

HOLY PRAISES

2019-2020 Collection

a collection of prayers and scriptures

FOREWORD

We are so excited to share this beautiful compilation of prayers with you! This is the St. Mark Moms 3rd annual prayer book, and we could not be more proud of this resource. The talents and insights contributed by the women in this group are awe-inspiring. The St. Mark Moms group has grown by leaps and bounds and these prayer books serve as a meaningful spiritual reminder of the women that have gathered together all in the name of Jesus.

This is typically the time of the year where we'd be meeting in person; laying our stacks of prayers across the chapel chairs, building our prayer books together in community, and sharing the profound ways we've been using the prayer or scripture to grow our relationship with the Holy Trinity. We'd talk about how our hearts were gently mended to receive the peace and love that only a Father can give and how the light overcame the dark. However, this is no ordinary time.

2020 has been an extraordinary year that only God knew was coming. Like the rest of the world, our St Mark moms were challenged to walk in faith and to believe without seeing. Many of the prayers and scriptures found in this book were the exact tools and anchors they used to successfully navigate the uncharted waters. The faith and encouragement from this group is like nothing we've ever experienced before. It is real, authentic and from a place of love. There is no secret knock, no special handshake, all moms are welcome. Women who walk alongside each other, reminding one another to turn their gaze back to Jesus when the world overwhelms and seems too big. This is the community—Our community of St Mark the Evangelist.

We are thrilled to share this book, our hearts, reflections on the pandemic, and tools with you so that you too may find His unfailing grace and love. We pray that each woman who reads the words in this prayer book finds consolation in the beautifully shared words of your sisters. You, daughter of God, are worthy of every bit of His grace and love. You belong here.

Jen & Amy

ST. GIANNA'S PRAYER

Jesus, I promise You to submit myself to all that You permit to befall me,
make me only know Your will.
My most sweet Jesus, infinitely merciful God, most tender Father of souls,
and in a particular way of the most weak, most miserable, most infirm
which You carry with special tenderness between Your divine arms,
I come to You to ask You, through the love and merits of Your Sacred Heart,
the grace to comprehend and to do always Your holy will,
the grace to confide in You,
the grace to rest securely through time and eternity in Your loving divine arms.

*With Love,
Christine DeSilva*



Faith is like a bright ray of sunlight.
It enables us to see God in all things as well as all things in God."
-St. Francis de Sales

NUMBERS 6:24-26

The LORD bless you and keep you;
the LORD make his face shine upon you
and be gracious to you;
the LORD turn his face toward you
and give you peace."

I hope this brings as much peace to your heart as it does to mine. Unfaltering faith in knowing we are never alone. God is so good.

I love all of you ladies and thank you for all the joy, love, and support you constantly provide.

*Sisters in Christ.
Eli Martin*





LITANY OF HUMILITY

O Jesus! meek and humble of heart,
Hear me.

From the desire of being esteemed,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the desire of being loved,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the desire of being extolled,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the desire of being honored,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the desire of being praised,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the desire of being preferred to others,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the desire of being consulted,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the desire of being approved,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear of being humiliated,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear of being despised,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear of suffering rebukes,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear of being calumniated,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear of being forgotten,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear of being ridiculed,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear of being wronged,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear of being suspected,
Deliver me, Jesus.

That others may be loved more than I,
Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

That others may be esteemed more than I,
Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

That, in the opinion of the world, others may
increase and I may decrease,

Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

That others may be chosen and I set aside,
Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

That others may be praised and I unnoticed,
Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

That others may be preferred to me in
everything,

Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

That others may become holier than I,
provided that I may become as holy as I should,

Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

Amen.

*Litany of Humility submitted by
Amy Diaz*

LITANY OF TRUST

From the belief that I have to earn Your love,
Deliver me, Jesus.
From the fear that I am unlovable,
Deliver me, Jesus.
From the false security that I have what it
takes,
Deliver me, Jesus.
From the fear that trusting You will leave me
more destitute,
Deliver me, Jesus.
From all suspicion of Your words and
promises,
Deliver me, Jesus.
From the rebellion against childlike
dependency on You,
Deliver me, Jesus.
From refusals and reluctances in accepting
Your will,
Deliver me, Jesus.
From anxiety about the future,
Deliver me, Jesus.
From resentment or excessive
preoccupation with the past,
Deliver me, Jesus.
From restless self-seeking in the present
moment,
Deliver me, Jesus.
From disbelief in Your love and presence,
Deliver me, Jesus.
From the fear of being asked to give more
than I have,
Deliver me, Jesus.
From the belief that my life has no meaning
or worth,
Deliver me, Jesus.
From the fear of what love demands,
Deliver me, Jesus.
From discouragement,
Deliver me, Jesus.

That You are continually holding me,
sustaining me, loving me,
Jesus, I trust in You.
That Your love goes deeper than my sins and
failings and transforms me,
Jesus, I trust in You.
That not knowing what tomorrow brings is an
invitation to lean on You,
Jesus, I trust in You.
That You are with me in my suffering,
Jesus, I trust in You.
That my suffering, united to Your own, will
bear fruit in this life and the next,
Jesus, I trust in You.
That You will not leave me orphan, that You
are present in Your Church,
Jesus, I trust in You.
That Your plan is better than anything else,
Jesus, I trust in You.
That You always hear me and in Your
goodness always respond to me,
Jesus, I trust in You.
That You give me the grace to accept
forgiveness and to forgive others,
Jesus, I trust in You.
That You give me all the strength I need for
what is asked,
Jesus, I trust in You.
That my life is a gift,
Jesus, I trust in You.
That You will teach me to trust You,
Jesus, I trust in You.
That You are my Lord and my God,
Jesus, I trust in You.
That I am Your beloved one,
Jesus, I trust in You.

