

PRAYER

SERVICE

INTRODUCTION

Prayer, in whatever form it takes--spoken word, song, meditation--is a point of focus in the lives of all of us to some degree. In the Catholic Daughters of the Americas organization, prayer is a major focus and one we emphasize in many special ways.

Through the following collection of prayers and prayer services, it is hoped that the CDA courts will utilize the information to make their meetings more spiritually gratifying, as well as helping members realize in their own spirituality, a deeper reflection of God's love for us.

Part of the joy in enhancing the spirituality of meetings and events is using the God-given talent of imagination. Feel free to re-structure, refine or add to any of the prayer services so they fit your particular needs. By adding music, flowers, statues, candles, symbols or poems, Court members will appreciate the effort put into making meetings special and Spirit-filled. For "wherever two or more are gathered in my name, there I am also."

Many thanks to the Catholic Daughters from across the country who submitted prayers or prayer services for use in this booklet. Your generous offerings will be used throughout the Catholic Daughter courts to provide exciting and different formats for worship and offer new, unique and positive experiences in their prayer life.

Blessings to each of you.

Evelyn Saxton
National Director
Oklahoma

ADVENT PRAYER SERVICE

Leader: The Lord be with you.
All: And also with you.
Leader: Shout with joy and gladness, for great in our midst is the Holy One of Israel!

Lighting of the Advent Wreath: light first candle

Left: Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

Light second candle:

Right: A voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight a highway for our God.

Light third candle:

Left: Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low.

Light fourth candle:

Right: The uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain.

All: And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken." (Isaiah 40:1-5)

Response will be the "O" Antiphons

Leader: Come, O Wisdom of our God Most High.

All: Come, Lord Jesus, come

Leader: Come, O Leader of Ancient Israel.

All: Come, Lord Jesus, come

Leader: Come, O Flower of Jesse's stem.

All: Come, Lord Jesus, come

Leader: Come, O Key of David.

All: Come, Lord Jesus, come

Leader: Come, O Radiant Dawn.

All: Come, Lord Jesus, come

Leader: Come O King of all Nations

All: Come, Lord Jesus, come

Leader: Come, O Emmanuel.

All: Come, Lord Jesus, come

Leader: Lord, God, source of our salvation, we await your coming when the dawn from on high shall break upon us, to shine on our land of darkness and lead us to lasting peace.

All: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Amen

AN ADVENT AWAKENING OPENING CEREMONY

REGENT: Much of the advent season occurs in the month of December. In many areas, December often brings us our first snow as winter begins to take hold of our lives. A blanket of snow seems to cover the land with a kind of silence. It is a good time to be in conversation with the Lord. This is our Advent vocation—to be present to the questions that the Lord will present to us. He asks, “Can you wait for me? Can you be silent and watch and pray? Can you hear what I am saying to you? Can you slow down and be patient? Do you have hope? What can you share with the poor? What do you need to receive?” As we listen to these questions, the Lord moves tenderly into our lives and helps us to realize that His calling is not a once and for all occurrence. He comes to us many times, as He calls to us many times.

Each of His comings, each of His calls leads us more deeply into the mystery of our vocation, our life with Him. Let us wait in patience and in silence, that, in this Advent season, we may recognize His coming and answer His call.

The Advent wreath is to remind us of God Himself, His eternity and endless mercy, which has no beginning and no end. The candles symbolize the light of God coming into the world through the birth of His son. It also reminds us that we are called to be a light to the world as we reflect the light of God’s grace to others. (Taken from *Aids in Ministry, Winter, 1986, by Sister Roseann Kasayka, OSF*)

REGENT: The first candle represents EXPECTATION and HOPE

TREASURER LIGHTS PURPLE CANDLE AND READS: All powerful God, increase our strength of will for doing good that Christ may find an eager welcome full of EXPECTATION and HOPE at His coming and call us to his side in the kingdom of heaven.

REGENT: The second candle represents PEACE.

FINANCIAL SECRETARY LIGHTS PURPLE CANDLE AND READS: God of power and mercy, open our hearts in welcome. Remove things that hinder us from receiving Christ’s **Peace** so that we may share his wisdom and become one with him when he comes in glory.

REGENT: The third candle represents JOY.

RECORDING SECRETARY LIGHTS PINK CANDLE AND READS: Lord, God, may we, your people who look forward to the birthday of Christ experience the JOY of salvation and celebrate that feast with love and thanksgiving.

REGENT: The fourth candle represents LOVE.

VICE REGENT LIGHTS THE PURPLE CANDLE AND READS: God of power and mercy, you blessed the Americas at Tepayac with the presence of the Virgin Mary of Guadalupe. May her prayers help all men and women to accept each other as brothers and sisters. Through your justice held in our hearts, may your LOVE reign in the world.

REGENT: (An Advent Meditation by Most Rev. Thomas J. Grady, Retired Bishop of Orlando, Florida)

My heart, O Lord, is a lonely place. Anxieties and worries and desires rush through my heart but they come to nothing and leave me empty.

Across the centuries I hear the haunting cry of Isaiah: a child will be born for you. I hear the cry of angels: I bring you tidings of great joy. A savior is born for you.

Only you can fill the emptiness of my heart. You come again and again. Why am I never ready? Why do I love you without passion? Why am I afraid of commitment to you?

I offer You my loneliness, my emptiness, my need. They are my only claim upon you. Awaken my heart to your Advent; to your new coming to us. Stir up the cold fire of my love.

(Submitted by Court Henry A Sullivan #584, Danvers, MA)



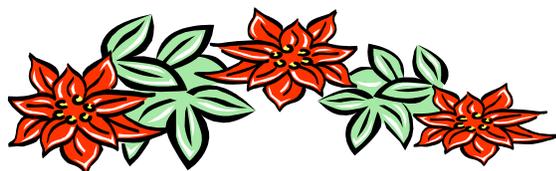
ADVENT PRAYER (by Henri Nouwen)

Lord Jesus, Master of both the light and the darkness, send your Holy Spirit upon our preparations for Christmas. We who have so much to do, seek quiet spaces to hear your voice each day. We who are anxious over so many things look forward to your coming among us. We who are blessed in so many ways, long for the complete joy of your kingdom. We whose hearts are heavy seek the joy of your presence. We are your people, walking in darkness, yet seeking light. To you we say, Come Lord Jesus. AMEN.

A CHRISTMAS BLESSING

- ❖ May there be harmony in all of your relationships. May sharp words, envious thoughts, and hostile feelings be resolved.
- ❖ May you give and receive love generously. May this love echo in your heart like the joy of church bells on a clear December day.
- ❖ May each person who comes into your life be greeted as another Christ. May the honor given the Babe of Bethlehem be that which you extend to every guest who enters your presence.
- ❖ May the hope of this sacred season settle into your soul. May it be a foundation of courage for you when times of distress occupy your inner land.
- ❖ May the wonder and awe that fills the eyes of children be awakened within you. May it lead you to renewed awareness and appreciation of whatever you too easily take for granted.
- ❖ May the bonds of love for another be strengthened as you gather with your family and friends around the table of festivity and nourishment.
- ❖ May you daily open the gift of your life and be grateful for the hidden treasures it contains.
- ❖ May the coming year be one of good health for you. May you have energy and vitality. May you care well for your body, mind and spirit.
- ❖ May you keep your eye on the Star within you and trust this Luminescent Presence to guide and direct you each day.
- ❖ May you go often to the Bethlehem of your heart and visit the One who offers you peace. May you bring this peace into our world.

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A Blessing of Angels

LEADER: *If you look into the scriptures you will find that angels encircle the entire life of Jesus, from the angel's invitation asking Mary to welcome Jesus in her womb to the blessed moment of an angel announcing His being raised from the dead.*

Right: May the angel of the annunciation bless you, inviting you daily to awaken to the God-life within you.

Left: May the angel of Joseph's dreams bless you, stirring your spirit to trust the many ways that Mystery whispers to you.

Right: May the angel of birthing bless you, calling forth wonder, awe, and gratitude for all that has helped you to become your true self.

Left: May the angel of Bethlehem-songs bless you, tickling your soul with laughter and joy, heralding hope and good tidings to you.

Right: May the angel of the journey to Egypt bless you, guiding and protecting you as you travel the inner and outer roads of your life.

Left: May the angel of desert wilderness bless you, bringing courage when you experience bleak, intense searching and struggle.

Right: May the angel of prayer bless you, gathering you closely to the Divine Beloved who longs for your embrace.

Left: May the angel of children on the lap of Jesus bless you, helping you to see the beauty and freedom of your inner child.

Right: May the angel of the agony in the garden bless you, offering you solace in your times of tribulation.

Left: May the angel at the tomb of resurrection bless you with faith, assuring your faith and trust that all shall be well.*

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(*The chant "Angels Before Me" could be sung as a closing to this prayer. CD is *Out of the Ordinary: Chants* composed by Joyce Rupp)

BLESSING OF A CHRISTMAS TREE

(This prayer might be copied and given to the CDA members at the December meeting to take home and perform with their family as the Christmas tree is put up and decorated.)

