

IN THIS TIME of MERCY



A Compendium
of Traditional Catholic Prayers
and Practices

John A. F. Sill, Sr.

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FOREWORD

The rich young man in Matthew 19 asks Jesus the all-important question: “How do I possess everlasting life?” He tells Jesus that he has kept the commandments, but wonders “What do I need to do further?” Jesus responds that if the young man wishes to be perfect, he should sell all his possessions and give to the poor. Only then can the rich young man do as Jesus requests: “Come and follow me.”

Following Jesus today means seeking spiritual perfection in your relationship with him, increasing your love for him day by day. Wouldn't you want to get an A-plus in your relationship with Jesus? *A summa cum laude* when you are received into heaven? Well, then, this prayer book, compiled and arranged with great care and devotion by John Sill, will help you increase your love for our Lord, discern God's will for us, lead holy lives, and, over time, achieve spiritual perfection.

I love John's section on daily prayers and how to integrate those prayers into the rhythm of each day — morning, noon, and evening. The book is interactive, inviting personalization throughout and providing space for notes and reflections.

Saint Paul tells us, “So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God” (1 Corinthians 10:31). This book can help you give God the glory and live in ways as pleasing as incense that rises up towards heaven.

Reverend James Martell, Pastor
Holy Rosary Catholic Church
Memphis, Tennessee

I asked the Lord Jesus how he could tolerate so many sins and crimes and not punish them, the Lord answered me, "I have eternity for punishing [these], and so I am prolonging the time of mercy for the sake of [sinners]. But woe to them if they do not recognize this time of My visitation."
(Diary of Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska, 1160)



Prayer is a door that opens up into the mystery of God and at the same time a means of communing with him. It actuates the personal relationship with the Lord present in the very depths of the spirituality. Prayer is the gate of entry to the center of the castle — God's dwelling place in the soul — where he sits upon his throne as King.
(Saint Teresa of Jesus)

INTRODUCTION

I came to know God’s mercy in profound ways as I made my way back to the Catholic Church after a thirteen-year absence. My heart was opened one weekend during a Methodist-sponsored Emmaus Walk, a program modeled on Cursillo. Within a year, I made my confession at Holy Rosary Catholic Church in Memphis, Tennessee, experiencing what Jesus said to Saint Maria Faustina about “the time of mercy.” As I became reacquainted with my Catholic faith, I was drawn to lead a devout and holy life.

Holy Rosary Parish provides a variety of free pamphlets, cards, and booklets on a table in the vestibule. Topics include: how to make a good confession, how to pray the Rosary, and information on devotions. I collected some of the many resources I discovered there and purchased a prayer book at a local Catholic bookstore, but I found the resources and prayer book did not meet my needs. I still had to supplement my collection with other pamphlets and prayer cards. I finally realized that the only way to have a complete book would be to compose my own. This book is the result of my efforts over the course of several years and is printed with the guidance of Greg Pierce of ACTA Publications, whose *Rosary Novenas to Our Lady* is included here.

How to Use This Book

As you open this book, you may ask, “Where do I start?” You might begin with **Traditional Catholic Prayers**. You may already know many of these prayers by heart, but others may

be less familiar. Memorization is a good practice, allowing the prayers to be accessible whenever the need arises and freeing your mind to enter more deeply into the meaning of the prayers.

You may decide to establish a prayer routine by using the selections in **Daily Prayers**. The daily schedule from the Roman Breviary calls for six hours of prayer: dawn or first rising (6:00 a.m.); morning; noon; afternoon (3:00 p.m.), dusk or evening (6:00 p.m.), and bedtime. With persistence, determination, and adaptation to your particular situation, you can face the challenges of beginning and remaining faithful to such a routine. Distractions and other obstacles are inevitable. If you have a smart phone, you might consider downloading a scheduling app to remind you of the times for prayer. I have found this helpful in my own practice.

During my return to the Church, I discovered new ways to pray popular devotions, including the Rosary, Stations of the Cross, and novenas. These are included in several sections. I took particular care in arranging **A Year of Novenas, Prayers, and Observances**. While some of prayers are specific to certain days or seasons, most can be incorporated into your daily routine. For example, the Stations of the Cross are associated with Lent and the Feast of All Souls, but can be prayed whenever the need or desire arises. The Rosary, of course, is part of the daily routine of many Catholics.

I have also included detailed sections on the Mass — the central prayer of our Catholic tradition — and the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

An ample appendix includes a treasure trove of Catholic teaching, including the Precepts of the Church, Works of Mercy,

Virtues, and Fruits of the Spirit. I find it helpful to review this material on a regular basis, usually on the first Friday of each month. I have also included space for you to record additional prayers, your personal goals, and your reflections, as well as a page for you to list the names of the dead for whom you pray.

