

Fathers Prayers



*"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened,
and I will give you rest."*

(Mt 11,28)



The Blessing of Surrender

Prayers of preparation

O Lord our God, we thank you for the gift of fatherhood and ask for your help when we are in difficulties and when we fail to carry out our responsibilities, to love and to protect our families.

We want to turn away from the things that separate us from you. Please guide our lives and inspire us in all that we do.

Lord, give us the strength and guidance we need to fulfil our role, to accept our proper place in society as fathers, following the example of Joseph the husband of Mary.

We ask you, Lord, for your protection over the women and children you have placed in our care; please guard them against any evil or harmful influence.

Lord, please bless Mothers Prayers, Fathers Prayers and Children of Faith that they will each continue to be guided by the Holy Spirit.

Amen.



Introduction

This booklet has been prepared especially for men who wish to pray together and support each other and will include both physical and spiritual fathers.

Fathers Prayers groups of up to eight men meet regularly in their local areas, in houses or a hall/church, to pray for all fathers and their families.

We pray that all who use it will be blessed by our loving God as he guides us all on our journey to be the people He created us to be.

Many men around the world have been blessed through their meetings

Fathers Prayers is part of the Solace Community. It came into being following the spread of Mothers Prayers. Children of Faith is the third initiative of the Solace Community.

This booklet has been designed to fit neatly into a pocket - please keep it with you.

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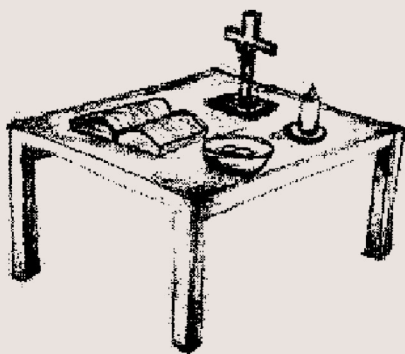


What do we do in our groups?

We form a half circle with a table as the focus, on which we place a cross, bible, candle and basket in which we place the names, written on paper discs, of those for whom we wish to pray.

During our time of prayer, praise and scripture reading we allow space for sharing of any concerns. We then surrender these concerns to the Lord, withholding our natural desire to counsel and give advice. Our meetings are always friendly and welcoming aware that not everyone may be of the same denomination or may have been in such a group before.

We try to encourage everyone to contribute, if they wish, assuring them that we never pass on anything we may hear in the group.



Some questions which you may wish
to consider daily and also to enable
you to share during your meetings

What has been most on my mind?

Any major distractions?

What has been my closest moment to the Lord?

How was my prayer life?

What has been a high point?

What has been a low point?

What may the Lord be teaching me?

What have I done today to evangelise others?

In what acts of charity am I able to involve myself?

Do I need prayer from my brothers at the meeting?

*'and know that I am with you always;
yes, to the end of time' (See Matt. 28:20)*



We start our prayers by quietly focusing on the presence of the Lord, commencing on page 6 with the short reflection of St Anselm.

Then we pray:

- | | | |
|------|--------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Page | 7. | For the Holy Spirit to guide our meetings. |
| | 8. | For protection from evil. |
| | 9. | Prayer of Adoration. |
| | 10. | We praise God in prayer and/or song. |
| | 11. | Prayer of Repentance. |
| | 12. | Reading from Scripture. |
| | 13. | Prayer for Fidelity and Holiness. |
| | 14. | Prayer of Thanksgiving for Fatherhood. |
| | 15. | Prayer of Commitment. |
| | 16. | Prayer as we place the names in the basket
at the foot of the cross. |
| | 17. | Prayer for our Families |
| | 18-28. | Other Prayers for Fathers. |



Reflection of St Anselm

Come now,
turn aside from your daily toil,
escape for a moment
from the turmoil of your thoughts.
Put aside your weighty cares,
let your burdensome distractions wait;
free yourself awhile for God
and rest awhile in Him.

Enter the inner chamber of your soul,
shut out everything except God
and that which can help you in seeking Him,
and when you have shut the door,
seek Him.

Now my whole heart says to God:
'I seek your face, Lord,
it is your face I seek.'

Pause - to be open to the Lord's calming presence.



Prayers of preparation

Invitation to the Holy Spirit to Guide our Meeting

Come O Holy Spirit
and fill our hearts with your love
so that our meeting and our desire to pray
will be guided by you.

Help us to search within ourselves
for anything that may separate us from God and please give us the desire to
repent.

We seek to renew our lives
in the service of God and of one another.
Holy Spirit, bless us, our families and friends and give us your peace in our
lives.
Amen.

*(A short pause should be made after this, and each of the following prayers,
for anyone who may wish to share)*



Prayer for Protection

Lord Jesus,
in this changing world
help us to remain true
to the values you have given us.

Protect us from all dangers of soul and body
and give us the security of knowing that,
through your love for us,
we are freed from anxiety
and the fear of what is to come.

