

Christian Prayer Book

Which Contains Beautiful, Devout Supplications,
Thanksgivings and Testimonies

by Péter Pázmány S.J.
Cardinal
Archbishop of Esztergom, Hungary from 1616 to 1637



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CHRISTIAN PRAYER BOOK,
WITH BEAUTIFUL, DEVOTIONAL PRAYERS,
THANKSGIVINGS AND TESTIMONIES

In Graz, 1606

PREFACE LETTER

To the noble and honorable Mrs. Anna Kapi,
to the honorable László Hethesi Pethe, free lord of Ormosd Castle,
and the beloved spouse of His Imperial Majesty's field lieutenant,
to me, my lady,
I wish you long life and eternal glory from the Lord God.

The majestic God, through the prophet Zechariah, promised long ago that whose heart is filled with God, the Holy Spirit poured out by Christ, will teach and stir up to divine supplication, devout and fervent prayer; For almost as the fruit tree without water produces no good fruit; as the limbs are broken without bodily food; as the honeycomb without honey; as the wall without lime, and the body without the quickening spirit is weak and useless: so also the soul of a Christian man, cannot increase in any good thing, cannot bear any fruit, cannot gain any enduring perfection without prayer and supplication.

This gift promised by God, the Holy Spirit, I certainly experience in Your Grace, my noble and pious lady; For when the infinite goodness of the living God, having chosen your Grace in the womb, has brought you to the true knowledge of the old Christian religion, has, together with the true religion, instilled and planted in your heart such a spirit of devotion and prayer that you have no greater spiritual joy and delight than in prayer and divine service; By which devotion also the soul of your Grace, as the face of Moses by conversation with God, shall be so purified and enlightened, that in it, as in a mirror of steel, and in a fair and lively image, any man may see with delight the power and zeal of true knowledge, and the power and zeal of God the Holy Ghost, who is grafted in with it.

For this reason, the other day, Your Grace, complaining here in Graz, in the name of yourself and of many Christians in Hungary, how scarce and rare are Christian prayer-books in our nation, Your Grace advised me, to write such a devout Christian book.

And though I have many daily and diverse occupations in this place, nevertheless, in compliance with the request of your Grace and of many devout Christians, I have gathered together, along with my various duties, some devotions and thanksgivings, not only from the writings of the ancient holy fathers, but especially from the Holy Scriptures, that we may pray with the words coming from the mouth of God. For though I have not written down everywhere in the margins of the book the places of Scripture, nevertheless almost all the prayers contained in this book are taken from Scripture.

And since the admonition and desire of your Grace has been the main reason for this work, I want to dedicate and write this prayer book to your Grace, and through your Grace to many Christians dwelling in the country of Hungary, so that, as in the Scriptures two women called Anna are given as examples to all categories of people in prayer, one in the

Old Testament, who, being infertile, by her prayer received Samuel from God; and the other in the time of our Lord Christ, who by her continual prayer obtained to see with her eyes God become flesh: In this way, your Grace, bearing their name, may also follow devotions, and as they were in time past the mirror and example of devout worshippers, so may your Grace in our wretched country be the mirror of the order of devout women.

May the most majestic God keep your Grace, together with her loving spouse, her sweet child, and all the Christian orders, in the true faith to the end, and bless her with a good, healthy, peaceful, happy, long life in this world, and in the next with everlasting joy and happiness.

At Graz, in the year 1606, on the 25th day of the month of St. George.

Happy to be of service to Your Grace

Peter Pázmány

FOR THE TRUE FAITH

Praise be to thee, my holy Father in heaven, that thou hast chosen me out of so many heathen nations and apostate erring people, not for my own merit, but for thy good pleasure only, and hast led me to thy true knowledge, the old Christian religion. For what shall it profit me to be born into the world, if thou wilt not enlighten me with the light of the true faith? For without faith it is impossible for me to be saved.

O light of my soul, which comest from the inconceivable brightness of God! O unfailing righteousness, which is the gift of God for the guidance of our pilgrimage! Let my soul, O Lord, follow thy true teaching in this unholy valley of ignorance, that I may thereby enter into the day of eternal happiness.