I hope you discover, as I have, that God's mercy is poured out on all who wait on him. With Saint Teresa of Jesus, I hope you discover that prayer is "a door that opens up into the mystery of God."

John A. F. Sill, Sr.
Memphis, Tennessee
January 1, 2016
Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God,
in the Jubilee Year of Mercy

TRADITIONAL
CATHOLIC PRAYERS

The Bible, the writings of the early Church, and the words of holy men and women throughout the ages, including the saints, have given us a rich tradition of prayer. The prayers in this section are central to Catholic belief and practice and are worthy of memorization.



SIGN OF THE CROSS

The Sign of the Cross is made with the right hand touching the forehead at the word “Father,” the chest at the word “Son,” and the left and right shoulders at the words “Holy Spirit.”

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

OUR FATHER

Our Father, who are in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
Your kingdom come,
your 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. Amen.

HAIL MARY

Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with you.
Blessed are you among women,
and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners,
now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

GLORY BE

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.

THE APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth.
And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended into hell;
the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and sits at the right hand of God the Father almighty;
from thence he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Catholic Church,
the communion of Saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting.
Amen.

ACT OF CONTRITION

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended you, and I detest all my sins, because I dread the loss of heaven and the pains of hell, but most of all because they offend you, my God, who are all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of your grace, to sin no more, and to avoid the occasion of sin. Amen.

ACT OF FAITH

O my God, I firmly believe that you are one God in three divine Persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. I believe that your divine Son became man, died for our sins, and that he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe these and all the truths which the holy Catholic Church teaches, because you have revealed them, who can neither deceive nor be deceived. Amen.

A YEAR OF NOVENAS,
PRAYERS, AND
OBSERVANCES

The term novena derives from novem, the Latin word for nine, and novena usually consists of prayers for nine straight days, during which the faithful ask God for special graces. These prayers may be as simple as a daily recitation of the Rosary or short prayers throughout the day. Novenas may be dedicated to mourning; preparation for a liturgical feast, such as Christmas; a personal need, such as healing; or penance. This section includes twelve months of novenas as well as a listing of feast days and related prayers. Novenas and prayers for Lent, Easter, and Pentecost begin on page 186 .

JANUARY

January 1 » Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

Father, source of light in every age, the virgin conceived and bore your Son who is called Wonderful God, Prince of Peace. May her prayer, the gift of a mother's love, be your people's joy through all ages. May her response, born of a humble heart, draw your Spirit to rest on your people. Grant this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Canticle of Mary (Magnificat)

My soul proclaims your greatness, O my God, and my spirit has rejoiced in you my Savior; for you have regarded me as your holy handmaid; henceforth all generations shall call me blessed; for you who are mighty, have done great things for me, and Holy is your Name; your mercy is on those who fear you throughout all generations. You have showed strength

with your arm. You have scattered the proud in the conceit of their heart. You have put down the mighty from their seat, and have lifted up the powerless. You have filled the hungry with good things, and have sent the rich away empty. Remembering your mercy, you have helped your people Israel as you promised Abraham and Sarah. Mercy to their children forever. Amen.

January 2 » Saints Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen,
Bishops and Doctors of the Church

January 4 » Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, Religious

January 5 » Saint John Neumann, Bishop

January 6 » Saint André Bessette, Religious

January 8 » Our Lady of Prompt Succor

This novena is usually prayed January 7-15.

O Almighty and Eternal God, seeing us surrounded by so many dangers and miseries, grant in your infinite goodness that the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of your Divine Son, may defend us from the evil spirit, protect us from all adversities, obtain for us mention your request here, and safely guide us to the kingdom of Heaven. This we ask of your through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever. Amen.

O Mary, Mother of God, amid the tribulations of the world, watch over the people of God and be to us truly Our Lady of Prompt Succor. Make haste to help us in all our necessities, that in this fleeting life you may be our succor. Obtain for us mention your request here. Help us to gain life everlasting through the merits of Jesus, your Son, our Lord and Redeemer. Amen.

Our Lady of Prompt Succor, hasten to help us.

Our Lady of Prompt Succor, hasten to help us.

Our Lady of Prompt Succor, hasten to help us.

Pray the Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be.

Litany of Our Lady of Prompt Succor

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, hear us.

Christ, graciously hear us.

God the Father of Heaven, have mercy on us.

God the Son, Redeemer of the world, have mercy on us.

Holy Trinity, one God, have mercy on us.

Respond with “pray for us” to each of the following invocations.

Holy Mary...