Amen.

Written by Sr. Faustina Maria Pia, SV, Sisters of Life (www.sistersoflife.org)

*Litany of Trust submitted by
Amy Diaz*





PRAYER TO TEACH CHILDREN HOW TO PRAY

God bless mommy, daddy, (name family members, pets), aunties, uncles, cousins, grandmas, grandpas and everyone else. Amen.

CHILD'S NIGHT PRAYER

I say my prayers and hop into bed.
Straighten the pillow and smooth out the spread.
Someone is coming you can easily see,
To Dreamland we'll go, my Jesus and me.
Then Mother Mary with Jesus comes in,
We cover Him up, right up to the chin,
And then we slip off to the land of nod,
Just wee (sweet) little me (name of child) and the Son of God.

ANGEL OF GOD

Angel of God, My guardian dear,
to whom God's love commits me here,
Ever this day be at my side,
to light and guard, to rule and guide.
Amen.
(We all close with this right after)
Most sacred heart of Jesus.
We offer all our prayers, works and sufferings of this day.
Amen.

Submitted by Mary Stauder



PROVERBS 31:28–29

Her children rise up and call her blessed;
her husband, too, praises her:
"Many are the women of proven worth,
but you have excelled them all."

Submitted by Kristin Brandstaetter

HAIL MARY

Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou amongst women
And blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
Pray for us sinners,
Now and at the hour of our death.
Amen.

OUR SPECIAL PRAYER INTENTION

May your guardian angel protect you and watch over you as you sleep and protect you from all the evils of this world, especially Satan and all of his snares and works. May Mother Mary wrap her immaculate heart and mantel around you (your heart/special intention) and give you perfect health.

Dear Mothers,

Sharing the above childhood bedtime prayers with you all. I now say these with my little one every night as does each of my sisters. These nighttime prayers have gone down many generations within my family. I hope you enjoy them as much as we do!

Throughout this quarantine, I have been charged with slowing down and stepping back into the simple joys within my life-family walks, extra snuggles, daily talks with my sisters/family and quality time together at home.

Love,

Mary Stauder



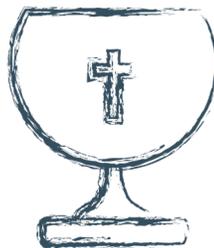
GALATIANS 5: 22-23; 25

In contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

Against such there is no law.

If we live in the Spirit, let us also follow the Spirit.

Submitted by Kristin Brandstaetter



PRAYER OF ST. DOMINIC

May God the Father who made us bless us.
May God the Son send his healing among us.
May God the Holy Spirit move within us and
give us eyes to see with, ears to hear with,
and hands that your work might be done.
May we walk and preach the word of God to all.
May the angel of peace watch over us and
lead us at last by God's grace to the Kingdom.

Xavier.edu

Dear Friends and Sisters,

I am so grateful for you. Thank you for your example as a Christian, Catholic, Mother, and Friend. You are a blessing.

This Pandemic has been challenging. I miss you all, I miss the church, I miss normalcy. That said, there has also been something beautiful about this time with my family and our Father in Heaven. I feel we have leaned on Him, spoken to Him, and seen Him more in our daily lives. As we move forward, I will try to remember the importance of slowing down and enjoying the blessings that are sometimes taken for granted.

I love this prayer, may we all let the Holy Spirit continue to move us. I was inspired by our discussion about Pentecost, thank you.

*With Love,
Becky Lococo*



MORNING OFFERING TO MARY OUR MOTHER

Oh Mary, my Queen and my Mother,
I give myself entirely to you today,
and to show my devotion to you,
I consecrate to you this day
my eyes, my ears, my heart,
my whole being without reserve.
Because I am your own,
keep me and guard me as your property and possession.

Amen.

Sisters of Mary Mother of the Eucharist

Submitted by Christine DeSilva



A PRAYER SO SMALL

“Lord Jesus, I thank you.
Lord Jesus, I need you.
Lord Jesus, I love you.”

I crawl into bed and I'm bone-deep exhausted. To the point where I can't make coherent thoughts anymore. I've just spent my day cooking, cleaning, tending to broken lovies and scrapes, cleaning again, cooking again, doing 5,000 dishes, reading books about superheroes and feelings that relate to COVID-19 so that my girls can try and understand. They understand more than I realize. How do they understand more than I do? "It's okay to feel everything, Mommy. Jesus knows and he's here with us" (Adalynn, age 5). And homeschooling...oh homeschooling. I'm a mom, a wife, a sister, a friend, a chef, a peacekeeper, a judge, a nurse, a teacher, and a million other titles throughout my day. As I lay in my bed, I think: How did I become so many things? Did I turn off the living room light? Did I say 'I love you' enough? Did I lock the doors? Did I make sure to say prayers with the girls tonight? Did I do enough? I begrudgingly slip out of bed. I check the living room lights and the already locked doors. I check on the girls and say 'I love you' one more time; cradling each of their sleeping bodies in my arms and kissing their cheeks. I give my husband a kiss on his forehead as he softly snores. I linger by the side of my bed and silent tears fall down my face. I kneel and I tell God that I have nothing left. A tiny prayer emerges in my head: "Lord Jesus, I thank you. Lord Jesus, I need you. Lord Jesus, I love you". A peace sweeps over me and I hear ever so slightly in the silence of my heart: "Daughter, you are enough. You did enough. Sleep." I get into bed and I sleep deeply and peacefully.