Blessed art thou, O God, who through true faith hast shewn us the unthinkable treasures of thy riches, and hast through Christ endowed us with all spiritual blessings. Strengthen, O Lord, to the end what thou hast begun in me; instruct my ignorance, enlighten my blindness, strengthen my weakness, and increase my faith. Preserve in me the precious treasure of thy true religion; help my weak faith to believe truly and without all doubting everything about thee, thy glory, the Trinity one God, the incarnation of your holy Son, and of all the branches of true faith which Holy Mother Church has set before me; and that I should not give place to any reasoning against this, but should keep my understanding and my affections under the obedience of faith.

And that this thy gift may be profitable and fruitful in me, give me thy holy grace, that my faith may not be found before thee without a wedding garment, but working in charity, and may be adorned by works of mercy; and that I may not only by word, but by deed, and even if need be by death, make a brave profession of the true faith above all things; knowing that he who denies the truth before men will be denied it in the day of judgment.

I believe and fully confess, my God, what thou hast set through Holy Mother Church, through the vicars of the apostles, before me. In this faith I will go before thy judgment seat. Keep me, O Lord, in the true doctrine until the end. Through thy holy Son, our Lord

Jesus Christ. Amen.

FOR HOPE

Gracious Lord of heaven and earth, in thee is my hope, I shall not be ashamed. In thee I trust, for I was taken under thy care while still in my mother's womb. O Lord, thou art merciful on those who trust in thee, and do not forsake those who put their hopes in thee: strengthen my heart with the strong iron anchor of true hope, that I may always trust in thee steadfastly in the midst of the wars and tempests of this world, and be comforted by thy holy word in all my troubles.

Our fathers trusted in thee, and thou hast delivered them from all troubles: they trusted in thee, and were not ashamed. It is better to trust in thee, than in the sons of men, and in princes, who cannot deliver. Cursed is he that trusteth in the flesh, and putteth his trust in the strength of men: his hope is as a cobweb, and perisheth quickly.

Wherefore, O Lord, when we behold our weakness, we justly tremble; but we are encouraged by thy infinite goodness and mercy, which overcomes our iniquities. The precious wounds of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the shedding of His holy blood, are the cause of our courage: they are our treasure, our hope, our courage, and our invincible refuge. For why should I not trust in thee, O Lord, who for me were crucified on the cross? O my protection, O my hope, who hast written me on thy holy hand, that though a mother forget one of her own, thou mayest never forget me. Though my sins make me afraid, yet your abundant redemption is my comfort. For thou art the infinite good, whose most favored deed is mercy; and only those who will not receive thy gifts thou hast no mercy on. If therefore thou didst not hate me when I was purposely separated from thee, but diligently sought me as a lost sheep, and took me upon thy shoulder: neither wilt thou hate me now, I know, when, being stirred up by thy gift, I humbly seek thy holy majesty. Give me, O Lord, a steadfast hope, that in all my afflictions, in all my sicknesses, I may trust in thee, my merciful Father. Through thy holy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

AGAINST DESPAIR

I know and confess, O Lord God, that I have transgressed thy laws innumerable times, I have defiled my life with many evils, for which my heart fears and trembles.

But thou, Father of mercy, whose property is mercy and all of whose works mercy overrides; who receives the wicked man to thyself, in the hour he repents, and remembers not his iniquities: receive thy prodigal sons to thyself. I have sinned, O Father, against heaven and against thee. If thou wilt take count of my iniquities, I shall not be saved. But, O Lord, against the dry leaf, provoke not thy wrath, and against the dust, show not thy power, but thy mercy. Look not on my sins, but look on the face of Christ lifted up on the cross, and on his abundant redemption, who, though one drop of his blood was sufficient to redeem the whole world, yet, to encourage his sinful sons, he shed for us his precious, holy blood to the last drop.

Greater is your mercy, O Lord, than my iniquity; greater is the cry of the blood of righteous Abel, than my iniquity. Trust therefore in God, my soul; behold the abundant treasure of thy

salvation, which thy Saviour has presented unto God.

