

PRAYERS & REFLECTIONS

C. CREATIVE PRAYERS

THE SONG OF THE SUN

Good Lord, you who are
over all things,
to whom all power belongs,
Praise and glory and honour
and every blessing are yours.
To you alone, highest One,
they belong

And no one is worthy to call
upon your name.

Be praised, O my Lord,
with all your creatures,
Especially our brother
the Sun

Who is the light of the
daytime,
and you give us light
through him.

And he is lovely and
shines because of his
great splendour.

O highest Lord, he is the sign
of you.

Be praised, O my Lord,
through our sister Moon and
the stars,
For you made them in the
heavens glittering pure and
lovely.

Be praised, O my Lord,
through our brother the Wind
And through the air, the
clouds, the sky and
every season
By which you keep in life
your creatures.

Be praised, O my Lord,
through brother Fire
By means of whom you
lighten the night.
He is handsome and joyful
and powerful and brave.



Be praised, O my Lord,
through our sister and
mother the Earth
Who sustains and governs us
And brings forth the crops
we eat and the flowers we
rejoice in.

Be praised, O my Lord,
through
Those who show mercy for
love of you,
All those who put up with
sickness and trials.
Blessed are they who carry
these burdens peacefully
For you, the highest One,
will crown them.

Be praised, O my Lord, for
our sister Bodily Death
From whom no living person
can escape.

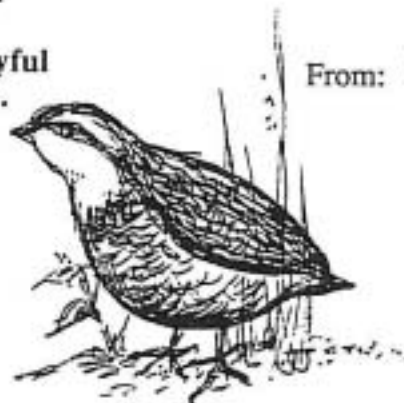
Woe to those who die
without love in their hearts.
Blessed are those who die at
rest in your holy will
For the second death cannot
touch them.

Let all creatures praise and
bless my Lord and thank him
And serve him in great
humility.

Father Francis, pray for us
That we may rejoice with you
in holy poverty.
And follow you into the
garden of the King.

- Francis of Assisi
(Translation J K Baxter)

From: *The Marist Messenger*
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GOD

Changing beauty
Patterns inexhaustible,
Wondrous mystery,
gentle as a dew drop,
Sharp as the shipping wind
Upon a stormy sea.

Burst of colour,
Brilliant as the sunrise,
Sparkling Splinters,
Into the blackness of my mind.
Mist cloud swirling,
Darkness daunting
Even those who dare...

Wondrous Mystery
Clad in flesh and human form
Weeping with the weary
And with those who mourn.
Heart beat pounding,
Pulsing with the life of love
Calm ... compassion ... comfort
In a warm caress.

Beyond all boundaries
Never captured ... floating ... free.
Past, present, future
Intermingling in a spiral
Pattern that simply is.



Sister Josephine Gresham smsm
Permission granted for all material used throughout.

GOD

Lord God, give us faith to believe
that you don't operate outside our existence.
But you are co-experienced, co-known,
co-active, co-present
in the quest for meaning
in the search for truth
in the hunger for freedom
in the nostalgia for the beautiful
and in the voice of conscience.

