



# Prayer Book

# Introduction

This is a prayer book.

A book to be used time and time again.

A book to help you pray whatever your mood or experience.

A book that can be used at anytime, anywhere.

Prayer is a learning process. Although we can never get it wrong, it is a process of learning to trust God with every bit of who we are.

Prayer invites us to be real about who we are and what we are feeling.

It is a journey of discovery of ourselves and God.

You can trust God that every prayer, however small is being heard.

God is already waiting to listen; he is closer than our own heartbeat.

In the pages that follow, there are a selection of written prayers that you may choose to pray either by yourself or with others. The prayers may also inspire you to speak your own prayer to open a conversation with God.

There are more ways to pray than using words. A separate 'Creative Ways to Pray' booklet is available from

**[salvationist.org.uk/core-recovery](http://salvationist.org.uk/core-recovery)**



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**'It is in prayer that God teaches us real rest, real freedom, real truth, real inspiration and real compassion. It is in prayer that we are found, it is in prayer that we are welcomed, in prayer God meets us, celebrates us, heals us and awakens us to life in Jesus.'**

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– Mark Yaconelli,  
*Wonder, Fear and Longing*

# The Core Recovery Prayer

God, we thank you for the life that you have given us.  
May we live it to the full – inviting you to  
share each day with us.

Help us to rely on your grace, compassion and faithfulness.  
Help us to be forgiving, loving and  
aware of the needs of others.  
Help us to use our strengths, and  
weaknesses to live courageously.

We thank you for recovery and restoration.  
May we live one day at a time,  
Always connected to you and to one another.  
Amen.



# Prayers for Recovery

## The Serenity Prayer

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can and wisdom to know the difference.

## God of Compassion

Dear Jesus,  
I ask you to turn this weakness into strength,  
this suffering into compassion, sorrow into joy,  
and pain into comfort for others.

May I trust in your goodness and hope in your faithfulness,  
even in the middle of this struggle.  
Fill me with patience and joy in your presence  
as I breathe in your healing life.

## Eyes of Mercy

God, look upon me with eyes of mercy.  
May your healing hand rest upon me,  
may your life giving powers flow into every cell of my body  
and into the depths of my soul,  
cleansing, purifying, restoring me to wholeness and strength.

## One Day at a Time

Thank you for keeping me sober another day.  
I pray only for the knowledge of your will for me,  
and the power to carry that out. I pray that you keep me sober  
again tomorrow.

## Change Pain into Love

Dull the pain with your love.  
Blur the sharp edges by reminding me that from bad comes  
good.  
Help me appreciate that after the sorrow, joy is sweeter.  
I look forward to better times. I can endure anything with you  
by my side.



# More Recovery Prayers

O God,

When I want to run – hold me.

When I want to turn away – turn me round.

When I want to hide – race me to my hiding place and win.

When I want to hurt others – deflect my aim.

When I want to hurt myself – love me.

When I cry – grab me quickly and hold me safely in your arms.

*– Ruth Burgess*

Lord hang on to me,

Because I don't feel well enough to hang on to you.

You, Lord, you have given so much to me;

Give me one thing more:

A grateful heart. Amen.

*– George Herbert*

Hope of my heart,

Strength of my soul,

Help of my weakness,

By your powerful kindness complete

what in my powerless weakness I attempt. Amen.

*– St Anselm – Prayer to Christ: First verse from:*

*<https://christhaunted.wordpress.com/2010/10/14/st-anselm-prayer-to-christ/>*

O God,  
Who knows us to be in the midst of so many and great  
dangers,  
That by reason of the frailty of our nature we cannot always  
stand upright,  
Grant us such strength and protection, as may support us in all  
dangers,  
And carry us through all temptations.  
Through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
Amen.

*Book of Common Prayer*

## **My recovery prayer**

*Use the space below to write your own recovery prayer:*

# Praying in Distress

It is hard to pray when you're hurting, especially when that hurt has lasted a long time.

It's hard to pray when we have to watch the suffering of others, especially when it seems to make no sense.

It is sometimes hard to pray in recovery, because we are moving away from past hurts. It is an act of courage that will take everything we have.

## Remember ...

- It's not always possible to find a safe place to pray. But if you can, move to somewhere safe, and perhaps to a place where you can be supported.
- Know that in our distress and suffering, God wants us to know his protecting presence even more.
- Throughout the Bible people have called to God in the worst circumstances:

How long, Lord, must I bear pain in my soul, and have sorrow in my heart all day long? **Psalm 13:2, NRSV**

Give ear to my prayer, O God. My heart is in anguish, the terrors of death have fallen upon me. **Psalm 55:1, NRSV**

- Cry, scream, shout out to Jesus. There are no niceties in this situation – you need to know God's presence now; and he seeks out those who are suffering
- When you can, concentrate on your breathing. Try to slow it down. As your breathing slows say the name of Jesus, or just one word to represent your prayer. Remember you are not alone.

Imagine God holding you, keeping you safe.

When you can, notice what is happening in your body. Are you hurting anywhere?

Is there an ache in your chest, a lump in your throat, a knot in your stomach, a pain in your forehead?

