennoble me  
through contact with those who share Your cross.  
Sword-pierced Mary, tender and understanding  
Mother, be with me as I try to give myself to your  
suffering children.

AMEN

*Teresa of Avila in a bold moment challenged God:  
"No wonder You have so few friends, you treat Your  
friends so badly!"*

---

*When I pray I become aware that Christ has a Mission,  
and that He needs me to carry it out in this present world.*

## HOUSE VISITATION

### *THE QUESTION*

*Poverty, squalor, bad management, illness, cruelty, deprivation, loneliness, lack of Faith, despair, loss of dignity, weakness of drugs and drink – NEED all around, desperate need . . .*

### *THE ANSWER*

*The frailty of man, limitation and weakness, loss of courage, lack of perseverance – yet strength of God providing in strange and mysterious ways, restoring courage, granting perseverance, supplying help and companionship: raising fallen mankind with Him from death to resurrection, through suffering to glory. God will provide: I must co-operate to rise, strong with His strength.*

### **THE PRAYER**

O God, someone in this house needs me.  
I don't know how I will be received,  
but I go as Your ambassador,  
however unworthy and weak I am myself.  
Give me Your power to help in the best way possible,  
offering what is needed,  
giving the proper advice,  
saying the right thing.  
I am Your servant  
and the servant of anyone who needs me.

I am weak – You can make me strong:  
I am tongue-tied – You can supply my words:  
I lack courage – You can reinforce me:  
I am perplexed – You can give the answer:  
I am useless – You can make me useful.  
Above all, make me recognise You in these people,  
and seeing You let me love them as I love You.  
They need Your love,  
they need my love,  
let's love them together.  
I'll do my best:  
be with me in what is Your work, and mine.

Kind, gentle, understanding Saint Vincent de Paul,  
inspire me in all my dealings with the needy  
whom you knew, understood and loved so much.

AMEN

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*To pray is to ask Christ to let me know His will for me,  
and to follow it with courage, determination and joy.*

## PRISON VISITATION

### *THE QUESTION*

*Man's weakness: temptation unresisted: crime committed: regret: bitterness: shame and disgrace: loss of dignity: spirit broken: grudge against society: why ME?*

### *THE ANSWER*

*Man can regain strength – can become even stronger than before: resistance to temptation can be built up: crime repented: resolution to do better: bitterness only at self-weakness: shame and disgrace will pass – all men are frail and fall often: dignity is always ours as sons of God can be increased by nearness to God and God's laws: spirit can be revived with prayer and the sacraments, and humble acceptance of counselling: society is good, and bad: be on the better side from now on.*

*I have been unwell but my recovery can lead to renewed strength and vigour for what is right.*

### **Prayer**

Lord, You fell three times under the cross, but You got up three times: teach me to help prisoners to rise up again!

I may never have been in prison, Lord,  
but I often wonder have I really deserved to be!  
At least I have this in common with the prisoners:

I have often yielded to temptation.  
So I have something in common with them for a start.  
Give me the light to see the dignity of man,  
even in men who have fallen in other men's esteem.  
Give me the wisdom to comfort, to counsel and console  
without seeming self-righteous or patronising.  
Help me, Lord, to be genuine and sincere,  
to be understanding and humble.  
If I can help, show me how.  
If I cannot help, at least I can befriend.  
If I cannot befriend, at least I can seem to CARE.  
No matter how I am received, even with cynicism and  
resentment,  
give me strength and courage to return to bring YOU to  
men who need YOU in their loneliness. AMEN  
Direct, O Lord, our actions by Your holy inspiration,  
and carry them on by Your gracious assistance; that  
every prayer and work of ours may begin always from  
You, and by You be happily ended: this we ask through  
Jesus Christ Our Lord. AMEN.

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*To pray is to read and meditate on the words of Christ, to  
follow His will by keeping my eyes constantly fixed on  
Him and on my brother's need.*

*(Charles de Foucauld)*

## TWINNING

### *THE QUESTION*

*Inequality of man; inadequacy of development, of organisation, of resources, of health services. Lack of communications leads to lack of awareness: lack of awareness leads to lack of care: cries from afar go unanswered. We can be smug and self-complacent and selfish, “We’re all right: let them look after themselves . . .”*

### *THE ANSWER*

*Men can share: modern communications can help us learn about the lack in undeveloped lands far away, and lead us to share our riches and stability with their poverty and instability: we must become AWARE, then CARE – first by prayer, then by material gifts, prayer in action. Charity knows no bounds: there are always many in need abroad as well as at home. They cry out to us for often there is no solution from within. They depend on us: we must turn to them and feed them as Christ fed all His children. Awake, then, to awareness: stretch out a helping hand to those far off: let their distant cries of HELP! be answered by YOU.*

### **The Prayer**

God of all creation, Father of all men, Your family is so large it contains rich and poor, healthy and unhealthy, those who have and those who have not.

We can often become self-satisfied and uncaring:  
at most we can be aware of the needs of those  
around us,  
our families, our town, our country.  
Show us clearly the needs of others in far off lands.  
Your love shows no bounds:  
You befriended all in need, despite the cost to Yourself.  
You lived and died for all men.  
Put into me a caring heart like Yours – all embracing.  
Teach me first to pray for all in need,  
for prayer, like love, knows no boundaries.  
Then give me the vigour to put my prayer into action –  
action by giving till it hurts,  
giving to those I shall never meet,  
but who still NEED me to share with them  
what much or what little I have.  
All men are, in a sense, my TWINS.  
Let not the healthy twin neglect his unhealthy brother.  
AMEN.

---

*You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God.*  
(Mt. 16:16)

*Rest alone in God, my soul. (Ps. 62,5)*

*Lord God, happy the man who puts his trust in You.*  
(Ps.84, 1)

## A MEETING

### *THE QUESTION*

*Words, words, words – procedure – voting – motions and counter-motions – minutes and HOURS – report from sub-committee – plan for action – other competent business – words, words, WORDS.*

### *THE ANSWER*

*The WORD was made flesh and dwelt amongst us. Words can be fine, especially when shot through with charity. Talking must come before planned action. Short, to the point, prepared agendas prepared interventions – POSITIVE and CHARITABLE and CONSTRUCTIVE help edify, build up. YOU are present, so exercise the Apostolate of the Presence. Christ is present too, in Himself, in the others around you, in every word spoken and every decision made. Hold your meetings around Him. Let Him be the centre of all you say, then ACTION will result.*

### **The Prayer**

Lord Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh,  
Teach us to speak the things which are wise and kind.  
Be present at our meeting and inspire us with the right words to speak and the right decisions to take.  
Our decisions will concern You,  
They will concern You present in other people,  
So be with us as we meet.