from 'Speak Lord' by Nicholas Howlett
Marist Brothers Publication, 1986

COME DANCE IN MY HEART

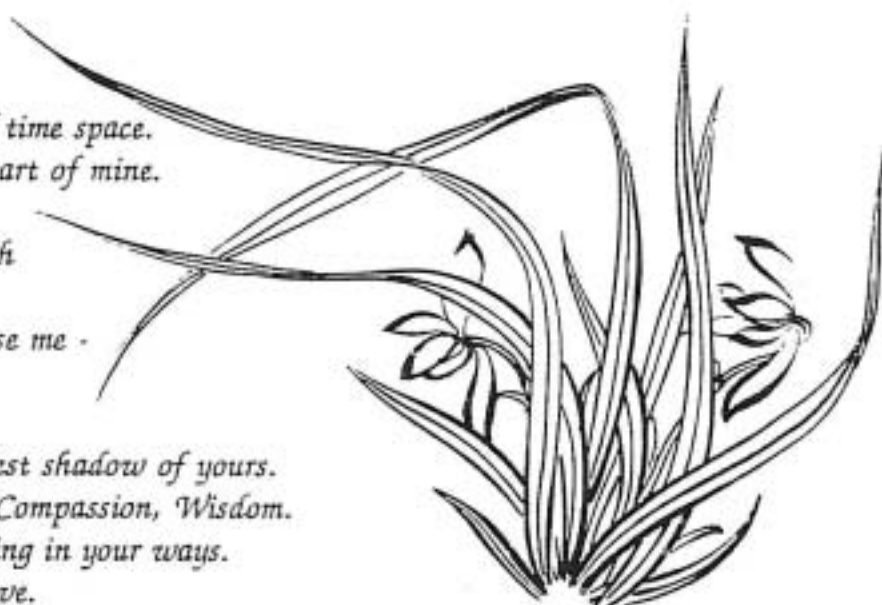
*God of the dance.
God of the Rainbow.
God of the sunlight reflecting dispersing light.
Come dance in my heart.*

*God of laughter.
God of being.
God of the tiniest shower drop that shimmers
Enlighten me, dispel the darkness.*

*O Cosmic Christ.
You who hold all in being
Sustained within the web of time space.
Transcend this poor weak heart of mine.*

*God of gentle human warmth
Touch - surrender.
Be me - Hold me - immerse me -
I am only in You.*

*My 'amness' is but the faintest shadow of yours.
You who are infinite Love, Compassion, Wisdom.
Come Lord set my feet dancing in your ways.
My heart rejoicing in your love.*



Sister Pamela Hedges sjc
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***I HAVE RELIED ON YOU SINCE THE DAY
I WAS BORN AND YOU HAVE ALWAYS BEEN MY GOD***

Psalm 22.

BODY OF CHRIST

Sunday morning 11am
The colourful crowd flock out from within.
Vibrant colour, speech and laughter
Mingle and match . . .

Children carried 'bobbing', reaching
Movement, colour, sound. . .
Evaporates, dispelled over the darkness
Of asphalt ground.

Till only the silence remains.
Christ has scattered in many grains.
Gone to the home, workplace and leisure.
Till once again the grains gather and reform again. . .

It's Sunday and they come
To celebrate again . . .
Eucharist in the One as in the All.

Sister Pamela Hedges sjc



MAGNIFICAT

Shout with joy
All creation.

Sing God's praise
my brothers, my sisters, my friends.

For God
Our gracious God
has looked upon
My nothingness with love.
Well God knows my frailty
and my fear.

Well he knows the longings
of my wayward heart.

Yet God dares
To catch me up
To bid me come
To lay his hand upon my life
and set me firm
Upon a journey he has trod.

Praise the gift I am
Praise the broken places too
Spaces where God's glory
filters through.

Life giver
Life bearer
Both are you
Both you ask me to become.

Sister Josephine Gresham smsm

MARY

Mary you must have been a strong woman,
aware of events
and concerned about the sufferings of the oppressed.
Mary help us not to be manipulated
but let us be active and decisive participants
in the events of our world.
Blessed Virgin you were complete in yourself,
your identity was your own,
may I have a sense of my real worth.
When troubles plague my path and worries dog my step,
remind me, like you, to ponder, reflect and pray
about these things in my heart.

from 'Speak Lord' by Nicholas Howlett
Marist Brothers Publication, 1986

WITH THE VIRGIN MARY

With the Virgin Mary
our souls proclaim the greatness of the Lord
and our spirits exult with joy
in Jesus our Saviour.

Blest are you, O Lord,
through eternity!

Because you have looked with favour
upon your lowly handmaid,

Blest are you, O Lord,
through eternity!

Because the power of your love
has done great things for her,

Blest are you, O Lord,
through eternity!

Because your mercy reaches from age to age
to all who worship you,

Blest are you, O Lord,
through eternity!

Because you show the power of your arm
and scatter the proud of heart,

Blest are you, O Lord,
through eternity!

Because you cast down princes from their thrones
and exalt the lowly,

Blest are you, O Lord,
through eternity!

Because you fill the hungry with good things,
and send the rich away empty,

Blest are you, O Lord,
through eternity!

