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Title: Prayers of the Early Church

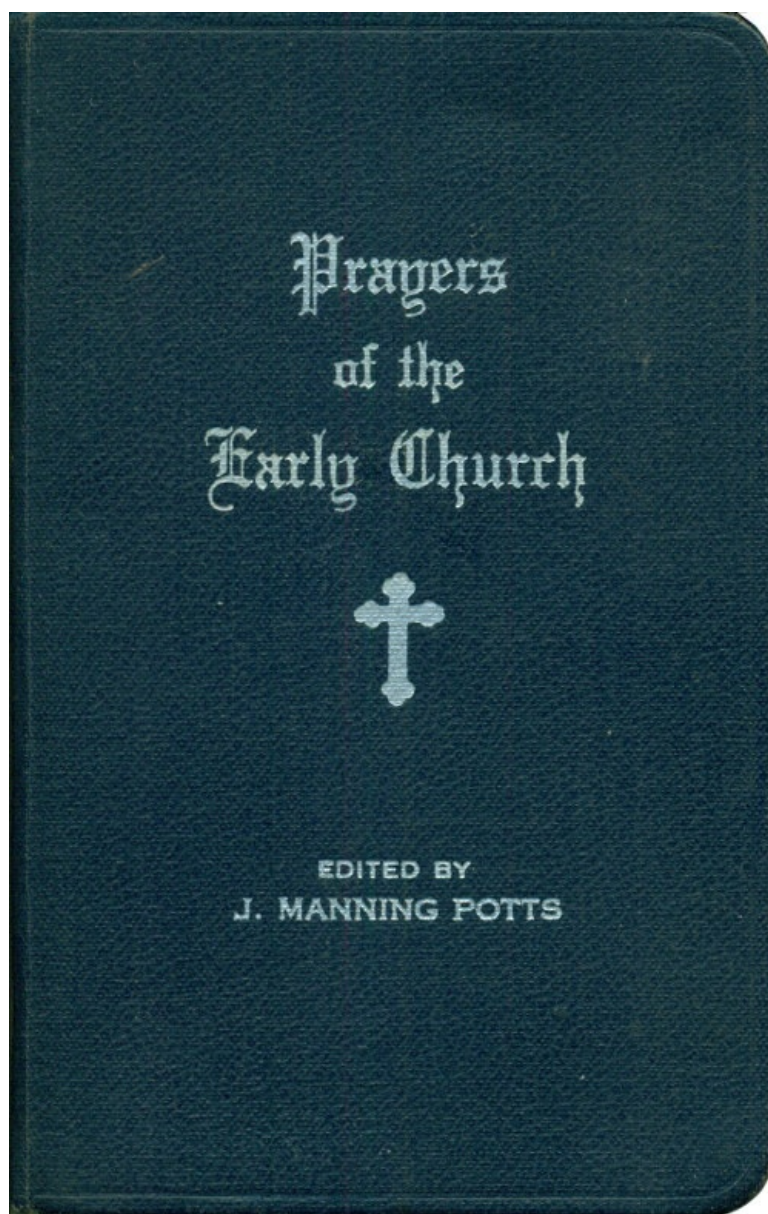
Editor: J. Manning Potts

Release date: February 12, 2015 [EBook #48247]

Language: English

Credits: Produced by Stephen Hutcheson, Dave Morgan and the Online Distributed Proofreading Team at <http://www.pgdp.net>

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**PRAYERS
of the**

EARLY CHURCH

Edited by
J. MANNING POTTS



THE UPPER ROOM

The World's Most Widely Used Devotional
Guide

1908 GRAND AVENUE
NASHVILLE 5, TENNESSEE

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by

The Upper Room
Nashville, Tennessee

UR-74-50-1053-10

Printed in the United States of America

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Preface

Demand for books of prayers has caused this book to be compiled. The experience of The Upper Room in publishing Ralph S. Cushman's *A Pocket Book of Prayer* with its sale of over a million copies and the reaction from the publication of other prayer books have prompted the editor to collect and arrange these prayers. There are prayers of our Lord, the apostles, the martyrs, and the saints covering the period of the Early Church from its beginning through the fifth century. There are some prayers from each of the first five centuries. The treasure house from which to choose is almost unlimited. It is a vast and fruitful field and anyone is amply rewarded who delves into it.

The prayers have been selected primarily for their spiritual and devotional content. Many have been laid aside with regret that they could not be included in this book, but its compass in size is set and only so many can be used.

The prayers are arranged chronologically. Some other method of arrangement might have been chosen but this seemed good in order to represent each century. There are questions about the date and authorship of the prayers. They are the same questions that arise in reference to the Books of the Bible.

This book of prayers is published with the hope and prayer that it may have wide use. It has been prepared for individual and family devotions. It can be used with prayer groups in prayer meetings, for cells, and, of course, for the development of one's own personal spiritual life. The material is perfect for use in the devotional services of young people's groups, women's groups, and men's clubs. The prayers are excellent for insertion in church bulletins. Other ways will be found of making these great prayers usable.

The prayers have been collected from many old books of prayers and devotional materials. The editor is deeply indebted to all those who have ploughed the field before. They have labored and we have entered into their labors. It has been a joy to search out the material, to arrange the prayers, to put them in order, and to index them under so many subjects.

J. MANNING POTTS
Editor, *THE UPPER ROOM*
Nashville, Tennessee

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CHAPTER I FIRST CENTURY PRAYERS

8

1. New Testament Prayers

The Prayer of Simeon

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.

—Luke 2:29.

The Magnificat

And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name. And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation. He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away. He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy.

—Luke 1:46-54.

9

Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane

O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt. O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.

—Matt. 26:39, 42.

Jesus' High Priestly Prayer

These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: as thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world

was. I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.

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—John 17:1-8.

Jesus Prays From the Cross

Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.

—Luke 23:34.

Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit.

—Luke 23:46.

Prayer of Stephen

And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.

And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

—Acts 7:59-60.

That Christ May Dwell in Your Hearts

Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places.

11

For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.

Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory forever and ever. AMEN.

—Epistle to the Ephesians 1:15-20; 3:14-21.

12

For Friends and Relatives

O God, the Father of glory, the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom every family in heaven and earth is named, thou who hast set the solitary in families, grant to all members of this family and to all the members of our different families, that, according to the riches of thy glory, we may be strengthened with might by thy Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith; that we, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that we may be filled with all the fulness of God; through the eternal Christ our Saviour. AMEN.

—Adapted: Ephesians 1:17; 3:15-19.

For a Knowledge of God's Will

O Almighty God, we are confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in us, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ: we pray that our love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; that we may approve things that are excellent; that we may be sincere and without offense, till the day of Christ, being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God. AMEN.

—Adapted: Philippians 1:6-11.

13

Persecuted for Righteousness' Sake

O Lord, our heavenly Father, grant to thy children who are persecuted for righteousness' sake that our

conversation may be as becometh the Gospel of Christ; that we may stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel; that in nothing terrified by our adversaries we may be steadfast in behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake, who liveth forever and ever. AMEN.

—Adapted: Philippians 1:27-29.

For Spiritual Desires

Our Father, we most humbly beseech Thee to give unto this house, and unto each member of it in particular, to stand fast in the Lord. May we be of the same mind in the Lord. May we rejoice in the Lord always. Grant that whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, if there be any praise, may we think on these things, may we know both how to be abased, and how to abound. May we do all things through Christ which strengtheneth us, knowing that God shall supply all our need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. AMEN.

—Adapted: Philippians 4.

14

Patience and Longsuffering

For this cause we also, ... do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness; giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us unto the kingdom of his dear Son: in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.

Now unto God and our Father be glory for ever and ever. AMEN.

—Adapted: Epistles to the Colossians 1:9-14 and Philippians 4:20.

Begotten to a Lively Hope

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us. Keep us by the power of God through faith unto salvation; that the trial of our faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. AMEN.

15

—Adapted: First Peter 1:3-7.

2. Other First Century Prayers

For All Kings and Rulers

Grant unto all Kings and Rulers, O Lord, health, peace, concord, and stability, that they may administer the government which Thou hast given them without failure. For Thou, O heavenly Master, King of the Ages, givest to the sons of men glory and honour, and power over all things that are upon the earth. Do Thou, Lord, direct their counsel according to that which is good and well pleasing in Thy sight, that administering in peace and gentleness, with godliness, the power which Thou hast given them, they may obtain Thy favour. O Thou Who alone art able to do these things, and things far more exceeding good than these, for us, we praise Thee, through the High Priest and Guardian of our souls, Jesus Christ; through Whom be the glory and the majesty, unto Thee, both now and for all generations, and forever and ever. AMEN.

—Clement of Rome.

16

A Morning Prayer

O God, Who art the unsearchable abyss of peace, the ineffable sea of love, the fountain of blessings, and the bestower of affection, Who sendest peace to those that receive it; open to us this day the sea of Thy love, and water us with the plenteous streams from the riches of Thy grace. Make us children of quietness, and heirs of peace. Enkindle in us the fire of Thy love; sow in us Thy fear; strengthen our weakness by Thy power; bind us closely to Thee and to each other in one firm bond of unity; for the sake of Jesus Christ. AMEN.

—Syrian Clementine Liturgy.