Teach us when to speak and when to be silent.  
Let us be kind in what we say.  
Let our suggestions be constructive and for Your glory.  
Prevent us from speaking to hear our own voices.  
Be on our lips, in our words, guiding our minds to  
express what is right and for the general good.  
And open our ears to hear what is said by others.  
Defend us from uncharitable thoughts.  
Enrich us by ideas and suggestions granted to others.  
In times of difficulty – elections, decisions, financial  
problems – let us turn again to You for a moment  
to be enlightened and guided.  
And help us to ACT in accord with what we say.  
Lord Jesus, the Word made flesh,  
Let Your presence ABOUND at this our meeting.

Kind and gentle St Francis de Sales, teach us to use our  
power of speech worthily in the cause of Christ and for  
the benefit of the people of God. AMEN.

---

*God, here I am: I come to do Your will. (Heb. 10.7)*

*Lord, give me some of Your living water so that I may  
never be thirsty again. (Jn. 4,15)*

*Lord, teach me Your way, how to walk beside You  
faithfully. (Ps. 86,11)*

## THE DIFFICULT SITUATION

### THE QUESTION

*How can I face this problem I have been asked to solve? Others have tried to solve it and have failed. Why me now? I am not Solomon, I have had little experience of this difficulty. Other people would be better than I could ever be. Besides, what will the reaction be to my solution? There seems no answer. I am in the dark and very frightened.*

### THE ANSWER

*Who are you, alone? Useless, inefficient, inadequate, alone. What will YOUR solution be? Wrong, unsatisfactory, even harmful. But you are not alone. You are a mere ambassador, a messenger from Christ. You convey His help, His solution. Rely on Him, for He alone can solve problems. He will teach you how to act, what to say. You cannot go it alone. But you are NOT alone: He is with you. TRUST HIM, lean on Him. The more you depend on Him the stronger you will be. Go forward now into battle. He is at your side and you will not fail.*

### The Prayer

Courageous Lord, be with me now,  
Sent as I am on a difficult errand,  
I fully realise my own shortcomings and inadequacies.  
I am not able to see any solution,  
any way out of the mist.

I am of myself totally useless.  
Therefore I need help.  
Come to my aid and guide me through the mist.  
Teach me what to do and say.  
The advice I shall give will be Yours, not my own.  
Work through me, but please, You work,  
using me as Your instrument of good.  
I am afraid of the fog,  
Only You can be my Light through it.  
Stand by me, be in my mouth, my eyes, my  
understanding.  
Use me as You will, how You will, when You will.  
But do not abandon me and leave me alone.  
I have never needed You more.  
All reliable Lord, I rely on You.

The blind, the lame, the crippled and the weak must  
all depend on God if their lives seem fruitless and  
unavailing. I am blind, lame and crippled: I am the  
weakest of men. Lord, by the intercession of the saint  
whose name I am proud to bear, be my strength and  
make up for my weakness. AMEN.

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*Help us in this hour of crisis, the help that man can give  
is worthless. (Ps. 60,11)*

*The road to sanctity has no resting place.*

## THE ELECTION

### THE QUESTION

*Whom should I vote for? There is nobody to replace the one who went before. There's just no one the same around. Others talk of X, but he/she's not for me. Will I myself have a chance of election? I could do the job well, but many will not even consider me: it's an unjust world and all the wrong folks are elected. It's a puzzle. Maybe I should abstain? And if I'm not elected maybe I should leave – they may give me a vote of no-confidence. Anyway, I would only get involved in more meetings, more work. What shall I do at this election?*

### THE ANSWER

*There is a serious job to be done today, I must play my part in getting the right person. Who is he/she? The one God wants. And that may well be the least competent in our eyes, the unexpected: it happens so often. So, not listening to what has been said, I say a prayer and vote for whoever I think best of the eligibles, despite my opinions about them. Myself? I think I'm the best: some of them will actually vote for me. If they only knew. I'm the worst – I KNOW that. Ambition? Unworthy of any Society let alone one which is bound to service and unobtrusive life. God may play the joke of seeing that I am elected – and I will try to do the job – but I know myself and know that such ambition is false. No – I go forward confidently, vote for who I think will fit the bill, then lend that person my*

*FULLEST support when he/she is in office. I will not even consider myself. Maybe best for me to get a few votes and be thoroughly beaten by a better candidate!*

### **The Prayer**

The task for which You were chosen, Lord, was hardly an enviable one, but You did the will of the One Who sent You, for sheer obedience as the sign of immensity of love.

Help us choose the right person for the right task today.

Let us not be influenced by one another, but by You.

Reign over our election and guide our choice.

Defend me personally from all ambition or false ideas about my own worth.

Teach me my worthlessness, even by humiliation.

Be with all those who vote, and free them from themselves.

Be with our Society and guide it with right leadership.

The unexpected may happen.

But You know what You're about.

Help me, then, Lord, choose the right person,

Then give me the strength and the humility to be of service to the one chosen – for You will have guided that choice and You I serve.

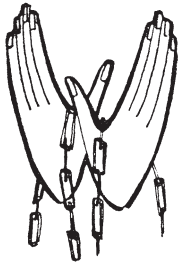
Let all discussion then end, and true loyalty and service begin.

St Matthias, last and most unexpected of the apostles, help guide our elections today. Help us see God's providence at work, even in strange ways. Your entry to the college of apostles was remarkable. But let us see the hand of God today, accept His will and pledge our loyalty to His choice.

AMEN.

# Thoughts for Meditation

*Better is it to be heavy-laden and near one that is strong  
than relieved of one's load and near one that is weak.  
When you are laden, you are near to God. (Thérèse)*



*Christ did not come to do away with suffering: He did not come to explain it, but to fill it with His presence.*

## THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

### **The Door**

Let the door of your heart be always open to Him;  
observe His entrance, embrace His presence,  
hearken diligently to His voice,  
implore His assistance,  
and earnestly desire Him never to forsake thee.

### **Abandonment**

Never trouble thy mind for anything that shall happen  
to thee in this world. Nothing can come but what God  
wills. (St Thomas More)

### **Time**

How precious are the hours of our earthly pilgrimage,  
since on them alone depends our eternity.  
Each moment can be used for an act of more ardent  
love – the principle of a closer union with God, and of  
a greater splendour of the beauty of God in our souls.  
And my minutes are numbered.  
O! the value of time. (Cardinal Mercier)

### **Christ with Me**

May He give us all the courage that we need to go the  
way He shepherds us; that when He calls we may go  
unfrightened.  
If He bids us come to Him across the waters,  
unfrightened we may go.  
If He bids us climb the hill, may we not notice



that it is a hill, mindful only of the happiness of His company.  
He made us for Himself, that we should travel with Him and see Him at least in His unveiled beauty in the abiding city where He is light and happiness and endless home. (Bede Jarrett, O.P.)

### **St Vincent de Paul**

Our Lord is a perpetual spiritual communion to the soul which does His will.  
The paradise of earth, like that of heaven, consists in charity.  
Do you wish to find God? He speaks to the simple. He assists them and blesses their labours.  
The soul filled with charity is a sanctuary where God delights to dwell.  
Teach me, O my Saviour, by both Thy grace and Thy example, to be truly humble of heart.  
Those who have loved the poor during life shall meet the approach of death without fear.