Because you are mindful of the mercy
promised to our fathers,
to Abraham and to his descendants forever,

Blest are you, O Lord,
through eternity!

(Luke 1:46-55)



from 'Speak Lord' by Nicholas Howlett
Marist Brothers Publication, 1986.

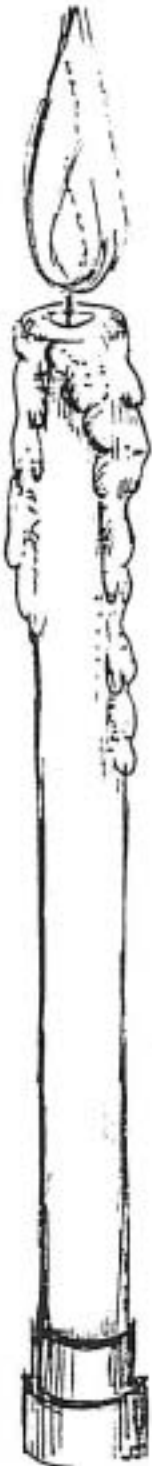
DISCIPLESHIP

Discipleship is a way of life demanded
of all who call themselves Christian.
Lord, you ask us as you did of Peter
'Who do you say I am?'
Nowadays, you might ask us;
*'Are you really my disciples or have you
reversed the roles and made me your
disciple?'*

Lord, alert us to the demands of discipleship
which must constantly disturb us.
Yet, we prefer coma to challenge,
so help us to overcome the temptations
of familiarity which chain us
to the well tried and comfortable ways.
Help us to take risks and let go,
as your subversive stories suggest.

For us the question is the same
that Jesus put to Peter,
'Who do you say I am?'

from **'Speak Lord'** by Nicholas Howlett
Marist Brothers Publication, 1986.



The Way

*Winding road,
Symbol of a life
Scattered stream of friendship
Laughing down, flowing under,
trickling alongside,
Smoothing broken stones,
Cutting through the undergrowth
With loving force.
Calling life forth with
Every splash and ripple.*

*Fern fringed edges
Heather sprinkled hillside
pink and white
All pointing to the sky.
Scarred rock face speaks of pain
Some the very stretch marks
of your birth.
Others healed through time,
Shadowed by a friendly punga frond
or Cradled in forgiving moss.*

*In some of the break of wholeness
While the fresh cuts,
Weeping still its reddened rock
Cry out.
The road winds on
Those who journey with it
Learn its song.*



Sister Josephine Gresham smsm

Prayer in Loneliness



Help me not to dread
the feeling of being alone
and cut off from others.

In my loneliness
may I discover your presence
and how much I depend on you.
And by drawing closer to you
may my sadness
never become self-centred.

In your presence
may I learn to gaze on all mankind
with understanding
and compassion.

May I see my loneliness
as part of the loneliness
all people feel at times
and which Jesus Christ himself shared.

Help me ease
in some small way
by my presence
the loneliness of others.

I ask this
through Jesus Christ,
your Son, Our Lord,
who died in desolation
but rose through your power
to fullness of life with you
and with the whole universe
forever and ever.

Amen.

from *Annals* '74, October 1974. p3.
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ON THE BEACH

IT WAS NICE THAT DAY, LORD,
WHEN WE MET ON A LONELY BEACH.
YOU WERE THERE IN THE SEA
AND I LIKENED OUR FRIENDSHIP TO WAVES.
EACH TIME THE SEA AND SAND MEET,
A LITTLE OF EACH IS ABSORBED BY THE OTHER.
THE CONSTANCY OF THEIR MEETING
WAS LIKE YOUR CONSTANCY WITH ME.
THE COARSENESS OF THE SAND IS SOFTENED
BY THE GENTLE TOUCH OF THE WAVES.
SO TOO AM I SOFTENED BY EACH MEETING WITH YOU.
SOMETIMES, THOUGH, THE SAND RECEDES AS IF TO ESCAPE.
THEN THE SEA SEEMS TO STRETCH ITSELF,
AS IF IT WERE DEPENDENT ON THE MEETING, THE TOUCH.
IS IT NOT SO WITH US TOO?
I MOVE AWAY FROM YOU, AND YOU STRETCH YOURSELF TO TOUCH ME.
SUDDENLY, THE SAND IS GONE, AND THERE ARE ROCKS.
THE SEA TAKES NO NOTICE - IT CAN FLOW THROUGH OR OVER THEM
TO FIND WHAT EVER GRAIN OF SAND IS LEFT.
YOU, LORD, SEEM TO TAKE NO NOTICE OF THE ROCKS BETWEEN US
YOU NEVER GIVE UP TRYING TO FIND THE TINIEST GRAIN
OF ATTENTION I MIGHT PAY TO YOU.
THE BEAUTY OF IT ALL IS THAT THERE IS NO END TO THE SAND AND
THE SEA.
WHEN THE SAND ENDS, IT'S ABSORBED INTO THE SEA
- SUCH HAS BEEN YOUR PROMISE TO ME.