For Rulers and Governors

To our rulers and governors on the earth—to them Thou, Lord, gavest the power of the kingdom by Thy glorious and ineffable might, to the end that we may know the glory and honour given to them by Thee and be subject to them, in nought resisting Thy will; to them, Lord, give health, peace, concord, stability, that they may exercise the authority given to them without offence. For Thou, O heavenly Lord and King eternal, givest to the sons of men glory and honour and power over the things that are on the earth; do Thou, Lord, direct their counsel according to that which is good and well-pleasing in Thy sight, that, devoutly in peace and meekness exercising the power given them by Thee, they may find Thee propitious. O Thou, who only hast power to do these things and more abundant good with us, we praise Thee through the High Priest and Guardian of our souls Jesus Christ, through whom be glory and majesty to Thee both now and from generation to generation and forevermore. AMEN.

17

—Clement of Rome.

For Blessings

May God, who seeth all things, and who is the Ruler of all spirits and the Lord of all flesh—who chose our Lord Jesus Christ and us through Him to be a peculiar people—grant to every soul that calleth upon His glorious and holy Name, faith, peace, patience, long-suffering, self-control, purity, and sobriety, to the well-pleasing of His Name, through our High Priest and Protector, Jesus Christ, by whom be to Him glory, and majesty, and power, and honour, both now and forevermore. AMEN.

—Clement of Rome.

18

For Forgiveness

Thou didst make to appear the enduring fabric of the world by the works of Thy hand; Thou, Lord, didst create the earth on which we dwell,—Thou, who art faithful in all generations, just in judgments, wonderful in strength and majesty, with wisdom creating and with understanding fixing the things which were made, who art good among them that are being saved and faithful among them whose trust is in Thee; O merciful and Compassionate One, forgive us our iniquities and offences and transgressions and trespasses. Reckon not every sin of Thy servants and handmaids, but Thou wilt purify us with the purification of Thy truth; and direct our steps that we may walk in holiness of heart and do what is good and well-pleasing in Thy sight and in the sight of our rulers. Yea, Lord, make Thy face to shine upon us for good in peace, that we may be shielded by Thy mighty hand and delivered from every sin by Thine uplifted arm, and deliver us from those who hate us wrongfully. Give concord and peace to us and all who dwell upon the earth, even as Thou gavest to our fathers, when they called upon Thee in faith and truth, submissive as we are to Thine almighty and all-excellent Name. AMEN.

—Clement of Rome.

19

Prayer Before Partaking of the Holy Sacrament

O God, who art great, great in name and counsel, powerful in Thy works, the God and Father of Thy Holy Son Jesus, our Saviour, look upon us, Thy flock, which Thou hast chosen through Him to the glory of Thy Name; sanctify us in body and soul, and grant that we, being purified from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, may partake of the mystic blessings now going before Thee, and judge none of us unworthy of them, but be Thou our Supporter, our Helper, and Defender, through Thy Christ, with whom glory, honour, laud, praise, thanksgiving, be to Thee and the Holy Ghost forever. AMEN.

—The Clementine Liturgy.

A Pure Heart

O God Almighty, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Thine only begotten Son, give me a body unstained, a pure heart, a watchful mind, and an upright understanding, and the presence of Thy Holy Spirit, that I may obtain and ever hold fast to an unshaken faith in Thy Truth, through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord; through whom be glory to Thee in the Holy Ghost, forever and ever. AMEN.

—The Clementine Liturgy.

20

For Joy and Gladness

Blessed art Thou, O Lord, who hast nourished me from my youth up, who givest food to all flesh. Fill our hearts with joy and gladness, that we, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work in Christ Jesus our Lord, through whom to Thee be glory, honour, might, majesty, and dominion, forever and ever. AMEN.

—The Clementine Liturgy.

21

Intercession

May God the Father, and the Eternal High Priest Jesus Christ, build us up in faith and truth and love, and grant to us our portion among the saints with all those who believe on our Lord Jesus Christ. We pray for all saints, for kings and rulers, for the enemies of the Cross of Christ, and for ourselves we pray that our fruit may abound and we may be made perfect in Christ Jesus our Lord. AMEN.

—Polycarp.

A Dying Prayer of Polycarp, the Martyr

O Father of Thy well-beloved and blessed Son Jesus Christ, through whom we have known Thee; O God of the angels and powers and of every living creature, and of all sorts of just men which live in Thy presence, I thank Thee that Thou hast graciously vouchsafed this day and this hour to allot me a portion among the number of martyrs, among the people of Christ unto the resurrection of the everlasting life, both of body and soul, in the incorruption of the Holy Ghost; among whom I shall be received in Thy sight this day, as a fruitful and acceptable sacrifice, as Thou hast heretofore prepared, often revealed and now fulfilled, most faithful God who canst not lie. Wherefore for all things I praise Thee, I bless Thee, I glorify Thee, through the everlasting High Priest, Jesus Christ, Thy well-beloved Son, to whom with Thee and the Holy Ghost, be all glory, world without end. AMEN.

—The Martyrdom of Polycarp.

A Prayer for the Privilege of Martyrdom

Ask for me this only in your prayers, that strength may be given me of the Lord that I may not be called but proved to be a Christian. Then shall I be seen to be faithful when the world no longer sees me. For nothing that appeareth is eternal. For the things which are perceived are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. I write to the Churches and charge you all that willingly I die for Christ, if you prevent me not. I ask of you that your love for me be not untimely; allow me to be devoured of wild beasts, through whom I may attain unto God. I am the grain of God ground between the teeth of wild beasts, that I may be found to be the pure bread of Christ. Then indeed shall I be the true disciple of Christ when the world shall no longer behold my body. Beseech Christ on my behalf that through these means I may be found a perfect sacrifice. Not as Peter and Paul do I command you. They were apostles, I am the least of them; they were free, but I am a slave even unto this day, but, if you wish, I shall be the freedman of Jesus Christ, and in Him I shall rise again and be free. AMEN.

—Ignatius.

For Soul Cleansing

O God, who hast taught us Thy divine and saving oracles, enlighten the souls of us sinners for the comprehension of the things which have been before spoken, so that we may not only be seen to be hearers of spiritual things, but also doers of good deeds, striving after guileless faith, blameless life, and pure conversation.

Release, pardon, and forgive, O God, all our voluntary and involuntary sins, such as we have committed in action and in word, knowingly and ignorantly, by night and by day, in mind and thought, forgive us all in goodness and love.

Sanctify, O Lord, our souls, bodies and spirits; examine our minds and search our consciences; take from us all evil imaginations, all impurity of thought, all inclinations to lust, all depravity of conception, all envy, pride and hypocrisy, all falsehood, deceit and irregular living, all covetousness, vain glory and sloth; all malice, anger and wrath, all remembrance of injuries, all blasphemy and every motion of flesh and spirit that is contrary to the purity of Thy Will. AMEN.

—Liturgy of St. James.

To Witness for Christ

Grant, O merciful God, that as Thy holy Apostle St. James, leaving his father and all that he had, without delay, was obedient to the call of Thy son Jesus Christ, and followed Him, and at last cheerfully laid down his life for His gospel's sake, so I, forsaking all worldly and carnal affections, may be evermore ready to follow Thy holy commandments, and, whenever Thy providence shall make it my duty, may readily and cheerfully embrace death, though armed with his utmost terror, rather than forsake or deny Thee. Let me rejoice in every happy occasion of testifying the sincerity of my love, by suffering for Thy truth, and let the firm belief of those glorious eternal rewards which Thou hast prepared for them who lay down their lives for Thy sake, support me under all the

cruelties of the most merciless persecutors. Grant this, O blessed Lord, who didst die for me, and didst rise again, and now sittest at the right hand of the Father, to intercede for me, and all Thy faithful disciples. AMEN.

—Liturgy of St. James.

26

For a Pure Heart

O God, the Father of our Saviour Jesus Christ, whose name is great, whose nature is blissful, whose goodness is inexhaustible, God and Ruler of all things, who art blessed forever; before whom stand thousands and thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand, the hosts of holy angels and archangels; sanctify, O Lord, our souls and bodies and spirits, search our consciences, and cast out of us every evil thought, every base desire, all envy and pride, all wrath and anger, and all that is contrary to Thy holy will. And grant us, O Lord, Lover of men, with a pure heart and contrite soul, to call upon Thee, our holy God and Father who art in heaven. AMEN.

—Liturgy of St. James.

Sanctify Us, O Lord

God and Father of our Lord and God and Saviour Jesus Christ, the glorious Lord, the blessed essence, the bounteous goodness, the God and Sovereign of all, who art blessed to all eternity, who sittest upon the cherubim, and art glorified by the seraphim, before whom stand thousand thousands and ten thousand times ten thousand hosts of angels and archangels: Thou hast accepted the gifts, offerings, and fruits brought unto Thee as an odour of a sweet spiritual smell, and hast been pleased to sanctify them, and make them perfect, O good One, by the grace of Thy Christ, and by the presence of Thy all-holy Spirit. 27

Sanctify also, O Lord, our souls, and bodies, and spirits, and touch our understandings, and search our consciences, and cast out from us every evil imagination, every impure feeling, every base desire, every unbecoming thought, all envy, and vanity, and hypocrisy, all lying, all deceit, every worldly affection, all covetousness, all vainglory, all indifference, all vice, all passion, all anger, all malice, all blasphemy, every motion of the flesh and spirit that is not in accordance with Thy holy will: and count us worthy, O loving Lord, with boldness, without condemnation, in a pure heart, with a contrite spirit, with unshamed face, with sanctified lips, to dare to call upon Thee, the holy God, Father in heaven. AMEN.

—Liturgy of St. James.