Give us the confidence and strength to avoid sin,
and to be pure in heart and mind
so that we will always be close to you.

Protect us, and our families, from all evil.
Amen.

(Pause)



Prayer of Adoration

Heavenly Father,
we thank you for your gift of life
and for creating us in your own image.
You are God living and true
and you come in all your radiance
bathing us in your heavenly light.

We thank you for the wonder of your creation
and for surrounding us with such great beauty.
We are honoured that you have allowed us
to share in your plan for creation.

Nothing can compare with your generosity
towards us, your sons.

Give us, in this time of prayer, the joy of praising and
adoring you for such great blessings.
Amen.

(Pause)



Songs of Praise

Please choose from
the songs/hymns listed below which may
be said or sung, or, of course, a song
of your own choice.

O Lord my God when I in awesome wonder.

Father I place into your hands the things that I can't do.

Lay your hands gently upon us.

Majesty.

Father God I wonder.

Our desire to praise God is His gift to us.



Prayer of Repentance

Jesus, we thank you for dying for us
so that we should have eternal life with you.
We are sorry that we have sometimes strayed
from the path you wanted us to take,
and ask forgiveness for all the times
we have been inward looking,
selfish, weak, lacking in courage and faith
and for all the other opportunities
we have missed to show love to others.

*Here we spend a few minutes in examining our
lives to see how we could have avoided
temptation and received a blessing instead.*

Lord, we repent of all our sins and offer to you
all the pain caused by our sinning.
We surrender ourselves to you so that
you may cleanse us
and protect us from all temptation.
Amen.



Scripture Reading

In the scriptures we read the Word of God.

Anyone may share a passage from scripture which has meant something special to him or take a couple of verses at random and reflect on them.

For example:

'Abraham said, "what if only ten innocent men are found"? God said, "I will not destroy the city if only ten are found". (Gen: 18:32).



Prayer for Fidelity and Holiness

Lord Jesus, we are anxious to grow more in holiness
and to be the loving people you created us to be.

Keep us firm in the faith that you have given us.
Fill us with your strength so that we may be
faithful to you in our daily lives,
enabling others to grow, especially our families.

Lead us to be men
who have our thoughts focused on you,
so that our actions can be seen as
a reflection of your love.
Amen.

(Pause)



Prayer of Thanksgiving for Fatherhood

We thank you, our most gracious Lord and God,
for the wonderful gift of fatherhood.

Keep us always
in a close loving relationship with our children
and please give us patience with a listening heart
to recognise their needs and to see you in them.

We thank you Lord, for this wonderful prayer
support as we unite our prayers with all
Fathers Prayers groups throughout the world.

May we never forget
the importance of fatherhood.
Amen.

(Pause)



Prayer of Commitment (We say this together)

Lord, in the past, we have often been reluctant to serve you in others and have shirked our responsibilities towards them.

We thank you for showing us where we have gone wrong and we ask now for your help to change our lives.

We now commit ourselves to you and promise, with your help, to guide and to protect our families and to be available to all those who need our care and advice.

Please give us the resolve to change our lives through prayer, so that people will see in us men of power and inner strength men of the Gospel and workers in your vineyard.
Amen.

(Pause)

'With God, all things are possible.' (Matt. 19:26)



Prayer as we begin to place the discs into the basket

Lord, our God, we offer to you the names of those we love and all those for whom we now pray. We realise that sometimes we have problems in truly letting go of our concerns for them and have often kept all the worries to ourselves. But Lord, supported by our brothers, we now commit them into your care surrendering them to you.

Lord we realise that by our own efforts we can do nothing - but we know that you love our families and friends even more than we do.

Lord, above all, please bring them into a real understanding of your great love for them.
Amen. *(Pause)*

*One by one, we place the names of those, whom we wish to surrender to the Lord, into the basket. We can kneel or stand for this. We spend a short time in prayer there for those we love.
(Whilst each member is praying, the rest of the group pray quietly in support, with background instrumental music, if available.)*

'Ask and you shall receive.' (Luke. 11:9)



We finish with the following prayer:

Prayer for our Families

Lord help us to remain close to those dearest to us,
our wives, our families, our friends
and those in our parishes.
Keep us aware of our responsibilities
to them and to their needs.



Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
and forgive us our trespasses;
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom
the power and the glory.
For ever and ever. Amen.

Other Prayers for Fathers

Work

Lord, be with us in our work and
help us to deal with the day to day problems.
Give us the grace to do our work well
and to be respected within our employment.

Let us not give in to temptation
in any form whilst we are at work,
and give us the satisfaction of earning sufficient
for the needs of those you have placed in our care.

We pray for those who are unemployed
or retired, for their well-being and
that they will make good use of their time
Amen.



Faith Sharing

At a time when many men
do not take their faith seriously, Lord,
help us to encourage them to renew
their commitment to you.

Thank you that you will
give us strength, through regular prayer,
to be ready to share with others
the faith you have given us.