Lord our God,
we praise you for the light of creation:
the sun, the moon, and the stars of the night.
We praise you for the light of Israel:
the Law, the prophets,
and the wisdom of the scriptures.
We praise you for Jesus Christ, your Son:
He is Emmanuel, God-with-us, the Prince
Of Peace, who fills us with the wonder of
your love.

Lord God,
let your blessing come upon us
as we light this tree.
May the light and cheer it gives
be a sign of the joy that fills our hearts.
May all who delight in this tree
come to the knowledge and joy of salvation.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

(You might sprinkle the tree with holy water and allow the children to bless it with holy water also.)



DAILY LENTEN PRAYER

God of mercy, You have given us this special time to reflect on our lives,
believe in the Good News and draw closer to you.

May this season of Lent help us use this time to fast and pray,
be more generous and show others how to live in Christ.

Let us see each day of this season as a new opportunity to renew our lives
and gain a deeper appreciation of your active presence in us and our community of faith.

Give us the grace to see your face in others, especially the poor and those who suffer.

And through your Spirit, enkindle in us the fire of Your love
so that we may be better disciples
of Your redeeming work throughout the world.

(Submitted by Nancy Bambanek, Minnesota)

PRAYER OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

Lent is a time of self reflection, of holding up a spiritual mirror in which to view ourselves and our world. We need to look inward, to confront the illusions of our lives and see where change is needed. Saint Francis offers us this beautiful prayer:

Most merciful Lord, with a contrite heart and penitent spirit, I bow down before thy Divine majesty. I adore Thee as my Supreme Lord and Master. I believe in Thee, I hope in Thee. I love Thee above all things. I am heartily sorry for having offended you, my only and supreme God. I firmly resolve to amend my life; and although I am unworthy to obtain mercy, yet looking upon Thy holy cross, I am filled with peace and consolation. I will therefore, meditate on Thy sufferings and visit the stations to promote your honor and save my soul.

FOR LENTEN REFLECTION

“The Son of Man is destined to suffer grievously, to be rejected, and to be raised up on the third day. If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him renounce himself and take up his cross every day and follow me. For anyone who wants to save his life will lose it; but anyone who loses his life for my sake, that man will save it.”

Luke 9: 22-24

Dear Lord, our journey on the path to Calvary with you has begun. May we be close to you, strengthened and open to your presence as our steps proceed toward resurrection.

“On the first day of the week, at the first sign of dawn, they went to the tomb with the spices they had prepared. They found that the stone had been rolled away from the tomb, but on entering they discovered that the body of the Lord Jesus was not there. As they stood there not knowing what to think, two men in brilliant clothes suddenly appeared at their side. Terrified, the two women lowered their eyes. But the two men said to them, ‘Why look among the dead for someone who is alive? He is not here; He has risen. Remember what He told you when He was still in Galilee: that the Son of Man had to be handed over into the power of sinful men and be crucified, and rise again on the third day?’ And they remembered his words.”

Luke 24: 1-8

Heavenly Father, help us to follow you through our daily actions, even unto your death at Calvary. It is through life’s sorrow, failures and pain as well as life’s happiness, successes and well-being that lead us closer to you. May we always be faithful to you and thankful for your ultimate sacrifice for all of us. Amen.

(If used to start or close a court meeting, it might be more meaningful to have an instrumental music CD of choice playing in the background while the reflection is being read.)



A WOMAN'S STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Leader: With this being the season of Lent, what better way to start our meeting than reflecting on the Way of the Cross, the journey Jesus took to bring us salvation. As we begin, let us be reminded of those who have traveled their journey during this past year and have reached their eternal reward. May we be granted the graces of wisdom, understanding and the realization of just how much Jesus loves us.

The Way of the Cross is a way of prayer. We walk in spirit with Jesus on his journey to Calvary and meditate on his suffering and death. Each meditation can be a personal meeting with Jesus and a new discovery of his presence in our lives.

Reader 1: The first station, Jesus is condemned to death---Jesus stood before Pilate an innocent man, yet he was condemned to death.

All: Dear Lord, help me not to be so quick to judge others. Help me to try to understand them and why they act as they do. Help me to see other people as you see them.

Reader 1: The second station, Jesus carries his cross---Jesus, already tired and broken, picked up the heavy cross to begin the journey to Calvary.

All: Dear Lord, help me even when I am exhausted and worn out, to fulfill my daily duties. Please help me to accept the crosses that come my way and to bear them with a willing spirit.

Reader 1: The third station, Jesus falls the first time---Jesus falls down under the weight of the cross, yet somehow, he finds the strength to get up and try again.

All: Dear Lord, many times I feel overwhelmed and ready to collapse under the weight. Help me to keep going even when I feel I can't take another step.

Reader 1: The fourth station, Jesus meets his Mother---even in his darkest hour, Jesus' Mother, Mary, was there.

All: Dear Lord, please help me to be with others in their pain. Help me to offer comfort and consolation and to be a source of strength for others as they travel through life.

Reader 2: The fifth station, Jesus is helped by Simon---Simon wasn't looking to help. He was just one of the crowd, but he was pressed into service.

All: There are many times I don't want to help either. It's easy to turn away and think someone else will do the work. Dear Lord, help me to help whenever I am needed. Don't let me turn my back on anyone in need.

Reader 2: The sixth station, Veronica wipes the face of Jesus---Veronica reached out to Jesus, offering an act of kindness when the others walk by.

All: Who do I know who is hurting? Dear Lord, help me to be the person who comes in to offer kindness when others walk by.

Reader 2: The seventh station, Jesus falls the second time---again Jesus falls and again he gets up.

All: Sometimes life can be so discouraging, it feels like the whole world is against us. I want to give up, to fall down and surrender the fight. Dear Lord, please help me to have the courage to continue. Help me to face another day.

Reader 2: The eighth station, Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem---even in the midst of his pain, Jesus stops to comfort the women who were weeping by the side of the road.

All: It is so easy when I am in pain for me to just think about me. Dear Lord, even when I am hurting, help me to remember that others are hurting also. Help me to not be self-centered and to continue to reach out to those who need me.

Reader 3: The ninth station, Jesus falls the third time---the end of the journey is near and Jesus falls again. He struggles to get up and continue one last time.

All: Dear Lord, help me to continue when the way is hard and I have lost all hope. Please guide my faltering steps.

Reader 3: The tenth station, Jesus is stripped of his garments---in the end Jesus had nothing, not even his clothes

All: Dear Lord, please help me to share my material goods with others, to feed the hungry and clothe the naked. Also, let me help those who are emotionally naked and who have been left exposed to the world. Help me to never revel in another person's shame but to instead reach out a helping hand or offer a word of encouragement.

Reader 3: The eleventh station, Jesus is nailed to the cross---with each nail, the pain grew greater, each blow a vivid reminder of our sins.

All: Dear Lord, thank you for your love for me. Thank you for dying to forgive my sins. Help me to do your will.

Reader 4: The twelfth station, Jesus dies on the cross---Jesus suffered immeasurable torment on the cross, both physical and emotional. He cried out to his father in heaven, “My God, My God, why have you abandoned me?” Yet he also found the strength to forgive his persecutors.

All: Dear Lord, at times I feel abandoned. Help me to remember that you understand and are always at my side.

Reader 4: The thirteenth station, Jesus is taken down from the cross---Jesus was taken down from the cross and his lifeless body was laid in his mother’s arms. The pain Mary must have felt as she held her son. She was the mother of a convicted criminal. Truly a “sword pierced her heart.”

All: Dear Lord, help me to remember the mothers who have lost children to violence and criminal activity. Help me to pray for them as they suffer so much pain.

Reader 4: The fourteenth station, Jesus is laid in the tomb—and then there was darkness. The tomb was a place of transition for Jesus—a stopping place between death and new life.

All: Dear Lord, please help me as I go through my own times in the tomb; times when I feel lost and scared, fearful of change. Help me to see your light and give me the faith and trust I need to walk with you, even to Calvary, guiding me safely to new life. AMEN.

(Used with permission of author, Patrice Fagnan-MacArthur)

(“Via Dolorosa” by Sandi Patti makes a beautiful ending to the stations)

EASTER REFLECTION

Leader: Let us pray to God the Father, who gave us new life through the risen Christ:

All: Give us the glory of your Son.

Leader: Lord our God, your mighty works have revealed your eternal plan: you created the earth, and you are faithful in every generation.

All: Hear us, Father of mercy.

Leader: Purify our hearts with your truth, and guide them in the way of holiness

All: so that we may do what is pleasing in your sight.

Leader: Let your face shine upon us

All: that we may be freed from sin and filled with your plenty.

Leader: You gave the apostles the peace of Christ.

All: Grant peace to your people and to the whole world. Amen.

MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR _____

Leader: We invite all Catholic Daughters to remember in a special way our deceased member_____. As we worship, let us all renew our commitment to a life of unity and charity so that through our good deeds we may someday hear the beautiful words of St. Matthew's Gospel: "Come and receive the kingdom which has been prepared for you ever since the creation of the world."

Leader: Let us pray. Loving Father, God of all consolation, in fulfillment of your will, Jesus conquered death and rose again that we might be saved, pass through death and reach new life. Hear our prayers for our beloved deceased_____, whom you have summoned to yourself. She died believing in Jesus and was buried with him in the hope of rising again. We thank you for the fatherly care you showed her in this life. We ask you to forgive her sins, that on the Day of Judgment, she may rise with all the saints to eternal life and rest in your kingdom. Amen.

Reader 1: A reading from the Book of Wisdom, Chapter 3, verses 1-9

But the souls of the just are in the hand of God, and no torment shall touch them. They seemed, in the view of the foolish, to be dead; and their passing away was thought an affliction and their going forth from us utter destruction. But they are in peace. For if before men, indeed, they be punished, yet is their hope full of immortality, chastised a little, they shall be greatly blessed, because God tried them and found them worthy of himself. In the time of their visitation they shall shine, and shall dart about as sparks through stubble. Those who trust in him shall understand truth, and the faithful shall abide with him in love: because grace and mercy are with his holy ones and his care is with his elect.

Light one candle and say: For our sister_____

All: We pray to the Lord.

Reader 2: A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John, Chapter 6, verses 51-58

"I myself am the living bread come down from heaven. If anyone eats this bread he shall live forever; the bread I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world.

At this the Jews quarreled among themselves, saying, 'let me solemnly assure you, if you do not eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. He who

feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has life eternal, and I will raise him on the last day.’ For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. The man who feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him, just as the Father who has life sent me and I have life because of the Father, so the man who feeds on me will have life because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Unlike your ancestors who ate and died nonetheless, the man who feeds on this bread shall live forever.”

Light one candle and say: For our sister_____

All: We pray to the Lord

Reader 3: A reading from the Letter of Paul to the Romans, Chapter 8, verses 31-35

“If God is for us, who can be against us? Is it possible that he who did not spare his own son, but handed him over for the sake of us all will not grant us all things besides? Who shall bring a charge against God’s chosen ones? God who justifies? Who shall condemn them? Christ Jesus, who died or rather, was raised up, who is at the right hand of God and who intercedes for us? Who can separate us from the love of Christ? Trial, or distress, or persecution, or hunger, or nakedness, or danger, or the sword? Yet, in all this we are more than conquerors because of him who loves us. For I am certain that neither death nor life, neither angels nor principalities, neither the present nor the future, nor powers, neither height nor depth nor any other creature, will be able to separate us from the love of God that comes to us in Christ Jesus, our Lord.”

Light one candle and say: For our sister_____

All: We pray to the Lord.

Reader 4: A reading from the First Letter of Peter, Chapter 5, verses 7-11

“The end of all things is at hand. Therefore, be serious and sober for prayer. Above all, let your love for one another be intense, because love covers a multitude of sins. Be hospitable to one another without complaining, as each one has received a gift. Use it to serve one another as good stewards of God’s varied grace. Whoever preaches, let it be with the words of God; whoever serves, let it be with the strength that God supplies, so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs glory and dominion forever and ever.”

Light one candle and say: For our sister_____

All: We pray to the Lord.

Leader: We give her back to you, O Lord, who first gave her to us, and as you did not lose her in the giving, and so we do not lose her in the return. Not as the world gives her do you give O lover of souls! For what is yours is ours also, if we belong to you. Life is unending because

love is undying and the boundaries of this mortal life are but a horizon and a horizon is but the limit of our sight.

Lift us up, strong Son of God, that we may see further! Strengthen us in faith, that we may see beyond the horizon! And while you prepare a place for us, as you have promised, prepare us also for that happy place that where you are we may be also with those we loved, forever.

With the lighting of the candles we pause to call to mind and pray for our deceased chaplains, deceased National and State Officers, all deceased members of the Catholic Daughters of the Americas and our deceased men and women who served in the Armed Forces, that their souls may rest in peace.

(Submitted by Idella Miller, Oklahoma)

MEMORIAL SERVICE

(You may wish to read the names of the departed here)

Psalm 121

I lift up my eyes to the mountains, from where shall come my help?

My help shall come from the Lord who made heaven and earth.

May He never allow you to stumble! Let Him sleep not, your guard.

No, He sleeps not nor slumbers, Israel's guard.

The Lord is your guard and your shade; at your right side he stands.

By day the sun shall not smite you, nor the moon at night.

The Lord will guard you from evil, He will guard your soul.

The Lord will guard your going and coming both now and forever.

Reader: In you Lord, is our hope. We shall never hope in vain. We shall dance and rejoice in your mercy.

Response: Lord, you are our life and resurrection.

Reader: Christ, Son of the living God who raised up Lazarus, your friend, from the dead. Raise up to life and glory the dead whom you have redeemed by your precious blood

Response: Lord, you are our life and resurrection.

Reader: Christ, consoler of those who mourn, comfort those who mourn the dead.

Response: Lord, you are our life and resurrection.

Reader: Christ, Savior, destroy the reign of sin in our earthly bodies, so through you we may gain eternal life.

Response: Lord, you are our life and resurrection.

Reader: Christ, Redeemer, look on those who have no hope because they do not know you. May they receive faith in the resurrection and in the life of the world to come.

Response: Lord, you are our life and resurrection.

Reader: When at last our earthly home is dissolved, give us a home, not of earthly making, but built of eternity in heaven.

Response: Lord, you are our life and resurrection.

Reader: Lord God, you are the glory of believers and the life of the just. Your Son redeemed us by dying and rising again. Our sister/sisters (names) were faithful and believed in our own resurrection. Give her/them the joys and blessings of the life to come. We ask this in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

(Submitted by Elizabeth Williams, Oklahoma. Excerpts from the Christian Prayer—Liturgy of the Hours)



PRAYER SERVICE FOR THE SICK

Leader: Today we gather together as a community of believers—believers in our Lord Jesus Christ, believers in the Holy Eucharist, and believers in the awesome power of prayer. We gather also to show concern for the spiritual and physical welfare of our beloved sister_____. As part of our Christian responsibility, we are urged to visit the sick, remember them in prayer, and celebrate the sacraments with them. Through our words of encouragement and faith, we pray that_____ will continue the fight against illness and be restored to good health in days to come.

In the name of Jesus and the power of his Church, there is salvation—even liberation from sickness. (Read Acts 3:1-10)

All Respond: Lord, hear my prayer, let my cry come to you. Do not hide your face from me now that I am in distress. Turn your ear to me; when I call, answer me quickly. Bless the Lord, my soul, all my being, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, my soul, do not forget all the gifts from God, who pardons all your sins and heals all your ills, delivers your life from the pit, surrounds you with love and compassion, fills your days with good things.

Leader: Let us join hands and offer together the prayer Our Lord Jesus Christ taught us: Our Father who art in heaven...

Leader: All praise and glory are yours, Lord our God, for you have called us to serve you in love. Bless all who have grown old in your service and give_____ strength and courage to continue to follow Jesus your Son.

All Respond: Father, your Son accepted our sufferings to teach us the virtue of patience in human illness. Hear the prayers we offer for our sick sister. May all who suffer pain, illness or disease realize that they have been chosen to be Saints and know that they are joined to Christ in his suffering for the salvation of the world. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

(If circumstances allow, the rosary may then be recited for the person who is ill.)

Leader: We now turn to the perfect prayer to our Blessed Mother, the holy rosary, “for never was it known that anyone who fled to her protection, implored her help or sought her intercession, was left unaided.” We stand before her, humbly asking that our prayers for_____ be answered.

(Submitted by Evelyn Saxton, Oklahoma)

VETERAN'S DAY PRAYER

God, our all-powerful Father, who has given those in the Armed Forces the power to defend our freedom, bless all Veterans who have served this country. We pay tribute and honor to all those who fought on and off the battlefield, those who gave up their lives for this country. Fill the heroic hearts of our noble soldiers with the grace of patriotism. Accept the red and white stripes of their sacrifice and the shining stars of their obedience, so that as one nation under God, this country may sing to your glory forever. Amen.



IN HONOR OF VETERAN'S DAY

Reader: As we celebrate Veteran's Day, we remember all those men and women who have served and continue to serve in our Armed Forces. We deeply appreciate all they have done to secure our freedom every day and to keep America one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

In every age, You call certain persons to defend the human family from oppression, tyranny and evil. Since our founding as a nation "conceived in liberty," countless American men and women have stepped forward to defend our country and many others from aggressors, and to liberate those held captive.

We revere all of our veteran's: those who rest in glory, those who still suffer from the wounds of war, and those who, with us, enjoy the blessing of living in the land of the free and the home of the brave.