For Stewardship

O Lord God Almighty, who hast built Thy Church upon the foundation of the Apostles, under Christ the head corner-stone, and to this end didst endue Thy holy apostle St. Barnabas with the singular gift of the Holy Ghost; leave me not destitute, I humbly beseech Thee, of Thy manifold gifts and talents, nor yet of grace to make a right use of them always without any sordid self-ends, to Thy honour and glory; that, making a due improvement of all those gifts Thou graciously entrustest me with, I may be able to give a good account of my stewardship when the great Judge shall appear, the Lord Jesus Christ, who reigneth with Thee and the Eternal Spirit, one God, blessed forever. AMEN. 28

—Barnabas.

Stewardship

O Lord God Almighty, who didst endue Thy holy apostle Barnabas with singular gifts of the Holy Ghost; leave us not, we beseech Thee, destitute of Thy manifold gifts, nor yet of grace to use them always to Thy honour and glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

—Barnabas.

Prayer to the Teacher

Be gracious, O Instructor, to us Thy children, Father, Charioteer of Israel, Son and Father, both in One, O Lord. Grant to us who obey Thy precepts, that we may perfect the likeness of the image, and with all our power know Him who is the good God and not a harsh judge. And do Thou Thyself cause that all of us who have our conversation in Thy peace, who have been translated into Thy commonwealth, having sailed tranquilly over the billows of sin, may be wafted in calm by Thy Holy Spirit, by the ineffable wisdom, by night and day to the perfect day; and giving thanks may praise, and praising thank the Alone Father and Son, Son and Father, the Son, Instructor and Teacher, with the Holy Spirit, all in One, in whom is all, for whom all is One, for whom is eternity, whose members we all are, whose glory the aeons are; for the All-good, All-lovely, All-wise, All-just One. To whom be glory both now and forever. AMEN. 29

—Clement of Alexandria.

For Growth in Grace

Give perfection to beginners, O Father; give intelligence to the little ones; give aid to those who are running their course. Give sorrow to the negligent; give fervour of spirit to the lukewarm. Give to the perfect a good consummation; for the sake of Christ Jesus our Lord. AMEN.

—Irenaeus, Old Gallican Sacramentary.

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CHAPTER III THIRD CENTURY PRAYERS

32

For Blessings

We most earnestly beseech Thee, O Thou Lover of mankind, to bless all Thy people, the flocks of Thy fold. Send down into our hearts the peace of heaven, and grant us also the peace of this life. Give life to the souls of all of us, and let no deadly sin prevail against us, or any of Thy people. Deliver all who are in trouble, for Thou art our God, who settest the captives free; who givest hope to the hopeless, and help to the helpless; who liftest up the fallen; and who art the Haven of the shipwrecked. Give Thy pity, pardon, and refreshment to every Christian soul, whether in affliction or error. Preserve us, in our pilgrimage through this life from hurt and danger, and grant that we may end our lives as Christians, well-pleasing to Thee and free from sin, and that we may have our portion and lot with all Thy saints. AMEN.

—Liturgy of St. Mark.

For Light

O God of Light, Father of Life, Giver of Wisdom, Benefactor of our souls, who givest to the fainthearted who put their trust in Thee those things into which the angels desire to look; O Sovereign Lord, who hast brought us up from the depths of darkness to light, who hast given us life from death, who hast graciously bestowed upon us freedom from slavery, and who hast scattered the darkness of sin within us, do Thou now also enlighten the eyes of our understanding, and sanctify us wholly in soul, body, and spirit. AMEN.

—Liturgy of St. Mark.

For the Peace of Christ's Flock

O Sovereign and Almighty Lord, bless all Thy people and all Thy flock. Give peace, Thy help, Thy love unto us, Thy servants the sheep of Thy fold, that we may be united in the bond of peace and love, one body and one spirit, in one hope of our calling, in Thy Divine and boundless love; for the sake of Jesus Christ, the great Shepherd of the sheep. AMEN.

—Liturgy of St. Mark.

Before the Holy Communion

O God of light, Father of life, Author of grace, Creator of worlds, Founder of knowledge, Giver of wisdom, Treasure of holiness, Teacher of pure prayers, Benefactor of our souls, who givest to the faint-hearted who put their trust in Thee those things into which the angels desire to look: O Sovereign Lord, who hast brought us up from the depths of darkness to light, who hast given us life from death, who hast graciously bestowed upon us freedom from slavery, who hast scattered the darkness of sin within us, through the presence of Thine only-begotten Son, do Thou now also, through the visitation of Thy all-holy Spirit, enlighten the eyes of our understanding, that we may partake without fear of condemnation of this heavenly and immortal food, and sanctify us wholly in soul, body, and spirit, that with Thy holy disciples and apostles we may say this prayer to Thee: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. AMEN.

—Liturgy of St. Mark.

For Divine Strength

O mightiest King, co-eternal with the Father, who by Thy might hast vanquished hell and trodden death under foot, who hast bound the strong man, and by Thy miraculous power and the enlightening radiance of Thy unspeakable Godhead hast raised Adam from the tomb, send forth Thy invisible right hand, which is full of blessing, and bless us all.

Pity us, O Lord, and strengthen us by Thy divine power.

34

Take away from us the sinful and wicked influence of carnal desire.

Let the light shine into our souls, and dispell the surrounding darkness of sin.

Unite us to the all-blessed assembly that is well-pleasing unto Thee; for through Thee and with Thee, all praise, honour, power, adoration, and thanksgiving are due unto the Father and the Holy Spirit, now, henceforth, and for evermore. AMEN.

—Liturgy of St. Mark.

For Blessings

O Sovereign and Almighty Lord, bless all Thy people, and all Thy flock. Give Thy peace, Thy help, Thy love unto us Thy servants, the sheep of Thy fold, that we may be united in the bond of peace and love, one body and one spirit, in one hope of our calling, in Thy divine and boundless love. AMEN.

—Liturgy of St. Mark.

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A Morning Prayer

We give Thee thanks—yea, more than thanks O Lord our God, for all Thy goodness at all times, and in all places, because Thou hast shielded, rescued, helped, and guided us all the days of our lives, and brought us unto this hour. We pray and beseech Thee, merciful God, to grant in Thy goodness that we may spend this day, and all the time of our lives, without sin, in fullness of joy, holiness, and reverence of Thee. But drive away from us, O Lord, all envy, all fear, and all temptations. Bestow upon us what is good and meet. Whatever sin we commit in thought, word, or deed, do Thou in Thy goodness and mercy be pleased to pardon. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; through the grace, mercy, and love of Thine only begotten Son. AMEN.

—Liturgy of St. Mark.

Thanksgiving and Prayer for Pardon

We render unto Thee our thanksgiving, O Lord our God, Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by all means, at all times, in all places. For that Thou hast sheltered, assisted, supported, and led us on through the time past of our life, and brought us to this hour. And we pray and beseech Thee, O God and loving Lord, grant us to pass this day, this year, and all the time of our life without sin, with all joy, health, and salvation. But all envy, all fear, all temptation, all the working of Satan, do Thou drive away, O God, from us, and from Thy holy Church. Supply us with things good and profitable. Whereinsoever we have sinned against Thee, in word, or deed, or thought, be Thou pleased in Thy love and goodness to forgive, and forsake us not, O God, who hope in Thee, neither lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one and from his works; by the grace and compassion of Thine only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. AMEN.

—Liturgy of St. Mark.

37

For Friends and Relations

Have mercy, O Lord, upon all those whom Thou hast associated with us in the bonds of friendship and kindredship, and grant that they, with us, may be so perfectly conformed to Thy Holy Will, that being cleansed from all sin, we may be found worthy, by the inspiration of Thy love, to be partakers together of the blessedness of Thy heavenly kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

—Old Gallican Sacramentary.

38

For Christian Graces

Grant Thy servants, O God, to be set on fire with Thy Spirit, strengthened by Thy power, illuminated by Thy splendour, filled with Thy grace, and to go forward by Thine aid. Give them, O Lord, a right faith, perfect love, true humility. Grant, O Lord, that there may be in us simple affection, brave patience, persevering obedience, perpetual peace, a pure mind, a right and honest heart, a good will, a holy conscience, spiritual strength, a life unspotted and unblamable; and after having manfully finished our course, may we be enabled happily to enter into Thy kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

—Old Gallican Sacramentary.

A Table Grace

Abba, Father, fulfill the office of Thy Name towards Thy servants; do Thou govern, protect, preserve, sanctify, guide, and console us. Let us be so enkindled with love for Thee, that we may not be despised by Thee, O most merciful Lord, most tender Father; for Jesus Christ's sake. AMEN.

—Old Gallican Sacramentary.

Morning Prayer

We give thee hearty thanks for the rest of the past night, and for the gift of a new day, with its opportunities of pleasing thee. Grant that we may so pass its hours in the perfect freedom of thy service, that at eventide we may again give thanks unto thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN. 39

—The Eastern Church.

A Table Grace

In the evening and morning and noonday we praise Thee, we thank Thee, and pray Thee, Master of all, to direct our prayers as incense before Thee. Let not our hearts turn away to words or thoughts of wickedness, but keep us from all things that might hurt us; for to Thee, O Lord, our eyes look up, and our hope is in Thee: confound us not, O our God; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

—Eastern Church Vespers.

For Ministers

O God, great in power, unsearchable in understanding, wondrous in counsels towards the children of men, do Thou fill with the gift of Thy Holy Spirit those whom Thou dost will to undertake the degree of the priesthood that they may be worthy to stand before Thy holy altar unblamably, to announce the Gospel of Thy kingdom, to administer the Word of Thy Truth, to offer gifts and spiritual sacrifices unto Thee, and to renew Thy people in the laver of regeneration; that at the second coming of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ, Thine only begotten Son, they may go forth to meet Him, and by the multitude of Thy mercies receive their reward; for Thy venerable and majestic Name is blessed and glorified. AMEN. 40

—Eastern Church Liturgy.

