

Prayers *of* Intercession

Following the Common Worship Lectionary

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Foreword

When I was seeking to deepen my prayer life I was given a card with the following prayer of St Augustine upon it:

‘Watch thou, dear Lord,
with all who watch or wake or weep this night,
give your angels charge over those who sleep.
Tend your sick ones:
refresh your weary ones:
sustain your dying ones:
calm your suffering ones:
have pity on your distressed ones,
and all for your mercy and love’s sake.’

The words made me deeply aware that all belongs to God and he loves the whole of his creation. When you seek to draw near to the heart of God you realise that as you come towards his love you must let that love radiate from out of your life. You are called to be a channel of his love; let it pour into you and then out to others. Before any intercessions it is good to rejoice in the presence and in the love of God. As God cares for all of his creation and enfolds it in his love, so they who seek to acknowledge the love of God must express the same care and love for all. The closer we come to God the closer we come to one another. This will involve us in knowing not only the love of God but in his giving himself for the world. True intercession is costly as can be seen by the offering of Christ on the cross. Intercession is about offering our lives to God in communion with Christ for the redemption of the world.

Intercession involves us in the deepest of relationships for it involves us not only with God but with all of his creation. We are expressing our love and trust in God, our love and concern for each other and for the whole world. An easy way to begin intercession is always to approach God with someone or some concern in your heart and to know that you are both in the heart of God. Intercession continues when you leave your prayers with the awareness that God is in your heart as you approach others in love and care, knowing they are also in the heart of God.

In the coming to God in love we seek to lay our whole life before him in self-surrender. Intercession is not a shopping list

of needs; it is seeking to place all before God in love and saying to him, 'Your will be done.' I believe God does not force us to do things but when we say in sincerity, 'Your will be done,' and open ourselves to him he can work through us in wonderful ways. Intercession is sharing our hopes and our fears, our joys and our sorrows with the Beloved in the knowledge that he cares for us all, and at the same time offering our lives to him that he might work through us. Our time of intercession can be a time when God speaks to us and sends us out to live and work to his praise and glory: through intercession we learn to work with God for the good of all.

Intercession is always in danger of becoming dull if it is just the same list time after time. Prayer is not dull. God can never be dull! So we need to make sure our asking prayers are full of life and love. Most of the intercessions in this book follow a simple structure, we pray in turn for the Church, the world, our families and friends, the ill and the suffering, and the departed. This is meant to be an aid to prayer and not a restrictive pattern. An all inclusive pattern for prayer cannot be exclusive when we are praying to God who loves all. The prayers are offered as an aid to your own prayers and not to replace your own prayers. They are not just to be read out; they are to be made your own and to be prayed from your heart. It is always good to find matters that concern you and events that are in the news to add to these prayers. Make sure that your intercessions are part of your living relationship with God. Above all let your intercessions be an affirmation of the presence and power of God and his love for all.

David Adam

Year A

First Sunday of Advent

YEAR A

Blessed are you, Lord our God,
for you have created us out of your love
and for your love.

You have given us eyes to see,
minds to understand
and hearts to love you.
Help us to be aware of your presence
and your coming to us
this day and always.

We ask your blessing
upon all preachers and ministers of the word,
that they may proclaim your presence
and the coming of your kingdom.

We remember before you
all who seek to witness to your abiding love
and your dwelling among us.

We pray for your faithful people
as they prepare to celebrate Christmas
and to rejoice in your love for them.

Silence

Come, Lord God,
make yourself known among us.

We pray for all who watch during the darkness of night
and seek our safety.

We remember the police, coastguards, fire crews,
the ambulance service and all doctors and nurses.

We ask your blessing
upon all who work through the night
to provide us with our daily needs.

Silence

Come, Lord God,
make yourself known among us.

We give you thanks for our homes and our loved ones.
At this time of preparation for Christmas
help us to make sure we have time
for each other and for you.
We remember all who will be lonely and troubled
at this time.

Silence

Come, Lord God,
make yourself known among us.

We give thanks for our health and well-being.
We remember in your presence
all who have suddenly become ill
or been injured in accidents,
and those whose lives have been darkened
by the loss of a loved one.
We ask your blessing
upon all who are homeless or hungry
and all who fear the future.
May they know your presence
and so have courage and hope in their troubles.

Silence

Come, Lord God,
make yourself known among us.

We rejoice that you come to us
and offer us life that is eternal.
We remember in your presence
our loved ones departed and all your saints.
May we all rejoice for ever in your love.

Silence

Merciful Father,
**accept these prayers
for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.**

Second Sunday of Advent

YEAR A

Blessed are you, Lord our God,
for you sent the prophets and John the Baptist
to prepare your way.
You have told us of your coming
and you reveal yourself to us in Jesus.
You come to each of us in power and in love.
Blessed are you, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Father, we give thanks
for all who tell of your love
and who proclaim your coming.
We ask your blessing upon all priests and preachers,
upon all who teach the Scriptures
and tell of your coming.
Bless all who are baptised
into your presence and power.
Lord, we ask forgiveness
when your Church misuses
the resources you have given it
and when we fail to live up to your teaching and love.

Silence

Lord, come to us:
forgive us and guide us.

We remember in your presence
the troubles and sorrows of our world.
We pray for all who are caught up in war or violence,
all who suffer from the greed and insensitivity of others.
May we not misuse or squander the earth's resources
but use them with care and for the benefit of all.
We ask your blessing upon all leaders and politicians.

Silence

Lord, come to us:
forgive us and guide us.

We ask your blessing
upon all who do not look forward to Christmas.
We remember all who will be homeless or lonely
and all who are poor or deeply in debt.
We pray that our homes
may be places of love and peace
where you are welcome.
May we know that in the coming of others to us
you also come and seek our love.

Silence

Lord, come to us:
forgive us and guide us.

We remember all who are ill
and suffering at this time,
all who are distressed
and those who are overburdened.
May they know your peace and your presence.
May all who walk in darkness
come to know your light and your love.
We pray for all who are in hospital
or in care at this time.

Silence

Lord, come to us:
forgive us and guide us.

We remember all our loved ones departed,
and we pray for any who have died recently.
May they rejoice in the fullness of life
and be with you in glory.

Silence

Merciful Father,
**accept these prayers
for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.**