### **St Louise de Marillac**

God communicates Himself more fully to the soul deprived of human consolation.  
The poor stretch out their hands to use, but it is God Who receives what we give to them.  
Remove all obstacles to interior peace, and then await in patience the visit of Jesus.

### **Children**

God says: "I like youngsters. I want people to be like them. I don't like old people unless they are still

children. I want only children in My Kingdom. I like children because My likeness has not yet been dulled in them.” (Quoist)

### **Bishop Fulton Sheen**

The more empty a soul is of self, the greater room in it for God.

Charity is to be measured not by what one has given away, but by what one has left.

It is not hard to put up with others’ foibles when one realises how much God has to put up with from us.

Nowadays, many people want God, but on THEIR terms, not His.

It is significant that Judas, the grumbler amongst the apostles, was the one who did not persevere.

Some are afraid to give God their finger, lest He seize their hand.

In vain does one search for other people’s scars when their own wounds are bleeding.

True peace deepens in sorrow, false peace is shattered by reverse.

Virtue is a dangerous career.

Revolution within the soul is Christian adventure.

### **Prayer**

Prayer, at least in the high sense of the word is not always holding out the hand to receive, but holding it out to give. (Raoul Plus)

### **Our Lady**

We may have a thousand protectors in heaven, but we have only one Mother.

### **The Apostle**

The apostle is a chalice full to the top with the life of Jesus Christ, the overflow of which is poured on souls. (St Thomas Aquinas)

### **The Mass**

Every Mass has a repercussion in heaven, in purgatory and on earth. (Putz)

### **Hands**

Hands lifted up in prayer smash up more battalions than hands that strike. (Bossuet)

### **Tiptoe**

Stand on tiptoe and you will reach heaven. (St Francis se Sales)

### **Busy**

O Lord, Thou knowest how busy I must be today; if I forget Thee, do not Thou forget me. AMEN.

### **Self**

Conquer yourself, and the world is at your feet. (St Augustine)

### **A Time and Place for Everything**

Things done at the proper time, things kept in the proper place: this is a form not only of efficiency and time-saving, but of great charity.

### **Never be Doing Nothing**

Time is so precious: idleness so unholy. Wear yourself in service to others: be tired at the end of your day, tired at the end of your life.

### **Look Outwards**

Spend your time looking OUTWARDS to others, not INWARDS to yourself.

### **Obedience**

Children are not the only ones called to obedience: the call comes to adults many times each day – obedience to the laws of God, the laws of the land (traffic laws, for example), obedience at work, obedience to the demands, reasonable or unreasonable, of others. And obedience is the practical sign of LOVE – “If you love Me, keep My commandments.”

### **It's Now that Matters**

“The NOW moment is the moment of destiny:” not the past, not the future, but the HERE AND NOW. Fulfil it well with all your strength and you will be accumulating great rewards.

### **Prayer**

Prayer keeps open the line to God: it can be so varied, so active and so passive, so formal and so informal. Never cease to pray.

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*Be sure that the Lord will never forsake those who love Him when they run risks solely for His sake.*

**Self-Control**

Strive always for self-control. The space-ship out of control is highly dangerous: man is a complicated being too, and is more dangerous than any machine out of control. Spend your whole life controlling yourself, your speech, your activity, your temper, your work and recreation.

**Balance**

Man must be constantly seeking for true BALANCE in life – balance between work and play, between prayer and activity, between silence and speaking: the saints were balanced people.

**Dreams and Ideals**

For sure, be realists – but never lose your dreams and idealism: life would be impossible without them – even though they may never come true.

**Hope**

We LIVE on hope in this life: hell is loss of hope. Never let us say, “There’s no hope” – keep hoping – HEAVEN is the fulfilment of all hope.

**Charity**

Charity is the summary of the Law – the greatest of all the virtues: thus it is the most difficult to exercise. It is easy to say that you love your neighbour as yourself, but how are you responding to the frequent calls on you to be charitable in word and in deed and in attitude. The secret of true charity? To SEE God in everyone and treat them as you would treat Him.

### **Newness of the Moment**

Enthusiasm is based on being able to see and enjoy new things and new people every moment of life – God is constantly revealing Himself: each day is different, each face is different. Enjoy the changing changelessness of God.

### **Adaptability**

Pray often for the grace to be adaptable – to be able to fit in with what is demanded of you here and now, in this situation, with these people. God is constantly calling, be able to answer His call in the proper way at the proper time.

### **Reverence**

Strive to be reverent always, reverent to God, reverent to yourself, reverent to other people. This will cause a true gentleness and meekness which will win souls. “I cannot hear your words because of the thunder of what you ARE.”

### **Dependence**

We are entirely dependent on the providence of God. Great evils come of being over-independent. Great strength comes from using GOD to fill what is wanting in us.

### **Piety**

Piety, the sense of the sacred, the love of things which pertain to God is a lovely virtue: teach it to the children. Awe and wonder are part and parcel of the child: turn them to God

### **The Smile**

Life would be quite impossible without a kind of sense of humour. See the funny side – laugh at yourself a lot.

### **I Know where I'm Going**

Always know clearly where you are going and stride out towards the goal – the final goal and those which come in between. My true DIGNITY and strength lie in the fact that God created me for Himself.

### **Memories**

Memories are lovely things to have and to give. Do everything well, make the most of every moment, and you will have no regrets, just happy memories.

### **Please and Thanks**

What precious words these are: much charity is contained therein.

### **Tremble**

Never cease to tremble before God, whilst always remembering that He is a loving Father. Tremble at yourself and what you might do if God is not with you.

### **Prayer and Conduct**

If the standard of your conduct is deteriorating, then look to the standard of your prayer life. All action must start and be motivated by prayer.

### **Little Things of Life**

Nothing is unimportant in this life: every second holds its own charm, its own opportunities, its own challenge, its own love. Nothing in life is trivial.

### **Learn Quickly**

Try to learn soon and quickly, without wasting time about making mistakes in order to learn. Learn a little every day about things, about people – for this is really learning about GOD. I HATE WASTE, waste of time, of talents, of opportunities.

### **Jigsaw**

You are a precious piece in the jigsaw of God's plan: strive, then, to FIT into the proper place – don't have to force yourself where you don't belong. Every piece, your own and others' – is terribly important and completes the picture God has had from the beginning of the world.