For Illumination

Shine into our hearts, O loving Master, by the pure light of the knowledge of Thyself, and open the eyes of our mind to the contemplation of Thy teaching, and put into us the fear of Thy blessed commandments; that trampling down all that is worldly, we may follow a spiritual life, thinking and doing all things according to Thy good pleasure. For Thou art our sanctification, and our illumination, and to Thee we render glory, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. AMEN.

—Eastern Church Liturgy.

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CHAPTER IV FOURTH CENTURY PRAYERS

42

For Charity

O God of love, Who hast given a new commandment through Thine only begotten Son, that we should love one another, even as Thou didst love us, the unworthy and the wandering, and gavest Thy beloved Son for our life and salvation; we pray Thee, Lord, give to us, Thy servants, in all time of our life on the earth, a mind forgetful of past ill-will, a pure conscience and sincere thoughts, and a heart to love our brethren; for the sake of Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord and only Saviour. AMEN.

—Coptic Liturgy of St. Cyril.

For Protection

Be gracious to our prayers, O merciful God, and guard Thy people with loving protection; that they who confess Thine only begotten Son as God, born in our bodily flesh, may never be corrupted by the deceits of the devil; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

—Ambrose.

43

For Pardon

O Lord, who hast mercy upon all, take away from me my sins, and mercifully kindle in me the fire of Thy Holy Spirit. Take away from me the heart of stone, and give me a heart of flesh, a heart to love and adore Thee, a heart to delight in Thee, to follow and to enjoy Thee, for Christ's sake. AMEN.

For Trust and Fuller Knowledge

Merciful Lord, the Comforter and Teacher of Thy faithful people, increase in Thy Church the desires which Thou hast given, and confirm the hearts of those who hope in Thee by enabling them to understand the depth of Thy promises, that all Thine adopted sons may even now behold, with the eyes of faith, and patiently wait for, the light which as yet Thou dost not openly manifest; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

—Ambrose.

For Salvation

O God, Who didst look on man when he had fallen down into death, and resolve to redeem him by the advent of Thine only begotten Son; grant, we beseech Thee, that they who confess His glorious Incarnation may also be admitted to the fellowship of Him their Redeemer; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

—Ambrose.

44

For Freedom From Sin

O Lord, my Saviour, in whose power it is to remit sins, I beseech Thee say unto me, "Loose thee from thy chains, come out of the bonds of thy sins"; and when Thou sayest it, loose those cords of my errors wherewith I am entangled and bound; for, though I am the most wicked of all men, and to be abhorred by reason of my continuance in sins, yet when thou commandest, I shall be free from them. AMEN.

—Ambrose.

For Pardon

Lord Jesus Christ, who didst stretch out Thine hands on the Cross, and redeem us by Thy Blood, forgive me, a sinner, for none of my thoughts are hid from Thee. Pardon I ask, pardon I hope for, pardon I trust to have. Thou who art pitiful and merciful, spare and forgive me. AMEN.

—Ambrose.

For Purity

O Holy Spirit of God, very God, Who didst descend upon Christ at the River Jordan, and upon the Apostles in the upper chamber, we have sinned against heaven and before Thee; purify us again, we beseech Thee, with Thy Divine fire, and have mercy upon us; for Christ's sake. AMEN.

—Nerses of Clajes.

45

Confession of Sin

O Thou that beholdest all things, we have sinned against Thee in thought, word, and deed; blot out our transgressions, be merciful to us sinners, and grant that our names may be found written in the book of life, for the sake of Christ Jesus our Saviour. AMEN.

—Nerses of Clajes.

For Protection

Lord Jesus Christ, Keeper and Preserver of all things, let Thy right hand guard us by day and by night, when we sit at home, and when we walk abroad, when we lie down and when we rise up, that we may be kept from all evil, and have mercy upon us sinners. AMEN.

—Nerses of Clajes.

A Prayer for Spiritual Blessings

Most high God, our loving Father, infinite in majesty, we humbly beseech Thee for all Thy servants everywhere, that Thou wouldst give us a pure mind, perfect love, sincerity in conduct, purity in heart, strength in action, courage in distress, self-command in character. May our prayers ascend to Thy gracious ears, and Thy loving benediction descend upon us all, that we may in all things be protected under the shadow of Thy wings. Grant us pardon of our sins; perfect our work; accept our prayers; protect us by Thine own Name, O God of Jacob; send us Thy saving help from Thy holy place, and strengthen us out of Zion. Remember all Thy people

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everywhere, give us all the grace of devotion to Thy will; fulfill our desires with good gifts, and crown us with Thy mercy. When we serve Thee with faithful devotion, pardon our sins and correct us with Fatherly tenderness. Grant that, being delivered from all adversity, and both here and eternally justified, we may praise Thee forever and ever, saying Holy, Holy, Holy; through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour, Who with Thee and the Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth, ever one God, world without end. AMEN.

—Gallican Sacramentary.

For Those Gathered in Worship

O Lord God, Who hast taught us to pray all together, and hast promised to hear the united voices of two or three invoking Thy Name; hear now, O Lord, the prayers of Thy servants unto their salvation, and give us in this world knowledge of Thy Truth, and in the world to come life everlasting; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

—Armenian Liturgy.

47

For Right Blessings

O Lord our God, teach us, we beseech Thee, to ask Thee aright for the right blessings. Steer Thou the vessel of our life toward Thyself, Thou tranquil Haven of all storm-tossed souls. Show us the course wherein we should go. Renew a willing spirit within us. Let Thy Spirit curb our wayward senses, and guide and enable us unto that which is our true good, to keep Thy laws, and in all our works evermore to rejoice in Thy glorious and gladdening Presence. For Thine is the glory and praise from all Thy saints forever and ever. AMEN.

—Basil.

For Converts in Mission Fields

Remember, O Lord, all who in heathen lands are under instruction for Holy Baptism; have mercy upon them and confirm them in the faith; remove all the remains of idolatry and superstition from their hearts, that being devoted to Thy law, Thy precepts, Thy fear, Thy truths, and Thy commandments, they may grow to a firm knowledge of the word in which they have been instructed, and may be found worthy to be made an habitation of the Holy Ghost, by the laver of regeneration, for the remission of their sins, through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

—Basil.

48

For Light and Guidance

Eternal God, Thou uncreate and primal Light, Maker of all created things, Fountain of pity, Thou Sea of Bounty, fathomless deep of Loving-Kindness: lift Thou up the light of Thy countenance upon us! Lord, shine in our hearts, true Sun of Righteousness, and fill our souls with Thy beauty.

Teach us always to keep in mind Thy judgments, and to discourse of them, and own Thee continually as our Lord and Friend. Govern by Thy will the works of our hands; and lead us in the right way, that we may do what is well-pleasing and acceptable to Thee, that through us unworthy Thy holy name may be glorified.

To Thee alone be praise and honor and worship eternally. AMEN.

—Basil.

For Two or Three

Almighty God, who hast given us grace at this time to make our common supplications unto Thee; and dost promise that when two or three are gathered together in Thy name Thou wilt grant their requests: fulfill now, O Lord, the desires and petitions of Thy servants, as may be most expedient for them, granting us in this world knowledge of Thy truth, and in the world to come, life everlasting. AMEN.

—Chrysostom.

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For All People

Remember, O Lord, this city wherein we dwell and every other city and country, and all the faithful who dwell in them. Remember, O Lord, all who travel by land or water, all that labour under sickness or slavery; remember them for health and safety. Remember, O Lord, those in Thy Holy Church who bring forth good fruit, are rich in good works and forget not the poor. Grant unto us all Thy mercy and loving-kindness, and grant that we may with one mouth and one heart praise and glorify Thy great and glorious name, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, now, henceforth, and forever. AMEN.

—Chrysostom.

Invocation

Lord God, of might inconceivable, of glory incomprehensible, of mercy immeasurable, of benignity ineffable; do Thou, O Master, look down upon us in Thy tender love, and show forth, towards us and those who pray with us, Thy rich mercies and compassions. AMEN.

—Liturgy of St. Chrysostom.

For Refreshment

O Lord our God, under the shadow of Thy wings let us hope. Thou wilt support us, both when little, and even to gray hairs. When our strength is of Thee, it is strength; but, when our own, it is feebleness. We return unto Thee, O Lord, that from their weariness our souls may rise towards Thee, leaning on the things which Thou hast created, and passing on to Thyself, who hast wonderfully made them; for with Thee is refreshment and true strength. AMEN.

—Augustine.

Adoration

O Thou Good Omnipotent, Who so carest for every one of us, as if Thou caredst for him alone; and so for all, as if all were but one! Blessed is the man who loveth Thee, and his friend in Thee, and his enemy for Thee. For he only loses none dear to him, to whom all are dear in Him who cannot be lost. And who is that but our God, the God that made heaven and earth, and filleth them, even by filling them creating them. And Thy law is truth, and truth is Thyself. I behold how some things pass away that others may replace them, but Thou dost never depart, O God, my Father supremely good, Beauty of all things beautiful. To Thee will I intrust whatsoever I have received from Thee, so shall I lose nothing. Thou madest me for Thyself, and my heart is restless until it repose in Thee. AMEN.

—Augustine.

51

The Holy Spirit

O holy Spirit, Love of God, infuse Thy grace, and descend plentifully into my heart; enlighten the dark corners of this neglected dwelling, and scatter there Thy cheerful beams; dwell in that soul that longs to be Thy temple; water that barren soil, over-run with weeds and briars, and lost for want of cultivating, and make it fruitful with Thy dew from heaven. Oh come, Thou refreshment of them that languish and faint. Come, Thou Star and Guide of them that sail in the tempestuous sea of the world; Thou only Haven of the tossed and shipwrecked. Come, Thou Glory and Crown of the living, and only Safeguard of the dying. Come, Holy Spirit, in much mercy, and make me fit to receive Thee. AMEN.

