

POPULAR PRAYERS



Third Edition

POPULAR
PRAYERS

The *Popular Prayers* Collection

In 1971 *Popular Prayers* was first printed. It was reprinted several times, and due to popular demand the collection was updated in 2003 for a second edition by Fr. Francis Kemsley, O.Carm. After selling thousands of copies, *Popular Prayers* has been further revised by Johan Bergström-Allen and published in 2006 by Saint Albert's Press, the publishing house of the British Province of Carmelites. We hope that you find this little prayer book helpful in your relationship with God, and we welcome any suggestions for future editions.

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THE CARMELITE FAMILY

The Order of Carmelites (or Brothers of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel) developed from a group of lay hermits living a contemplative existence modelled on the prophet Elijah and the Blessed Virgin Mary in 12th-century Palestine. We follow the Rule of Saint Albert, and first came to Britain in 1242. As the hermits became friars following the 1247 General Chapter in Aylesford, Kent, and later in 1452 when nuns and lay people were formally admitted to the Order, the Carmelites developed their distinctive way of living in allegiance to Jesus Christ through prayer, community-life and service.

Britain contained the largest Carmelite Province in the Order until its suppression at the Reformation. It was re-established under the patronage of Our Lady of the Assumption in the twentieth century. There are communities of friars, sisters and lay Carmelites across England, Scotland, and Wales. Similar communities exist in Ireland, and throughout the world. The international Order of Discalced Carmelites (friars, nuns, and laity) is also present in Britain and Ireland. Members of the Carmelite and Discalced Carmelite Orders work, live, and pray together to make up the wider 'Carmelite Family', which seeks the face of the Living God in parishes, prisons, university chaplaincies, retreat centres, workplaces, schools, and through many other forms of ministry.

Further sources of information on Carmelite spirituality:

John Welch, O.Carm.,
The Carmelite Way: An Ancient Path for Today's Pilgrim,
(Leominster: Gracewing, 1996).

Wilfrid McGreal, O.Carm.,
At the Fountain of Elijah: The Carmelite Tradition,
(London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1999).

To find out more about the Carmelite Family online, please visit:

The British Province of Carmelites
www.carmelite.org

Aylesford Priory, Kent
www.thefriars.org.uk

National Shrine of St. Jude, Faversham
www.stjudeshrine.org.uk

Lay Carmel in Britain
www.laycarmel.org

Carmelite Forum of Britain and Ireland
www.carmeliteforum.org

Carmelite Institute of Britain and Ireland
www.cibi.ie

The Irish Province of Carmelites
www.carmelites.ie

Disalced Carmelite Family in England, Scotland & Wales
www.carmelite.org.uk

Corpus Christi Carmelite Sisters
www.corpuschristicarmelites.org

Association of Disalced Carmelite Nuns in Great Britain
www.carmelnuns.org.uk

The Carmelite General Curia
www.ocarm.org

PRAYER

Prayer is religion in action. The Christian, who tries to be a real Christian, learns to live his or her prayer and to pray his or her life. In the words of the fourth Eucharistic prayer, life thus becomes a 'living sacrifice of praise'. This 'living sacrifice of praise' means quite simply saying 'Yes' to God day after day in the events of life. Saying 'Yes' to life, to the people among whom we live and work, to the society of which we are a part. But that 'Yes' will scarcely ring true unless we have already said it in the depths of our hearts in personal prayer. We cannot pray all of the time, everywhere, unless we bother to pray some of the time, somewhere.

Praying to God some of the time, somewhere, demands a time and a place. It may be a very short period of time, a few minutes at the end of a very demanding day. The place itself may not always be conducive to prayer. If we have little privacy in our lives, the place may well be in our own hearts amid the noise and bustle of the city. Perhaps, as St Teresa of Jesus (of Avila) suggested, we may have to find God among the pots and pans in the kitchen.

The prayers you will find in this prayer book are prayers for all occasions, prayers for the ups and downs of life. Or, as St Thérèse of Lisieux puts it, they are 'a cry of grateful love from the crest of joy or the trough of despair.'

Some occasions, more than others, move us to deep personal prayer. The death of someone we love, a country devastated by war or famine, the suffering of

the innocent, can force us, like Job, to ask the most fundamental questions about life and its purpose. Such events confront us with mystery. We have no answer. We can only say to God that God's ways are not our ways. We can only ask him to give us patience with his ways.

But the birth of a baby leads us to prayer of another kind. So does the sight of a young couple at the altar making their marriage promises to each other with evident sincerity and wholeheartedness. We come before the wonder of new life, of new love.