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*Ah Mary, pierced with sorrow,  
Remember, reach and save  
The soul that comes tomorrow  
Before the God that gave.*



*There is no revenge so sweet as forgiveness.*

*A twinge of conscience is a gift from God.*

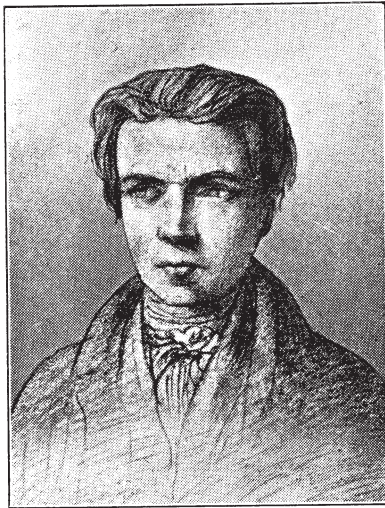
*I cannot hear what you say because of the thunder of what you ARE. (Zulu proverb)*

*Small sorrows speak, great ones are silent. (Seneca)*

*Always judge somebody because of the way he treats the person who can be of no use to him.*

# Prayers

*Never criticise a man until you have walked for two weeks in his moccasins. (Indian proverb)*



## **SOME OF THE GREAT PRAYERS**

*A good deal of prayer is silent, some is spoken in your own halting words – but there are times when we turn to the saints to use words which they have used during their holy lives.*

*Jesus taught us to call God Our Father, and so we have the courage to say: **OUR FATHER.***

*The Annunciation and the Visitation, coupled with a prayer for a happy death are summed up in the **HAIL MARY.***

***THE APOSTLES' CREED** sums up all the articles of our Faith, make it your frequent prayer.*

*Some of the most wonderful words of Scriptures are contained in the prayer to Our Lady so much used by our forefathers: **THE ANGELUS.***

*Maybe the most natural of all prayers to Our Lady, in a language we really understand, is the lovely prayer of Saint Bernard, **THE MEMORARE.***

*Call often on the Trinity – with the sign of the cross, and the **GLORY BE TO THE FATHER.***

*And for a happy death:*

Jesus, Mary and Joseph, I give you my heart and my soul.

Jesus, Mary and Joseph, assist me in my last agony.

Jesus, Mary and Joseph, may I breathe forth my soul in peace with you. AMEN.

*All hail to Mary in the lovely words of the HAIL,  
HOLY QUEEN.*

*Don't forget the blessing before and after the food we  
eat, in the GRACE BEFORE AND AFTER MEALS.*

All praise to God!

Blessed be God.

Blessed be His Holy Name.

Blessed be Jesus Christ, true God and true man.

Blessed be the name of Jesus.

Blessed be His most sacred Heart.

Blessed be His most precious Blood.

Blessed be Jesus in the most Holy Sacrament of the altar.

Blessed be the Holy Spirit the Paraclete.

Blessed be the great Mother of God, Mary most Holy.

Blessed be her holy and Immaculate Conception.

Blessed be her glorious Assumption.

Blessed be the name of Mary, Virgin and Mother.

Blessed be Saint Joseph, her most chaste Spouse.

Blessed be God in His angels and in His saints.

*Frequently confess your sins in the words you know so  
well from the beginning of each Mass: I CONFESS.*

*AN ACT OF SORROW*

O my God, because You are so good, I am very sorry  
that I have sinned against You, and I will not sin again.  
AMEN.

*AN ACT OF FAITH*

O my God I believe in You and all Your Church  
teaches, because You have said it and Your word is true.

*AN ACT OF HOPE*

O my God I hope in You for grace and for glory,  
because of Your promises, Your mercy and Your power.

*AN ACT OF LOVE*

O my God, because You are so good, I love You with  
all my heart, and for Your sake I also love my  
neighbour as myself.

*FOR THE DEAD*

Out of the depths I have cried to Thee O Lord (Psalm  
129) Eternal rest give unto them O Lord and let  
perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in  
peace. AMEN.

It would be a good thing if these, together with any of  
your favourite prayers, were learned off by heart: all  
those above plus little precious ejaculations which join  
you to God whilst at work:

“Live, Jesus, live, so live in me that all I do is done by  
Thee.”

“O Mary conceived without sin, pray for us who have  
recourse to Thee.”

“O Sacrament most Holy, O Sacrament Divine, all  
praise and all thanksgiving be every moment Thine.”

I would hope that these prayers are so well known to  
you that you would wish them to be recited at your  
deathbed. Make them a PART of you!

### **Anima Christi**

Soul of Christ, sanctify me.  
Body of Christ, save me.  
Blood of Christ, inebriate me.  
Water from the side of Christ, wash me.  
Passion of Christ strengthen me.  
O Good Jesus, hear me.  
Within Your wounds hide me.  
Suffer me not to be separated from Thee.  
From the malignant enemy, defend me.  
At the hour of my death, call me,  
And bid me come to You,  
That with your saints I may praise You,  
For ever and ever. AMEN.

### **Prayer before the Crucifix**

Look down on me, O kind and gentle Jesus, as I kneel before You. With all my heart I beg You to grant me an increase of Faith, Hope and Love, together with real sorrow for my sins, and a firm resolve to do better. With real sadness I remember your five most precious wounds, recalling David the prophet's words about You, dear Lord "They have pierced my hands and my feet: they have numbered all my bones."

### **Nunc Dimittis**

At last, all powerful Master,  
You give leave to Your servant  
to go in peace according to Your promise.  
For my eyes have seen Your salvation  
which You have prepared for all nations,  
the light to enlighten the Gentiles  
and the glory of Israel Your people. (Luke 2:29-32)

### **The Magnificat**

My soul glorifies the Lord,  
my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,  
He looks upon His servant in her nothingness:  
henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.  
The Almighty works marvels for me,  
Holy His name!  
His mercy is from age to age  
on those who fear Him.  
He puts forth His arm in strength  
and scatters the proud-hearted.  
He casts the mighty from their thrones  
and raises the lowly.  
He fills the starving with good things,  
sends the rich away empty.  
He protects Israel, His servant,  
remembering His mercy.  
The mercy promised to our Fathers,  
For Abraham and for His sons forever.

(Luke 1: 46-55)

---

*Experience is as to intensity, not as to duration.*

*Goodness is the only investment that never fails.*



## **PRAYERS OF THE SAINTS AND TO THE SAINTS**

### **A Prayer for a Friend**

O sweet Lord Jesus, give him a heart to love You,  
a will to choose You,  
a memory to remember You,  
a soul which will always be united to You.  
And may You, the God of love and mercy  
love him forever. AMEN. (St Augustine)

*The following two prayers, of St Ignatius and  
St Francis of Assisi, speak of **GENEROSITY AND  
INSTRUMENTALITY**. If taken seriously, they could  
revolutionise your whole lives: they are quite terrifying  
in their implications.*

### **Prayer of Saint Ignatius**

Dearest Jesus, teach me to be generous,  
teach me to serve You as You deserve,  
to give and not to count the cost,  
to fight and not to heed the wounds,  
to toil and not to seek for rest,  
to labour and not to ask for any reward  
save that of knowing that I do Your holy will.

AMEN.

