

Morning and Evening Prayer

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INTRODUCTION

Some religious communities and congregations celebrate morning and evening prayer. Morning prayer, undertaken alone or shared with other people, can be a meaningful beginning to each new day; and evening prayer can reconcile our thoughts to God. These prayers may be used flexibly:

A structure for Morning Prayer

- Hymn or worship song
- Call to Worship
- Psalm (see options below)
- Canticle: a hymn or song of praise taken from biblical or holy texts other than the Psalms.
- Psalm of praise
- Biblical Reading (see options below)
- (Preaching or reflection)
- (ritual)
- The Benedictus (also known as the Song of Zechariah or Canticle of Zechariah) from the Gospel of Luke 1:68–79
- Prayers of intercession
- The Lord's Prayer
- Closing Prayer and Blessing
- (Concluding Hymn)

A structure for Evening Prayer

- Hymn
- (Call to Worship) Psalm(s)
- New Testament Canticle (Song of Simeon (Luke 2:29–32) can be used as a Canticle in Christian prayer in the evening)
- New Testament Reading
- (Preaching or reflection)
- (ritual)
- Canticle of Mary – The Magnificat – taken directly from the Gospel of Luke 1:46 –55)
- Intercessions
- The Lord's Prayer

POSITIVEFAITH

- Closing Prayer and Blessing
- (Concluding Hymn)

The following Psalms and Scripture readings might be used:

Ps. 13, 22, 23, 27, 33, 42, 63, 72, 85, 90, 95,100,108, 116, 118, 121, 137, 139,142,147,149,150.

Gen. 1 : 1-4; Eccles. 3 : 1-8; Wisdom 7 : 26-30; Is. 49 : 8-13; Mt. 25 : 1-13, 31-46, 26: 36-46, 28: 1-8; Lk. 24: 15, 28-32; Jn. 4: 1-30, 9: 103, 35-37, 10: 27-30, 12: 20-36; 14: 1-6; Rm. 8: 18-25, 31-39; 1 Cor. 12: 12-27, 15: 3-5; 2 Cor. 4; Gal. 2: 15-21; Eph. 2: 19-22, 3: 14-19; Philipp. 2: 5-11; Jm . 2: 1-13; 2 Pet. 4: 7-11; 1 Jn . 2: 7-11, 5: 1-4; Rev. 21 : 1-5, 22: 3-5.

Informal Morning Prayer

1. HUMBLY SERVE YOUR GOD

Reflection:

By our Baptism we become a "blessed people", a "happy people", "Beatitude people". Our humble services arises from our belief in a loving God, or trust in the coming of the Kingdom, and our love for all within the Kingdom. We "... walk humbly with (our) God" as we try to live the Beatitudes.

The Beatitudes are for people who have their hearts set on having the reign of God come about. Beatitudes are a way of life designed for those who want their lives to be a blessing. Beatitude people are searching people. They have this working with God on their minds and they can't rest until the world is right and just and equitable for all.

They urge us out of the comfortable and the ordinary. They invite us to risk in our daily living and meet the holy in the unsettling questions of the day. They tell us that God is forever in our midst if we bless the world with Beatitude-living. The Beatitudes are values that come straight from the mind of Christ.

Pope Francis has spoken the Beatitudes in simple words. Let this be our prayer.

Blessed are those who remain faithful while enduring evils inflicted on them by others and forgive them from their heart.

R. For they shall be comforted.

Blessed are those who look into the eyes of the abandoned and marginalised and show them their closeness.

R. For they shall have mercy shown unto them.

Blessed are those who see God in every person and strive to make others also discover him.

R. For they shall see God.

Blessed are those who protect and care for our common home.

R. For they shall inherit the Earth.

POSITIVEFAITH

Blessed are those who renounce their own comfort in order to help others.

R. For they shall be filled with good things.

Blessed are those who pray and work for peace and reconciliation between people of all faiths and none.

R. For they shall be called children of God.

Prayer: ALL

Compassionate God, we are here to give ourselves to you and to your people. It is through what we are and do that others will come to know you. We are here to bring peace to a broken people, healing to those in need, and justice to Creation. We are here to witness to a world seeking truth, equality, justice and freedom.