O God, thank you for the selfless sacrifice of these veterans and of their families. Help us to remember them, to pray for them, and to care for them. Please bring all our departed veterans into your Kingdom and console their families with your unfailing love. Please heal our wounded veterans through the power of your Holy Spirit, and give to all our veterans the satisfaction of having served you even as they have served us. Thank you for the gifts of life, liberty and the

pursuit of happiness. May we fight to keep these rights available to all. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

FOR PRIESTLY VOCATIONS

Lord Jesus Christ, you gave us the Eucharist as the memorial of your suffering and death.

By our worship of the sacrament of your body and blood,

we beg you to give the Church more priests.

Guide them to be worthy ministers for your altars and courageous servants of the Gospel.

Help them to serve you with undivided hearts as they follow in your footsteps.

Strengthen them to pour out their lives in loving service to their brothers and sisters.

Keep them faithful to your teaching and never let them be parted from you

For you are Lord forever and ever. Amen.

(Adapted from the Roman Missal)



PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS

Dearest Jesus, Son of the Eternal Father and Mary Immaculate, grant to our young men and women the generosity necessary to follow Thy call, the courage required to overcome all obstacles to their vocation.

Give to parents that faith, love and spirit of sacrifice which will inspire them to offer their children to God's service and cause them to rejoice exceedingly whenever one of their children

is called to the religious life. Let Thy example, and that of the Blessed Mother and St. Joseph, encourage both children and parents, and let Thy grace sustain them. Amen.

(Submitted by Charlotte Kitsch, North Dakota)

COME HOLY SPIRIT

Enkindle the Fire of your Love.

Transform all that is fearful into boldness of heart.

Inspire Your servant with Wonder and Awe at the Mystery of Your Presence.

Confirm Your friend in compassion and forgiveness.

Whisper discernment in the midst of confusion; Reverence in the face of diversity;

Patience with the unfolding of life and forever anoint Your messenger with Joy. Amen.

(Submitted by Janet Martineau, Montana)

PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

Leader: As we gather today, let us pray for God's help and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit during our time together.

Reader: Corinthians 4:13-15

“Since, then, we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, ‘I believed, therefore I spoke,’ we too, believe and therefore speak, knowing that the one who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and place us with you in his presence. Everything indeed is for you, so that the grace bestowed in abundance on more and more people may cause the thanksgiving to overflow for the glory of God.”

All respond: I will state directly what is in my mind; my lips shall utter knowledge sincerely; for the spirit of God has made me, the breath of the Almighty keeps me alive. *Job 33:3-4*

Leader: We come together bound in the Spirit. Let us open our minds and hearts to the special needs of the Catholic Daughters. May each of us put aside our own self-interest in favor of the welfare of the entire organization. May each member present feel free to express their ideas, concerns and projects for the sincere consideration of those assembled.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: Father, we have offered to you our prayer for assistance. Believing that we are gathered in your Spirit, we ask that you would strengthen our faith, hope, and love, and bring our efforts to a fruitful conclusion. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER FOR THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

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

Thank you, Father, for the gift of life and the gift of this day. We come together as sisters in Christ to hear Your voice and to lift our hearts to You. Lord Jesus, before ascending into heaven, You promised to send the Holy Spirit to finish Your work in the souls of Your apostles and disciples. Grant us the gift of Your Holy Spirit. Perfect us in Your love and fill us with Your grace that we may be made fit and ready for service.

Member 1: Grant us the Spirit of WISDOM—help us to live wisely. In all things, make us prudent. Help us to make good choices for our families, for ourselves, and in what we do for others. In what we gather and in what we share, in our work and in our relaxation, in what we use and in what we save, help us to be good stewards of all that You provide. Keep us from hoarding for the sake of hoarding. Things are not You.

Member 2: Grant us the Spirit of UNDERSTANDING—help us to live compassionately. Keep us from condemnation of ourselves and others. Help us to overlook human weaknesses and failings. Make us generous with praise, gentle in criticism, and forgiving of shortcomings. Help us to build bridges between people and to fight for the poor and the marginalized of society. In small things and in great ones, the key is love.

Member 3: Grant us the Spirit of COUNSEL—help us to live truthfully. Help us not to give advice but to share the truth based on Your Word. Advice is easy; living as you call us to live is much harder but much more valuable to the Body of Christ. Teach us to share our faith with joy and with enthusiasm. Make us living witnesses of our faith in You.

Member 4: Grant us the Spirit of FORTITUDE—help us to live bravely. Help us to know that when we face obstacles, You face them with us. In the darkest times, You light our way. When we are in danger of going under, You walk across the waters of turmoil to save us. You have loved us with an everlasting love. We trust in You. We are Yours.

Member 5: Grant us the Spirit of KNOWLEDGE—help us to live attentively. In the quietness of waiting, in answer to our prayers, You show us how to serve You. Reveal to us the gifts we have been given and command us to use them to serve Your people. Out of the knowledge of Your will comes our life's work. Help us to hear Your voice.

Member 6: Grant us the Spirit of PIETY—help us to live reverently. All we have and all that we see is your gift to us. Our gift to You is to enjoy the beauty of the world around us and to be grateful for the people You have put in our lives. Teach us to live in the moment and to enjoy being where we are—right now—which is exactly where You want us to be.

Member 7: Grant us the Spirit of the FEAR OF THE LORD—help us to live, as much as we humans can, in recognition of Your awesomeness. You are our creator and our God. “In You we live and move and have our being.” One of Your most amazing gifts to us is Your willingness to let us know You so that we can love You. Call us to sit at Your feet and help us to respond to that call.

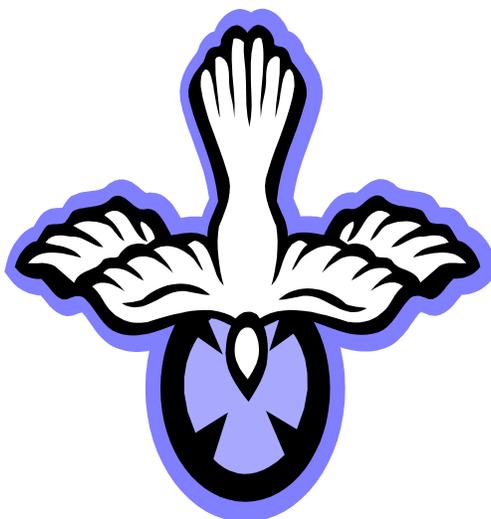
Leader: Speak, Lord. Your servants are listening... (pause)

Lord, make us aware that You are in our midst. Your Word says, “Ask and you shall receive.” Help us to know that You have answered our prayers and that the Spirit of God is here, leading us into service. Guide us as we discuss the work of our order. In all things, make us aware that it is not our will but Yours that is important. Bless and perfect our plans so that all we do may be for Your honor and for Your glory. Amen.

(Submitted by the Texas State Court)

(Suggested activity: provide 7 different sizes of gift bags representing the 7 gifts of the Holy Spirit. Place a sign on the front of each with the particular “gift” of the Spirit—wisdom, understanding, etc. As each gift is described, have the member hold the gift bag that corresponds to her reading.

Following the reading, the music of the hymn “Holy Spirit, Truth Divine” might be played and sung. Beautiful text of the hymn is by Samuel Longfellow 1819-1892)



MARIAN PRAYERS

Holy Mary, Mother of God, you have given the world its true light,

Jesus, your Son—the Son of God.

You abandoned yourself completely to God's call
and thus became a wellspring of the goodness which flows forth from Him.

Show us Jesus. Lead us to Him. Teach us to know and love Him,

so that we too can become capable of true love

and be fountains of living water in the midst of a thirsting world. Amen.

(Given at St. Peter's in Rome, by Pope Benedict XVI)

Our Lady is a seamstress: patiently she bends
over the world's wastebasket, and mends and mends.

Stitching our troubles, darning our care,
patching our hearts so they won't show the wear.

She likes to thread her needle, pick up a dream,
slip on her thimble and sew in a seam.
Love and hope sometimes gap, often do not meet,
Our Lady has to baste them, putting in a pleat.
When life shrinks up with wearing and can't be made to fit,
She knows where all the tucks are, and lets them out a bit.
And when it's time for God to come and clip the thread off—NOW,
She'll run and catch the end, and save us all somehow.

(Submitted by Loretta Schneider, Vermont)



LITANY TO OUR LADY OF FATIMA

Our Lady of Fatima, Pray for our beloved country.
Our Lady of Fatima, Sanctify our clergy
Our Lady of Fatima, Make our Catholics more fervent.
Our Lady of Fatima, Guide and inspire those who govern us.
Our Lady of Fatima, Cure the sick who confide in thee.
Our Lady of Fatima, Console the sorrowful who trust in thee.
Our Lady of Fatima, Help those who invoke thy aid.
Our Lady of Fatima, Deliver us from all dangers.
Our Lady of Fatima, Help us to resist temptation.
Our Lady of Fatima, Obtain for us all that we lovingly ask of thee.
Our Lady of Fatima, Help those who are dear to us.
Our Lady of Fatima, Return to the Holy Catholic Church those who are in error.
Our Lady of Fatima, Give us back our ancient fervor.
Our Lady of Fatima, Obtain for us pardon of our many sins and offenses.