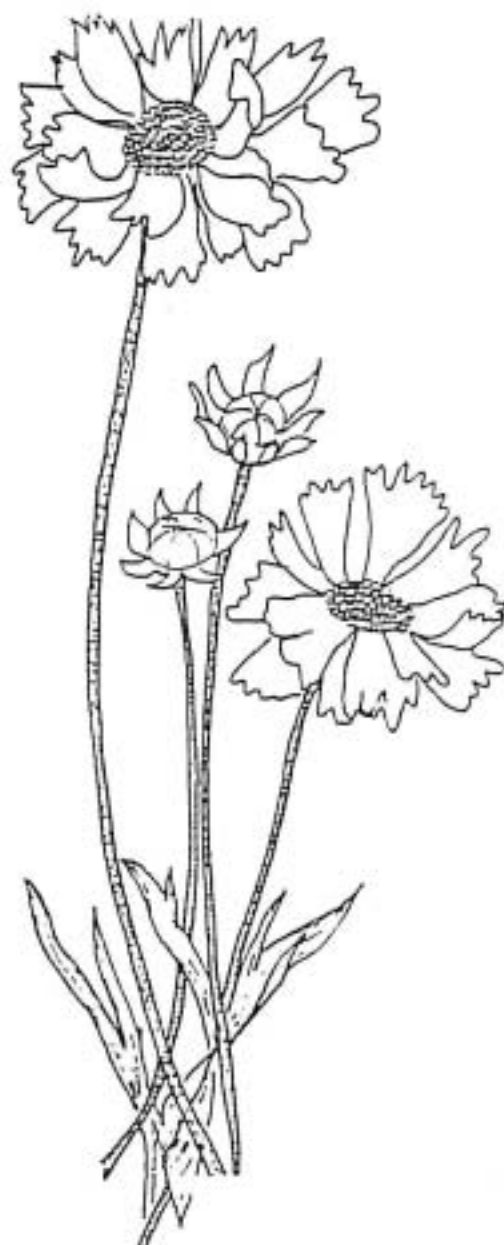
from '**Speak Lord**' by Nicholas Howlett
Marist Brothers Publication, 1986

MY LIFE IN FAITH

God has created me to do him some definite service.
He has committed some work to me which
he has not committed to another.
I have my mission -
I may never know it in this life,
but I shall be told it in the next.

I am a link in a chain,
a bond of connection between persons.
He has not created me for naught,
I shall do good.
I shall do his work.
I shall be an angel of peace,
a preacher of truth in my own place
while not intending it if I do but keep his Commandments.

Therefore I will trust him.
Whatever, wherever I am,
I can never be thrown away.
If I am in sickness, my sickness may serve him;
in perplexity, my perplexity may serve him;
if I am in sorrow, my sorrow may serve him.
He does nothing in vain.
He knows what he is about.
He may take away my friends.
He may throw me among strangers.
He may make me feel desolate, make my spirits sink,
hide my future from me - still he knows what he is about.



Cardinal Newman (1801-1890)
from 'Speak Lord' by Nicholas Howlett
Marist Brothers Publication, 1986

TRUST AND CONFIDENCE

*My cry is for faith,
Lord, help me to trust,
to struggle with uncertainty,
and still believe;
to be faithful to you
even when I feel you're not around.
Let me trust and have confidence in you Lord,
for it is sometimes dark.*

*Yahweh
your God
is in your midst;
He will exult with joy
over you.*

from 'Speak Lord' by Nicholas Howlett
Marist Brothers Publication, 1986

ps. 3:17



Some Class Prayers

GOD BLESS THOSE...