If thou, O my God, hast laid my sins upon the shoulders of thy holy Son, and have scourged in him all our iniquities, do not punish my wicked life anew, but, giving us thy holy Son, pour out thy mercy upon us with him. Many times have I offended thee greatly; but, Father of mercies, have not thou laid my burden on the shoulders of thy holy Son? Hast thou not healed my spiritual afflictions with the wounds flowing with the blood of his holy body? Thou hast so extended thy mercy, O Lord, that, when we could not make satisfaction for our sins, thou hast given thy Son in our stead; that his humility might be a remedy for our pride: his anguish might make satisfaction for our bodily pleasures; his meekness might purge our wrathful disobedience. Why then should I despair? Why should I not trust in the infinite merit of my Saviour, and in thy great love? If thou wouldst ask mercy for thy murderers on the cross; if thou wouldst receive St. Peter, who denied thee, if thou wouldst receive the robber, who begged thee on the cross, with such grace: Thy mercy is not changed even now; and since thou callest to thee with gracious promises those that are heavy laden with sin, and promisest them relief, I also, thy poor sinful servant, will appeal to thee with my hope as with a strong anchor; I will cleave to thee as to a strong rock. If never before hast thou hated them who trusted in thee; if thou never were ashamed of any that trusted in thee: hate poor me either.

My Father, who hast created me to see thy face, and hath planted me in Christ by true faith, suffer me not to perish for my sins, and let not the shedding of the blood of thy holy Son be in vain in me. Encourage my heart, and say unto it, I am thy salvation: whosoever trusteth in me shall not perish. Let the precious merit of thy holy blood, thy saving name of Jesus, and thy steadfast love to us, awaken in me the true hope: that in thee, who art both my judge and my merciful advocate and protector, I may firmly trust in all my fights with all my heart. Who livest and reignest. Amen.

FOR THE FEAR OF GOD

I beseech thee, true and holy God, to pour into my heart the beginning of true wisdom, the foundation of a perfect life, and the strong protection of all good works, thy holy fear: that knowing my iniquities, and thy wondrous and righteous judgments, I may fear in all my doings, and dread thy wrath as waters above my head, knowing that thou wilt not leave iniquity unpunished.

O Lord God, before whom the stars are not pure, and even in thy angels findest defect: who dreadeth not thee, seeing thy harsh scourge against sinners, the daily afflictions of those who are unstable in the service of God, the innumerable insinuations of this world and of the devil, wherewith they continually afflict human weakness?

Take out of my heart, O Lord, all worldly fears, that I may not fear them which can do no harm but to the body: but that I may fear thee, who can kill my body and my soul. Let me love thee, O Lord, for thy infinite goodness; let me fear thee, for thy majesty's sake, and for my innumerable sins, which I must account for before thy righteous judgment seat in the sight of the heavenly hosts. If the righteous then be but little saved in thy judgment, where shall the wicked man go?

Let thy fear, O my God, be a strong keeper of my soul and of my affections, to put away not only sin, but also the company and the means that leadeth to sin. Lord, do not scourge

me in thy wrath; do not go to judgment with thy servant, for no one before thee, without thy mercy, is justified and cleansed from sin. Heal me therefore, O Lord God, and I shall be healed; deliver me, and I shall be delivered. For thou art my hope. Who liveth and reigneth for ever and ever. Amen.

Pour into our hearts the fear and love of thy holy name, O Lord God; for never shall thy fatherly providence forsake them whom thou hast built up on the strength of thy love. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

FOR LOVE

O Lord God, who loved us so much that thou wouldst give thy only Son for us, through His travail, toil, and suffering thou hast redeemed us, thy ungrateful and rebellious servants. Therefore, for thy infinite love, I beseech thee to kindle in my heart the fire which thy holy Son brought into the world. Write and plant in my soul thy new commandment, whereby thou hast ordered us to love thee above all things, our neighbour as ourselves and as members of the one living body, not only in word and with the tongue, but in reality and deed.

Grant, O Lord God, that I may love not only my benefactors, but also my enemies, and that, following the example of thy holy Son, I may pray with pure love for the people who mish me evil. Take out of me, O Lord, all hatred, envy, and resentment against my neighbour, that the bond of perfection, true love, may dwell in me: and as thou forgivest us our trespasses, so let us truly forgive those who trespass against us.