Parent of the poor, the marginalised, the stranger and the oppressed, we ask for your strength. You have shown us how to be faithful to you. You have taught us to stand firm in the pain that we experience in our broken world.

Teach us to use our hands to work at building a kingdom of mercy and love. We ask this in your name.

Amen.

2. GATHERING FOR LIFE

Music

Hymn/Psalm

Reading: John 15: 1-8

Quiet time of reflection.

Affirmation of Faith

The people say in unison: Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, nor shall you bear any grudge against the sons and daughters of your own people, but you shall love your neighbour as yourself: I am the Lord.

The Prayers of the People

The Leader and People pray responsively

O God, we know you hear the prayers of your people.

R. We turn to you in our need, O God.

We pray for the world, that your gift of creation may be understood, respected, cherished and valued.

R. You gave the world into our caring. Help us to be your faithful stewards, tending the world in humility and love.

We pray for the peoples and nations of the world.

R. You gave us to each other. Teach us to treasure your priceless gift of community, diversity and fellowship.

We pray for all who call upon you, O God.

R. We call you by many names. Teach us that we are one people, your people, and that you are one God, our God.

POSITIVEFAITH

We pray for communities of faith.

R. Give us grace to unite in your love and show your glory in the world.

We pray for your continued presence among us. Stay near us, we pray.

R. For without you, we can do nothing.

Prayer

God our sustainer, we give you thanks for the gift of life. We give thanks to you for all those who enrich and sustain our lives: our loved ones, family, friends, care-givers and our community of faith.

Please name someone you would like to give thanks for.....

For these and all those who show us love, understanding and compassion, who bring us hope and strength, we thank you. Amen.

3. USING OUR GIFTS IN HELPING ONE ANOTHER

(For this celebration, you will need a bowl of water)

Hymn:

Spirit of the living God,
Fall afresh on me.....
Spirit of the living God,
Fall afresh on me,
Melt me, mould me,
Fill me, use me.
Spirit of the living God ,
Fall afresh on me.(Second time, "afresh on us")

Reflection:

Water – symbol of life – without, we cannot live; plants cannot grow. With too much of it, there is flooding and destruction. In the wrong place, the wrong amount , the wrong force – destruction. In the right amount, the right place, channeled in the right way, it becomes life-giving.

So too, our gifts, our help. In the wrong place, the wrong amount, or if too forcefully given, it can lead to dependence, or a sense of helplessness; the human spirit can be broken. Given in the right way, channeled with empathy and compassion, our gifts, our help become life-giving to others, allowing them their dignity, their self-respect and the chance to exercise their responsibility for their own choices.

As a sign of our role in enabling each other throughout the world, and especially here in to be life-giving channels of God' s gift s, we ask the Spirit to bless this water as we sprinkle it upon ourselves and upon our land.

POSITIVEFAITH

Blessing:

(recited by one person as water is sprinkled)

May all the rainwater of the future
wash me clean.

May all the showers of the coming century, rinse me.

May, one day, one waterfall after another come down on my head.

All the supplies that you, heaven, have stored in your compassion for steppe
and desert:

give them to me.

May also the waves of the sea break over me and its surf beat against me.

Then may Yahweh come to me the God who strikes the springs who can find
all the water in the world.

Come make me a spring that flows gently and gaily. Amen.

(Times of Life: Prayers and Poems)

Reading:

Then said a rich man, Speak to us of Giving.

And he answered:

You give but little when you give of your possession.

It is when you give of yourself that you truly give.

For what are your possessions but things you keep and guard
for fear you may need them tomorrow?

And tomorrow, what shall tomorrow bring to the over prudent
dog burying bones in the trackless sand as he follows the
pilgrims to the holy city?

And what is fear of need but need itself?

Is not dread of thirst when your well is full, the thirst
that is unquenchable?

There are those who give little of the much which they have
and they give it for recognition and their hidden desire
makes their gifts unwholesome.

And there are those who have little and give it all.