—Augustine.

For Entire Love

O Lord, my God, Light of the blind and Strength of the weak; yea, also, Light of those that see, and Strength of the strong; hearken unto my soul, and hear it crying out of the depths.

O Lord, help us to turn and seek Thee; for Thou hast not forsaken Thy creatures as we have forsaken Thee, our Creator. Let us turn and seek Thee, for we know Thou art here in our hearts, when we confess to Thee, when we cast ourselves upon Thee, and weep in Thy bosom, after all our rugged ways; and Thou dost gently wipe away our tears, and we weep the more for joy; because Thou, Lord, who madest us dost remake and comfort us.

Hear, Lord, my prayer, and grant that I may most entirely love Thee, and do Thou rescue me, O Lord, from every temptation, even unto the end. AMEN.

—Augustine.

For Steadfastness

O God, the light of every heart that sees Thee, the Life of every soul that loves Thee, the strength of every mind that seeks Thee, grant me ever to continue steadfast in Thy holy love. Be Thou the joy of my heart; take it all to Thyself, and therein abide. The house of my soul is, I confess, too narrow for Thee; do thou enlarge it, that Thou mayest enter in; it is ruinous, but do Thou repair it. It has that within which must offend Thine eyes; I confess and know it; but whose help shall I implore in cleansing it, but Thine alone? To Thee, therefore, I cry urgently, begging that Thou wilt cleanse me from my secret faults, and keep Thy servant from presumptuous sins, that they never get dominion over me. AMEN.

—Augustine.

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For Perseverance

I know, O Lord, and do with all humility acknowledge myself an object altogether unworthy of Thy love; but sure I am, Thou art an object altogether worthy of mine. I am not good enough to serve Thee, but Thou hast a right to the best service I can pay. Do Thou then impart to me some of that excellence, and that shall supply my own want of worth. Help me to cease from sin according to Thy will, that I may be capable of doing Thee service according to my duty. Enable me so to guard and govern myself, so to begin and finish my course, that, when the race of life is run, I may sleep in peace, and rest in Thee. Be with me unto the end, that my sleep may be rest indeed, my rest perfect security, and that security a blessed eternity. AMEN.

—Augustine.

For Mercy

Come, O Lord, in much mercy down into my soul, and take possession and dwell there. A homely mansion, I confess, for so glorious a Majesty, but such as Thou art fitting up for the reception of Thee, by holy and fervent desires of Thine own inspiring. Enter then, and adorn, and make it such as Thou canst inhabit, since it is the work of Thy hands. Give me Thine own self, without which, though Thou shouldst give me all that ever Thou hast made, yet could not my desires be satisfied. Let my soul ever seek Thee, and let me persist in seeking, till I have found, and am in full possession of Thee. AMEN.

—Augustine.

Refuge and Peace

O Thou full of compassion, I commit and commend myself unto Thee, in whom I am, and live, and know. Be Thou the Goal of my pilgrimage, and my Rest by the way. Let my soul take refuge from the crowding turmoil of worldly thoughts beneath the shadow of Thy wings; let my heart, this sea of restless waves, find peace in Thee, O God. Thou bounteous Giver of all good gifts, give to him who is weary refreshing food; gather our distracted thoughts and powers into harmony again; and set the prisoner free. See, he stands at thy door and knocks; be it open to him, that he may enter with a free step, and be quickened by Thee. For Thou art the Well-spring of Life, the Light of eternal Brightness, wherein the just live who love Thee. Be it unto me according to Thy word. AMEN.

—Augustine.

54

Perfect Love

Grant me, even me, my dearest Lord, to know Thee, and love Thee, and rejoice in Thee. And, if I cannot do these perfectly in this life, let me at least advance to higher degrees every day, till I can come to do them in perfection. Let the knowledge of Thee increase in me here, that it may be full hereafter. Let the love of Thee grow every day more and more here, that it may be perfect hereafter; that my joy may be great in itself, and full in Thee. I know, O God, that Thou art a God of truth, O make good Thy gracious promises to me, that my joy may be full. AMEN.

—Augustine.

For Perfect Light

O Thou holy and unspeakable, Thou wonderful and mighty God, whose power and wisdom hath no end, before whom all powers tremble, at whose glance the heavens and the earth flee away, Thou art Love, Thou art my Father, and I will love and worship Thee forever and ever!

Thou hast deigned to show pity on me, and a ray from Thy light hath shone upon mine inward eye. Guide me on into the perfect light, that it may illumine me wholly, and that all darkness may flee away. Let the holy flame of Thy love so burn in my heart that it be made pure, and I may see Thee, O God; for it is the pure in heart who see Thee. Thou hast set me free; Thou hast drawn me to Thee; therefore forsake me not, but keep me always in Thy grace. Guide me, and rule me, and perfect me for Thy kingdom. AMEN.

—Augustine.

55

For More Love

Thee, most merciful God, do I now invoke to descend into my soul, which Thou hast prepared for Thy reception by the desire which Thou hast breathed into it. Ere ever I cried to Thee, Thou, most Merciful, hadst called and sought me, that I might find Thee, and finding love Thee. Even so I sought and found Thee, Lord, and desire to love Thee. Increase my desire, and grant me what I ask. See, I love Thee, but too little; strengthen my love. When my spirit aspires to Thee, and meditates on Thine unspeakable goodness, the burden of the flesh becomes less heavy, the tumult of thought is stilled, the weight of mortality is less oppressive. Then fain would my soul find wings, that she might rise in tireless flight ever upwards to Thy glorious throne, and there be filled with the refreshing solace that belongs to the citizens of heaven. AMEN.

—Augustine.

56

For Mercy and Grace

O God, our true Life, in whom and by whom all things live, Thou commandest us to seek Thee, and art ready to be found; Thou biddest us knock, and openest when we do so. To know Thee is life, to serve Thee is freedom, to enjoy Thee is a kingdom, to praise Thee is the joy and happiness of the soul. I praise, and bless, and adore Thee, I worship Thee, I glorify Thee, I give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory. I humbly beseech Thee to abide with me, to reign in me, to make this heart of mine a holy temple, a fit habitation for Thy Divine majesty. O Thou Maker and Preserver of all things, visible and invisible! keep, I beseech Thee, the work of Thine own hands, who trusts in Thy mercy alone for safety and protection. Guard me with the power of Thy grace, here and in all places, now and at all times, forevermore. AMEN.

—Augustine.

For a Safe Voyage

Blessed are all Thy saints, my God and King, who have travelled over the tempestuous sea of mortality, and have at last made the desired port of peace and felicity. Oh, cast a gracious eye upon us who are still in our dangerous voyage. Remember and succor us in our distress, and think on them that lie exposed to the rough storms of troubles and temptations. Strengthen our weakness, that we may do valiantly in this spiritual war; help us against our own negligence and cowardice, and defend us from the treachery of our unfaithful hearts. We are exceeding frail, and indisposed to every virtuous and gallant undertaking. Grant, O Lord, that we may bring our vessel safe to shore, unto our desired haven. AMEN.

—Augustine.

For Perfect Love

Look upon us, O Lord, and let all the darkness of our souls vanish before the beams of Thy brightness. Fill us with holy love, and open to us the treasures of Thy wisdom. All our desire is known unto Thee, therefore perfect what Thou hast begun, and what Thy Spirit has awakened us to ask in prayer. We seek Thy face, turn Thy face unto us and show us Thy Glory. Then shall our longing be satisfied, and our peace shall be perfect. AMEN.

—Augustine.

For Obedience and Love

Thou, O Lord, who commandest me to ask, grant that I may receive; Thou hast put me upon seeking, let me be happy in finding; Thou hast bidden me knock, I pray Thee open unto me. Be graciously pleased to direct and govern all my thoughts and actions, that, for the future, I may serve Thee, and entirely devote myself to obeying Thee. Accept me, I beseech Thee, and draw me to Thyself, that I may henceforth be Thine by obedience and love, who am already all Thine own, as Thy creature. Even Thine, O Lord, who livest and reignest forever and ever. AMEN.

—Augustine.

For Light

O God our Father, who dost exhort us to pray, and who dost grant what we ask, if only, when we ask, we live a better life; hear me, who am trembling in this darkness, and stretch forth Thy hand unto me; hold forth Thy light before me; recall me from my wanderings; and, Thou being my Guide, may I be restored to myself and to Thee, through Jesus Christ. AMEN.

—Augustine.

For Illumination

Late have I loved Thee, O Thou Eternal Truth and Goodness: late have I sought Thee, my Father! But Thou didst seek me, and when Thou shinedst forth upon me, then I knew Thee and learnt to love Thee. I thank Thee, O my Light, that Thou didst thus shine upon me; that Thou didst teach my soul what Thou wouldst be to me, and didst incline Thy face in pity unto me. Thou, Lord, hast become my Hope, my Comfort, my Strength, my All! In Thee doth my soul rejoice. The darkness vanished from before mine eyes, and I beheld Thee, the Son of Righteousness. When I loved darkness, I knew Thee not, but wandered on from night to night. But Thou didst lead me out of that blindness; Thou didst take me by the hand and call me to Thee, and now I can thank Thee, and Thy mighty voice which hath penetrated to my inmost heart. AMEN.

—Augustine.

