

# Prayers for Uncertain Times

## **For the Unity of Christians**

Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your apostles, “Peace I give to you; my own peace I leave with you.” Regard not our sins, but the faith of your Church, and give to us the peace and unity of that heavenly city, where with the Father and the Holy Spirit you live and reign, now and forever.<sup>1</sup>

## **For All Christians in Their Vocation**

Almighty and everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of your faithful people is governed and sanctified, receive our supplications and prayers, which we offer before you for all members of your holy Church, that in their vocation and ministry they may truly and devoutly serve you; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.<sup>2</sup>

## **An Anglo-Saxon ‘Our Father’**

Guardian of humanity, forgive us our guilt and sins, and pardon our crimes, the Body’s wounds, and our wicked deeds, although we often offend against you, the almighty God, in your mercies, just as we pardon on earth the crimes of those who often do wrong against us, and do not think to accuse them of their evil deeds, in order to have eternal life. Do not lead us to punishment, to the grief of affliction, nor to the testing, redeeming Christ, lest we, devoid of grace, become out of enmity estranged from all your mercies. And free us now from the evil of every fiend; we in our hearts shall eagerly speak of thanks and glory, Prince of the angels, true Lord of victories, because you have mercifully set us free from the bondage of hell’s torments by your mighty power. Let this be.<sup>3</sup>

## **For Families**

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who settest the solitary in families: We commend to your continual care the homes in which your people dwell. Put far from them, we beseech you, every root of bitterness, the desire of vainglory, and the pride of life. Fill them with faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness. Knit together in constant affection those who, in holy wedlock, have been made one flesh. Turn the hearts of the parents to the children, and the hearts of the children to the parents; and so enkindle fervent charity among us all, that we may evermore be kindly affectioned one to another; through Jesus Christ our Lord.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Anglican Church of Canada, *The Book of Alternative Services*, 676.

<sup>2</sup> Anglican Church of Canada, 676.

<sup>3</sup> Ward, *Christ Within Me*, 73.

<sup>4</sup> The Episcopal Church, *The Book of Common Prayer*, 829.

### **For the Care of Children**

Almighty God, heavenly Father, you have blessed us with the joy and care of children: Give us calm strength and patient wisdom as we bring them up, that we may teach them to love whatever is just and true and good, following the example of our Savior Jesus Christ.<sup>5</sup>

### **For Young Persons**

God our Father, you see your children growing up in an unsteady and confused world: Show them that your ways give more life than the ways of the world, and that following you is better than chasing after selfish goals. Help them to take failure, not as a measure of their worth, but as a chance for a new start. Give them strength to hold their faith in you, and to keep alive their joy in your creation; through Jesus Christ our Lord.<sup>6</sup>

### **For Peace**

O God, it is your will to hold both heaven and earth in a single peace. Let the design of your great love shine on the waste of our wraths and sorrows, and give peace to your Church, peace among nations, peace in our homes, and peace in our hearts; through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.<sup>7</sup>

### **For the Neighbourhood**

O Lord our creator, by your holy prophet you taught your ancient people to seek the welfare of the cities in which they lived. We commend our neighbourhood to your care, that it might be kept free from social strife and decay. Give us strength of purpose and concern for others, that we may create here a community of justice and peace where your will may be done; through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.<sup>8</sup>

### **For the Poor and Neglected**

Almighty and most merciful God, we remember before you the homeless, the destitute, the sick, the aged, and all who have none to care for them. Heal those who are broken in body or spirit, and turn their sorrow into joy. Grant this for the love of your Son, who for our sake became poor, Jesus Christ our Lord.<sup>9</sup>

### **For Doctors and Nurses**

Sanctify, O Lord, those whom you have called to the study and practice of the arts of healing, and to the prevention of disease and pain. Strengthen them by your life-giving Spirit, that by their ministries the health of the community may be promoted and your creation glorified; through Jesus Christ our Lord.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> The Episcopal Church, 829.

<sup>6</sup> The Episcopal Church, 829.

<sup>7</sup> Anglican Church of Canada, *The Book of Alternative Services*, 677.

<sup>8</sup> Anglican Church of Canada, 680.

<sup>9</sup> Anglican Church of Canada, 681.

<sup>10</sup> The Episcopal Church, *The Book of Common Prayer*, 460.