These are the believers in life and the bounty of life, and
their coffer is never empty.

POSITIVEFAITH

There are those who give with joy, and that joy is their reward.
And there are those who give with pain, and that pain is their baptism.

And there are those who give and know not pain in giving, nor do they seek joy, nor give with mindfulness of virtue;
They give as in yonder valley the myrtle breathes its fragrance into space.

Through the hands of such as these God speaks, and from behind their eyes He smiles upon the earth.

(Gibran, The Prophet)

Response:

Spontaneous prayers of thanksgiving for gifts given and gifts received.
Response to each prayer "We thank you, Creator, GOD. "

Closing Prayer:

Leader

My God, to thee alone I pray,
The God who thunders and it rains:
Give me an offspring!
Every day, To thee only I pray.

O Morning Star that rises forth

Every day, To thee only I pray.
He who is like a sage,
To whom I offer my prayer.
Every day, To thee only I pray.
O God, to whom prayer is made,
The God who hears our prayer. Every day, To thee only I pray.

(Prayer of the Maasai Mbiti , The Prayers of African Religion)

4. SEEDS FOR THE FUTURE

(For this celebration, you will need a number of seeds, one for each person)

Opening Song

Make me a channel of your peace

(During this song, the seeds are passed around for each person to take one)

Leader: Pick a seed.

The works we have done are like fruits which ripen and then turn to seed in order to bring forth more life. Each seed is a sign of the fruition of our work – and a symbol of the potential for future life.

Look at your seed – remember – dream.

Reading: 1 Th. 3 : 9-13

What thanks can we give to God for all the joy we feel in his presence because of you, as we ask him fervently night and day that we may see you face to face and remedy any shortcomings in your faith? May God himself, who is our Father, and our Lord Jesus make our path to you a straight one! And may the Lord increase you and make you overflow with love for one another and for all, even as our love does for you. May he strengthen your hearts, making them blameless and holy before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his holy ones.

Response:

Plant your seed in our hearts and let it bring forth fruit of justice in creation.

Benedictus:

Said or sung by all as the seeds are watered by those who wish.

POSITIVEFAITH

Blessed are you, God of Israel, because you have visited and ransomed your people.

You raised up a horn of saving strength for us in the house of David your servant, as you promised through the mouths of your holy ones, the prophets of ancient times.

Salvation from our enemies, and from the hands of all our foes.
You dealt mercifully with our ancestors and remembered the holy covenant you made.

The oath you swore to Abraham and Sarah you would grant us
That rid of fear and delivered from the enemy, we should serve you devoutly
and through all our days be holy in your sight.

And you, O child, you shall be called the prophet of the most high.
For you shall go ahead to prepare a straight
path for the most high.

Giving the people knowledge of salvation in freedom from their sins.

All this is the work of the kindness of our
God, the dayspring who shall visit us in mercy.

To shine on those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, to guide our
feet into the way of peace.

(Psalms Anew)

Prayer

We humbly ask you, O God, to look gently upon your people living with HIV in so many different ways.

Protect the healthy, bring peace to those who are afraid, give courage to those in pain, physically and emotionally; comfort those who are approaching the end of their life.

To those who have gone before us, may they be embraced by you in an eternity of love.

Console the bereaved.

POSITIVEFAITH

Bless those who care for those who are sick.

May we hope one day for a cure for HIV.

O God of compassion and mercy, grant that in this and in all our hopes and struggles in life, we may put our whole trust and confidence in your steadfast love. Amen.

Closing Song

Informal Evening Prayer

5. WELCOME THE STRANGER

Leader: When the lights are on and the house is full, and the laughter is easy,
and all is well –

R: Behold, I stand at the door and knock.

Leader: When the lights are low and the house is still, and the talk is intense,
and the air is full of wondering –

R: Behold, I stand at the door and knock.

Leader: When the lights are out and the house is sad, and the voice is
troubled, and nothing seems right –

R: Behold, I stand at the door and knock.

Leader: And tonight, always tonight, As if there were no other people,
no other house,
no other door –

Cantor/all: Behold, I stand at the door and knock.

