

THE PRAYERS

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Cor ad cor loquitur (Heart is speaking to heart) was J.H. Newman's familiar phrase to describe devotional literature that really "works." Whether it's called "Pastoral Prayer," "Prayers of the People," or just "The Prayers," that part of the liturgy aims for that heart-to-heart quality. Here's my 5 Nov 89 attempt:

PRAYERS

O Lord our God, by whom we exist, in whom we live, with whom we have been brought safely through another week, our worship together here this morning is both an offering of gratitude & joy to you & a reminder to us of where the Center is & who the Savior is & what is the hope we Christians hold for ourselves & for the world. Though we are unworthy of your grace & our worship imperfect, you have taught us to claim the worthiness of your Son our Lord Jesus Christ &, in your Spirit, to press on toward perfection. Save us now, as each alone & all together we attend to you, from coldness of heart & wanderings of mind, that the words of our mouths & the meditations of our hearts may be acceptable in your sight. LORD, IN YOUR MERCY, HEAR OUR PRAYER.*

Heavenly Father, on this All Saints' Sunday we remember all, great in the Spirit & ordinary in the Spirit but as truly in the Spirit as were the great in the Spirit, who have gone before us; those the ages remember & those remembered only as long as their loved ones lasted on the earth; those who set their minds to seeing that we remember you more than we remember them; those who built, & those who through two centuries have maintained, this place where now we, following them, worship. "For here the habit of the soul / Feels less the outer world's control. /....The world that time & sense have known / Falls off & leaves us You alone." Forgive us where, here in this community & place of faith, we have failed to be faithful to You & to each other; & accept now our resolve to think bigger, pray bigger, & be bigger. LORD, IN YOUR MERCY, HEAR OUR PRAYER.

God of power & grace, we pray for our nation, whose regnant powers put grace on the scaffold & greed on the throne. We thank you that greed, reaching for heaven, drives itself into the ground; & we pray for the innocent sufferers whose bodies, minds, spirits, & hopes are hurt by this grasping & its self-defeat. Forgive us where we have failed to resist, by the power of your everpresent Spirit, the corrupting seductions of avarice. "Take from our souls the strain & stress" of lusting for more than we need, "And let our ordered lives confess / The beauty of thy peace." LORD, IN YOUR MERCY, HEAR OR PRAYER.

We lift up now before you, fellow-Sufferer with all sufferers, those whose lives have been torn up by wind & flood & earthquake, ravages of nature; those who are grieving from separation & loss; those whose hearts are anxious as they face life's major crises. May loving hearts & hands reach out to them; & may they know, with or without words, your presence. Forgive us where our hearts & hands have not heeded the call of love; & grant us wisdom to know, & courage to do, our part. LORD, IN YOUR MERCY, HEAR OUR PRAYER.

Finally, we pray for all witnesses to Jesus, ourselves & all your Christian folk everywhere, that we may both live & speak the word of Life. LORD, IN YOUR MERCY, HEAR OUR PRAYER.

*Congregational response