What are you feeling right now – anger, fear, guilt?

Just take time to notice that this is what is happening. What is this all saying to you?

Imagine Jesus with you right now wanting to heal that pain. Can you give it to him? Stay with Jesus in this place until you are ready to move.



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**'When things are hard, take  
refuge in Christ's heart.'**

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- Mother Theresa

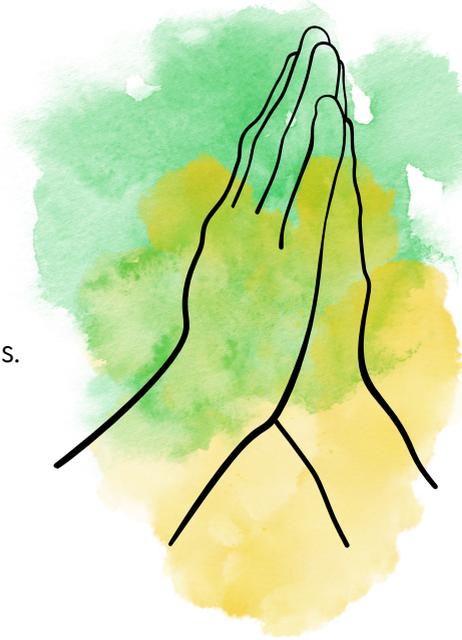


It is important to find someone safe to share your distress and walk with you as you find a way forward.

# Other useful prayers

## The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Lead us not into temptation  
but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours  
now and for ever.  
Amen.



Lord make me an instrument of your peace;  
where there is hatred, let me sow love;  
where there is injury, pardon;  
where there is doubt, faith;  
where there is despair, hope;  
where there is darkness, light;  
and where there is sadness, joy. Amen.

*- attr. to Francis of Assisi*

Lord,  
The help of the helpless,  
The hope of those past hope,  
The rescuer of the storm-tossed,  
The harbour of the voyagers,  
The healer of the sick:  
I ask you to become all things to all people,  
For you know the needs of each one.  
Accept us all into your Kingdom,  
Making us children of light;  
And give us your peace and love, Amen.

*- Divine Liturgy of St. Basil*

Guide us that we may be more sensitive to our neighbours' needs.

Help us to see our neighbour, both close and far away –  
The need of the old to know they are wanted,  
The need of the young to know they are listened to,  
The need of all people to know they are of value.  
Lord, keep us aware.

*- Women of New Zealand, Adapted*

I give you these stirrings inside of me,  
I give you my discontent,  
I give you my restlessness,  
I give you my doubt,  
I give you my despair.  
I give you all the longings I hold inside.

*- A Prayer of Longing, The Northumbrian Community*

God be in my head,  
And in my understanding.  
God be in my eyes,  
And in my looking.  
God be in my mouth,  
And my speaking.  
God be in my heart,  
And my thinking.  
God be in my end,  
And my departing.  
Amen

– *Book of Hours*



Lord,  
The sea is wide  
And my boat is so small.  
Be with me.

– *Prayer of a Breton fisherman*

I thank you, Lord, that you have kept me through this day.  
I thank you, Lord, that you will keep me through the night.  
Bring me, in safety, to the morning hours,  
That you may receive my praise at all times,  
Through Jesus Christ my Lord, Amen

– *Gelasian Sacramentary*

I arise today, through God's strength to pilot me,  
God's might to uphold me, God's wisdom to guide me,  
God's eye to look before me, God's ear to hear me,  
God's word to speak for me, God's hand to guard me,  
God's shield to protect me, God's host to save me.

From snares of devils, from temptation of vices,  
From everyone who shall wish me ill, afar and near.

Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me,  
Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me,  
Christ on my right, Christ on my left,  
Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit down,  
Christ in the heart of everyone who thinks of me,  
Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me,  
Christ in the eye that sees me,  
Christ in the ear that hears me.

I arise today  
Through a mighty strength,  
Through a confession of the Oneness  
Of the Creator of creation.  
Amen.

*- Prayer of St. Patrick, abridged*



# Blessings to share

May Christ dwell in your hearts through faith;  
And may you be rooted and grounded in love,  
And comprehend with all the saints,  
What is the breadth and length and height and depth  
Of the love of Christ,  
So that you may be filled  
With all the fullness of God.

– *based on Ephesians 3:17-19*

May the warmth of Christ heal you,  
The eyes of Christ gaze on you,  
And the peace of Christ shine through you,  
Today and evermore, Amen.

– *Angela Ashwin, The Book of a Thousand Prayers*

Let nothing disturb you,  
Nothing frighten you.  
All things are passing –  
God never changes.  
Patient endurance attains all things.  
Whoever possesses God is wanting in nothing;  
God alone is enough.

– *Teresa of Avila*





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**Praying doesn't have to be  
all about words, remember  
we can pray with all our  
senses. 'Worship with your  
own weirdness.'**

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Pete Greig

# My prayers









The Salvation Army is a Christian church and registered charity in England and Wales 214779,  
in Scotland SC009359 and in the Republic of Ireland CHY6399.