God, bless those whose faces come into our minds as we come into your presence. Bless those we love, let nothing harmful happen to them today. Bless our friends and all our classmates, let nothing come between us. Bless those whom we know to be ill, give them a restful and healing time today. Bless those we know who are sad, comfort them today. Bless those who are being foolish, keep them from doing anything that would wreck life for themselves and for others. Bless the poor, the homeless, the friendless, those in prison, in misfortune and in disgrace. Bless our parents and families today. Grant this through Christ Jesus Our Lord. **Amen.**

BLESS US, LORD

God, bless the people whom we should think of and pray for. Bless our parents, our grandparents, our brothers and sisters, our friends, and our teachers. Bless those who have no one to remember them, and no one to pray for them, the aged, the lonely, the friendless, those who have no one to love and no one to love them. Bless all of us with grateful hearts for all that we have, contrite hearts for all our sins, Lord bless us all with hearts at peace because they rest in you. Grant this through Christ Jesus Our Lord. **Amen.**

TODAY

All through today, God, help us to be quick to praise and slow to criticise, quick to forgive, and slow to condemn, quick to share, and slow to refuse to give. Help us all through today to have complete control over our tempers, that we may be slow to anger; help us, God, to have control over our tongues that we may speak no hasty words. Help us today to serve others and to hurt no one. Grant this through Christ Jesus Our Lord. **Amen.**

PRAYER FOR MOTHERS

Dear Lord, be with young mothers who are anxious about their babies. Bless them and give them your support.

Lord, help those who fear their pregnancies and are tempted to have abortions. Given them courage to choose life.

Lord, help mothers whose children have gone astray, who no longer come home. Bring them together again in renewed love.

Dear Lord, be the hope of mothers who lose their children, by sickness or accident. Give them your compassionate love.

Thank you, Lord, for my parents
Help me to be a source of joy and happiness in their lives.

Amen.

LET YOUR SPIRIT SPEAK

Lord God, let your Spirit speak to our minds and our hearts today. May your Spirit be light for our way, strength for our tasks, peace for our worries, while leading us to forgiveness of our sins. Give us the power to live according to your Spirit, God. Grant this through Christ Jesus Our Lord. **Amen.**

GOD, HELP US ALL THROUGH TODAY**God, help us all through today**

To do nothing to worry those who love us;
To do nothing to let down those who trust us;
To do nothing to fail those who teach us;
To do nothing to hurt those who are close to us.

GOD, HELP US ALL TO BE THIS DAY**God, help us all to be this day**

A comfort to those who are sad or unhappy,
A friend of those of us who are lonely and afraid,
An encouragement to those who are depressed.

OUR CLASS

God, grant that our classmates may see in each one of us a reflection of Jesus Christ, may we truly serve each other today.

GOD - TO WALK THIS DAY WITH YOU

God, help us to walk this day with you. Give each of us something of the wisdom that are in your words; something of the love that are in your heart; something of the help that is in your hands; something of your patience with people; something of your ability always to forgive.

TODAY**Lord God, help us all to use today**

To know you a little better;
To work as a class a little better
To serve each other with more care and consideration;
To make today a day of progress in our lives, and to become a little more like what you want us to be.



OUR SCHOOL

Lord God, we ask you to come into our school today and into our hearts. Stay with us all today, help us to trust each other especially if the going is rough and we feel unfairly treated.

GIVE US FAITH

Give us faith, Lord, when we are at the crossroads of life, and doubt which way to turn. Help us to turn to you for guidance, and when we do, hear our prayers. Bless all those who encourage and guide us.

YOUR WORD

Lord, help us to accept your Word and to live by faith. Help us to trust your wisdom and love. Give us faith, when we cannot see clearly where our road through life is leading.

TO SEE THE BRIGHT SIDE OF LIFE

Lord, we often have our trials and sufferings and sometimes they depress us and get us down. Help us today to look on the bright side of things and to be cheerful always. Help us to know our blessings, and to realise that there are many who suffer more than we do. May we help each other today by our kindness, and care of each other.