*All my love,
Dana Richards*



MEMORARE

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to your protection, implored your help or sought your intercession was left unaided.

Inspired with this confidence, I fly to you, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother, to you do I come, before you I stand, sinful and sorrowful.

O Mother of the word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in your mercy hear and answer me.

Amen~

*An all time favorite sweet prayer,
Christine DeSilva*





PRAYER TO MARY UNDOER OF KNOTS

Holy Mary, full of God's presence during the day of your life, you accepted with full humility the Father's will, and the devil was never capable of tying you up with his confusion.

Once with your Son you interceded for our difficulties, and full of kindness and patience, you gave us example of how to untie the knots in our life. By remaining forever Our Mother, you put in order and make more clear the ties that link us to the Lord.

Holy Mother, Mother of God and our Mother, to you who untie with a motherly heart the knots of our life, we pray to you to receive in your hands (the name of the person), and to free him/her of the knots and confusion with which our enemy attacks.

Through your grace, your intercession and your example deliver us from all evil, Our Lady, and untie the knots that prevent us from being united with God, so that we, free from sin and error, may find Him in all things, may have our hearts placed in Him, and may serve Him always in our brothers and sisters.

Amen.

Jen Garcia



MY NIGHTLY PERSONAL PRAYER

Heavenly Father,
Let me reflect upon what I have done today Lord. Thank you for giving me the strength in my good choices, and forgive me for the bad ones. Help me to have more consciousness of my thoughts and actions. I pray Father that you help me embrace your will. Give me the peace and fulfillment to surrender to your perfect plan for my life. May you increase as I decrease. May I do it all for Your Glory. Change my heart Lord to be able to take whatever you give me. Amen.

This is a short simple prayer I say sometimes at night. I wrote it in my prayer journal awhile back to help me with surrendering to his will and giving up my own control issues. Thank you ladies for welcoming me into the group this year. I love being a part of our little "Mom Convent."

-Courtney Landers

PRAYER TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS IN TIME OF TROUBLE

SACRED Heart of Jesus! make us remember, when the world is cold and dreary, and we know not where to turn for comfort, that there is always one spot bright and cheerful—the Sanctuary. When we are in desolation of spirit, when all who are dear to us have passed away like summer flowers, and none are left to us or care for us, whisper to our troubled souls that there is one Friend Who dies not. One Whose love never changes, the Sacred Heart of Jesus on the Altar.

When sorrows thicken and crush us with their burden, when we look in vain for comfort, let Thy dear words come forth with full force from the Tabernacle: “Come to me, all you who labor and are heavily burdened, and I will refresh you.”

Would that we could realize the pure happiness of possessing Thy sympathy. Would that we could feel—when we are crushed and humbled, when the hope we have lived for has withered, when sorrows and trials that we dare not reveal to any make our souls sink well nigh unto death when we look in vain for someone to understand us, one who will enter into our miseries, make us remember that there is One on the Altar Who knows every fibre of our hearts, every sorrow, every pain special to our peculiar natures, and Who deeply sympathizes with us.

Compassionate Heart of Jesus! our hearts crave for sympathy, and to suffer seems nothing to the bitterness of suffering alone.

This special prayer was a blessing given to me from a very special Priest friend Fr. Tom Hennesey, it truly brings peace to the weary heart, I hope you too find it comforting.

*With Love,
Christine DeSilva*



PRAYER TO ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL

St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle, be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him we humbly pray; and do thou, O Prince of the Heavenly host, by the power of God, cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls.

Amen.

Submitted by Carmen Cueva



Dear Beautiful Moms,

My heart prays through songs. My girls and I love music and adore this song. It has brought me comfort during this pandemic season. I hope it does the same for you. We will get through this time because Jesus is above all things. Thank you for being my sisters in faith.

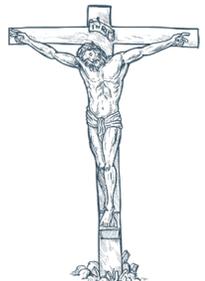
Love you all,

Vivian Lopez

WAYMAKER

Way maker, miracle worker, promise keeper
Light in the darkness
My God, that is who You are
You are
Way maker, miracle worker, promise keeper
Light in the darkness
My God, that is who You are
You are here, touching every heart
I worship You
I worship You
You are here, healing every heart
Healing every heart
Oh, I worship You
Jesus, I worship You
You're turning lives around
You are here, oh, turning lives around
I worship You
I worship You
You mended every heart
You are here, and You are mending every
heart
I worship You, yeah
I worship You
And You are
Way maker, miracle worker, promise keeper
Light in the darkness
My God, that is who You are
Yeah You're the way maker

Way maker, miracle worker, promise keeper
Light in the darkness
My God, that is who You are
Yeah sing it again You are, yeah
Way maker, miracle worker, promise keeper
Light in the darkness
My God, that is who You are
Oh it's who You are, Jesus, yeah
Way maker, miracle worker, promise keeper
Light in the darkness
My God, that is who You are
Sing that is who You are
Oh, that is who You are
And that is who You are
Oh, and that is who You are
That is who You are
Lord Jesus, that is who You are
That is who You are (oh, He lifts you up)
That is who You are
That is who You are
My Jesus, yeah
Miracle worker, promise keeper
Light in the darkness
My God, that is who You are
Yes it is yeah, it's who You are
Way maker, miracle worker, promise keeper
Light in the darkness (hey)
My God, that is who You are