Comings and goings, separations and engagements, the reunion of friends, setting out on a journey, all give us food for thought and prayer. We read the book of life, the book of nature, of events and of persons. We reflect and we pray. Reading, thinking, praying, are the three steps in our education in prayer. When we read the book of life in what happens and in what people say and do in the everyday world, we never have all the answers. But we do have a vision of God and of life. In prayer, all that we experience can be illuminated by that vision and lead us deeper into its mystery. Hence, in prayer we work with God who ever seeks to transform us by the power of his Spirit into the likeness of his Son.

The Christian vision and experience of God is written large for us in the pages of the Bible, that story of God's dealings with God's people, which is our story too. The God of Abraham, 'our father in faith', is the God of Jesus whom we call 'Father'. As he taught God's people of old God still teaches us today. For the Christian, the Bible is a treasure house of prayer. The utterances of men and women of old, the spontaneous prayers from

the heart, the accumulated wisdom of a people living in close intimacy with the saving God, the prayer of Christ himself and his teaching on prayer, and the beautiful outpourings from the heart of St Paul, all these should teach us to pray, simply and from the heart.

The Bible and the liturgical ritual serve to remind us of the moods of prayer which we can so often ignore or express in the wrong way. The mood of petition is the kind of prayer that helps us to get it all together. Petition is accepting: accepting ourselves, our world and its people. Intercession is being concerned about others, a release from preoccupation with ourselves. St Paul is forever telling the early Christians to praise and to give thanks constantly. He is telling them to make their lives a continuous Eucharist.

The high point of the Christian's daily Eucharistic effort is the Sunday Eucharist. Here, the weekly coming together of the Christian family gives us added inspiration for praise and thanksgiving. The liturgy of the word gives us fresh motivation, Sunday after Sunday; for joyful thanksgiving. This weekly gathering also sends us back to our daily surroundings. Our Sunday Eucharist feeds our daily prayer and inspires our saying 'Yes' to God in the events of life. There is no conflict then between daily living, personal prayer and the liturgy. The word of Christ to which we listen at Sunday Mass dwells in us richly for the rest of the week and strengthens us to 'do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus giving thanks to God the Father through him' (Col 3: 17).

Eltin Griffin, O.Carm.

PRAYERS IN COMMON USE

'... one of Jesus' disciples said to him, 'Lord teach us to pray'...' (Lk. 11:1)

Our Father (The Lord's Prayer)

OUR Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

A Modern Lord's Prayer

OUR Father in Heaven, let your holy name be known, let your kingdom come, and your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today the bread that we need, and forgive us our wrongs, as we forgive those who have done wrong to us. Do not lead us into trial, but save us from evil. Amen

Hail Mary

HAIL Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now, and at the hour of our death. Amen

Glory be

GLORY be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of
Heaven and Earth,

And in Jesus Christ, his only son, our Lord;

Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,

born of the Virgin Mary,

Suffered under Pontius Pilate,

was crucified, dead, and was buried;

He descended into hell;

the third day he rose again from the dead;

He ascended into Heaven, and is seated

at the right hand of God, the Father almighty;

From there he shall come to

judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,

the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints,

the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body,

and life everlasting. Amen.

MORNING PRAYER

Each day can be a new beginning. Yesterday is past, tomorrow has not happened, today is the here and now in which we live. Morning is the time to open our eyes anew to God's world and to become aware once again of the God who is both Mother and Father to us, who is continually at work within us through the Holy Spirit, forming us in the likeness of Jesus his Son.

There may be little time for morning prayer, but the essential thing is that we turn to God, however briefly, with all our heart and awake to God's loving and strengthening presence. The following prayers suggest some thoughts for morning prayer. It is for each of us to choose what suits best, remembering that the words of prayer have meaning only when they come from the heart.

Morning Prayer

O my God, you love me,
You are with me night and day.
I want to love you always
In all I do and say.
I'll try to please you, Father,
Bless me throughout the day. Amen



O JESUS,
through the most pure heart of Mary,
I offer you all my thoughts,
words and actions,
joys and sufferings,
of this day
for all the intentions
of your most divine heart.

Morning Prayer

I expect to pass through this world but once; any good, therefore, that I can do, or kindness that I can show to any fellow-creature, let me do it now; let me not defer or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again.



Tobit 3:11; Ps 5:3

You are blessed, O God of mercy!
May your name be blessed for ever,
and may all things you have made
bless you everlastingly.
It is you whom I invoke, O Lord.
In the morning you hear me;
in the morning I offer you my prayer,
watching and waiting.