And I shall love you, O Lord, with such steadfast and fervent love, that neither life nor death, neither poverty nor riches, neither joy nor troubles, shall separate me from thy love. Who would not love you, O Lord, who are the inexhaustible fountain of all beauty, comfort, riches, and delights? All worldly beauty is but a shadow of thy beauty; the good of the beings of this world are all but morsels of thy table, wherein are many wantings, and cannot satisfy my soul. Return therefore to thy rest, O my soul, and love Him only who hath filled and satisfied thee with all good; who hath loved thee with joy, and hath loved thee more than a mother loveth her only son. If even fierce lions those who do good to them: why then, O my ungrateful and hard heart, lovest thou not thy Lord thy God, who hath made thee lord of the earth, and of the sea, and of every created animal? Who hath delivered thee by the terrible torment of His only Son? Who promised Himself as a reward for thy love? I love thee, O Lord, who first loved me, loved me with an everlasting love, and created me for thyself; when I would have fallen, thou raised me up; when I would have died, thou gavest me life again, with the precious blood of the true pelican bird, our Lord. For all these things, O Lord, I owe it to thee to give thee my heart entirely: and not once, but many times more. Grant, therefore, my sweet God, that my soul may be quickened and consumed with thy love, and that I may truly say with St. Paul, 'I live, and now not I, but Christ lives in me.' Lord, what more can I desire of thee, on earth or in heaven? My heart and my body, O God of my heart, melt in thy love. Extinguish in me, O Lord, with the fire of thy love, the fire of worldly desires. Soften my will to thy will, harden it to the desires of this world. For our loving Lord and Saviour, who lives and reigns &. Amen.

FOR SUFFERING IN SILENCE OUR TROUBLES AND OUR AFFLICTIONS

O Lord God, who art the strength of the weak, the comfort of the weary and burdened, the consolation of the embittered, the keeper and protector of the forsaken: thou God of all comfort, thou seest my weakness and my infirmity. Thou seest that I cannot bear my troubles, which thou hast brought upon me for my sins, without thy holy grace. Thou knowest well the weakness of a vessel made of clay, how a little speck of dust is carried away by a whirlwind, so my weakness shall be overcome by troubles, if thou dost not help me.

Therefore I humbly beseech thy holy Majesty to give me such encouraging grace, that with such an affliction as thou scourgest thy disobedient son, I may take it well and with thanksgiving; that I may bear thy punishments with full faith and quiet suffering; that I may conform my judgment and my will to thy holy will in all things.

I confess, O Lord, that for my iniquity I have deserved more than what I now suffer: and I thank thee that thou dost not pay according to what I deserve, but showest thy fatherly mercy in punishment, and as thy son, thou wilt mercifully rebuke and scourge me, that I may not be carried away with the deceitfulness of a flattering world. Blessed be thy name in all things, O Lord, who wounds me, and heals me again; who scourges me, and comforts me again.

O my God my Saviour, true master of quiet endurance, who from thy circumcision unto thy holy death sufferest innumerable pains, reproaches, scorns, injuries, scourgings: give me such a steadfast heart that I may suffer all reproaches, shames and scourgings silently.

O merciful and gracious God, whose mercy overpasses all other works, grant that through thy holy grace, following the example of godly Job, we may bear all our troubles in silence; for we suffer them due to our sins, we, who have not used the peace and good fortune which thou hast given us for thy service, but for the desires of our flesh.

O Lord Jesus Christ, who for me were crucified on the cross, the support of the weak, the consoler of the sorrowful, the strength of the oppressed, the joy of the weeping, the protector of the abandoned, the helper of the afflicted, the God of all comfort: comfort and encourage me, that I may suffer all thy scourges and thy fatherly visitations in peace. I cannot, O Lord, complain against thee for thy scourgings; for I know that if thou hadst punished me according to my deserts, thou wouldst have inflicted much greater blows upon me. But only I beseech your holy name, that this present troubles of mine may be for the salvation of my soul, for the honour of thy holy name; and that thou mayst not allow the waters of the world to come upon me above my strength. Thou seest, O Lord, that our infirmity cannot overcome this many troubles of this world: grant us therefore thy holy grace, that we may suffer the scourge of our sins in peace. Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us; and though our ceaseless transgressions deserve ceaseless blows, grant that all our troubles may be for the betterment of our lives, and not for our eternal damnation. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

AGAINST PRIDE

O Lord Jesus Christ, true mirror of humility, who wanted that we should learn humility from thee, and that dust and ashes should learn humility from thy shameful pains; who have no

cause for pride either in body or soul: put away from me the puffed-up pride which thou hatest. Almighty and righteous God, who hast humiliated the pride of angels in a terrible way, and hast chosen thy humble handmaid to be thy mother, take away the pride of my heart, and grant that I may boast in nothing but thee; Let me hate no man, nor attribute anything to myself, but let me recognize that what is good in me, comes from thee, the infinite fountain of all good, that I may attribute all the glory not to me, but to thy holy name. Who livest with God the Father and the Holy Ghost, &. Amen.