### **Prayer of Saint Francis**

Lord, make me an instrument of Your peace,  
where there is hatred, let me sow love,  
where there is injury, let me sow pardon,  
where there is doubt, let me sow Faith,  
where there is despair, let me sow Hope,  
where there is darkness, let me sow light,  
where there is sadness, let me sow joy.  
O Divine Master,  
grant that I may not try to be comforted  
but to comfort  
not try to be understood but to understand,  
not try to be loved but to love.  
Because it is in giving that we receive,  
it is in forgiving that we are forgiven,  
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

AMEN.

### **Saint Richard's Prayer**

Thanks be to You, my Lord Jesus Christ,  
for all the benefits which You have given me,  
for all the pains and insults which You have borne for me.  
O most merciful Redeemer, Friend and Brother,  
may I know You more clearly,  
love You more dearly,  
and follow You more nearly. AMEN.

### **Prayer of Saint Thomas Aquinas**

Give me, O Lord, an ever-watchful heart,  
a noble heart,  
a heart of honesty that no insincerity can warp.  
Give me a heart of courage that no distress shall ever  
crush.

Give me a heart so free that no earthly affection shall  
ever claim it for its own.

Bestow upon me, O Lord my God,  
an understanding that knows You,  
wisdom in finding You,  
a way of life that is pleasing to You,  
perseverance that faithfully waits for You,  
and confidence that I shall embrace You at the last.

AMEN.

### **To Saint John Ogilvie**

O God Who raised up Your servant JOHN to be a  
glorious witness

to the sovereignty of Christ's Kingdom, and the  
spiritual authority of Christ's Vicar on earth,  
we beg You ever to keep Your people in unity,  
and to prosper and bless with wisdom  
the counsels of our Holy Father the Pope  
and of all the Bishops of Holy Church. AMEN.

### **To Saint Margaret of Scotland**

Chosen Patron of Scotland,  
model of motherhood,  
protect us from all dangers of losing the precious gift  
of Faith.

Come to our aid that we may sanctify the family life  
of our land:

and enable us by your prayers and example  
to bring our fellow-countrymen back to the Faith of  
their fathers,  
and to the ancient love of our country for the Holy  
Mother of God. AMEN.

### **To Saint Vincent de Paul**

O God, who through Blessed Vincent did bring together in Your Church a new family for the salvation of the poor and the formation of the clergy, grant we pray You, that we too, alive with the same spirit, may love what he loved and do what he taught, through Christ Our Lord. AMEN.

### **A Prayer from Cardinal Newman**

My God, You have created me to do some specific service,

You have given some work to me which You have not given to any other.

I have a place in Your plan:

I may never know what it is in this life,  
but I will be told it in the next.

Therefore I trust You in all things.

If I am sick, my sickness may serve You,

If I am worried, my worry may serve You,

If I am in sorrow, my sorrow may serve You.

You do nothing in vain: You know what You are doing.

You may take away my friends,

You may put me among strangers,

You may make me feel forgotten,

You may make my spirits sink,

You may hide my future from me

– still, You know what You are doing

and I trust You. AMEN.

## **PRAYERS OF OFFERING**

LORD JESUS,

I give You my hands to do Your work,

I give You my feet to go Your way,

I give You my eyes to see as You do,

I give You my tongue to speak Your words,

I give You my mind that You may think in me.

Above all, I give You my heart,

that You may love in me Your Father and all mankind.

I give You my whole self that You may grow in me,

so that it is You, Lord Jesus.

who work and live and pray in me. AMEN.

DEAREST JESUS:

I give You my work, do You give me rest.

I give You my sorrow, do You give me comfort.

I give You my sufferings, do You give me support.

I give You my trials, do You give me triumph.

I give You time, do You give me eternity.

I give myself with all that I am and have in life and in death, to be entirely yours.

'You are the God of my heart and my portion forever.

AMEN.

God be in my head and in my understanding:

God be in my eyes and in my looking:

God be in my mouth and in my speaking:

God be in my heart and in my thinking:

God be at my end and at my departing. AMEN.

Resignation

The will of God be done by me,  
The laws of God be kept by me,  
My evil will controlled by me,  
Repentance made in time by me,  
Christ's Passion understood by me,  
All sinful crimes refused by me,  
My end remembered well by me,  
And death be blessed found in me,  
With angels' music heard by me,  
And God's high praises sung by me,  
For ever and for ever. AMEN.

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*Religion which demands nothing is worth nothing.*

*The best things in life are usually accomplished unpaid  
and when a little afraid.*

## PRAYERS ON RETREAT

O Lord, I thank You for this time of recollection. Grant that by Your grace it may prove a source of inspiration and comfort to me. May it help me to bear my cross with fortitude, to avoid all occasions of sin, and strengthen me in the daily practice of my Faith. Teach me to love You, then do with me what You will.

... ..

Dear Lord, help me to remember that I have one life to live, one God to love, one death to undergo, and one soul to saviour lose. I therefore implore Your grace to help me ever to avoid sin, to pray often, to go to Confession frequently, to receive Communion often, and to remain faithful to the promises which I have made during this Retreat. AMEN.

... ..

Take my life and let it be  
consecrated, Lord, to Thee.  
Take my moments and my days,  
Let them flow in endless praise.  
Take my voice and let it sing  
always, only for my King.  
Take my lips and let them be  
Filled with messages from Thee.

Take my intellect and use  
every power as Thou shalt choose.  
Take my heart, it is Thine own,  
Let it be Thy royal throne.  
Take my love, my Lord, I pour  
at Thy feet its treasure store.  
Take myself and I will be  
every, only, all for Thee. AMEN.

... ..

Take, O Lord, my freedom,  
Take my memory, my mind and my whole will.  
You have given me all that I have or own:  
I give them all back to You and offer myself  
completely to You,  
so that I may follow Your holy will  
Give me Your love and Your grace,  
and then I shall be rich enough,  
and will ask for nothing more. AMEN.

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*It's later than you think!*

*The ears of barley which bear the richest grain always  
hang the lowest. (Sheen)*



## PRAYERS IN SICKNESS

Dear Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, I hold up all my weakness to Your strength, my failure to Your faithfulness, my sinfulness to Your perfection, my loneliness to Your compassion, my little pains to Your great agony on the cross. I know that You will cleanse me, strengthen me, guide me, so that in all ways my life be lived as You would have it lived, without cowardice and for You alone. Show me how to live in true humility, true contrition and true love. AMEN.

... ..

Let nothing disturb me, nothing fright me. All things are passing: God never changes. Patient endurance attains all things. Who possesses God is wanting in nothing. Alone God suffices.

... ..

O Lord Jesus Christ, when You were on earth You had pity for the sick and cured their diseases. Hear our prayer now as we ask You to give Your merciful help to this sick person. Give him back good health so that he may live to praise and serve you. AMEN.