Leader: Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest,
Stay with us for day is ending.
Bring to our house your poverty.

ALL: FOR THEN WE SHALL BE RICH.

Leader: Bring to our house your pain
ALL: THAT SHARING IT, WE MAY ALSO SHARE YOUR JOY.

Leader: Bring to our house your understanding of us
ALL: THAT WE MAY BE FREED TO LEARN MORE OF YOU.

Leader: Bring to our house all those who walk behind you
ALL: THAT WE MAY MEET YOU AS THE SAVIOUR OF ALL.

Leader: Bring to our house your Holy Spirit

POSITIVEFAITH

ALL: THAT THIS MAY BE A CRADLE OF YOUR LOVE.

Leader: With friend, with stranger, with neighbour and the well-known ones,
Be among us tonight.

ALL: FOR THE DOORS OF OUR HOUSE WE OPEN, AND THE DOORS OF OUR
HEARTS WE LEAVE OPEN.

Silence for reflection.

Reading: Matthew 25 : 31- 46

ALL: Our Father (The Lord's Prayer)

6. SERVICE OF LIGHT

Meditative Music.

Lighting of a candle.

Gathering Song.

Responsorial Prayer:

Celebrant: God of our hope, dispel the many forms of darkness that we encounter. Help us to walk boldly in your light! Arise let your glory shine forth.

Sung Response: Arise, come to your God, singing your songs of rejoicing.

Celebrant: Arise, O people of God, arise and shine forth, for the glory of God is rising upon us!

Arise, O sleepers, see glory in our midst, for God has come to make us a holy people!

Sung Response: Arise, come to your God, singing your songs of rejoicing.

Celebrant: Though darkness covers the earth, though thick clouds quench the fire of our love, you, O God, come to us in glory, with brilliant light you pierce the dawn.

Sung Response: Arise, come to your God, singing your songs of rejoicing.

Celebrant: Arise, O sleepers, from your despair, for God will lift us high, will give us the wings of eagles, will show us the mountain of glorious delight.

Sung Response: Arise, come to your God, singing your songs of rejoicing.

Reading: Genesis 1 : 1-4

Lighting of Candles

remembering all those who we love, living and dead.

Celebrant: We live in many different dark places. We are often uncertain. We are sometimes afraid.

Response: In the darkness, we light a candle of hope.

Celebrant: We all have sadness in our lives. We have all known pain. Each of us carries special regrets.

Response: In our sorrow, we light a candle of reconciliation and forgiveness.

Responsorial Chant or Music during candle-lighting.

Intercessions:

Celebrant: Creator God, open our hearts and minds to see you, not only in power and glory, but also in weakness and rejection, so that as we pray we may have that mind in us which was in Christ Jesus, who was smitten and wounded for our sake.

Reader: We pray that in the midst of this world and before the eyes of all people with whom we are united in our common humanity, we may live the good news of God's reign. Lord, in your mercy

All: Hear our prayer.

Reader: We give thanks for the gifts which people living with HIV bring before our society and church. God, in your mercy

All: Hear our prayer.

Reader: As we listen to the words of all who experience difficulties, anxieties and pain may we become more aware of their needs. May we recognise as one part of the body is gifted with life and healing, so is the whole.

God, in your mercy

All: Hear our prayer.

POSITIVEFAITH

Reader: We remember all those in this country and across the world who strive to live positively with HIV. We give thanks for all who care for people with HIV. We pray for those and all who are involved in research and treatment that in their work they may always respect the precious dignity of the human person. God, in your mercy

All: Hear our prayer.

Celebrant: Blessed are you, Creator God, for in Jesus you gather us into one great global family, through the workings of the Holy Spirit.

Grant us your strength that we may stand in solidarity with those living with and affected by HIV, now and in the days to come.

All: Amen.

Blessing and Dismissal:

Celebrant: Let us go from this place assured that nothing can separate us from the love of God, committed to loving one another as God has loved us.

All: Amen.

‘Morning and Evening Prayer’ Adapted from Positive Rites - Liturgical Resources for World AIDS Day by John Thornhill