THE CITY

*Concrete city, graffiti plastered
Praise God.*

*Littered streets, effluent pollution
Praise God.*

*Blaring ghetto blaster, blatant tunes
Praise God.*

*Dogs barking, cars squealing
Praise God.*

*Sirens screaming, red lights flashing
Praise God.*

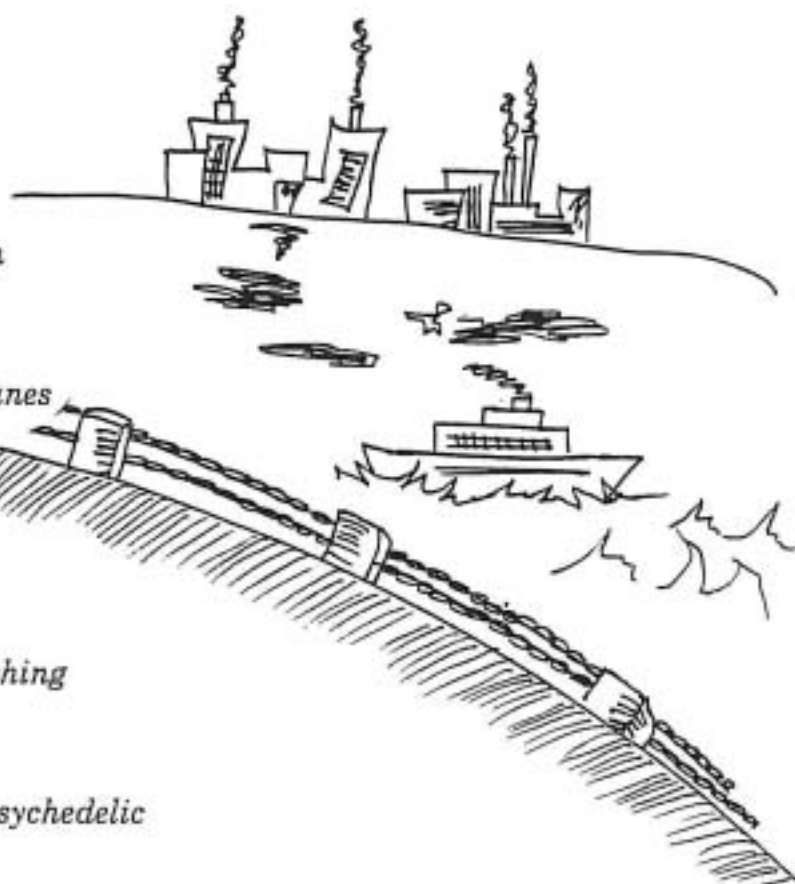
*Kaleidoscope of colours, bright psychedelic
Praise God.*

*Skateboards skittering, space machines frittering
Praise God.*

*Language strange, tones discordant
Praise God.*

*Vivid slashes of colour, cacophony of sound,
But the warmth of the Ghetto reaches out -
Wraps around,*

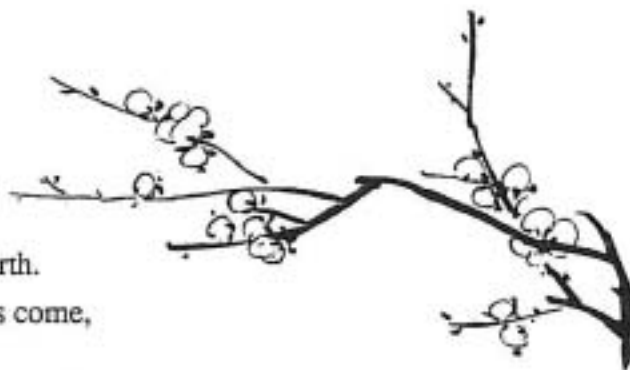
*Love in action, love in sound,
Praise God.*



Sister Pamela Hedges, sjc

SPRINGTIME LEARNING - A Reflection

'Come then, my love,
my lovely one, come.
For see, winter is past,
the rains are over and gone.
The flowers appear on the earth.
The season of glad songs has come,
the cooing of the turtle dove
is heard in our land.'



Song of Songs

Reflection:

With the promise of spring before me what was the most difficult task I faced this past winter? _____

How did I do? _____

What did I learn from it? _____

What do I most look forward to in this springtime ahead of me?

ADVENT

A Meditation for Advent

The beginning of summer
Spring is the time of expectation - waiting - new life.
Summer begins - we prepare.
Prepare for the gifts that God gives
'Prepare the way of the Lord' (Matthew 3:3)

How do we prepare for Christ to come,
Christ, a king who is not of this world,
Gowns, red carpets and feasts?
Rich gifts, expensive dreams?