WAYMAKER (CONTINUED)

Let's sing this together
Even when I don't see it, come on, even when
Even when I don't see it, You're working
Even when I don't feel it, You're working
You never stop, You never stop working
You never stop, You never stop working
(come on)
Even when I don't see it, You're working
Even when I don't feel it, You're working
You never stop, You never stop working
You never stop, You never stop working (oh)
Even when I don't see it, You're working
Even when I don't feel it, You're working
You never stop, You never stop working
You never stop (yeah oh), You never stop
working
Even when I don't see it, You're working
Even when I don't feel it (yeah), You're work-
ing
You never stop, You never stop working
You never stop, You never stop working
(You're the way maker, yeah)
Way maker, miracle worker, promise keeper
Light in the darkness
My God, that is who You are
Yeah, yeah
Way maker, miracle worker, promise keeper
Light in the darkness
My God, that is who You are
Sing that is who You are
Oh, that is who You are
That is who You are

Oh and, that is who You are
That is who You are
Yeah, and that is who You are, yeah
That is who You are
Oh, that is who You are
That is who You are
Oh it's who You are, now Jesus
Light in the darkness
My God, that is who You are
You are
Way maker, miracle worker, promise keeper
Light in the darkness
My God, that is who You are
Oh, His name is above
His name is above depression
his name is above loneliness
Oh, His name is above disease
His name is above cancer
His name is above every other name
Yes it is
That is who You are
(That is who You are)
That is who You are
(That is who You are) Jesus
And that is who You are
(That is who You are)
Oh I know that is who You are
That is who You are

Songwriters: Osinachi Okoro

THE MOST IMPORTANT PERSON ON EARTH IS A MOTHER



She cannot claim the honor of having built Notre Dame Cathedral. She need not. She has built something more magnificent than any cathedral - a dwelling for an immortal soul, the tiny perfection of her baby's body...

The angels have not been blessed with such a grace. They cannot share in God's creative miracle to bring new saints to Heaven. Only a human mother can. Mothers are closer to God the Creator than any other creature; God joins forces with mothers in performing this act of creation...

What on God's good earth is more glorious than this: to be a mother?

-Venerable Joseph Cardinal Mindszenty

Submitted by Carmen Cueva



PRAYER OF TRUST IN GOD'S WILL

O God, early in the morning I cry to you. Help me to pray and to concentrate my thoughts on you: I cannot do this alone. In me there is darkness, but with you there is light. I am lonely, but you do not leave me. I am feeble in heart, but with you there is help. I am restless, but with you there is peace. In me there is bitterness, but with you there is patience. I do not understand your ways, but you know the way for me... Restore me to liberty, and enable me so to live now that I may answer before you and before me. Lord, whatever this day may bring, your name be praised.

My dear sisters,

I have missed you all so much. During these crazy times I was reminded of how He is with us all the time if we just slow down and pay attention. Special angels were sent my way every time I was on the edge of losing it. The simple text messages of you ladies praying for me, cards in the mail, am zoom calls, pictures of beautiful OLS Rosaries were all beautiful reminders when I didn't have the strength to pray, there are always you amazing ladies holding us all up. Know that if you ever feel that the weight is too much to bear I am also there praying for all of you ladies and your families. Love you all and may God continue to bless you,

Shelly Baker



CONSECRATION TO THE HOLY FAMILY

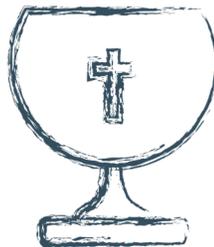
O Jesus,
our most loving Redeemer,
who having come to enlighten the world
with Thy teaching and example,
didst will to pass the greater part of Thy life
in humility and subjection to Mary and Joseph
in the poor home of Nazareth,
thus sanctifying the Family
that was to be an example for all Christian families,
graciously receive our family as it dedicates
and consecrates itself to Thee this day.
Do Thou protect us,
guard us and establish amongst us Thy holy fear,
true peace and concord in Christian love:
in order that by living according to the divine pattern
of Thy family we may be able,
all of us without exception,
to attain to eternal happiness.

Mary,
dear Mother of Jesus and Mother of us,
by the kindly intercession
make this our humble offering acceptable in the sight of Jesus,
and obtain for us His graces and blessings.

O Saint Joseph,
most holy Guardian of Jesus and Mary,
help us by thy prayers in all our spiritual and temporal needs;
that so we may be enabled to praise our divine Savior Jesus,
together with Mary and thee,
for all eternity.

Know that my prayers are with you always. What an interesting part of history we are all living out with our families. I'm so thankful for your uniqueness and thankful to share in the one thing that unites us all, Our Lord! There was a day before I moved here, when I would loiter in Target, hoping to make one single friend. I prayed to God when we moved to Tucson that He would bring me a friend, and wow, was His plan so much better than I could have ever imagined for myself. Blessed and humbled to call you all friends and be a part of this sisterhood of Godly women. I love you all and I pray that God blesses you in all the ways you need. We will all remember 2020.

Jen Garcia





PRAYER TO ST. JOSEPH AFTER THE ROSARY

Introduction

This prayer to Saint Joseph—spouse of the Virgin Mary, foster father of Jesus, and patron saint of the universal Church—was composed by Pope Leo XIII in his 1889 encyclical, *Quamquam Pluries*. . . . He asked that it be added to the end of the Rosary, especially during the month of October, which is dedicated to the Rosary. The prayer is enriched with a partial indulgence (*Handbook of Indulgences*, conc. 19), and may be said after the customary *Salve Regina* and concluding prayer. It may also be used to conclude other Marian devotions.