Our Lady of Fatima, Bring all men to the feet of thy Divine Child.

Our Lady of Fatima, Obtain peace for the world.

O Mary conceived without sin, Pray for us who have recourse to thee.

Immaculate Heart of Mary, Pray for us now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Let us pray:

O God of infinite goodness and mercy, fill our hearts with a great confidence in Thy dear Mother, whom we invoke under the title of Our Lady of the Rosary and Our Lady of Fatima, and grant us by her powerful intercession all the graces, spiritual and temporal, which we need. This we ask through Christ our Lord. Amen.

A PRAYER TO OUR BLESSED MOTHER

O dearest Mother, Mary, Mother of our Lord Jesus Christ and our Mother,

We humbly beg you to stay with us now, today, tomorrow and forever.

Our heart and home is yours. Teach us to be true and faithful children of God
and to obey humbly our heavenly Father.

Teach us to love Jesus more than all other creatures,

and to respect our bodies as true temples of the Holy Spirit.

Teach us how to pray always and how to accept suffering as the royal road to heaven.

Help us to carry our cross to Calvary as Jesus did.

Show us how to love one another as Jesus commanded.

Fill our hearts with purity and modesty; our minds with holy thoughts,

especially the word of God found in the Gospels.

Send holy angels to watch over us and protect us from the hatred of the evil one.

Send the saints to inspire us and to help us do all for the greater honor and glory of God.

Pray to the Blessed Trinity, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,

that we might become holy and pleasing in their sight.

And on the day we die, please remember, O most loving Mother, Mary,
that this day we have welcomed you into our heart and our home with love and honor.

May you one day welcome us into our eternal home in heaven.

Amen.

(Submitted by Court #1359, Belen, New Mexico)

Mary, Queen of our hearts, your destiny is meant to be our destiny. Teach us to love our God as you did, to love our neighbors as you did and, above all, to love our family as you loved yours. We consecrate ourselves and our loved ones to you with the ancient prayer:

My Queen, my Mother, I give myself entirely to you, and to show my devotion to you, I consecrate to you this day my eyes, my ears, my mouth, my heart, my entire self without reserve. As I am your own, my good Mother, guard me and defend me as your property and possession. Amen.

DEVOTION TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

May Crowning

Leader: Dear Blessed Virgin Mary, you are our queen! The most Blessed Trinity has confidently placed the welfare of the Church into your powerful and gently motherly hands. You will lead the pilgrim people of God home to His infinite loving heart. Giving you this crown is a symbolic way to entrust to you once more, the full responsibility of this task.

All: The crown symbolizes all the dignity and beauty that God Himself has bestowed on you. It shows your right to act as a queen and leader, as a mother and educator in and for the kingdom of God on earth.

Leader: We wish to crown you because of our personal helplessness in facing the deep distress of our times. We struggle to find God and we search his inscrutable ways. We struggle with the lack of faith and all it entails. Please fold your hands in prayer on our behalf. Tell your divine Son as you once did in Cana of Galilee, "Lord, they have no wine." Ask the Lord again and again to work miracles of peace, unity, and prosperity for the poor and suffering.

All: Take our flowers for your crown. Let them represent our wish to wind you with a wreath of joy and thanksgiving for the future. Let us work with you, our sister in faith, to make the coming years Christ-centered ages in which our people will do what He tells us. Grant peace and joy to our hearts, to our families, and to our parish. Lead our nation down the paths of justice, and assist each of us to be worthy to wear the crown of our calling that the Lord has prepared for us at the end of our journey.

Leader: The day will come when God will call us to leave our hearth and home for the eternal kingdom. Mary, we ask you to remain here to strengthen the faith of our children and their children, and to help them find their way home to the heart of God. When we worry about our eternal salvation and the salvation of our family, friends and relatives, we will remember the Lord's promises fulfilled in Mary!

All: Mary, you are the joy of those in heaven, the help of those on earth, the consolation of those still burdened by their sins. Accept our blossoms; accept each flower as a symbol of praise and thanksgiving! Thank you for your cooperation in the plan that changed the destiny of the world. Teach us, dear Mary, that we, too, may follow your example and be able to make heaven our home. With praise and all thanksgiving we pray. Amen.

DEVOTION TO MARY, MOTHER OF JESUS

Leader: O Virgin Mary, how great your cause for joy; God found you worthy to bear Christ our Savior.

All: Praise, O servants of the Lord, Praise the name of the Lord! May the name of the Lord be blessed both now and forever more! From the rising of the sun to its setting, praised be the name of the Lord! High above all nations is the Lord, above the heavens glory, who is like the Lord, our God, who has risen on high to His throne, yet stoops from the heights to look down upon heaven and earth. From the dust He lifts up the lowly; from His misery He raises the poor to set Him in the company of princes. Yes, the princes of His people.

Leader: O Virgin Mary, how great your cause for joy; God found you worthy to bear Christ our savior. **All: The Lord has chosen her, his loved one from the beginning.**

Leader: He has taken her to live with Him **All: His loved one from the beginning.**

Leader: Let us glorify our Savior, who chose the Virgin Mary for His Mother. Let us ask Him: **All: May your Mother intercede for us, Lord.**

Leader: Son of justice, the Immaculate Virgin was the new dawn announcing your rising. Grant that we may always live in the light of your coming. **All: May your Mother intercede for us, Lord.**

Leader: Eternal word, you chose Mary as the uncorrupted ark of your dwelling place. Free us from the corruption of sin. **All: May your Mother intercede for us, Lord.**

Leader: Savior of all, your Mother stood at the foot of your cross. Grant, that through her intercession, we might rejoice to share in your passion. **All: May your Mother intercede for us, Lord.**

Leader: With ultimate generosity and love, you gave Mary as a Mother to your beloved disciple. Help us to live as worthy children of so noble a Mother. **All: May your Mother intercede for us, Lord.**

Leader: Let us pray: Lord, may the prayers of the Virgin Mary bring us protection from danger and freedom from sin that we may come to the joy of your peace. We ask this through our Lord, Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

All: Blessed be God the Father who has created us. Blessed be God the Son who has redeemed us. Blessed be God the Holy Spirit who sanctifies us. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE CATHOLIC DAUGHTERS



THE LORD BE WITH YOU

Fill us, Lord, with the warm and serene beams of your light to guide our steps in your way.

Grant us the strength and vitality of your own life within us, that we may accomplish well the mission you have given us as Catholic Daughters of the Americas.

We ask for the depth and energy of your love to help us seek a set of strong values, to touch each person you send into our lives who need your caring presence.

Keep us faithful to the motto of our Order, "Unity and Charity," and faithful to the light, life and love given us through your Church, that we may serve you and the members of your Mystical Body generously.

May your light shine from us and your love animate us.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

(Submitted by Arizona)

HE POINTED HIS FINGER AT ME

They asked me to be an officer of CDA, I said, "Oh no, I couldn't do that." My plate is already full. *But God pointed His finger at me.*

I said "I'm just a small town girl, someone else may do better, you see." He said, "My disciples were simple folk." *And He pointed His finger at me.*

I said, "My family demands all my time, so the happier they will be." He said, "you'll grow in patience and love." *And He pointed His finger at me.*

I said, "I can't." For I get so nervous, so nervous I can scarcely see." But He promised He would calm my fears, *As He pointed His finger at me.*

"But in CDA there is so much to do, and with them I do not always agree." Tolerance and understanding He promised *As He pointed His finger at me.*

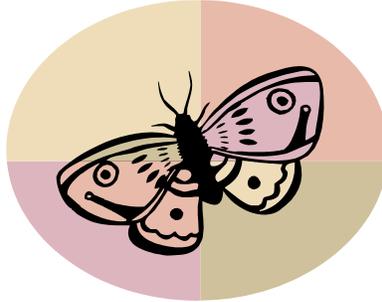
I said, "My talents are few, a leader I'll never be." He said, "But they shall be multiplied." *And He pointed His finger at me.*

I said, "I'd like to use my leisure time, to gain popularity." He said "God's love is more important than man's." *And He pointed His finger at me.*

So I said a prayer and answered "yes," to this fine opportunity. My life has been blessed in many ways *Since He pointed His finger at me.*

If you are called, the Lord's work to do, say "Yes, I give all to Thee." And you, too, will be glad as I have been glad, *That God pointed His finger at me.*

(Texas)



MEMORARE FOR MEMBERSHIP

Believing that through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, our Patroness,
we may obtain assistance in those things for which we ask,
let us pray faithfully for the increase in membership of the Catholic Daughters of the Americas
we need to keep our organization vigorously alive and growing.