Dearest Jesus, I know that You suffered pain in Your  
passion and on the cross.  
You know what pain is: You know of my pain.  
I offer my pain to You.  
I want You to take it and use it.  
I believe that it is useful.  
Please use some of it for priests –  
to help them be good priests.  
Please use some of it for those studying for the  
priesthood –  
to help them become good priests.  
Your suffering and death were useful –  
they saved the world.  
Mine can help to save the world now.  
I know that I can “fill up those things  
that are wanting in the sufferings of Christ.”  
My pain and suffering is mine –  
but I give it all to You.  
Sometimes I think that is all I have to give.  
Dear Jesus, today I offer You my pain. AMEN.

### **Sick Child**

Under Your hand, O God, all things grow and grown  
things are strengthened. Stretch out Your hand over this  
child of Yours who is young and sick, so that he may be  
restored to health and live a long life, Your true and  
grateful servant throughout his whole life.

AMEN.

## FOR THE DYING

Look, Lord, on Your servant in his weakness, and strengthen the soul You have created, so that his sufferings may make him holy, and he may grow better through Your health-giving sacrament, through Christ Our Lord. AMEN.

Almighty and eternal God who have bestowed on mankind the means of salvation and the gift of eternal life, graciously regard Your servants and cherish the souls that You have created, that at the hour of their death they may be presented to You, their Creator, without any stain of sin, by the hands of Your holy angels. AMEN.

... ..

Go forth Christian soul out of this world,  
in the name of God the Father Almighty who created  
you,  
in the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living  
God, Who suffered for you,  
in the name of the Holy Spirit Who was given to you,  
in the name of the most Holy and glorious Mary,  
Virgin Mother of God,  
in the name of Blessed Joseph,  
in the name of the angels, archangels thrones and  
dominations,  
in the name of the patriachs and prophets,  
of the holy apostles and evangelists,  
in the name of the holy martyrs, confessors, monks  
and hermits,

of the holy virgins and of all the saints of God.  
May peace be yours this day, and may your home be  
in heaven.

Through the same Christ Our Lord. AMEN.

God of mercy, God of pity,  
again and again Your mercy blots out the sins of  
penitent sinners

and wipes away the stain of their sins.

Look kindly upon this servant of Yours  
and forgive the wrong he has done You,  
for with all his heart he admits that he has done it  
and only asks for pardon.

Human weakness and the devil's snares  
have done much evil in his soul.

Undo this harm and make him again a sound member  
of Your Church.

Hear his sorrowful prayers, O Lord!  
see his tears and pity him.

He has no other hope except Your mercy.

Show him Your mercy, therefore,  
and take him back to You,  
through Jesus Christ, Our Lord. AMEN.

Into Your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit,

O Lord Jesus Christ, receive my soul.

Holy Mary, pray for me.

Mary, Mother of Grace, Mother of Mercy,

defend me from the enemy,  
receive me at the hour of death.

Saint Joseph, pray for me.

Saint Joseph, with your blessed Virgin Spouse

open wide for me the arms of God's mercy.

Jesus, Mary and Joseph, I give you my heart and my soul:

Jesus, Mary and Joseph, assist me in my last agony:  
Jesus, Mary and Joseph, may I breathe forth my soul in  
peace with you. AMEN.

O merciful Jesus, lover of souls, I pray to You by the  
agony of Your most Sacred Heart, and the sorrows of  
Your Immaculate Mother: cleanse in Your Blood the  
souls of the sinners of the whole world which are in  
their agony and are to die today.

Bless the sick,  
Have mercy on sinners,  
Comfort the afflicted,  
Grant to all the souls departed eternal rest. AMEN.

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*Pliable steel is far stronger than iron: gentleness makes  
us powerful.*

*An ounce of good living is worth many pounds of empty  
learning. (Francis de Sales)*

**FOR THE DEAD**

We commend to You, O Lord, the soul of Your servant ...

Dead to this world, may he find life with You.

In Your merciful goodness

forgive the sins he has committed in this life through human weakness;

This we ask, through Christ Our Lord. AMEN.

... ..

O GOD, great and omnipotent judge of the living and the dead, before Whom we are all to appear after this short life to render an account of our works: let our hearts, we pray You, be deeply moved at this sight of death, and let us be mindful of our own frailty and mortality, that walking always in Your fear and in the ways of Your commandments, we may after our departure from this world, experience a merciful judgement, and rejoice in everlasting happiness: through Christ Our Lord. AMEN.

... ..

**ALMIGHTY AND MOST MERCIFUL FATHER**

Who knows the weakness of our nature, bow down Your ear in pity unto Your servants upon whom You have laid the heavy burden of sorrow. Take away out of these hearts the spirit of rebellion, and teach them to see Your good and gracious purpose working in all

the trials which You send upon them. Grant that they may not languish in fruitless and unavailing grief, or sorrow as those who have no hope, but through their tears look meekly up to You, the God of all consolation: through Christ Our Lord. AMEN.

... ..

GRANT O LORD,

we beseech You, that whilst we lament the departure of our brother (sister), Your servant, out of this life, we may bear in mind that we are most certainly to follow him (her). Give us grace to make ready for that last hour by a devout and holy life, and protect us against a sudden and unprovided death. Teach us how to watch and pray, that when our summons comes, we may go forth to meet the Bridegroom and enter with Him into life everlasting: through Christ Our Lord.

AMEN.

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*In the end, we are only what we are in the sight of God.  
(Francis de Sales)*

*It is better to hang on the cross with Our Lord than look up at Him from a distance.*

## IN GENERAL FOR VARIOUS NEEDS

Not ours to know the reason why,  
unanswered is our prayer,  
But ours to wait for God's own time  
to live the cross we bear.

Not ours to know the reason why  
from loved ones we must part,  
But ours to live in faith and hope  
though bleeding to the heart.

Not ours to know the reason why  
this anguish, strife and pain,  
But ours to know a crown of thorns  
rich grace for us will gain.

A cross, a bleeding heart, a crown,  
what greater gifts are given?  
Be still, my heart, and murmur not –  
these are the keys to heaven.

### Comfort

For He Himself shall wipe away all tears:  
The pent-up grief of years, shall sob itself to rest.  
Childlike, upon His breast, with more than mother's  
love  
He shall caress, and bless  
With joys all joy above  
The comfortless.



### **Lonely**

I live alone, My Lord, stay by my side:  
In all my daily needs be Thou my guide.

Grant me good health, for that indeed I pray,  
To carry on my work from day to day.

Keep pure my mind, my thoughts, my every deed,  
Let me be kind, unselfish in my neighbour's need.

Spare me from fire, from flood, malicious tongues,  
From thieves, from fear and evil ones.

If sickness or an accident befall,  
Then humbly, Lord, I pray, hear Thou my call.  
And when I'm feeling low or in despair,  
Lift up my heart and help me in my prayer.

I live alone, dear Lord, yet have no fear,  
Because I feel Your presence ever near.