Prayer

To you, O blessed Joseph,
do we come in our tribulation,
and having implored the help of your most holy Spouse,
we confidently invoke your patronage also.

Through that charity which bound you
to the Immaculate Virgin Mother of God
and through the paternal love
with which you embraced the Child Jesus,
we humbly beg you graciously to regard the inheritance
which Jesus Christ has purchased by his Blood,
and with your power and strength to aid us in our necessities.

O most watchful guardian of the Holy Family,
defend the chosen children of Jesus Christ;
O most loving father, ward off from us
every contagion of error and corrupting influence;
O our most mighty protector, be kind to us
and from heaven assist us in our struggle
with the power of darkness.

As once you rescued the Child Jesus from deadly peril,
so now protect God's Holy Church
from the snares of the enemy and from all adversity;
shield, too, each one of us by your constant protection,
so that, supported by your example and your aid,
we may be able to live piously, to die in holiness,
and to obtain eternal happiness in heaven.

Amen.

Submitted by Carmen Cueva

PRAYER OF SURRENDER

Lord Jesus, it is my will to surrender and to fully abandon everything that I am and everything that I'm striving to be. I open the deepest recesses of my heart and invite your Holy Spirit to dwell inside of me.

I surrender to you my life, heart, mind, body, soul, spirit, all my hopes, plans and dreams. I surrender to you my past, present, future, my habits, flaws, livelihood, finances, occupation and all my relationships.

I surrender to you my health, physical appearance, disabilities, family, marriage, children and friendships. I ask you Jesus to take Lordship over every aspect of my life.

I surrender to you all my hurt, pain, worry, doubt, fear and anxiety, I ask you Jesus to wash me clean.

I release everything into your compassionate heart and merciful love. Please speak to me clearly, Lord. Open my ears to hear your voice. Open my heart to commune with you more deeply. Wrap me in your loving embrace. Open the doors that need to be opened and close the doors that need to be closed.

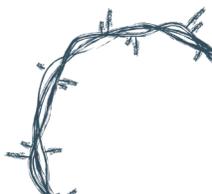
Please set my feet upon the path that you are walking with me, the one where I know I am not alone but under your protection and care. Continue walking with me Lord as I follow the path that leads to you and eternal life.

Amen.

Looking back on the past few months there are so many mixed emotions. There have been so many highs and some lows that have followed right behind them. Despite all that is happening around us though I truly feel that this time was a blessing for our family. We've never had time together the way we have, Ty not traveling has allowed us time as a family we would never have had otherwise. It's been a gift, a reset, a way to understand and grow with each other. It was a time for us to reflect on what really mattered and in a way was a foundational check to see just what we were built on. Where we built and rooted in God, a solid foundation that could whether the storm? There was definitely some bending of branches, and deepening of roots, but we came out stronger and more united not only as a family but in our faith. God's plan during all of this is something that we'll hopefully one day understand but I believe that from this there will be good fruit that comes to bear. Fruit that will last, fruit that will nourish, fruit that will be lifegiving for so many.

I have been so blessed by each one of you and I cannot thank you enough for the impact you've had in my life and the love that you have shown me. I don't know where I'd be without you and it's not something I ever want to find out. Each person in this incredible group of women was brought here by God, He knew that we needed each other, we needed this sisterhood, a sisterhood that would help shape us into the person that God designed us to be, a sisterhood rooted in Him. Thank you, Father, for bringing us all together. Thank you, sisters for being who you are! I cannot wait to continue walking this journey with you and seeing where God takes us.

*With my deepest love, your sister in Christ,
Imelda*



FOR CALMNESS AND PEACE OF MIND

Almighty God,

We bless you for our lives, we give you praise for your abundant mercy and grace we receive.

We thank you for your faithfulness even though we are not that faithful to you.

Lord Jesus, we ask you to give us all around peace in our mind, body, soul and spirit.

We want you to heal and remove everything that is causing stress, grief, and sorrow in our lives.

Please guide our path through life and make our enemies be at peace with us.

Let your peace reign in our family, at our place of work, businesses and everything we lay our hands on.

Let your angels of peace go ahead of us when we go out and stay by our side when we return.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Jesuit Prayer

Dear St. Mark Friends,

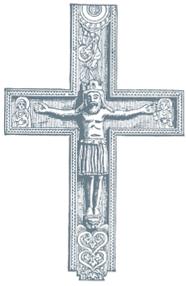
How is it possible that this unique time can bring so many blessings and so much uncertainty and despair, at the same time? I look each day into my childrens' eyes and feel such gratitude to be with them - hugging them, playing outside, cooking together, reading....things I don't seem to find time for during "regular life." Then, I feel the struggles, pain, and chaos of our world - one only need to watch the news or read the paper for this. My heart aches for those who have lost loved ones, even as I have great hope in their reunion with Christ! Hallelujah!

Each night, I try to find ways to calm myself - to breathe deeply, to reflect on the day no matter how trivial the activities, to glance at my children tucked into their beds, and prayer...lots of prayer. Lately, I've felt restless and this prayer has helped.

Wishing you God's blessings even in the small moments.

Jackie Picton





THE BOCKSTAHLER FAMILY 2020

During this Pandemic Pause we have truly come to grow and appreciate what it means to be a family of Gods love. It hasn't always been an easy path to navigate. There were times we were certain we would fail. Being able to do nothing actually takes a tremendous amount of work!