AGAINST AVARICE

O God, who gives all good in abundance, who hast often commanded alms for thy name's sake, open my ear to the understanding of thy commandments, and not to avarice; and grant that I may be well disposed to thy poor with the goods which I have received of thee. Take out of my heart the desire of worldly riches, which is the root of all evil. Grant that I may be content with what is mine, and desire nothing which belongs others: and that I may distribute my goods, which I have received of thy gift, joyfully and cheerfully to them that shall receive me into the habitation of eternal rest. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

AGAINST GLUTTONY

O Lord Jesus Christ, who, desiring by the example of thy life to restrain the convenience and the excesses of the human flesh, not only hungered for us forty whole days, but also chose vinegar and gall to quench your thirst at the hour of thy death: grant that I may be preserved from all excesses and drunkenness, and from the weak and convenient nourishment of my flesh; and having tasted the sweetness of heavenly happiness, I may not be anxious to fatten myself, the food of worms, but may desire with all my strength to enter thy heavenly feast. Who thou livest &c. Amen.

AGAINST LEWDNESS

O God of purity, who due to lewdness hast sent the flood into this world, to quench the flame of lewdness: behold the weakness of the human flesh, and quench the power of evil passions with thy holy grace; for without thy gift and help the weak human cannot live pure. Suffer me not, O my God, to defile my flesh, thy temple, which thou hast sanctified unto thee by the reception of thy pure holy Body and Blood; but grant that I may serve thee in purity of body and soul to the end: and that, having overcome the enemy of the household, and hating the beauties of this world, I may be partaker of thy joy, which overcometh all beauties. Who art alive, &c. Amen.

AGAINST ENVY

O merciful and gracious God, who dost include thy law in the commandment of love, put true Christian love in my heart, that I may love my brethren, redeemed by thy holy blood, as myself, and a member of the same body: rejoice in their good things as in my own;

mourn over their afflictions as over my own; and hate only him who through envy hath made the human race sin. Amen.

AGAINST HOLDING GRUDGES

My gracious and merciful Saviour, who like an innocent lamb hast been led to death without opening thy mouth; who for so many innumerable pains and shames hast not paid back with evil for evil, but rather for those who have sinned against thee hast pleaded with thy holy Father: plant in our hearts thy quiet, great forbearing gentleness, and restrain our angry, vengeful desires.

Grant, O my God, that I may really and truly know that for my sins I deserve far more than what I suffer from my neighbour: and that, having quenched the fury of wrath, I may overcome the evil done to me with good; that I may love my haters; and suffer with thanksgiving whatever your thy hand may bestow upon me; that through worldly suffering I may be made partaker of the joy of thy glory. Who livest with God the Father and the Holy Ghost, &c. Amen.

AGAINST SLOTH

O Lord Jesus Christ, who for my sake didst not spare any of thy labour and toil were; for my sake thou hast hungered, thirsted, prayed all night long: Take away from my heart sloth; grant that I may serve thee with joy, in fasting, in watchfulness, in unceasing prayer. May I help my neighbour with good will in his need, assist him in his failings, comfort him in his bitterness, instruct him in his ignorance, bear his burdens with joy, and labour diligently in all things: knowing not only that I have a short time, and after that I cannot labour, but also that our labour will have a glorious fruit. Help me therefore, O my God, and strengthen me. Who livest with God the Father and the Holy Ghost, &c. Amen.

THE DESIRE OF ETERNAL HAPPINESS

I rejoiced at what I heard, that we are going into the house of the Lord, where there is no sorrow, no grief, no mourning: for God will wipe away our tears, and will cast out all our pains. As the deer longeth for the well, so my soul longeth for thee, O Lord, for I know that I have no permanent stay here. How beautiful, O Lord, are thy tents! My soul longs and yearns for thy dwellings. Who will deliver me from the dungeon and prison of this death? Woe to me, for my pilgrimage is prolonged; I desire to be set free and to be with Christ: for better is one day in thy house than a thousand years in this world.