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known, that anyone who fled to your protection, implored your help, or sought your intercession, was left unaided. Inspired by this confidence, I fly unto you, O Virgin of Virgins, my Mother. To you I come, before you I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in your mercy, hear and answer me. Amen.

O Blessed Virgin Mary, beloved Patroness of the Catholic Daughters of the Americas, we pledge to you our love and fidelity.

As you have guided and watched over us in the past, we humbly ask you to intercede for us, asking that our Catholic Daughter sisters will grow in faith—in love—and in numbers so that our countless works of charity can continue.

May our hearts and minds remain open to the magnificent love you have to share.

And may all of our endeavors be directed to Jesus, your Son, through you and your bountiful mercy. Amen.

BLESSING TO CATHOLIC DAUGHTERS

May the glory of God invade the hearts and souls of Catholic Daughters, especially those having great struggles and difficulties. May God help them also, to fill their organizational courts with faithful, loyal members.

(Submitted by Annie Duran, New Mexico)

RITE OF BLESSING OF CDA MEMBERS

Priest: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Priest : May the Lord, who went about doing good, be with you.

All: And also with you.

Leader: God is love. In the desire to make us share in this love, he sent his Son into the world to come to our aid, and in gentle kindness, to help those who were weak, sick, or unfortunate. In his great love for all of us, Christ said that whatever we do for the least among us, we do for him. He called those who show mercy “blessed of his Father” and promised them eternal life. Let us, then, pray for the Lord’s richest blessings on the members of this organization who are devoted to helping their brothers and sisters.

Priest: Christ the Lord bore our infirmities and endured our sufferings. He went about doing good, leaving us an example to follow. Having Christ’s charity as the foundation of all we do, our Catholic Daughters will now pray for their needs.

Response is: Lord, teach us to serve our brothers and sisters.

CDA 1: Lord, for our sake you were poor and came not to be served but to serve; grant that we too may love our brothers and sisters and help them in their need.

All: Lord, teach us to serve our brothers and sisters.

CDA 2: By your redeeming work you made a new world where we have become neighbors to each other and are enabled to love one another; grant that we too may strive toward a way of life in keeping with the Gospel.

All: Lord, teach us to serve our brothers and sisters.

CDA 3: You want all people to share in the blessings you have brought; stir the hearts of many among our parishioners, so that, moved by your love, they may gladly join us and devote themselves to assisting those in need and in misfortune.

All: Lord, teach us to serve our brothers and sisters.

Priest: Let us pray that God who is love will enkindle our hearts with the fire of the Holy Spirit, to give us an ardent love for others, like Christ's love for us. Blessed are you, Lord, God of mercy, who through your Son gave us a marvelous example of charity and the great commandment of love for one another. Send down your blessings on these your servants, who so generously devote themselves to helping others. When they are called on in times of need, let them faithfully serve you in their neighbor. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

(Priest sprinkles the members with holy water)

GOD IS ALWAYS WITH US

Leader: The word of God is rich and greatly varied. It speaks to each person in the world. Men, women, and children, rich and poor alike, are touched by God's word, which speaks loudly of God's presence and God's love for us. Let us listen to the words of Scripture that should touch our hearts.

Reader 1: (John 17:9-11)

I am not praying for the world but for those you have given me, because they belong to you: all I have is yours and all you have is mine, and in them I am glorified. I am not in the world any longer, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep those you have given me true to your name, so that they may be one like us. The word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Reader 2 (John 17:21-23)

Father, may they be one in us, as you are in me and I am in you, so that the world may believe it was you who sent me. I have given them the glory you gave to me, that they may be one as we are one. With me in them and you in me, may they be so completely one that the world will realize that it was you who sent me and that I have loved them as much as you loved me. The word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Reader 3: The light of Your presence and Your promise to be with us assures us, Jesus, whenever we gather in Your name. We are encouraged to pray together.

- All:** Our Father, who art in heaven.....
- Reader 3:** Let us now take time to pray for ourselves and for guidance in supporting one another in our growing relationship with God. For the continuing grace to renew daily our commitment to prayer and friendship with god, we pray...
- All:** We praise You, God, for Your life within us.
- Reader 4:** For the honesty and candor to accept those things in our lives that we cannot change, we pray...
- All:** We praise You, God, for Your life within us.
- Reader 4:** For those weaker and darker parts of our nature that will also be part of our glory in Christ Jesus, we pray...
- All:** We praise You, God, for Your life within us.
- Reader 5:** For acceptance of the pain involved in the realization that because we are human, growth and development are ongoing realities rather than accomplished facts, we pray...
- All:** We praise You, God, for Your life is within us.
- Reader 5:** O God, we thank and praise You for Your continuing call to openness with You in friendship and love.
- All:** Grace us always with this relationship and let us never forget to praise You and the great work You have begun in us for our glory.
- Leader:** Lord, we offer to You our service. Give us the courage and insight to put Your love into action in our lives. Give us perseverance as we plan our (convention/workshop/meeting) so that we might begin to address the important needs around us. Jesus, You gave Your life in love to others.
- All:** May we learn to see what You see; to love what is there; and to celebrate the good that each of us has to offer in relationship with You, Lord, and with our families, our friends and all Catholic Daughters.
- Leader:** We offer these prayers in Your name. Amen.

(Submitted by the New York State Court)

A PRAYER FOR CATHOLIC DAUGHTERS

Dear Jesus,

Help us to remember that the Catholic Daughters of the Americas is composed of all types of women, all of whom are children of God. Our Courts will be filled, if we fill them. They will do great work, if we work. They will make generous gifts to many causes if we are generous. They will bring other women into its fellowship, if we bring them.

Catholic Daughters will be an organization of loyalty, love, faith and noble spirit, if its members, who make it what it is, are filled with those qualities. Therefore, with the help of God, we dedicate ourselves to the task of being all that we can be so that our Order continues to contribute to the benefit of Catholic womanhood, and that it may spread Unity and Charity among all members. Amen.

(Submitted by Letty Calvetti, Pennsylvania)

PRAYER SERVICE

In Honor of Catholic Daughters

(This prayer service might be used on CDA Day or any time at which an overview of our Catholic Daughter program would be appropriate.)

Leader: Dear Lord, the Catholic Daughters of the Americas have been a gentle force in the Catholic Church for over 100 years. Dedicated to our Blessed Mother and blessed with her loving care, we ask that we might remain constant in our works of Unity and Charity.

As we go about our daily lives, may we remain totally committed to our programs of service to those less fortunate and those in need. And may we also remain strong believers in the ideals of the Catholic Daughter program itself. We as you Lord, to bless us and keep us keenly aware of the ways in which we can work for your glory.

Through the following symbols, let us look at the tools the Catholic Daughters use to serve the needs of the Church and worldwide community:

(Member brings forward a statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary and places it on a table in front of the meeting room. All items to follow may be placed around the statue)

Leader: We present this statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary, patroness of the Catholic Daughters, Mother of God and Queen of Peace. We ask, Lord, that Mary, our Mother, grant us protection and obtain for us the graces to live and carry out our ministry according to you will.

Refrain: Lord, hear our prayer.

(Member brings forward a copy of the Catholic Daughter mission statement)

Leader: We present our Catholic Daughter mission statement. “We strive to embrace the principle of faith working through love in the promotion of justice, equality, and the advancement of human rights and human dignity for all.” We ask, O Lord, that we remain always faithful to our plan of action and reach our desired goals.

Refrain: Lord, hear our prayer.

(Member brings forward the “Unity and Charity” banner or facsimile)

Leader: We present our banner of “Unity and Charity.” Working together, each in our own way, but united in purpose, we carry out the many actions validating our love for our fellow man and our God. We ask, O Lord, that we carry our banner always with pride and with hearts full of love.

Refrain: Lord, hear our prayer.

(Member brings forward a CDA membership pin)

Leader: We present this membership pin of cross and crown. As a sign of commitment to the organization, may we wear it with honor and a certain sense of responsibility. We ask, O Lord, that members realize the joy and satisfaction of membership and keep their resolve strong.

Refrain: Lord, hear our prayer.

(Member brings forward a copy of the Circle of Love logo)

Leader: We present the Circle of Love, the core program of the Catholic Daughters. Through this multi-faceted program, the needs—spiritual and material—of the Church and community are presented along with ways the Daughters can effectively serve those needs through specific projects. We ask, O Lord, that all parts of the Circle of Love continue to be the focus in our ministry and be a major influence in our lives.

Refrain: Lord, hear our prayer.

(Member brings forward a copy of the By-Laws)

Leader: We present the By-Laws of the Order: the rules that govern and direct our actions and guide us in the proper conducting of business. We ask, O Lord, that we remain vigilant and faithful to the rules our members have approved and use them wisely in our proceedings.

Refrain: Lord, hear our prayer.

(Member brings forward a gavel)

Leader: We present this gavel used by those conducting local, state or National meetings. A symbol of order and of leadership, its use is important in maintaining order while proceeding in a positive direction. We ask, O Lord, that we see and use this gavel as a constructive tool in the procedures of our meetings.