There has been no one to rely on other than ourselves to take care of our children. We are always their parents but now, in this time, we are their teachers, nurses, their spiritual leaders, their guidance councilors, coaches, their full time live in chefs, maid service, and most importantly their best friends.

But this isn't something new. This was what God created us to be from day one as parents. Now though... it is more. Much, much, MORE. We were handed this opportunity of extreme reflection to provide our kids with an insurmountable amount of guidance. Of LOVE. STRENGTH. HUMILITY. FAITH.

My goal as a wife, and as a mother, during this time was to teach my family a Daily Prayer. Something they could wake up to and say out loud or in their hearts each morning. A directive of goodness and faith to start the day off in the right, and most beautifully lighted, direction...

Today Lord,
Open my eyes to see your goodness in all things.
Open my ears to hear the needs of others.
Open my mouth to speak words of kindness.
Open my mind to all I learn and experience.
Today Lord, be in my heart!

Blessed be God who gives us this new day!
May we be a reflection of Jesus in all we do, think and say.

Amen

~ Jillian Bockstahler

ISAIAH 43:1-4

But now, thus says the Lord, who created you, Jacob and formed you, Israel: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name: you are mine. When you pass through waters, I will be with you: through rivers, you shall not be swept away. When you walk through fire, you shall not be burned, nor will flames consume you. For I, the Lord am your God, the Holy one of Israel, your savior. I give Egypt as ransom for you, Ethiopia and Seba in exchange for you. Because you are precious in my eyes and honored and I love you.

This was brought to my attention one morning in adoration. How precious we are to God! He Loves Us! I wanted to share some of the thoughts I compiled to share earlier this year regarding how God Loves US. It is crazy how important and vital these memories are to move forward during this time of isolation.

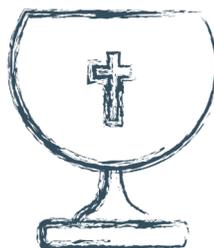
**We are loved... unconditionally.... We do not have to do anything to earn this love. It is given freely. God has blessed us with this group of women with exceptional skill, to draw out and focus on, the gifts that God himself created intentionally inside of each of us. We are all unique, we are all beautiful, each one of us created with intention- Our flaws are our gifts and God delights in them. He put them there intentionally!*

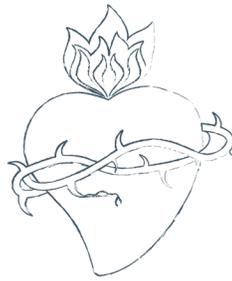
Each one of you helped me to realize....that I am a daughter of God. I am a DAUGHTER of God!! He made me.... All my flaws and gifts... my faults and contributions are intentional. There are no coincidences. I am fearfully and wonderfully made... a masterpiece. That is a hard truth when the enemy is constantly feeding you lies about yourself. These are not my truths alone.. They are yours too!!! For God has unimaginable love for us.

I often thought... Well he must be busy or maybe he is working on someone else's more important need. But, I have since learned....He is always 100% fixed on each one of us individually. You see he doesn't have to divide his gaze. He is God and he is fixed on us just waiting for us to look up. He loves us and is always 100% present. Whaaaaa I have 3 daughters and I am seriously lacking. But he is not... He is perfect and he loves us all the time all the way!

Sister, you are loved!! You are important and worthy. Just look up and meet the gaze that is fixed on you consistently without distraction. God delights in you for you are his!!! Think about looking at his face when you are in prayer! Look into his eyes and he will ALWAYS meet your gaze. He is waiting for it! We are his Beloved!

Submitted by Stacy Merritt





SONG OF SONGS 2:14

“Let me see your face,
Let me hear your voice,
For your voice is sweet,
And your face is lovely”

This time of distancing ourselves has strengthened the bonds of my family and helped us become closer and more rooted in our faith. I am thankful for the slow down and quality time our family has had. This is a gift and although it seems like the world outside of our home is dramatically different, I know that God has a plan and that after the storm has passed there will be rainbows and brightness that we did not know prior to these challenging and sad times. God has a plan and he never disappoints. I think about all of you often and am so blessed by each and every one of you. I feel like this journey has only begun and this sisterhood has no limits!

*Light and Love Always Sisters,
Stacy*



IRISH BLESSING

May the road rise up to meet you.
May the wind be always at your back.
May the sun shine warm upon your face;
the rains fall soft upon your fields and until we meet again,
may God hold you in the palm of His hand.

Submitted by Robin Roll



JOY

Heavenly Father,
Thank you for all the wonderful blessings in my life. I know that joy is a gladness that isn't dependent on our circumstances. Fill me with the grace I need, to have joy in everything I do even the things I don't want to do and to always be an example of great joy to others. Help me to bring others to you through grace and the gifts you have given me. I will try today to be the best version of myself and to emit joy to all.

Amen

Submitted by Lisa Mellady

My hopes are that one of you finds comfort in this compilation of prayers. If just one of you finds peace, God's work has been done by this group that shines so bright in His Love and Grace. There are three main reasons I have chosen to share bible quotes over a prayer to share with all of you:

1- Gives us the ability to meditate on God's Word throughout our day

2- Keeps our gaze on Him and helps us turn away from sin

3- Helps us to share His Good Word about the kind of God He is, Christ's sacrifice on the cross, and our salvation

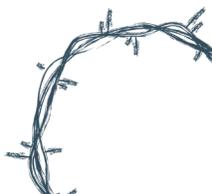
I will be working on memorizing these quotes, and invite you to join me!