Obligation to Others

O Lord, our Saviour, who hast warned us that thou wilt require much of those to whom much is given; grant that we whose lot is cast in so goodly a heritage may strive together the more abundantly to extend to others what we so richly enjoy; and as we have entered into the labours of other men, so to labour that in their turn other men may enter into ours, to the fulfillment of Thy holy will; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

—Augustine.

For Refreshment

O Holy Spirit, Love of God, infuse Thy grace, and descend plentifully into my heart; enlighten the dark corners of this neglected dwelling, and scatter there Thy cheerful beams; dwell in that soul that longs to be Thy temple; water that barren soil, over-run with weeds and briars, and lost for want of cultivating, and make it fruitful with Thy dew from heaven. Oh come, Thou refreshment of them that languish and faint. Come, Thou Star and Guide of them that sail in the tempestuous sea of the world; Thou only Haven of the tossed and ship-wrecked. Come, Thou Glory and Crown of the living, and only Safeguard of the dying. Come, Holy Spirit, in much mercy, and make me fit to receive Thee. AMEN.

—Augustine.

For Increased Godly Knowledge

Grant us, even us, O Lord, to know Thee, and love Thee, and rejoice in Thee. And if we cannot do these perfectly in this life, let us, at least, advance to higher degrees every day, till we can come to do them in perfection. Let the knowledge of Thee increase in us here, that it may be full hereafter. Let the love of Thee grow every day more and more here, that it may be perfect hereafter; that our joy may be great in itself and full in Thee. We know, O God, that Thou art a God of truth, O make good Thy gracious promises to us, that our joy may be full. To Thine honour and glory, Who with the Father and the Holy Ghost liveth and reigneth one God, world without end. AMEN.

—Augustine.

61

Praise

Great art Thou, O Lord, and greatly to be praised; great is Thy power, and Thy wisdom is infinite. Thee would we praise without ceasing. Thou callest us to delight in Thy praise, for Thou hast made us for Thyself, and our hearts find no rest until we rest in Thee; Who with the Father and the Holy Ghost all glory, praise, and honour be ascribed, both now and forevermore. AMEN.

—Augustine.

For Grace

We ask not of Thee, O Father, silver and gold, honour and glory, nor the pleasures of the world, but do Thou grant us grace to seek Thy Kingdom and Thy righteousness, and do Thou add unto us things necessary for the body and for this life. Behold, O Lord, our desire; may it be pleasing in Thy sight. We present our petition unto Thee through our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is at Thy right hand, our mediator and Advocate, through Whom Thou soughtest us that we might seek Thee; Thy Word, through Whom Thou madest us and all things; Thy only begotten Son, through Whom Thou callest us to adoption, Who intercedeth with Thee for us, and in Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; to Him, with Thyself and the Holy Spirit, be all honour, praise, and glory, now and forever. AMEN.

—Augustine.

62

For Peace

O Lord God, grant Thy peace to us, for Thou hast supplied us with all things—the peace of rest, the peace of the Sabbath, which hath no evening; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

—Augustine.

Evening Prayer

Watch Thou, dear Lord, with those who wake, or watch, or weep to night, and give Thine angels charge over those who sleep. Tend Thy sick ones, O Lord Christ. Rest Thy weary ones. Bless Thy dying ones. Soothe Thy suffering ones. Pity Thine afflicted ones. Shield Thy joyous ones. And all, for Thy Love's sake. AMEN.

—Augustine.

For Perfection

Hear, Lord, my prayer; let not my soul faint under Thy discipline, nor let me faint in confessing unto Thee all Thy

mercies whereby Thou hast drawn me out of all my most evil ways, that Thou mightest become a delight to me above all the allurements which I once pursued; that I may most entirely love Thee, and clasp Thy hand with all my affections, and Thou mayest yet rescue me from every temptation, even unto the end. For lo, O Lord, my King and my God, for Thy service be whatever useful thing my childhood learned; for Thy service that I speak, 64 write, read, reckon. For Thou didst grant me Thy discipline while I was learning vanities; and my sin of delighting in those vanities Thou hast forgiven. In them, indeed, I learnt many a useful word, but these may as well be learned in things not vain; and that is the safe path for the steps of youth. AMEN.

—Augustine.

For Light

O let the Light, the Truth, the Light of my heart, not mine own darkness, speak unto me. I fell off into that, and became darkened; but even thence, even thence I loved Thee. I went astray, and remembered Thee. I heard Thy voice behind me, calling me to return, and scarcely heard it, through the tumultuousness of the enemies of peace. And now, behold, I return in distress and panting after Thy fountain. Let no man forbid me! of this will I drink, and so live. Let me not be mine own life; from myself I lived ill, death was I to myself; and I revive in Thee. Do Thou speak unto me, do Thou discourse unto me. I have believed Thy Books, and their words be most full of mystery. AMEN.

—Augustine.

Communion with God

O how shall I call upon God, my God and Lord, since, when I call for Him, I shall be calling Him into myself? And what room is there within me, whither my God can come into me? Whither can God come into me, God who made heaven and earth? Is there, indeed, O Lord my God, aught in me that can contain Thee? Do, then, heaven and earth, which Thou hast made, and wherein Thou hast made me, contain Thee? Or, because nothing which exists could exist without Thee, doth therefore whatever exists contain Thee? Since, then, I too exist, why do I seek that Thou shouldest enter into me, who were not, wert Thou not in me? Why? Because I am not gone down in hell, and yet Thou art there also. For if I go down into hell, Thou art there. I could not be, then, O my God, could not be at all, wert Thou not in me; or rather, unless I were in Thee, of whom are all things, by whom are all things, in whom are all things! Even so, Lord, even so. Whither do I call Thee, since I am in Thee? Or whence canst Thou enter into me? For whither can I go beyond heaven and earth, that thence my God should come into me, who hath said, "I fill the heaven and the earth"?

O God, the vessels which Thou fillest uphold Thee not, since, though they were broken, Thou wert not poured out, on us, Thou art not cast down, but Thou upliftest us; Thou art not dissipated, but Thou gatherest us.... AMEN.

—Augustine.

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Rest in Thee

O Lord God, give peace unto us (for Thou hast given us all things): the peace of rest, the peace of the Sabbath, which hath no evening: Yea, give us rest in Thee, the Sabbath of eternal life. For Thou shalt rest in us, as now Thou workest in us; and Thy rest shall be through us, as Thy works are through us. AMEN.

—Augustine.

For Light

O Lord, who art the Light, the Way, the Truth, the Life; in whom there is no darkness, error, vanity, or death—the Light without which there is darkness; the Way without which there is wandering; the Truth without which there is error; the life without which there is Death; say, Lord, let there be Light, and I shall see Light, and eschew Darkness; I shall see the way and avoid wandering; I shall see the Truth and shun error; I shall see Life and escape Death: Illuminate, O illuminate my blind soul which sitteth in darkness and the shadow of Death; and direct my feet into the way of peace. AMEN.

—Augustine.

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A Morning Prayer

O God, who art faithful and true, who "hast mercy on thousands and ten thousands of them that love Thee," the lover of the humble, and the protector of the needy, of whom all things stand in need, for all things are subject to Thee; look down upon this Thy people, who bow down their heads to Thee, and bless them with spiritual blessing. "Keep them as the apple of an eye," preserve them in piety and righteousness, and vouchsafe them eternal life in Christ Jesus Thy beloved Son, with whom glory, honour, and worship be to Thee and to the Holy Spirit, now and always, and forever and ever. AMEN.

—Apostolic Constitutions.

The Thanksgiving for the Morning

O God, the God of spirits and of all flesh, who art beyond compare, and standest in need of nothing, who hast given the sun to have rule over the day, and the moon and the stars to have rule over the night, do Thou now also look down upon us with gracious eyes, and receive our morning thanksgivings, and have mercy upon us; for we have not “spread out our hands unto a strange God;” for there is not among us any new God, but Thou, the eternal God, who art without end, who hast given us our being through Christ, and given us our well-being through Him. Do Thou vouchsafe us also, through Him, eternal life; with whom glory, and honour, and worship be to Thee and to the Holy Spirit forever. AMEN.

—Apostolic Constitutions.

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A Morning Prayer

“Glory be to God in the highest, and upon earth peace, good-will among men.” We praise Thee, we sing hymns to Thee, we bless Thee, we glorify Thee, we worship Thee by Thy great High Priest; Thee who art the true God, who art the One Unbegotten, the only inaccessible Being. For Thy great glory, O Lord and heavenly King, O God the Father Almighty, O Lord God, the Father of Christ the immaculate Lamb, who taketh away the sin of the world, receive our prayer, Thou that sittest upon the cherubim. For Thou only art holy, Thou only art the Lord Jesus, the Christ of the God of all created nature, and our King, by whom glory, honour, and worship be to Thee. AMEN.

—Apostolic Constitutions.

An Evening Prayer

Save us, O God, and raise us up by Thy Christ. Let us stand up, and beg for the mercies of the Lord, and His compassions, for the angel of peace, for what things are good and profitable, for a Christian departure out of this life, an evening and a night of peace, and free from sin; and let us beg that the whole course of our life may be unblamable. Let us dedicate ourselves and one another to the living God through His Christ. AMEN.

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—Apostolic Constitutions.

An Evening Prayer

O God, who art without beginning and without end, the Maker of the whole world by Christ, and the Provider for it, but before all His God and Father, the Lord of the Spirit, and the King of intelligible and sensible beings; who hast made the day for the works of light, and the night for the refreshment of our infirmity,—for “the day is Thine, the night also is Thine: Thou hast prepared the light and the sun,”—do Thou now, O Lord, Thou lover of mankind, and Fountain of all good, mercifully accept of this our evening thanksgiving. Thou who hast brought us through the length of the day, and hast brought us to the beginnings of the night, preserve us by Thy Christ, afford us a peaceable evening, and a night free from sin, and vouchsafe us everlasting life by Thy Christ, through whom glory, honour, and worship be to Thee in the Holy Spirit forever. AMEN.