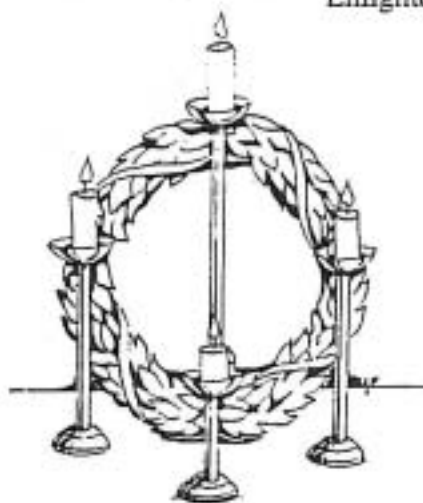
Our ungospelled hearts try to hide
our slowness to respond
to the gift already given.

Our hearts, cluttered and confused
search for the emptiness
that makes it possible to receive.
Prepare the way of the Lord!

He asks so little of us -
That we show the light of love
in our hearts, our lives,
Not just on our Christmas trees.

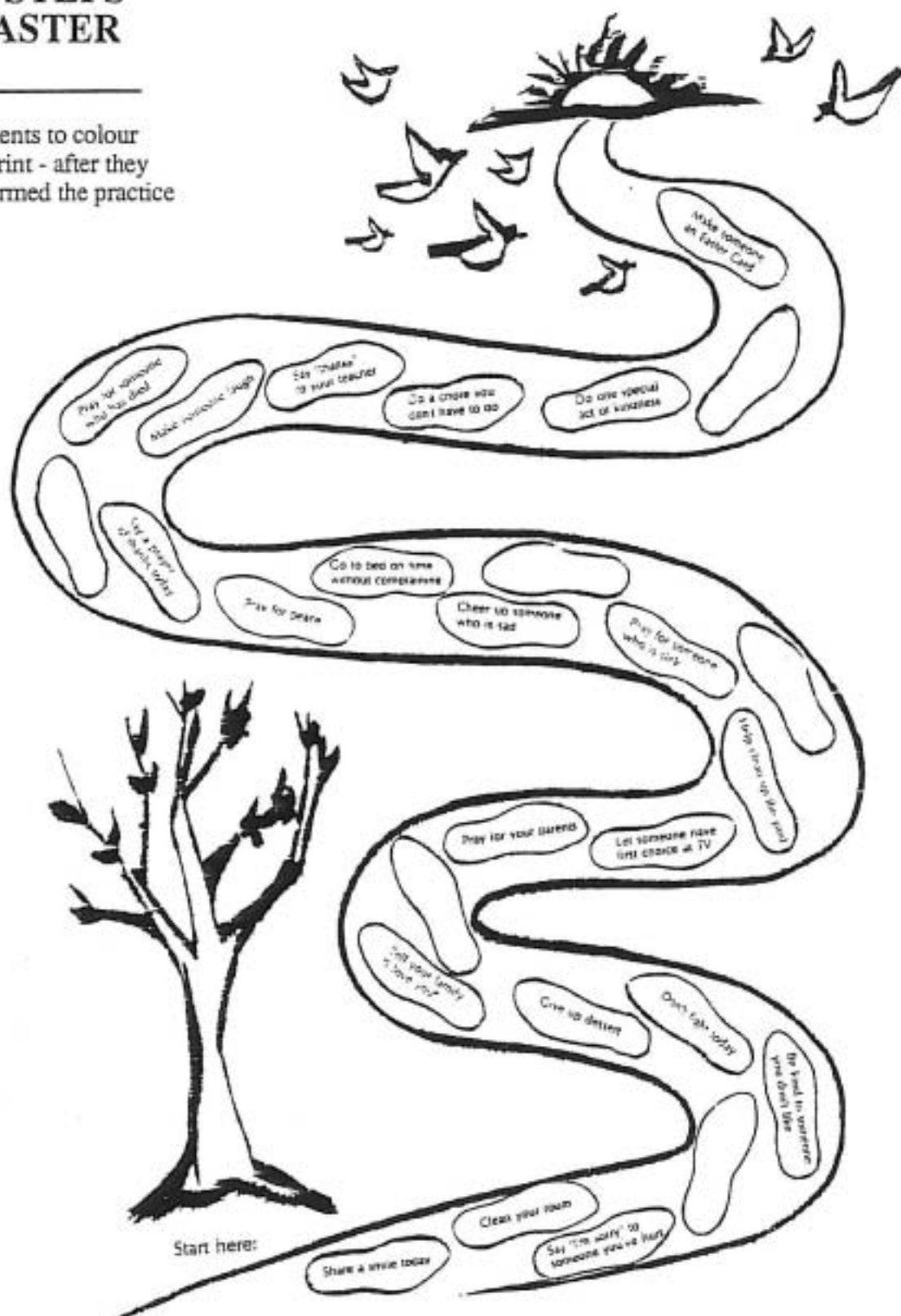
Let our hearts stand waiting,
as we wait for the coming summer.
Waiting for the Father's gift.
Come, Lord Jesus, Come.
Enlighten our lives with your presence.