Rejoice, O my soul, for thou wilt go into the house of the Lord, wherein is no temptation, no strife, no fear, but quiet and courageous joy: wherein is no envy, no arguments, no evil desire. O blessed hour, in which I also sing with St. David, that thou hast brought me through fire and water, and I am at rest. Then will I also joyfully say with the saints: O Lord God, thou hast made us kings, and we will reign for ever and ever; not in this land, where all joy and every kingdom is short and fleeting, but in the land of the living, where there shall be no more darkness of ignorance as in the gloom of Egypt, for God and the Lamb

are the true light of that city; Nor shall there be found any restless desires, for the Lord is everything in all, and will make us drunk with the beauty of his house, which shall so overpas our desires, that the consolation which God hath prepared for his faithful cannot even enter into the heart of man.

Rejoice also, O my body, which through death will be sown into the earth, like a good seed, that thou mayest bloom much more splendid in the spring. For now thou art corruptible, but then thou shalt be incorruptible; now thou art weak and abonimable, but then thou shalt be mighty and glorious; for the brightness, the quickness, the power, and the inviolability of the soul shall be thine as well.

I commend my soul into thy hands, O my God: thou hast redeemed me, O God of truth. I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that on the last day I shall rise again, and putting on my skin again, I shall see my God my Saviour. This hope is hid in my heart, and with it I go before my Lord.

FOR SUFFERING DISEASE IN PEACE

O my God, in this world scourge me, in this world visit me with thy plagues, but do not strip me of the everlasting goods, and do not cast me into eternal damnation. Thou use to scourge, O Lord, those who are in thy favor, And try in the furnace of affliction thine own. Let me therefore, my God, be one of those whom thou lovest: for I am of those whom thou scourgest.

Thou, O Lord, art the consolation in our troubles, the strength of our weakness. Either, therefore, lighten my afflictions, or strengthen my heart by thy Holy Spirit, that I may suffer your visitations in peace. I confess, O my God, that for my sins I deserve not only the scourge of this world, but also eternal damnation; but do not deal with me according to my sins, but according to thy infinite mercy.

Thanks be to thee, O Lord, that thou hast turned the eternal punishment which I deserve into temporal pains, and as my loving Father and good caring physician, thou hast scourged me: that I may not trust myself to the foul flesh and deceitful world, but turn all my desires to thee, who art the true strength and encourager of thy sick. Grant, O my God, that I may suffer thy visitations as quietly as thy faithful servants: Job, Tobias [Tobit], Joseph, David; and that he may encourage me in all my afflictions, who for me suffered the terrible torment of the cross with great peace, our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

PRAYER OF A MAN CONDEMNED TO DEATH

O merciful and gracious God, who by thy infinite wisdom dost wonderfully guide thy elect faithful, blessed be thy holy name in all things. I know, O my God, that for my abominable sins I deserve not only bodily death, but also eternal damnation; for innumerable, minor transgressions, I would be lost for ever, both in body and soul. But thou, Father of mercy, hast waited for me until this hour; and when I was sunk in iniquity, thou hast not suffered me to die suddenly, without penance, through mine enemies, or through accidental affliction, as many others have died; but hast given me time for the mourning of my sins, and hast also allowed me that which David the prophet desired with great supplication,

that thou hast made known to me the hour of my death, that, detaching my mind from worldly thoughts, I might prepare for my last struggle.

Blessed be your name, O Lord, who is willing to scourge my sins in this world, that thou mayst deliver me from eternal damnation. And because this is thy holy will, I receive thy visitation with thanksgiving: only, my Lord and my God, who wast crucified for me with great shame and scolding among the robbers, grant that I may suffer the deserved death in silence and peace, and that thy just wrath may be satisfied with this my torment.

Remember, O my saving God, thy bloody sweat before thy death, the terror of a weak flesh, and encourage my weakness, that for my sins and the satisfaction of thy justice I may suffer this death with joy, which is the way of my soul unto true life.

O how I would I want, O my God, to suffer this death not for my sins, but for the truth, for the Christian faith, for thy holy name! But since I was not worthy for this, and have by my sins scandalized many, by evil example, let many be cleansed from sins by my death. Accept, O Lord, this my suffering as a sweet-smelling sacrifice; and as thou had mercy on the robber crucified with thee at the hour of his death, have mercy, have mercy on me, thy poor sinful servant. Amen.