—Apostolic Constitutions.

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An Evening Prayer

“Ye children, praise the Lord: Praise the name of the Lord.” We praise Thee, we sing hymns to Thee, we bless Thee for Thy great glory, O Lord our King, the Father of Christ the immaculate Lamb, who taketh away the sin of the world. Praise becomes Thee, hymns become Thee, glory becomes Thee, the God and Father, through the Son, in the most holy Spirit, forever and ever. AMEN.

—Apostolic Constitutions.

Table Grace

Thou art blessed, O Lord, who nourishest me from my youth, who givest food to all flesh. Fill our hearts with joy and gladness, that having always what is sufficient for us, we may abound to every good work, in Christ Jesus our Lord, through whom glory, honour, and power be to Thee forever. AMEN.

—Apostolic Constitutions.

For the First-Fruits

We give thanks to Thee, O Lord Almighty, the Creator of the whole world, and its Preserver, through Thy only begotten Son Jesus Christ our Lord, for the first-fruits which are offered to Thee, not in such a manner as we ought, but as we are able. For what man is there that can worthily give Thee thanks for those things Thou hast given them to partake of? The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, and of all the saints, who madest all things fruitful by Thy word, and didst command the earth to bring forth various fruits for our rejoicing and our food; who hast given to the duller and more sheepish sort of creatures juices—herbs to them that feed on

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herbs, and to some flesh, to others seeds, but to us corn, as advantageous and proper food, and many other things —some for our necessities, some for our health, and some for our pleasure. On all these accounts, therefore, art Thou worthy of exalted hymns of praise for Thy beneficence by Christ, through whom glory, honour, and worship be to Thee, in the Holy Spirit, forever. AMEN.

—Apostolic Constitutions.

Thanks For Thy Mercies

We give Thee thanks for all things, O Lord Almighty, that Thou hast not taken away Thy mercies and Thy compassions from us; but in every succeeding generation Thou dost save, and deliver, and assist, and protect: for Thou didst assist in the days of Enos and Enoch, in the days of Moses and Joshua, in the days of the judges, in the days of Samuel and of Elijah and of the prophets, in the days of David and of the kings, in the days of Esther and Mordecai, and in our days hast Thou assisted us by Thy great High Priest, Jesus Christ Thy Son. For He has delivered us from the sword, and hath freed us from famine, and sustained us; has delivered us from sickness, has preserved us from an evil tongue. For all which things do we give Thee thanks through Christ, who has given us an articulate voice to confess withal, and added to it a suitable tongue as an instrument to modulate withal, and a proper taste, and a suitable touch, and a sight for contemplation, and the hearing of sounds, and the smelling of vapours, and hands for work, and feet for walking. Thou hast instructed [man] by Thy laws, improved him by Thy statutes; and when Thou bringest on a dissolution for a while, Thou hast promised a resurrection. Wherefore what life is sufficient, what length of ages will be long enough, for men to be thankful? To do it worthily it is impossible, but to do it according to our ability is just and right. Thou hast delivered us from error and ignorance; Thou hast sent Christ among men as a man, being the only begotten God; Thou hast made the Comforter to inhabit among us; Thou hast set angels over us; Thou hast put the devil to shame; Thou hast brought us into being when we were not; Thou takest care of us when made; Thou measurest out life to us; Thou affordest us food; Thou hast promised repentance. Glory and worship be to Thee for all these things, through Jesus Christ, now and ever, and through all ages. AMEN.

—Adapted: Apostolic Constitutions.

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For The Holy Spirit

O God Almighty, the Father of Thy Christ, Thy only begotten Son, give me a body undefiled, a heart pure, a mind watchful, an unerring knowledge, the influence of the Holy Ghost for the obtaining and assured enjoying of the truth, through Thy Christ, by whom glory be to Thee, in the Holy Spirit, for ever. AMEN.

—Apostolic Constitutions.

For the Faithful

O Lord Almighty, the Most High, who dwellest on high, the Holy One, that restest among the saints, without beginning, the Only Potentate, who hast given to us by Christ the preaching of knowledge, to the acknowledgment of Thy glory and of Thy name, which He has made known to us, for our comprehension, do Thou now also look down through Him upon this Thy flock, and deliver it from all ignorance and wicked practice, and grant that we may fear Thee in earnest, and love Thee with affection, and have a due reverence of Thy glory. Be gracious and merciful to them, and hearken to them when they pray unto Thee; and keep them, that they may be unmoveable, unblameable, and unreprouable, that they may be holy in body and spirit, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that they may be complete, and none of them may be defective or imperfect. O our support, our powerful God, who dost not accept persons, be Thou the assister of this Thy people, which Thou hast redeemed with the precious blood of Thy Christ; be Thou their protector, aider, provider, and guardian, their strong wall of defence, their bulwark and security. For “none can snatch out of Thy hand:” for there is no other God like Thee; for on Thee is our reliance. “Sanctify them by Thy truth: for Thy word is truth.” AMEN.

—Apostolic Constitutions.

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On the Lord’s Day

O Lord Almighty, Thou hast created the world by Christ, and hast appointed the Sabbath in memory thereof, because that on that day Thou hast made us rest from our works, for the meditation upon Thy laws. Thou hast also appointed festivals for the rejoicing of our souls, that we might come into the remembrance of that wisdom which was created by Thee; how He submitted to be made of a woman on our account; He appeared in life, and demonstrated Himself in His baptism; how he that appeared is both God and man; He suffered for us by Thy permission, and died, and rose again by Thy power: on which account we solemnly assemble to celebrate the feast of the resurrection on the Lord’s day, and rejoice on account of Him who has conquered death, and hast brought life and immortality to light. AMEN.

—Apostolic Constitutions.

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For the Holy Communion

We thank Thee, our Father, for that life which Thou hast made known to us by Jesus Thy Son, by whom madest all

things, and takest care of the whole world; whom Thou hast sent to become man for our salvation; whom Thou hast permitted to suffer and to die; whom Thou hast raised up, and been pleased to glorify, and hast set Him down on Thy right hand; by whom Thou hast promised us the resurrection of the dead. Do Thou, O Lord Almighty, everlasting God, so gather together Thy Church from the ends of the earth into Thy kingdom, as this corn was once scattered, and is now become one loaf. We also, our Father, thank Thee for the precious blood of Jesus Christ, which was shed for us, and for His precious body, whereof we celebrate this representation, as Himself appointed us, "to show forth His death." For through Him glory is to be given to Thee for ever. AMEN.

—Apostolic Constitutions.

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After the Holy Communion

We thank Thee, O God and Father of Jesus our Saviour, for Thy holy name, which Thou hast made to inhabit among us; and that knowledge, faith, love, and immortality which Thou hast given us through Thy Son Jesus. Thou, O Almighty Lord, the God of the universe, hast created the world, and the things that are therein by Him; and hast planted a law in our souls, and beforehand didst prepare things for the convenience of men. O God of our holy and blameless fathers, Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, Thy faithful servants; Thou, O God, who art powerful, faithful and true, and without deceit in Thy promises; who didst send upon earth Jesus Thy Christ to live with men, as a man, when He was God the Word, and man, to take away error by the roots: do Thou even now, through Him, be mindful of this Thy holy Church, which Thou hast purchased with the precious blood of Thy Christ, and deliver it from all evil, and perfect it in Thy love and Thy truth, and gather us all together into Thy kingdom which Thou hast prepared. Let this Thy kingdom come. AMEN.

—Apostolic Constitutions.

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CHAPTER V FIFTH CENTURY PRAYERS

78

For Thy Peace

Make Thy tranquillity, O Lord, to dwell amongst us, and Thy peace to abide in our hearts. May our voices proclaim Thy truth, and may Thy cross be the guardian of our souls. Account us worthy, O Lord, with boldness which is of Thee, to offer unto Thee of Thy grace a pure and holy prayer through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

—Liturgy of The Nestorians.

Intercession

Almighty God, we beseech Thee to hear our prayers for all who sin against Thee, or neglect to serve Thee, all who forget Thee, all who leave Thee out of their lives. O Lord, have mercy upon them; bestow upon us all true repentance and an earnest longing for Thyself. Vouchsafe, we beseech Thee, O Lord, to strengthen and confirm all Thy faithful people, and to lift up the light of Thy face upon them, giving them continually heavenly desires; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

—An Ancient Collect.

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An Evening Thanksgiving

Accept, we beseech Thee, our evening thanksgiving, O Thou Fountain of all good, who hast led us in safety through the length of the day; Who daily blessest us with so many temporal mercies, and hast given us the hope of resurrection to eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

—An Ancient Collect.

For Blessing

Bless all who worship Thee, from the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same. Of Thy goodness, give us; with Thy love, inspire us; by Thy spirit guide us; by Thy power, protect us; in Thy mercy, receive us now and always. AMEN.

—An Ancient Collect.

For Communicants

Hear us, O merciful Father, we most humbly beseech Thee, and grant to all communicants of Thy Church this day,

true repentance and living faith. And we pray that all those who shall from time to time receive Thy creatures of bread and wine, according to Thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ's Holy Institution, in remembrance of His Death and Passion, may be partakers of His most blessed Body and Blood; to Whom with Thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, world without end. AMEN.

—An Ancient Liturgy.