### **Saint Therese's Morning Offering**

O my God, I offer You all my actions today for the intentions and for the glory of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. I desire to sanctify every beat of my heart, my every thought, my simplest works, by uniting them to His infinite merits: and I wish to make reparation for my sins by casting them into the furnace of His merciful love.

O my God, I ask of You for myself and for those dear to me the grace to fulfil perfectly Your holy will, to accept for love of You the joys and sorrows of this passing life, so that one day we may be united together in heaven for all eternity. AMEN.

### **The Shepherd**

Wha is ma Shepherd, weel I ken,  
 The Lord Himself is He.  
 He leads me whaur the girse is green  
 an' burnies quiet that be.

All times I fain astray  
 wad gang an' wann'r far awa',  
 He finds me oot, He pits me richt  
 An' brings me hame an a'.

Tho' I pass through the gruesome cleuch,  
 Fin I ken He is near,  
 His muckle crook will be defen',  
 so I hae nocht tae fear.

### **Cross**

Here, dying on the cross, the world's life hung,  
 Leaving a world's sin in that deathly tide.  
 That down-bent head raised earth above the stars.  
 O timeless wonder, Life, because One died.

### **Our Lady**

As a light-bearing torch shining upon those in darkness  
 We see the Holy Virgin enkindling an immortal light,  
 To lead into divine knowledge all men.  
 SHE, the radiance that enlightens all minds  
 Is praised by this acclamation:  
 HAIL! Ray of the spiritual sun:  
 HAIL! Radiance of the never-waning light.  
 HAIL! Lightning flash illuminating souls.  
 HAIL! Mother undefiled!

COURAGE, then, let us continue our journey,  
awaiting from God the fullness of life of which He  
alone is the source, the centre, the hearth.

... ..

Make my faith more perfect,  
make my hope more strong,  
Make my love forever  
unto Thee belong. (Thomas Aquinas)

### **God Our Strength**

Life passes, riches pass away, the senses decay, the world changes, friends die. One alone is constant. One alone is true to us. One alone can supply our needs. One alone can train us up to our full perfections. One alone can give meaning to our complex and intricate nature. One alone can give tune and harmony. One alone can form and possess us.

Let us say with the psalmist: "Who have I in heaven but Thee? And there is none on earth that I desire in comparison with Thee. My flesh and my heart fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever." Cardinal Newman.

### **Prayer to Our Lady for Success in Study**

O MARY, Mother of love, of knowledge and of holy hope, by whose prayers many have grown wise and become holy, I choose you as the guide and patroness of my studies. Because of the deep tenderness of your motherly love for me, and because Jesus, the eternal Wisdom, was pleased to take from you our flesh and

give you more heavenly light than all the saints, I humbly ask that you would obtain for me by your prayers the grace of the Holy Spirit.

With this grace, may I be able to understand and remember, and show forth to others by word and action all things which bring honour to you and your Son, and which will lead me and others to everlasting life. AMEN.

### **Today**

I will try this day to live a simple, sincere and serene life, repelling promptly every thought of discontent, anxiety, discouragement, impurity, self-seeking: cultivating cheerfulness, generosity, charity and the habit of holy silence: exercising economy in expenditure, generosity in giving, carefulness in conversation, diligence in appointed service, fidelity to every trust and a childlike faith in God.

In particular, I will try to be faithful in those habits of prayer, work, study, physical exercise, eating and sleep which I believe the Holy Spirit has shown me to be right.

O God, grant me strength to live another day.

Let me not turn coward before its difficulties, or prove traitor in its duties.

Let me not lose faith in my fellow man.

Keep me sweet and sound of heart, in spite of ingratitude, treachery or meanness.

Help me to keep my heart clean and to live so honestly and fearlessly that no outward failure can distress me or take away the joy of inward peace. AMEN.

## **Pain**

O Lord, may we never refuse our share of the pain of the world. Open our eyes to see the beauty of the pattern of salvation – suffering transformed by love into the price of joy.

... ..

O God, since I sicken and You alone are my health,  
give me health.  
Since I suffer and You alone are my joy, give me joy.  
Since I die and You alone are my life – give me life.  
(John of the Cross)

... ..

**GIVE US COURAGE** and enthusiasm,  
Give us charity and unity,  
Give us a spirit of initiative and originality of thought.  
Give us a pure intention in everything, and a deep love of the cross.  
Give us a thirst for souls.  
Deliver us from selfishness and jealousy,  
Deliver us from cowardice and a fear of making sacrifices.  
Deliver us from blindness towards the needs of our neighbour.  
Deliver us from deafness towards the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. AMEN.

### **Whisper**

Lord, let us understand that there are many things You have chosen to impart to us only in a whisper.

My God, show me the littleness of earth, the grandeur of heaven, the brevity of time and the length of Eternity. AMEN.

### **Garden**

We are here on earth not to guard a museum, but to cultivate a garden flourishing with life and promise to a glorious future. (Pope John XXIII)

### **Heaven**

Bring us, O Lord God, at our last awakening, into the house and gate of heaven, to enter into that gate and dwell in that house where there shall be no darkness or dazzling, but one equal light: no noise nor silence, but one equal music: no fears or hopes, but one equal possession: no ends nor beginnings, but one equal eternity – in the habitation of Thy glory and dominion, world without end. AMEN. (John Donne)

O God, light of the mind that sees Thee,  
Life of the souls that love Thee,  
Strength of the thoughts that seek Thee,  
enlarge our minds and raise the vision of our hearts,  
that with swift wings of thought we may reach Thee,  
the Eternal Wisdom, who art from everlasting to everlasting. AMEN. (St Augustine)

### **Our Lord Speaks**

“I have no hands but your hands  
to do My work today:  
I have no feet but your feet  
to lead men on My way:  
I have no lips but your lips  
to tell men how I died:  
I have no help but our help  
to bring men to My side.”

### **A Seventeenth Century Prayer**

Go placidly amidst the noise and haste, and remember what peace there may be in silence. As far as is possible without surrender be on good terms with all persons. Speak your truth quietly and clearly; and listen to others, even the dull and ignorant; they too have their story.

Avoid loud and aggressive persons, they are vexatious to the spirit. If you compare yourself with others, you may become vain and bitter; for always there will be greater and lesser persons than yourself. Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans.

Keep interested in your own career, however humble; it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time. Exercise caution in your business affairs, for the world is full of trickery. But let not this blind you to what virtue there is; many persons strive for high ideals, and everywhere life is full of heroism.

Be yourself. Especially do not feign affection. Neither be cynical about love; for in the face of all aridity and disenchantment it is perennial as the grass.

Take kindly to the counsel of the years, gracefully surrendering the things of youth. Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in the sudden misfortune. But do not distress yourself with imaginings. Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness. Beyond a wholesome discipline, be gentle with yourself.

You are a child of the universe, no less than the trees and the stars, you have a right to be here. And whether or not it is clear to you, no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should.

Therefore be at peace with God whatever you conceive Him to be, and whatever your labours and aspirations; in the noisy confusion of life keep peace with your soul.