The Benedictus

The Canticle of Zechariah Lk 1:68-79

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

He has raised up for us a mighty saviour
in the house of David his servant,
as he promised by the lips of holy ones,
those who were his prophets from of old.

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

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

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

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

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

Based on the Divine Office

EVENING PRAYER

As the day draws to a close Evening prayer reminds us that God has been present throughout our routines and in our relationships; it commits us once again to God's love and care.

VISIT, we beseech thee, O Lord,
our homes and families,
and drive far from them all the snares
of the enemy; let your holy angels
dwell herein to keep us in peace,
and may your blessing be
always upon us.

Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

Prayer from the Divine Office



NOW as we retire to rest,
guard us by your grace and let
our sleep renew in us the strength
and courage to serve you
faithfully tomorrow and
the rest of our lives. Amen.

The Magnificat

The Canticle of Mary Lk 1:46-55

MY soul glorifies the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour.
He looks on his servant in her lowliness;
henceforth all ages will 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 forebears,
to Abraham and his line for ever.

Based on the Divine Office

NIGHT PRAYER

Night prayer gathers together the day with all that it has brought of joy and of sorrow, of interest and of boredom, of good and of evil. All this we offer to God, confident that we can place ourselves with entire trust in the hands of his loving mercy. As we enter the 'little death' of sleep we can make the great prayer of the dying Jesus, 'Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.' In this way our night prayer turns us towards a new day, a new beginning and a new resurrection.



The Nunc Dimittis

The Canticle of Simeon Lk 2:29-32

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 give glory to Israel, your people.

Divine Office

A Child's Night Prayer

GOD, I have spent a happy day.
I worked happily.
I played happily, thanks to you.
Now I am going to sleep.
Guard me and all the children of the world.
We are in your care.
You hear us when we call, so I shall sleep well.
Thank you, God. Amen.



Night Prayer

GOD, our Father, I come to say
thank you for your love today.
Thank you for my family
and all the friends you give to me.
Guard me in the dark of night
and in the morning send your light. Amen

Night Prayer of Carmel

DEAR Mary, Mother of Carmel, we ask you to commend to your divine son Jesus all the cares and anxieties of those who have asked our prayers. Succour and restore the suffering in body and mind, pity those who are tried by ill health and disease, give them light in darkness and, in your great compassion for the afflicted and unhappy, lead them close to the strength of Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord.

We commend to your safe keeping our parents, relatives, and friends and all who have done good to us for the sake of your holy name. Guard them from temptation and surprise and keep them from evil and misfortune.

At your feet may we learn the true spirit of Carmel. May our hearts burn with the zeal of St. Elijah; we implore the childlike trust in you of St. Simon Stock; we would crave the undaunted desires of St. Teresa, the mystic love born of suffering of St. John of the Cross and St. Mary Magdalen de Pazzi, the courage and shining purity of St. Albert of Trapani and St. Andrew Corsini. In simplicity with St. Thérèse may our souls grow in trust and deepen in love.

We ask you for vocations; lead other sons and daughters into your land of Carmel. Be our right hand in our weakness; give us greater trust in your promise of blessing and protection; ever renew in us the true spirit of our vocation; desert not your own; give us courage to build anew; quicken our desire to grow and increase and grant us good success.

Let us give God thanks for all his gracious gifts. Blessed be the Most Holy Trinity. May holy Mary and all the angels and saints of God be praised now and for evermore. Amen.

PRAYERS FOR SERVING OTHERS

Prayer of St. Francis

LORD make me an instrument of your peace,
Where there is hatred,
let me sow love,
Where there is injury, pardon,
Where there is darkness, light,
Where there is sadness, joy,
Where there is doubt, faith,
And where there is despair, hope.

O divine master,
grant that I may not so much seek
To be consoled, as to console,
To be understood, as to understand,
To be loved, as to love

For,
It is in giving that we receive,
It is in forgiving that we are pardoned,
And it is in dying that we are born
to eternal life.

Dedication of Service

TEACH us, good Lord,
to serve you as you deserve;
To give and not to count the cost;
To fight and not to heed the wounds;
To toil and not to seek for rest;
To labour and not to seek reward,
Save that of knowing we do your will.
Through Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen.

St. Ignatius



LORD. Thou knowest
I shall be verie busie this day.
I may forget thee.
Do not thou forget me.

Lord Astley before the battle of Edgehill