Before I share some bible quotes to memorize, I want to mention a few things about this time in quarantine during the 2020 COVID-19 Pandemic, with hopes that when my children are cleaning out our memory trunk, they find this and recall this strange time in our lives where everything was still. From the beginning, I understood that this was God's way of making everything in our modern society pause and reflect. Of course, we still had the internet so we were able to stay "virtually" connected with others, but all the chaos of life fell to the wayside. We were all spending an extraordinary time with our family in our homes (or outdoors) and this is exactly what God wanted from us.

We were able to celebrate Mass in our homes which was such a beautiful experience, and we all grew hungry for His body and blood TOGETHER. We bonded with our children more, we grew closer to our husbands, some of us started new hobbies, or dusted off our sewing machines to "pitch in" and sew masks to protect our families, friends, and healthcare workers.

We hope that when our kids grow up and look back at this time, they remember all the positive things that came from it- more time with family, connecting with our faith in difficult times, and patience while God's work is done through difficult situations.

Cristina McKeever



PROVERBS 31:26

She opens her mouth in wisdom;
Kindly instruction is on her tongue

GALATIANS 6:9

Let us not grow tired of doing good, for in due time we shall reap our harvest,
if we do not give up

PSALM 46:1

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

1 PETER 5:10

The God of all grace who called you to his eternal glory through Christ [Jesus] will himself
restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you after you have suffered a little.

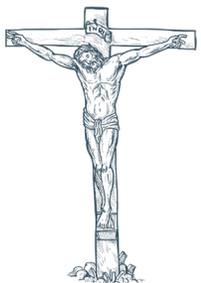
PSALM 119:129-130

Wonderful are your testimonies; therefore I keep them.
The revelation of your words sheds light, gives understanding to the simple.

EPHESIANS 2:4-5

But God, who is rich in mercy, because of the great love he had for us, even when we were
dead in our transgressions, brought us to life with Christ (by grace you have been saved)

Submitted by Cristina McKeever



EPHESIANS 6:10-20

Finally, **grow strong in the Lord**, with the strength of his power. Put on the full armour of God so as to be able to resist the devil's tactics. For it is not against human enemies that we have to struggle, but against the principalities and the ruling forces who are masters of the darkness in this world, the spirits of evil in the heavens. That is why you must **take up all God's armour**, or you will not be able to put up any resistance on the evil day, or stand your ground even though you exert yourselves to the full. So stand your ground, **with truth** a belt round your waist, and **uprightness** a breastplate, wearing for shoes on your feet the eagerness to spread the gospel of **peace** and always carrying the shield of **faith** so that you can use it to quench the burning arrows of the Evil One. And then you must take **salvation** as your helmet and the sword of the **Spirit**, that is, the word of God. In all your prayer and entreaty keep praying in the Spirit on every possible occasion. Never get tired of staying awake to pray for all God's holy people, and pray for me to be given an opportunity to open my mouth and fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel of which I am an ambassador in chains; pray that in proclaiming it I may **speak as fearlessly** as I ought to.

HEBREWS 3:13

Encourage yourselves daily while it is still "today," so that none of you may grow hardened by the deceit of sin.

PSALM 28:6-7

Blessed be the Lord, who has heard the sound of my pleading.
The Lord is **my strength** and **my shield** in whom my heart trusted and found help.
So **my heart rejoices**; with my song I praise my God.

Sisters in Christ

Dear St. Mark's Mom's Group,

It is funny how things work out sometimes. I live across town from your parish and would not have likely met or known you if it weren't for God's amazing ways. It was by chance that I ended up at the Blessed is She retreat and it was a treat to participate in one of your BIS nights in person. I've met some of you at most, only twice.

This pandemic has given me space to lean into God's love and peace, and I am so grateful. I have prayed for friendships that can share this central aspect of our identity and can encourage each other to have patience, peace, and perseverance growing in God's love. Honestly, this is a first for me and it is exciting.

I feel like I have gotten to know more of you because of this rare opportunity to meet regularly via Zoom. How funny, right? Part of me is sad to know that with life getting back to "normal" it means I will not be able to participate as often. I do look forward to spending more time with you in person, when it is possible. I know that God never stops working in our lives and I welcome his plan for me, and for us.

Thank you all for your thoughtfulness, kindness, and joy.

Carmen Cueva





If you ever feel distressed during your day, call upon Our Lady.
Just say this simple prayer,
“Mary, mother of Jesus, please be a mother to me now.”
I must admit, this prayer has never failed me.
– Mother Teresa

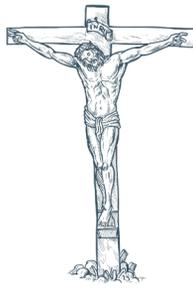
Dear Sisters,

As I type this reflection, the dishes aren't done, the boys are playing in their forts for the millionth time, and there are messes all over my house. But I've learned to take these moments with a bit more grace than I'm used to having because I know that this time that we're living in is nothing but a fleeting moment. I hope that next year at this time we'll be finishing up school in a more conventional way, but I also know that I need to appreciate the extra noise and the extra messes that pop up around me because we will never have moments like these again. Our boys will never be these same ages or have these same interests and may not have the friendship and closeness with one another that they are in the midst of right now. My husband will eventually resume working from his office and won't be able to pop in on the boys and I during distance learning or to have a quick lunch at the dining room table together. A table that is covered in markers, papers, maple syrup and crumbs... We truly are blessed. And for that I am grateful.