FOR OUR PARENTS

O Lord of heaven and earth, who commanded us, if we would be important in this world, to honour our father and mother, from whom we got our lives: I beseech thee, protect my beloved parents from all ills of body and soul. Thou hast vowed, O my God, that thou wilt dishonour him that dishonoureth his father or mother: but he that honoureth them, thou wilt hear all his supplications, and make the rest of his life long on this earth. Give me therefore a quiet and meek mind, that I may honour my parents and my guardians, obey them in obedience, not to trouble them: not to hate their age and waning strength, as that godless Cain; but for their cares and troubles for me, may serve them as my lords unto death, knowing that I cannot sufficiently repay their many labours and troubles with me.

O Lord Jesus Christ, true example and bright mirror of all virtues, who with great obedience obeyed thy holy mother, and in thy bitter anguish, taking care of her, thou commended her to thy loving disciple, and after thy Ascension, thou didst visit her with the gifts of the Holy Spirit: grant that I also may take obedient care of my beloved parents all my life; that I may not in any way violate their requests and wishes. Forgive me, O Lord, for my disobedience and unthankfulness hitherto; remember not the blindness and wickedness of my youth. Keep me from all wicked company, from lewdness, and from excesses: and grant that I may grow not only in age, but in learning, in godliness, and in all perfections, both before God and before men. Amen.

PIOUS MARRIED COUPLES FOR ONE ANOTHER

Gracious and merciful God, who in the beginning of the world didst ordain, and clothed in human flesh didst sanctify by thy presence and first miracle the marriage which thou didst make honorable in the holy patriarchs of old, that thereby thy people might increase and the number of the elect might be fulfilled: grant for thy holy name's sake that in this state

we may serve thee faithfully. Let not the devil have any power over us, as over the husbands of Sarah: but by thy Holy Spirit, and by the protection of the heavenly angels, guide us so that I may bear with my spouse the burden of holy matrimony with a quiet and gentle mind. Preserve and increase love between us, that we may live without all arguments, suspicion, disturbance, and disharmony, in pure and true Christian love, serving you with one heart and one will.

Protect us, O Lord, from all physical and spiritual evils, and, for the glory of your holy name, to the edification of Holy Mother Church, grant us that our children may also serve thy holy Majesty. Look not, O Lord, on my sins, and scourge me not with afflictions or death of my beloved spouse: but for thy infinite goodness keep us for the glory of thy holy name. Through your beloved holy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

PARENTS FOR THEIR CHILD

Eternal, almighty Lord God, who with great love hast called children to thee, and through the infants hast willed thy praise to be fulfilled: I beseech thee, for the shedding of thy precious holy blood, keep and bless these thy gifts, wherewith thou hast visited me by holy matrimony; and grant, for thy holy name's sake, that they may grow up in thy fear, in true faith, and in all good morals, that by them thy holy name may be glorified, thy holy mother church being built up.

But since after the fall of our first father, man is inclined to evil from his youth, and since the folly which leads to evil is instilled in the heart of the child, protect, O Lord, the children of thy servants from all evil company, from drunkenness, from sexual immorality: that the fear of your holy name may keep in them the pure robe of innocence of baptism forever. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen.

FOR PRISONERS

Lord of heaven and Creator of the earth, there is none who can resist thy will and overturn thy finished counsel. We beseech thee, out of thy infinite goodness, to look upon thy wretched poor, who lie innocent in the dungeons of the heathen, and cry to thee in hard service, as the people of Israel of old, who suffered in Egyptian bondage.

Give, O Lord God, by thy Holy Spirit, joy into their hearts, that for thy name's sake they may suffer in peace the scourge that is visited upon them: and according to thy infinite power and wisdom, give them a way of deliverance. Hear, O Lord, the prayers of those who are in chains, loose their bonds, grant them their freedom; that they may praise thy holy name with joy, and that the heathen nations may know that thou alone art the God of salvation.

But if thy majesty will further scourge the sinful sons, comfort their afflictions, lighten their yoke, deliver their souls from the bondage of the devil, keep them in the true faith: that neither worldly afflictions nor necessities, nor the enticements of the heathen, nor the deceitfulness of the devil, may hurt them. By thy loving and holy Son, who has delivered us from the bondage of the devil. Amen.