Source Unknown.



FOOTSTEPS TO EASTER

Invite students to colour each footprint - after they have performed the practice on it!



This is an adapted version of a Lenten calendar prepared by Ruth Darago, assistant liturgy coordinator at Notre Dame School in Hyde Park, New York. Ruth's version actually contained 40 footprints - one for each day of lent.

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Blessing before the Christmas and Easter Holiday

Preparation

Shortly before dismissal, the students gather so that the teacher will be able to touch each student.

Teacher: May the Lord's face shine on us, and may the Lord guide our feet into the way of peace.
Blessed be the name of the Lord:

All: Now and forever.

Teacher: Let us put ourselves into the hands of the Lord, and pray that God will bless us and our families during the coming holy days. May each of us help to make our home a place of joy, love, peace and safety. May we be generous and considerate, not thinking only about ourselves, but helping others enjoy the blessings of this coming season.

Please respond "Amen", as I bless each of you.

The teacher goes to each student in turn, places a hand on his or her head or shoulder, and says:
"(name)....., go with God."
When this is completed, prayer continues with the sign of the cross:

Teacher: My dear friends and students, may almighty God give you light and joy.

And, until we gather here again, may God bless all of us in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.



(Sing an appropriate hymn)

from Children's Daily Prayer for the Year 1991-92
Elizabeth McMahon Jeep
Liturgy Training Publications, 1800 North Hermitage Ave
Chicago, IL 60622-1101, 1991.



Blessing before Summer Holidays

Preparation

Shortly before dismissal, the students gather so that the teacher will be able to touch each student.

Teacher:

May the Lord's face shine on us,
and may the Lord guide our feet
into the way of peace.

Blessed be the name of the Lord:

All:

Now and forever.

Teacher:

Let us put ourselves into the hands of the Lord, and pray that God will bless us and our families during the wonderful months of summer. May we all help to make our homes a place of relaxation, joy, love, peace and safety. May we be generous and considerate, not thinking only about ourselves, but helping others enjoy the blessings of the summertime.

Please respond "Amen", as I bless each of you.

The teacher goes to each student in turn, places a hand on her or his head or shoulder, and says: "(name)....., go with God." When this is completed, prayer continues.

Teacher:

Lord, God, this class has shared many things this year. We were linked by common tasks, and time together.

Those ties are broken now. We say good-bye and end our year.

Lord, bless each of these, my classmates and friends, especially those I will not see again. Keep each of us in your care during the coming summer and throughout our lives.

Guide our steps and strengthen our hearts until we gather once again in your kingdom.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All:

Amen.

Teacher:

Let us end this year as we began it, with the sign of the cross.

All make
the sign
of the cross

All:

In the name of the Father...

Blessings for Birthdays

Leader: Loving God,
you created all the people of the world,
and you know each of us by name.
We thank you for (name).....
whose birthday it is today.
Bless him/her with your love and friendship,
May he/she grow in wisdom, knowledge
and grace.
May he/she have his/her family always
and be ever faithful to all friends.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: *Amen.*

Leader: May God, in whose presence our ancestors walked, bless you.

All: *Amen.*

Leader: May God, who has been your shepherd from birth until now, keep you.

All: *Amen.*

Leader: May God, who saves you from all harm, give you peace.

All: *Amen.*

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Prayer for Discernment of Vocation in Life

Please God, give me the grace to know your will for me, and the courage to do it.