Refrain: Lord, hear our prayer

(Member brings forward a copy of the Tools of the Trade)

Leader: We present the Tools of the Trade, the map of information for all areas of the various Catholic Daughter programs and ceremonials. With its use, procedures, protocol, leadership and membership are clearly defined. We ask, O Lord, that the Tools be constantly referred to and members realize its importance in knowing, as well as carrying out, our mission.

Refrain: Lord, hear our prayer.

(Member brings forward white roses)

Leader: We present these beautiful white roses in memory of our beloved deceased chaplains as well as the deceased members, the foundation of the Order and now saints in heaven who intercede for us personally. We ask, O Lord, that you would gather those who have been successful in their mission on earth into your loving arms for all eternity.

Refrain: Lord, hear our prayer.

(Member brings forward red roses)

Leader: We present these red roses as symbols of our current Catholic Daughters, faithful servants of the Lord. We see you, Lord, in our midst every day in those around us. We become your hands and your feet as we feed the hungry, shelter the homeless, care for the sick and love others as you have loved us. We ask, O Lord, that we be guided by your holy wisdom in all of our actions, thoughts and prayers.

Refrain: Lord, hear our prayer.

(Member brings forward a cross)

Leader: And finally, Lord, we present the cross upon which we base our beliefs. Through the crucified Jesus, we see the hope of salvation, the way of truth and love. We ask, O Lord, that you generously bless each Catholic Daughter and give us the grace to direct our thoughts and actions to the service of you and all others. Amen.

(Evelyn Saxton, Oklahoma)



MEDITATION

Life is a Series of Problem Solving Opportunities

The problems you face will either defeat you or develop you—depending on how you respond to them. Unfortunately, most people fail to see how God wants to use problems for good in their lives. They react foolishly and resent their problems rather than pausing to consider what benefit they might bring. Here are five ways God wants to use the problems in your life:

God uses problems to DIRECT you

Sometimes God must light a fire under you to get you moving. Problems often point us in a new direction and motivate us to change. Is God trying to get your attention? **Sometimes it takes a painful situation to make us change our ways.** ~Proverbs 20:30

God uses problems to INSPECT you

People are like tea bags, “if you want to know what’s inside them, just drop them in hot water!” Has God ever treated your faith with a problem? What do problems reveal about you? **When you have many kinds of troubles, you should be full of joy, because you know that these troubles test your faith, and this will give you patience.** ~James 1:2-3

God uses problems to CORRECT you

Some lessons we learn only through pain and failure. It’s likely that as a child your parents told you not to touch a hot stove. But you probably learned by being burned. Sometimes we only learn the value of something—health, money, a relationship—by losing it. **It was the best thing that could have happened to me, for it taught me to pay attention to your laws.** ~Psalm 119:71-72

God uses problems to PROTECT you

A problem can be a blessing in disguise if it prevents you from being harmed by something more serious. A man was fired for refusing to do something unethical that his boss had asked him to do. His unemployment was a problem—but it saved him from being convicted and sent to prison later when management's actions were eventually discovered. **You intended harm to me, but God intended it for good.** ~Genesis 50:20

God uses problems to PERFECT you

Problems, when responded to correctly, are character builders. God is far more interested in your character than your comfort. Your relationship with God and your character are the only two things you are going to take with you to eternity. We can rejoice when we run into problems—they help us learn to be patient. **And patience develops strength of character in us and helps us trust God more each time we use it until finally our hope and faith are strong and steady.** ~Romans 5:3-4 God is at work in your life even if you don't understand it.

(Submitted by Washington State Court)

ACCEPTING EACH OTHER IN THE CIRCLE OF LOVE

Leader: We have been blessed in and through Christ Jesus. We accept Jesus and His goodness in all aspects of our lives. He welcomes us into the light of His life and invites us to welcome others.

(Have 8 votive candles available to light one at a time as each beatitude is read.)

Leader: Blessed are the poor in spirit; the reign of God is theirs

All: Lord, bless us with the understanding that the riches of this life are not that important. The kingdom of God is ours to share with others.

Leader: Blessed are the gentle; they shall inherit the land.

All: Lord, help us to know that all we are is a gift from you so that we will be content with our greatness and our smallness. We pray that we will know ourselves, be true to ourselves, and be open to others.

Leader: Blessed are the sorrowing; they shall be consoled.

All: Lord, gift us with a heart renewed so that we may weep with the sorrowful and bring them consolation as a part of our commitment to you Gospel of love and compassion.

Leader: Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for God's justice; they shall be satisfied.

All: Lord, strengthen our belief in the concept that would have us serve only those who have nothing to offer us but their need and their dignity as human beings.

Leader: Blessed are they who show mercy; mercy shall be theirs.

All: Lord, gift us with a remembrance of forgiveness so we will be able to extend forgiveness to others.

Leader: Blessed are the single-hearted; they shall see God.

All: Lord, gift us with hearts that are free and simple that our vision will always be directed toward you.

Leader: Blessed are the peacemakers; they shall be called children of God.

All: Lord, let us be creators of peace. Let us build roads that unite rather than walls that divide.

Leader: Blessed are those persecuted for holiness' sake; the reign of God is theirs.

All: Lord, fill us with that inner strength and joy that will enable us to continue to work for the cause of right, no matter what the cost.

Leader: Lord, you have stretched out your arms and invited us to share your life. Help us always to accept you into our lives. May our hands and hearts be open to your good news.

All: Amen.

Leader: Let us join our hands as a sign of our unity and pray as Jesus taught us.

All: Our Father, who art in heaven...

Leader: Let us share a sign of Christ's welcoming peace with one another.

(Submitted by New York State Court)



CLOSING PRAYER

Leader: God of life—of all life and of each life—we lay our lives before you. We open our lives to you, from whom nothing in us is hidden.

All: You are before us, Lord; you are behind. You are in the light and the darkness.

Leader: You know the secret thoughts of every heart. We bring the faith that is in us, and the doubt.

All: We bring the joy that is in us, and the sorrow. We bring the pride that is in us, and the shame.

Leader: We bring the knowledge that is in us, and the ignorance. We bring the hope that is in us, and the despair. We bring the courage that is in us, and the fear.

All: With our weaknesses and our strengths, we ask, O God, that you will grant us the gift of grace that we might walk in the way of your Son. Guide us by your spirit, strengthen us against all evil, and protect us from all harm. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

~~Miscellaneous Prayers~~

AS WE BEGIN OUR DAY

O Lord, our heavenly Father, whose glory is in all this beautiful world, we ask thy guidance and blessings for our leadership, and for those who follow. Give us the wisdom and strength to know and do thy will. Fill us with the love of truth and righteousness. Rule our hearts and prosper our endeavors, that law and order, justice and peace may prevail, to the honor of thy holy name.

Lord, please help us this day to go about the tasks and duties with the remembrance that we are servants in the world. Make us honest, painstaking and cheerful, and grant that all we do and say may bring good to others and glory to thy holy name.

O heavenly Father, in whom we live and move and have our being, we humbly pray thee so to guide and govern us by the Holy Spirit that, in all cases and occupations of our daily life, we may never forget thee, but remember that we are walking in thy sight.

O Lord and Father of Mankind, keep us this day in health of body and soundness of mind, purity of heart and cheerfulness of spirit, in contentment with our lot and charity with our neighbor, and further all our lawful undertakings with thy blessing. In our labor strengthen us; in our pleasure purify us; in our troubles comfort us; in our difficulties direct us; in our perils defend us, and supply our needs according to the riches of thy grace in Christ our Lord. Amen.

(New Mexico)

Let us place ourselves in God's presence and set our minds and hearts to prayer.....

Within the stillness of hearts, let us prepare a dwelling place for God's word. Lord, we are aware today of your presence as we gather to honor You and do Your will. May our actions be pleasing to You and bring us renewed grace and purpose in serving You. We honor our patron, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and pray for her guidance and blessing in our hearts, our homes and our community.

Leader: Lord, come to our assistance

All: Lord, make haste to help us. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son.....

(Submitted by Esther Gow, California)



GOOD MORNING PRAYER

God, our creator and sustainer, You loved us long before we knew ourselves to be lovable and You still love us. Give us, we pray, a greater awareness of Your love for all people, and a confidence in the action of Your grace in us and in Your church.

Inspire us with a greater sensitivity to the poor and oppressed. Give us the courage to act on their behalf. We praise You today for Your mysterious ways among us, for Your presence in the midst of human affairs. By the power of Your Spirit, may we grow in the truth that impels us to act justly, giving expression to compassion and hope.

Let us repeat, as Mother Teresa did each morning, her daily prayer:

“Dear Jesus, help me to spread Thy fragrance everywhere I go. Flood my soul with Thy spirit and love. Penetrate and possess my whole being so utterly that all my life may only be a radiance of Thine. Shine through me and be so in me that every soul I come in contact with may feel Thy presence in my soul. Let them look up and see no longer me, but only Jesus. Stay with me and then I shall begin to shine as you shine; so to shine as to be a light to others. Amen.”