FOR THE SICK

Mighty God, strong guardian and protector of human frailty, who holds in his hands the bounds of our lives, we beseech thy majesty for thy sick servants: comfort them, encourage and strengthen them, that they may cherish your visitations and suffer them in silence. Heal them, for thy holy name's sake, from the plague that is visited upon them, that they may, recognizing thy goodness to them, give worthy thanks for thy mercy, and be strengthened in thy love and fear by thy fatherly scourging.

But if, in your infinite wisdom, you see that their present passing away is more useful, give them the Holy Spirit, that through true penance they may obtain remission of sins, and that they may be departed from this world in thy favor. Give them thy holy grace, that they may know the scourge of bodily afflictions and plagues to come from thy fatherly hand. For without thy will not even a hair of our head can fall off, and thou scourge us that we may turn from our sins to thee, who art true life and true happiness. O blessed Jesus, who hast conquered the snares of death, be a help to thy sick servants. Who liveth and reigneth with God the Father and the Holy Ghost. Amen.

FOR THOSE WHO ARE EMBITTERED

O Lord Jesus Christ, for thy bloody sweat, for thy bitterness at the hour of thy holy death, I beseech thee to be a help to thy bitter and troubled servants: encourage and comfort them by thy Holy Spirit, that in all things they may be conformed to thy will, and may suffer all their troubles in peace.

Now thou hast promised, O Lord, not to let thy servants be tempted above their strength, but to lighten their burdens. And though thou suffer the devil to chastise thy servants, and to try them in the fires of troubles, yet thou wilt restrain him, that he may not trample thy wheat, nor turn it into dust, but like St. Job, sifts them, keeping it intact. Give, therefore, my God, the Holy Ghost to thy embittered servants, wipe away their tears, comfort their sorrowful hearts: that they may not fall into some sin, because of outward troubles and inward bitterness, but may their lamentations turn to joy, out of thy goodness, and may they serve thy holy Majesty with infinite thanksgiving. Who livest and reignest &c. Amen.

FOR OUR ENEMIES

Long-suffering Jesus Christ, only begotten Son of the living God, who givest heavenly light to both good and evil alike; who at the hour of thy death makest supplication to thy holy Father for thy murderers; who commandest us also to love our enemies, and to pray for our slanderers, leaving vengeance only to thee: strengthen in us the Christian love, spiritual meekness and suffering in peace, that we may forgive those who trespass against us with a pure heart, and that we may suffer all troubles quietly and peacefully.

Forgive, O Lord, the sins of my enemies, and pay them well for their evil designs against me. Give them true love, that they may repent of their sins, and turning from their

iniquities, may they obtain mercy from thee. Keep me also, thy poor sinful servant, from the evil intentions of all my enemies in body and soul, turning their efforts against me into good. By thy holy death. Amen.

PLEA OF THE WAYFARERS

O merciful and gracious God, who brought the children of Israel through the midst of the sea by dry foot, and the three holy kings [wise men] by thy star; grant us and our wayfaring brethren a prosperous journey, and quiet time; that by the guidance of thy holy angel we may go on our way, and in the end may we go happily in the rest of eternal life.

O Lord God, who hast brought out thy servant Abraham from the heathen, from the fire of the Chaldeans, preserved him in all his ways: we beseech thee to protect us thy servants also. Be to us our help in our preparation, our comfort in our journey, our shade in heat, our shelter in rain and cold, our rest in weariness, our protection in adversity, our helper in our evil way, our helper in our peril: that by thee we may go in peace whithersoever we go, and come again to our house in health.

Hear, O Lord, our supplication, and guide the way of thy servants with thy salvific protection: that we may be preserved by thy help in the midst of the many perils of this world, and of the wayfarers.

Grant, we beseech thee, almighty God, that thy servants may walk in the way of salvation, and following the admonition of thy elder St. John, to come boldly to our Lord Jesus Christ.

O Lord Jesus Christ, faithful and diligent protector of the human race, I beseech thee, for thy many labours and pilgrimages for us, send down thine angel from on high, who shall keep and instruct me in all my ways, as he kept Abraham, Jacob, Tobias in their pilgrimages. And grant, by thy holy death, that we may all know our existence as a stranger in this world, and not cling to this earth, but with a pure heart and pure soul desire to come to thee, and to enter into the promised happiness. Who livest and reignest &c. Amen.