Our bond as a family has grown so strong during this time. A time that was supposed to be filled with travel, activities, more travel and just a general busyness that I honestly was not ready to jump into. Little did I know that God would answer my prayers for a slowdown of life in this way. And although the days aren't always easy, and some feel much longer than others, I am grateful to Him for this forced slow down and reminder of what really is important: God, Love, Prayer and Family.

Lord, thank you for this day. Thank you for this time in our lives that we will truly never forget. Thank you for growing our families closer and reminding us to check in on our neighbors, friends, and family members, both near and far. Thank you for the reminder that a great distance can be bridged with a simple text, phone call or hand drawn picture sent in the mail. Lord, thank you for this life we are living and for the constant reminder of Your never ending love for us. Amen.

*Your Sister in Christ,
Kristin Brandstaetter*



St Mark Moms,

Each year I receive this book, I am in awe of the beautiful women I've met through this ministry. Your kind hearts in search of healing, just like mine, gives me so much hope. Although we have the same blueprint, we are all unique - fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139:14) and it shows in your prayers and hearts. Thank you sisters.

Our time during quarantine has really stopped the Diaz family in our tracks. We've always been "too busy" to do much of the extras. Finding our daily routine was TOUGH and stressful, but through the grace of God and LOTS of tear-filled prayers, a routine was established. We had more time for family meals, to play board games and invent games using coolers, boxes and buckets as the goal. We watched mass on smart TVs from our home and have strengthened our rosary muscles as a family in the absence of the busy schedules. Real memories made and new habits formed, praise God.

We're making the effort to spend more time with each other and our immediate family. The boys have enjoyed spirited competition while I sit and watch also having more time for reading and to soak up the joys of motherhood. It's been an adjustment during quarantine, yet there's been many positives too. I'm excited to build on this new foundation and I pray each one of us continue our journey closer to God together.

*Love you sisters,
Amy Diaz*

mom's toolkit

*If you have read through this book and are looking for more resources,
please use this spiritual toolkit to help guide you further*

† Listen to Praise & Worship music

† Mom's Group Spotify Playlist
<https://tinyurl.com/Spotify-MG>

† "Let me see this day/circumstance
through Your eyes"

† You Version Bible Study
<http://bible.com/app>

† BIS Devotions
<https://blessedisshe.net/devotions>

† Nell O'Leary Audio Readings
<https://tinyurl.com/audio-readings-MG>

† Pray the Rosary

† Pray the Chaplet of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel

† Alone time

† Staying connected socially

† Lectio Divina

<https://tinyurl.com/lectio-divina-MG>

† Finding God in the Joy, not just the sorrow

† Keeping the stillness from quarantine

† Formed bible studies and videos
<https://formed.org>

† Do-it-yourself Retreat Books:
<https://tinyurl.com/diy-retreat-MG>

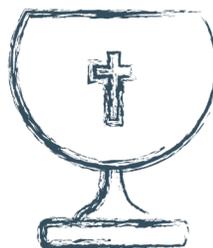
† Grace - A virtuous show for kids

† Read "Jesus and the Jewish Roots of Mary:
Unveiling the Mother of the Messiah"
<https://tinyurl.com/unveiling-MG>

† Daily devotions with someone

† Praise and Adoration to God

† Praise until Peace





Ride a Bike
OR SKATEBOARD



ASK FOR HELP



Blow Bubbles



Color
Paint
Draw

CREATE ART!



Listen to MUSIC



PLAY a
BOARD GAME



MAKE &
PLAY
WITH
SLIME



Practice
Gratitude



WEAVE,
KNIT OR
CROCHET

Use Kind &
Compassionate
Self-Talk



Make a
SCRAPBOOK
OR Collage



PRACTICE
YOGA



Hug
or
Climb
a Tree



KICK
BOUNCE
OR THROW
a BALL



JOURNAL OR
WRITE A LETTER



Take Slow,
Mindful Breaths



Cuddle or Play
with Your Pet



Drink
Water

50 COPING SKILLS for kids



Forgive
Let Go
Move On



Smile & Laugh



EAT
Healthy



Get Plenty
of **SLEEP**



TAKE A SHOWER
OR BATH



STRETCH



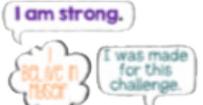
Go on a
Hike,
Walk or Run



Use
Aromatherapy
(Smell something good)



Cook
or **Bake**



SAY Positive
Affirmations



Sing and/or
Dance



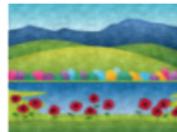
Take
GOOD CARE
of the
Earth



Look At or Take
PHOTOGRAPHS



Garden or
Do Yardwork



Visualize
a Peaceful Place



Try or
Learn
Something
New



READ a Book
or Magazine



DRINK
A WARM
CUP OF TEA



USE a STRESS BALL
(or other fidget tool)



Get a
HUG



DO a PUZZLE

EXPLORE & DISCOVER Nature's
Treasures



Cry

Clean,
Declutter
or Organize



Create
ORIGAMI

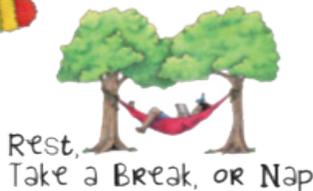


EXERCISE



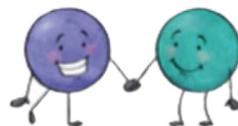
Play Outside

JUMP on a
Trampoline



Rest,
Take a Break, OR Nap

Do
Something **Kind**



BUILD
Something



TALK to Someone
You Trust