Mother of the Infant Jesus...

Our Lady of Prompt Succor...

Our Lady of Prompt Succor
of all who invoke you with confidence...

Our Lady of Prompt Succor
of all who are devout toward the Infant Jesus...

Our Lady of Prompt Succor
for obtaining a lively faith...

Our Lady of Prompt Succor
for sustaining the hope of Christians...

Our Lady of Prompt Succor
for obtaining and persevering in charity...

Our Lady of Prompt Succor
for observing the law of God...

Our Lady of Prompt Succor
for observing perseverance in virtue and good works...

Our Lady of Prompt Succor
in every spiritual necessity...

Our Lady of Prompt Succor
against the revolt of self-will...

Our Lady of Prompt Succor
in the occasion of sin...

Our Lady of Prompt Succor
in every temptation...

Our Lady of Prompt Succor
against the evil spirit...

Our Lady of Prompt Succor
for obtaining contrition...

Our Lady of Prompt Succor
of those wishing to re-enter the path of salvation...

Our Lady of Prompt Succor
for the conversion of sinners...

Our Lady of Prompt Succor
in every temporal necessity...

Our Lady of Prompt Succor
in every affliction...

Our Lady of Prompt Succor
of afflicted families...

Our Lady of Prompt Succor
of the sick and the poor...

Our Lady of Prompt Succor
against contagious diseases and epidemics...

Our Lady of Prompt Succor
in every accident...

Our Lady of Prompt Succor
against destruction by fire...

Our Lady of Prompt Succor
against lightning and tempest...

Our Lady of Prompt Succor against destruction by flood

Our Lady of Prompt Succor of travelers

Our Lady of Prompt Succor of navigators

Our Lady of Prompt Succor of the shipwrecked

Our Lady of Prompt Succor against the enemies
of our country

Our Lady of Prompt Succor in time of war

Our Lady of Prompt Succor of those aspiring to the holy
priesthood and the religious life

Our Lady of Prompt Succor of laborers
in the Lord's vineyard

Our Lady of Prompt Succor of missionaries
who spread the faith

Our Lady of Prompt Succor for those searching for the faith

Our Lady of Prompt Succor against
the enemies of the Church

Our Lady of Prompt Succor at the hour of death

Our Lady of Prompt Succor for the deliverance of the Souls
in Purgatory

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,
spare us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,
graciously hear us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.

V: Our Lady of Prompt Succor, pray for us.

R: That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

O Almighty and Eternal God, who sees us surrounded by so
many dangers and miseries, grant in your infinite goodness
that the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of your Divine Son,
may defend us from the evil spirit and protect us against

all adversities, that always and with prompt succor she may deliver us from every evil of soul and body, and safely guide us to the kingdom of Heaven, through the merits of Our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

January 21 » Saint Agnes, Virgin and Martyr

January 22 or 23 » Day of Prayer
for the Legal Protection
of Unborn Children

Almighty God, our Father,
you who have given us life
and intended us to have it forever,
grant us your blessings.
Enlighten our minds to an awareness
and to a renewed conviction
that all human life is sacred
because it is created
in your image and likeness.
Help us to teach by word
and the example of our lives
that life occupies the first place,
that human life is precious
because it is the gift of God
whose love is infinite.

Give us the strength to defend human life
against every influence
or action that threatens or weakens it,
as well as the strength
to make every life more human
in all its aspects.

Give us the grace...
When the sacredness of life
before birth is attacked,
to stand up and proclaim
that no one ever has the authority
to destroy unborn life.

When a child is described as a burden
or is looked upon only as a means
to satisfy an emotional need,
to stand up
and insist that every child is a unique
and unrepeatable gift of God,
a gift of God with a right to a loving
and united family.

When the institution of marriage
is abandoned to human selfishness
or reduced to a temporary conditional arrangement
that can easily be terminated,
to stand up and affirm
the indissolubility of the marriage bond.

When the value of the family is threatened
because of social and economic pressure,
to stand up and reaffirm
that the family is necessary
not only for the private good of every person,
but also for the common good of every society,
nation and state.

When freedom is used to dominate the weak,
to squander natural resources and energy,
to deny basic necessities to people,
to stand up and affirm
the demands of justice and social love.

Almighty Father,
give us courage to proclaim the supreme dignity
of all human life and to demand
that society itself give its protection.
We ask this in your name,
through the redemptive act
of your Son and in the Holy Spirit. Amen.

January 23 » Saint Marianne Cope, Virgin,
and Saint Vincent, Deacon and Martyr

January 25 » Conversion of Saint Paul the Apostle

January 26 » Saints Timothy and Titus, Bishops