With all its sham, drudgery and broken dreams, it is still a beautiful world. Be careful. Strive to be happy.

AMEN.

### **An Irish Blessing**

May the blessing of light be on you, light without and light within.

May the blessed sunlight shine on you and warm your heart till it glows like a great peat fire, so that the stranger may come and warm himself at it, and also a friend.

And may the light shine out of the two eyes of you like a candle set in two windows of a house, bidding the wanderer to come in out of the storm.

And may the blessing of the rain be on you – the soft, sweet rain.



May it fall upon your spirit so that all the little flowers  
may spring up, and shed their sweetness on the air.  
And may the blessing of the great rains be on you, may  
they beat upon your spirit,  
and wash it fair and clean, and leave there many a  
shining pool where the blue of heaven shines, and  
sometimes a star.

And may the blessing of the earth be on you, the great  
round earth; may you ever have a kindly greeting for  
them you pass as you go along the roads.

May the earth be soft under you when you rest out  
upon it, tired at the end of a day and may it rest easy  
over you when at last you lay out under it; may it rest  
so lightly over you, that your soul may be off from  
under it quickly, and up and off, and on its way to  
God.

And now may the Lord bless you all, and bless you  
kindly. AMEN.

### **O Holy Spirit**

Love of the Father and of the Son.

inspire me always with

– What I ought to think,

– what I ought to say,

– what I ought to keep silence about,

– what I ought to write,

– what I ought to act,

– what I ought to do

to procure Your glory.

the good of souls,

and my own sanctification –

O Jesus, all my trust is in You. AMEN.

**Angel Guardian**

Angel of God, my Guardian dear,  
To whom God's love commits me here,  
Ever this day be at my side,  
To light and guard, to rule and guide. AMEN.

... ..

O my God, may we praise You by our words, glorify  
You by our deeds, adore You by our thoughts. AMEN

... ..

Lord, I shall be very busy this day. I may forget Thee,  
but do not Thou forget me.

**Hebridean Prayer**

O Holy Christ, bless me with Thy presence when my  
ways are weary and my friends are few.  
Bless me with Thy presence when my joy is full, lest  
I forget the Giver in the gift.  
Bless me with Thy presence when I shall make an end  
of living.  
Help me in the darkness to find the Lord,  
and in my going, comfort me with Thy promise –  
that where Thou art, there shall Thy servant be.  
AMEN.

... ..

O Lord, make us children of Thy quiet peace,  
and heirs of Thy serenity. (Syrian Liturgy)

**Yes**

O Mary, you did not merely say “Yes” once, in one great moment; you sustained that “Yes” patiently, silently, constantly, in the serene assurance of the true believer. Help us to reproduce that “Yes” in our lives, for the glory of your Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ.

AMEN.

... ..

I shall stumble no more, Lord, when I have gained a firm footing in You, the Way we must all walk in.

(Simeon of Seleucia)

... ..

O Mary, till all speech be dumb, the voice of all humanity be hushed by time, till time itself be lost in all eternity, beside His perfect Speech Divine shall stand the Perfect Silence, thine.

... ..

Jesus, Son of Virgin Mother,  
I rest me on Thy promise that,  
if only I live for Thee from day to day,  
I shall yet live with Thee for ever and ever. AMEN.

(Hebridean)

## **A FINAL THOUGHT EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE**

Why am I a member of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul?

*First and foremost, my membership of the Society is to make me a better person – to deepen my relationship with Our Lord. If I am not striving after this, then my being a S.S.V.P. member is useless, despite the would-be good works I am doing.*

Am I trying hard enough to become a better person through the Society?

*This will involve first my fidelity to the Mass and the Sacraments, to prayer and my love for people who need me. Then I must go further: I must strive to be aware of the presence of God all around me, in creation and in creatures.*

What are my relationships with my own family and friends?

*We must first see to it that our relationships with our families and friends are what they should be. We cannot hope to form Christlike relationships with the poor and the needy unless our own home lives reflect the proper kind of love of Christ.*

Do I see in even the most unworthy of people the face of Christ?

*We cannot pick and choose the people we have to help. We accept each person who comes our way. Even if our help is squandered and misused, we have done our part.*

Is the weekly Conference Meeting such that it enriches my Faith?

*If it is not, then there is something wrong with it, and it has maybe developed into a mere discussion of "cases". It must be no ordinary meeting, but a holy encounter between men and women who are striving after a closer union with Our Lord.*

Am I unobtrusive enough in my membership of the Society?

*To work silently, with no wish for recognition or reward has always been a characteristic of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. Do I like the sound of my own voice? Do I try to force my opinions on others or grumble about others' methods.*

Am I gentle enough in my dealings with the brothers and sisters and those I help?

*Our Lord was meek, gentle, understanding and courteous. Our gentlemanliness must extend to one another, to the poor and even the toughest and roughest of people we meet. We show towards them that same courtesy Our Lord Himself would show.*

Am I an example to others?

*I must be a genuine example to others of living in the Faith of Christ. I must be strong in principle, gentle in its application. But above all, I must practice what I preach and what I stand for.*

**WORK HARD AT HOLINESS,  
AND YOUR WORKS WILL TAKE CARE  
OF THEMSELVES**

---

*If one wants to pray anywhere, all the time, one must learn to pray somewhere some of the time.*

## **THE MYSTERIES OF THE ROSARY**

*It is usual to say that Joyful Mysteries on Mondays and Thursdays, the Sorrowful on Tuesdays and Fridays, and the Glorious on Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays.*

### **I. THE FIVE JOYFUL MYSTERIES**

1. The Annunciation.
2. The Visitation.
3. The Nativity.
4. The Presentation in the Temple.
5. The Finding of the Child Jesus in the Temple.

### **II. THE FIVE SORROWFUL MYSTERIES**

1. The Prayer and Agony in the Garden.
2. The Scourging at the Pillar.
3. The Crowning with Thorns.
4. The Carrying of the Cross.
5. The Crucifixion and Death of our Lord.

### **III. THE FIVE GLORIOUS MYSTERIES**

1. The Resurrection.
2. The Ascension of Christ into Heaven.
3. The descent of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles.
4. The Assumption.
5. The Coronation of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Heaven and the Glory of all the Saints.

*After the last mystery we say the:*

## **Salve Regina**

Hail, holy queen, mother of mercy; hail, our life, our sweetness and our hope! To you we cry, poor banished children of Eve; to you do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in the valley of tears.

Turn then, most gracious advocate, your eyes of mercy towards us; and after this our exile show unto us the blessed fruit of your womb, Jesus, O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

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

R. That we may become worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray.

O God, whose only-begotten Son  
by his life, death and resurrection  
has purchasd for us that meditating on these  
Mysteries in the most holy Rosary of the Blesses  
Virgin Mary  
we may imitate what they contain  
and obtain what they promise,  
through the same Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