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For Right Living

Grant to us, Lord, we beseech thee, the spirit to think and do always such things as be rightful; that we, who cannot do anything that is good without thee, may by thee be enabled to live according to thy will; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

—Leonine Sacramentary.

For Heavenly-Mindedness

Grant us, O Lord, not to mind earthly things, but to love things heavenly; and even now, while we are placed among things that are passing away, to cleave to those that shall abide; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

—Leonine Sacramentary.

For Love of God's Law

We beseech Thee, O Lord, be gracious to Thy people, that we, leaving day by day the things which displease Thee, may be more and more filled with the love of Thy commandments, and being supported by Thy comfort in this present life, may advance to the full enjoyment of life immortal; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

—Leonine Sacramentary.

81

For Christ's Presence

Be present, O Lord, to our supplications; that as we trust that the Saviour of mankind is seated with Thee in Thy Majesty, so we may feel that, according to His promise, He abideth with us unto the end of the world; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

—Leonine Sacramentary.

For National Peace

We beseech Thee, O Lord, be gracious to our times; that both national quietness and Christian devotion may be duly maintained by Thy bounty; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

—Leonine Sacramentary.

For Light and Guidance

We beseech Thee, O Lord, let our hearts be graciously enlightened by Thy holy radiance, that we may serve Thee without fear in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life; that so we may survive the storms of this world, and with Thee for our Pilot attain the haven of eternal brightness; through Thy mercy, O blessed Lord, Who dost live and govern all things, world without end. AMEN.

—Leonine Sacramentary.

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For Acceptable Petitions

Let the prayers of Thy children, O Lord, come up to the ears of Thy mercy; and that we may obtain what we ask, make us ever to ask what pleaseth Thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

—Leonine Sacramentary.

For Peace

Mercifully receive, O Lord, the prayers of Thy people, that all adversities and errors may be destroyed, and they may serve Thee in quiet freedom, and give Thy peace in our times; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

—Leonine Sacramentary.

For Those Who Minister

O God, Whose ways are all mercy and truth, carry on Thy gracious work, and bestow, by Thy benefits, what human frailty cannot attain; that they who attend upon the heavenly mysteries may be grounded in perfect faith, and shine forth conspicuous by the purity of their souls; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

—Leonine Sacramentary.

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For Good Use of Blessings

Almighty and everlasting God, who healest us by chastening, and preservest us by pardoning; grant unto Thy suppliants, that we may both rejoice in the comfort of the tranquillity which we desired, and also use the gift of Thy peace for the effectual amendment of our lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

—Leonine Sacramentary.

For Cleansing

Cleanse us, O Lord, from our secret faults, and mercifully absolve us from our presumptuous sins, that we may receive Thy holy things with a pure mind; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

—Leonine Sacramentary.

For Grace and Protection

Incline mercifully Thine ear, O Lord, to these our prayers, and fill our hearts with Thy grace, that loving Thee with an unfeigned love we may evermore be defended under Thy most gracious protection, and be accepted in all our prayers and services; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

—An Ancient Collect.

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A Morning Prayer

Almighty God, who fillest all things with Thy presence, we meekly beseech thee, of thy great love, to keep us near unto thee this day; grant that in all our ways and doings we may remember that thou seest us, and may always have grace to know and perceive what things thou wouldst have us to do, and strength to fulfil the same; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

—An Ancient Collect.

For the Sorrowing

Almighty and everlasting God, the Comfort of the sad, the Strength of sufferers, let the prayers of those that cry out of any tribulation come unto Thee, that all may rejoice to find that Thy mercy is present with them in their afflictions; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

—Gelasian Sacramentary.

For Protection

O Lord, give ear unto our prayers and dispose the way of Thy servants in safety under Thy protection, that amid all the changes of this our pilgrimage, we may ever be guarded by Thine Almighty aid; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

—Gelasian Sacramentary.

85

For Love of God

O God, Who hast prepared for them that love Thee such good things as pass man's understanding; pour into our hearts such love towards Thee, that we, loving Thee above all things, may obtain Thy promises, which exceed all that we can desire; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

—Gelasian Sacramentary.

For God's Guidance

O Lord, from Whom all good things do come; grant to us, Thy humble servants, that by Thy holy inspiration we may think those things that be good, and by Thy merciful guiding may perform the same, through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

For Refreshment

We beseech Thee, Almighty God, to behold our prayers, and to pour out upon us Thy loving tenderness; that we who are afflicted by reason of our sins, may be refreshed by the coming of our Saviour; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

—Gelasian Sacramentary.

86

For Light

Incline, O Lord, Thy merciful ears, and illuminate the darkness of our hearts by the light of Thy visitation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

—Gelasian Sacramentary.

For True Joy

Almighty God, who alone canst order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men; grant unto thy people that they may love the thing which thou commandest, and desire that which thou dost promise; that so, among the sundry and manifold changes of the world, our hearts may surely there be fixed, where true joys are to be found; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

—Gelasian Sacramentary.

For Goodness

Lord of all Power and Might, who art the Author and Giver of all good things; graft in our hearts the love of thy name, increase in us true religion, nourish us with all goodness, and of thy great mercy keep us in the same; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

—Gelasian Sacramentary.

87

On a Fast-Day

O God, who in Thy deep counsel and foresight for mankind hast appointed holy fasts, whereby the hearts of the weak might receive salutary healing, do Thou purify our souls and bodies, O Saviour of body and soul, O loving Bestower of eternal happiness! through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

—Gelasian Sacramentary.

A Prayer for Divine Help

Stretch forth, O Lord, Thy mercy over all Thy servants everywhere, even the right hand of heavenly help, that they may seek Thee with their whole heart, and obtain what they rightly ask for; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

—Gelasian Sacramentary.

Praise

O God of hope, the true Light of faithful souls and perfect Brightness of the Blessed, Who art verily the Light of the world, grant that our hearts may both render Thee a worthy prayer, and always glorify Thee with the offering of praises; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

—Gelasian Sacramentary.

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For Light

Shed forth, O Lord, we pray Thee, Thy light into our hearts, that we may perceive the light of Thy commandments, and walking in Thy way may fall into no error; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

—Gelasian Sacramentary.

For the Holy Spirit

We beseech Thee, Almighty God, let our souls enjoy this their desire, to be enkindled by Thy Spirit, that being filled, as lamps, by the Divine gift, we may shine like blazing lights before the Presence of Thy Son Christ at His coming; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

—Gelasian Sacramentary.

For Thy Will

Into thy hands, O Lord, we commit ourselves this day. Give to each of us a watchful, humble, and a diligent spirit, that we may seek in all things to know thy will, and when we know it may perform it perfectly and gladly, to the honor and glory of thy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

—Gelasian Sacramentary.

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For Forgiveness

We beseech Thee, Almighty God, to receive with Fatherly tenderness Thy people fleeing from Thine anger to Thyself; that they who dread the scourge that comes from Thy Majesty may be enabled to rejoice in Thy forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

—Gelasian Sacramentary.

To Serve Thee

O God, who art the light of the minds that know thee, the life of the souls that love thee, the strength of the thoughts that seek thee, help us so to know thee that we may truly love thee, so to love thee that we may fully serve thee, whose service is perfect freedom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

—Gelasian Sacramentary.

For Thy Presence

Into Thy hands, O God, we commend ourselves and all who are dear to us this day. Let the gift of Thy special Presence be with us even to its close. Grant us never to lose sight of Thee all the day long, but to worship and pray to Thee, that at eventide we may again give thanks unto Thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

—Gelasian Sacramentary.

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General Petitions

O God, from whom all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed; give unto thy servants that peace which the world cannot give; that our hearts may be set to obey thy commandments, and also that by thee, we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may pass our time in rest and quietness; through the merits of Jesus Christ our Saviour. AMEN.

—Gelasian Sacramentary.

For Christ's Servants Everywhere

O God of infinite mercy and boundless majesty, Whom no distance can part from those for whom Thou carest, be present to Thy servants who everywhere confide in Thee, and through all the way in which they are to go be pleased to be their Guide and Companion. May no adversity harm them, no difficulty oppose them; may all things turn out happily and prosperously for them; that by the aid of Thy right hand, whatsoever they have asked for with reasonable desire they may speedily find brought to good effect; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

—Gelasian Sacramentary.

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For the Spread of Christianity

O God of unchangeable power and eternal light, look favourably on Thy whole Church, that wonderful and sacred mystery; and by the tranquil operation of Thy perpetual providence, carry out the work of man's salvation; let the whole world feel and see that things which were cast down are being raised up, that those which had grown old are being made new, and that all things are returning to perfection; through Him from Whom they took their origin, even Jesus Christ Thy Son our Lord. AMEN.

—Gelasian Sacramentary.

For Grace

O our Lord and God, look not on the multitude of our sins, and let not Thy dignity be turned away on account of the heinousness of our iniquities; but through Thine unspeakable grace sanctify this sacrifice of Thine, and grant through it power and capability, so that Thou mayest forget our many sins, and be merciful when Thou shalt appear at the end of time, in the man whom Thou hast assumed from among us, and we may find before Thee grace and mercy, and be rendered worthy to praise Thee with spiritual assemblies. AMEN.

—Liturgy of the Blessed Apostles.

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For Enlightenment

Enlighten, O our Lord and God, the movements of our meditations to hear and understand the sweet listenings to Thy life-giving and divine commands; and grant unto us through Thy grace and mercy to gather from them the assurance of love, and hope, and salvation suitable to soul and body, and we shall sing to Thee everlasting glory without ceasing and always, O Lord of all. AMEN.

—Liturgy of the Blessed Apostles.

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