Give us the opportunity
to speak to those who do not know you,
bringing them to a knowledge
of your saving love.
Amen.



Secure in Our God

Lord, help us to deal with any envy or jealousy we may have about the possessions or achievements of others.

Give us the grace to recognise with joy the gifts you have given to each of us and how precious we are in your sight.

Let confidence grow in us as we experience your presence, guiding us towards the fulfilment of your call on our lives.

Amen.



Discipline

Lord, as fathers,
help us to know when and how
to exercise discipline within our families.

Let us not give way to anger
nor that we lose control,
but let us act with generosity of spirit
and in a calm manner,
taking whatever action is necessary
for the good of our loved ones.
Amen.



Role Model

Lord, help us in our efforts to change our lives
so that we may be good examples
for all men who show the lack of love
and responsibility in marriage and family life.

Let our actions, as the supportive heads of
our own families, demonstrate our closeness
to those who are part of our lives.

Give us the grace
to understand the feelings of others
and to provide help
and encouragement for them.
Amen.



Your true self, in Gods image

As men we are expected to show our
masculine power and physical courage,
so please help us, Lord,
when we are trying to conceal our weaknesses
and when we try not to show
our emotions and tears.

Help us to accept ourselves as we are,
knowing that you are working within us,
and so we need not be too concerned about
the opinions of others.
Amen.



Reaching out

Lord, help us to use our resources
and time wisely so that we may help others
who are more needy than us.

Help us to reach out to:

those who have relationship problems;
those who are uncertain about their identity;
those who are unemployed or retired;
those who suffer from poverty or lack of hope;
those who give themselves to materialism;
those who have sexual difficulties;
those in prison;
those who are depressed;
and those who are suicidal.

Lord, please bless all fathers
and lead them into a deeper knowledge of you.
Amen.



Growth

Lord God,
you are Father of the world.
Help us to grow in wisdom and grace
under your protection.
Enable love, patience and integrity to grow
in our ordinary everyday work
as we honour you by the work of our hands.

Teach us to live in simplicity and love,
in joy and humility, in hope and faith
and as men of peace and unity.

Make us friends of Jesus,
faithful and courageous
experiencing His grace
so that we become generous servants.

Help us to unite with Jesus
for your greater glory and
become a blessing to our families and friends
and to the community in which we live and work.
Amen.



Prayer of Saint Anselm

O Lord, my God, teach my heart this day
where and how to see you,
where and how to find you.

You have made me and renewed me,
and you have bestowed upon me
all the good things I possess,
and still I do not know you.

I have not done that for which I was made.

Teach me to seek you,
for I cannot seek you unless you teach me,
or find you unless you show yourself to me.

Let me seek you in my desire,
let me desire you in my seeking.

Let me find you by loving you,
let me love you when I find you.
Amen.



Prayer of Surrender by St Therese of Lisieux

Lord, give me the open heart of a child.
Let me come trustingly to you,
not afraid of your love.
Deliver me from the belief
that I am self-sufficient.
Show me my need of you.
Give me grace to reach out to you.
Lord, give me a child's simplicity
and a sense of wonder.
May my enthusiasm for you never dim.
Let me hasten to converse with you
in the intimacy of prayer.
Give me discernment to realise
there is no detail in my life
too tiny for your concern.
Help me to perceive your glory
in the helplessness of the Cross.
Son of God, who for my sake,
took on the dependency of childhood,
help me to adopt the readiness
of the Father's grace.
Amen.



St Patrick's Breastplate

May the strength of God guide me this day,
and may His power preserve me.

May the wisdom of God instruct me;
the eye of God watch over me;
the ear of God hear me;
the Word of God give sweetness to my speech;
the hand of God defend me;
and may I follow the way of God.

Christ be with me, Christ be before me,
Christ be after me, Christ within me,
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ at my right hand, Christ at my left,
Christ on my journey,
Christ in the heart of every man who thinks of me,
Christ in the mouth of every man who speaks to me.
Christ in every eye that sees me.
Christ in every ear that hears me.



Notes

Fathers Prayers started following the spread of Mothers Prayers when men asked us 'what about us'? A core group of men had been praying, but the impetus to produce a booklet and to take things further came when I attended a Men's Weekend at Stoneyhurst College in Lancashire. I was certainly struck by the way the group of about 250 men were praising God so devoutly and so willingly! The power of their praise was so moving that I could feel the presence of the Holy Spirit. This experience of the power of men praying together was a time of inspiration for me which led me on to commence the work of Fathers Prayers.

In producing this booklet, I have been assisted, in no small measure, by the local core group at Star House, for whose help I am extremely grateful.

May God continue to bless this great work.

Maurice



Further information

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Notes



Notes



Men for the sake of getting a living
forget to live!

It is essential for men to reaffirm
their identity, not only as members of
society, but as heads of families and as persons making
up the Body of Christ.

When men are secure in their identity,
their marriages and families will also be
strong and healthy.

Men should be known not by virtue of their
wealth but by the wealth of their virtues.