### **For Healing**

O God of peace, who taught us that in returning and rest we shall be saved, in quietness and confidence shall be our strength; by the might of your Spirit lift us, we pray, to your presence, where we may be still and know that you are God; through Jesus Christ our Lord.<sup>11</sup>

### **For Those in Affliction**

Almighty and everlasting God, the comfort of the sad and the strength of those who suffer, hear the prayers of your people who are in any trouble. Grant to everyone in distress mercy, relief, and refreshment; through Jesus Christ our Lord.<sup>12</sup>

### **For Those in Mental Distress**

Heavenly Father, have mercy on all your children who live in mental distress. Restore them to strength of mind and cheerfulness of spirit, and give them health and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord.<sup>13</sup>

### **For the Aged**

O Lord God, look with mercy on all whose increasing years bring them isolation, distress, or weakness. Provide for them homes of dignity and peace; give them understanding helpers and the willingness to accept help; and, as their strength diminishes, increase their faith and their assurance of your love. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.<sup>14</sup>

### **For the Right Use of God's Gifts**

Almighty God, whose loving hand has given us all that we possess: Grant us grace that we may honor you with our substance, and, remembering the account which we must one day give, may be faithful stewards of your bounty, through Jesus Christ our Lord.<sup>15</sup>

### **For Those Who Travel**

God whose glory fills the whole creation, and whose presence we find wherever we go, preserve those who travel (in particular . . . ); surround them with your loving care; protect them from every danger; and bring them in safety to their journey's end; through Jesus Christ our Lord.<sup>16</sup>

### **For Guidance**

O God, by whom the meek are guided in judgment, and light rises up in darkness for the godly; Grant us, in all our doubts and uncertainties, the grace to ask what you would have us to do, that the Spirit of wisdom may save us from all false choices, and that in your light we may see light, and in your straight path may not stumble, through Jesus Christ our Lord.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Anglican Church of Canada, *The Book of Alternative Services*, 554.

<sup>12</sup> Anglican Church of Canada, 682.

<sup>13</sup> Anglican Church of Canada, 682.

<sup>14</sup> Anglican Church of Canada, 682.

<sup>15</sup> The Episcopal Church, *The Book of Common Prayer*, 827.

<sup>16</sup> Anglican Church of Canada, *The Book of Alternative Services*, 682.

<sup>17</sup> The Episcopal Church, *The Book of Common Prayer*, 832.

### **In Time of Great Concern**

Look in compassion, O heavenly Father, upon this troubled and divided world. Though we cannot trace thy footsteps or understand thy working, give us grace to trust thee with an undoubting faith; and when thine own time is come, reveal, O Lord, that new heaven and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness, where the prince of peace ruleth, thy Son our saviour Jesus Christ.<sup>18</sup>

### **The Way, the Truth, the Life**

Lord Jesu Christ, who said that you are the way, the truth, and the life: we pray you to suffer us not at any time to stray from you, who are the way; nor ever to distrust your promises, who are the truth; nor to rest in any other thing than you, who are the life; for you have taught us what to believe, what to do, what to hope, and wherein to rest.<sup>19</sup>

### **For the Suffering**

O You who are love, and who sees all the suffering, injustice, and misery which reign in this world: Have pity, we implore you, on the work of your hands. Look mercifully upon the poor, the oppressed, the destitute, and all who are heavy laden. Fill our hearts with deep compassion for those who suffer, and hasten the coming of your kingdom of justice and truth; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.<sup>20</sup>

### **For Bereavement or Loss**

Lord, I have been left alone, and my heart is broken. Be with me in this great loss and sorrow, let me know the comfort of your presence, give me strength to endure, save me from bitterness and self-pity, and keep my heart open to the needs of others. For the sake of Jesus Christ.<sup>21</sup>

### **For a Time of Desolation**

O Lord Jesus Christ, on the Cross you cried out in anguish, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me”. In that desert of the senses and the spirit, in that desert which consumed everything in your Heart, your soul was still in prayer. The dreadful wasteland of a heart devastated by suffering became in you a solitary call to God. O prayer of anguish, prayer of abandonment, prayer of unfathomable weakness, prayer of a forsaken God, let us adore you. If you prayed like this, O Jesus, if you prayed in such an agony, is there any abyss so deep we cannot call out from it to your Father? Is there any despair so hopeless that it cannot become a prayer by being gathered up into your abandonment? In those words, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me” you were able to say all that had to be said. Teach me to pray those words, so that they become the words of my own heart.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> MacNutt, *The Prayer Manual*, 177.

<sup>19</sup> MacNutt, 26.

<sup>20</sup> Colquhoun, *Parish Prayers*, 301.

<sup>21</sup> Duffy, *The Heart in Pilgrimage*, 152.

<sup>22</sup> Duffy, 153.

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