GATHERING PRAYER

Reader 1: Rejoice! For God our healer and sustainer is among us.

Reader 2: We have come to this place from many different directions

Reader 1: We have come to listen and to share, to teach and to learn, to draw renewed strength and inspiration from the Spirit of justice and mercy.

Reader 2: Let us gather now to worship the Holy One who knows us and our desires. Let us lift our praise in prayer to the source of all wisdom and compassion, our creator, who loves us like a father and nurtures us like a mother.

Reader 1: God draws us to each other, and claims us as people of God. As many parts of one body, we are here to worship God, our refuge and our strength, the healer of the nations.

All: We are gathered in unity this day to seek your blessing, Lord

Reader 1: We are here in response to God's desire for justice, mercy and compassion. He calls us in many ways for us to answer.

All: We are here to worship God in spirit and in truth. We remember God's mercy and grace to us, as we reach out to touch the lives of others with whom we work and live.

Reader 2: We come together to support each other in our common ministry in the name of "unity and charity" and to dream together about even greater possibilities for helping and healing our world.

All: We come to pray together, and to share new visions for wholeness in our world.

*Remind us, O God, from the depths of our hearts, that we are connected to the power behind the universe, an infinite source of love.

*Remind us, O God, from the depths of our spirits, that we are connected by your love to all humanity, to those most near to us, and to those most different from us.

*Be the vision of our work, so that we may create things together greater than we would ever do alone.

*Be the spark of our minds, so that we may comprehend that while we do not all think alike, you have thought of us all alike, as cherished and beloved.

*Come to us and bring your healing and your hope. Let us live to share our faith and hope with others who wait and long for justice.

*Be, O God, our guide and our strength as we journey this day and in the coming years. We pray in your name. Amen.

Reader 1: Let us go from this special place this evening with caring awareness for our world and all that is in it. May our God of mercy and compassion gift you with faith, strength, wisdom and peace. May the Spirit's love and grace be with you to inspire and guide you in life as faithful people of God, faithful Catholic Daughters, until we meet our Lord and God face to face.

Can you imagine that joy?

(Follow prayer with music: "I Can Only Imagine" by Ronnie Kimball; MRB Records, Christian Music Collection, Volume 1: "Inspiration, Hope, Encouragement")

PRAYER TO END ABORTION

Lord God, I thank you today for the gift of my life, and for the lives of all my brothers and sisters. I know there is nothing that destroys more life than abortion, yet I rejoice that you have conquered death by the Resurrection of Your Son. I am ready to do my part in ending abortion. Today I commit myself never to be silent, never to be passive, never to be forgetful of the unborn. I commit myself to be active in the Pro-Life movement, and never to stop defending life until all my brothers and sisters are protected, and our nation once again becomes a nation with liberty and justice not just for some, but for all, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

(Father Frank Pavone, National Director, Priests for Life)

TEACH ME TO LISTEN

Leader: Be still within and without. Be aware of the gift of hearing. Listen to the sounds and silence around you. Center yourself in God who speaks to your heart.

(Reflect quietly while instrumental music plays)

Leader: A reading from Luke 1:26-38: "In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent..."

All: Dear God, teach us to listen as Mary listened. Teach me to listen, O God, to those nearest to me, my family, my friends, my co-workers. Help me to be aware that no matter what words I hear, the message is, "Accept the person I am. Listen to me."

Leader: The response will be: "Blessed are the people who hear God's word and put it into action.

All: Blessed are the people who hear God's word and put it into action.

Leader: Teach me to listen, my caring God, to those far from me—the whisper of the hopeless, the plea of the forgotten, the cry of the anguished.

All: Blessed are the people who hear God's word and put it into action.

Leader: Teach me to listen, O God my Mother, to myself. Help me to be less afraid to trust the voice inside—in the deepest part of me.

All: Blessed are the people who hear God's word and put it into action.

Leader: Teach me to listen, Holy Spirit, for your voice—in busyness and in boredom, in certainty and in doubt, in noise and in silence. Teach me, O God, to listen.

All: Blessed are the people who hear God’s word and put it into action.

Leader: Thanks be to God who always gives us in Christ a share in his new life, and through us is spreading the word of God everywhere. Amen.

(Submitted by Duchess Collins, Texas)

TO OUR LADY OF CAMARIN

Our Lady of Guam, Queen of our island, protector of our people, we pledge our constant devotion in the fulfillment of the wishes of your Divine Son. Into your motherly hands we place our lives, our hopes and aspirations. Holy Virgin, Mother of Guam, lead us to perseverance in the Holy Catholic faith and in the observance of its precepts. Obtain for all our people the grace to offer to God a reasonable service in their homes and in their civic and social life. Pray for us that we may be blessed with plentiful vocations to the priestly and religious life, and that those who are called may respond with grace and persevere with God’s blessing. Bless our priests and all our leaders. Obtain these favors for us from God in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

(Submitted by Priscilla Muna, Guam)

LIGHT TO ALL NATIONS PRAYER SERVICE

(Each person is given a lighted candle to hold during the prayer service. Dim lights in the room. When the service is completed, each person blows out her candle and is given a small gift box to remind them they are a gift)

Leader: Father, we come before you today, in the presence of Court _____ # _____, to reaffirm our commitment to your work. We are Jesus Christ in the world today. We are a light to all in our community and in our church parish. Let us not forget you are always with us. We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord and brother. Amen.

Reader: Each one of us is a gift which the Father sends wrapped. Some of us are wrapped beautifully; very attractive when we are first seen. Some of us are in very ordinary wrapping paper. Others have been mishandled in the mail. Once in a while there is a “special delivery.” Some persons are gifts which come very loosely wrapped; others very tightly.

But the wrapping is not the gift! Sometimes the gift is very easy to open up. Sometimes we need others to help. Is it because we are afraid or does it hurt? Maybe some have been opened up before and thrown away.

We are all gifts. Have any of you ever looked inside the wrappings? Are you afraid to? Perhaps some of us have never accepted the gift that we are. Maybe some of us have never seen the wonderful gift that we are. Think about this: Am I a gift to others? Am I willing to be given to others? Are others content with the wrappings—or are they given the chance to enjoy the gift? Every meeting of persons is an exchange of gifts.

Leader: A reading from the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 5, verses 14-16:

“You are the light of the world. A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and then put it under a bushel basket; it is set on a lampstand, where it gives light to all in the house. Just so, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father.”

Reader: We will now affirm our commitment: Your response will be “We do”

Do you believe in the Spirit whose presence is felt in our enthusiasm and in our work?

Do you promise to work together in Catholic Daughters and with all other parish organizations and care for others in the way of Jesus Christ?

Do you promise to accept your talents, whether many or few, and to use them in our church parish and community?

Do you promise to be gracious and un-begrudging in your giving?

Do you promise to share whatever gift has been given to you?

Do you promise to share without expecting something in return?

Do you promise to fall more deeply in love with the God of all generosity so that our hearts are strong enough to give away freely whatever is asked?

As a seal of our commitment, let us join in saying the prayer of our community and Court _____#_____, the prayer Jesus taught us.

All: Our Father, who art in heaven...

Leader: God has called us to serve, to work, to live for God, to be hopeful, to love each other and to live according to God’s call. Make us worthy, Lord, to serve our fellow men throughout our church parish and community. Gracious God, create in our hearts a deep center of gratitude, a center that grows strong in its thanksgiving that sharing freely of our gifts will become the norm and pattern of our existence. Amen.

(Submitted by Vickie Broussard, Louisiana. Parts of prayer taken from Prayer Services for Parish Meetings by Debra Hintz)

Oración Para Todos Los Viernes del Año

En Belén esta un calvario de siete leguas de largo, por el rastro de la sangre que Jesús iba dejando, iba la Virgen Maria por su hijo preguntando. En el medio del camino una mujer encontró, ¿dígame santa mujer si mi hijo lo ha encontrado? Si señora lo he encontrado muy triste y amargado. Una cruz lleva en sus hombros, de madera muy pesada, una corona de espinas que el rostro le ensangrentaba, y una soga en su garganta que por él lo iba llevando.

La Virgen que así lo hayo, cayó en fuerte desmayos. San Juan y la Magdalena acuden a levantarla. Vamos arriba señora, vamos al Monte Calvario, por muy aprisa que vallan ya lo abran crucificado, le pusieron las espinas y también los fuertes clavos. La sangre que de él callea, cayó en cáliz sagrado y el cristiano que la beba será bien aventurado.

El que esta oración rezara todos los viernes del año saca un ánima de penas y la suya del pecado. El que la sabe y no la enseña y el que la oye y no la aprende, el día del juicio sabrá lo que esta oración contiene. ¡Amén!

Provided by

Tomasita Rodriguez, New Mexico