

SPECIAL PRAYERS

Praying is having a special conversation with God. It's special because it's always one way. It's we who do the talking, believing that God will listen and hopefully react as we want.

The one satisfying thing about **praying earnestly** is that God may or may not do as we ask, but whatever he does, we can always be sure that it's in our best interest.

We can also pray in the same way to a holy person such as Our Lady or a saint, usually asking for them to intercede with God on our behalf or to help us in any way.

When I'm praying, I sometimes find myself stuck for words. It's then that I tend to use some of the wonderful prayers created by Our Lord Jesus Christ, Our Lady, the Apostles, Saints, and other holy people. The words they select and how they use them are always better than the ones I would have used. I never tire of them.

As an example, a friend recently gave me the following short prayer, which I'd never seen before, and when I was looking at a large crucifix in church, I started to think about what it all meant to me.

THE PRAYER

**Dear Father in Heaven, here is
your beloved Son offering
himself as a sacrifice for me
and for the whole world.
I wish to join in that offering,
and I ask you to accept him as
my sacrifice for my sins
and the sins of the whole world.
Look on your well-beloved Son
And for his sake forgive us all
our sins and bring grace and life
to me and to all men, especially
all those I love and give rest and
peace to all the faithful departed.
Through him and with him
and in him, I offer myself with all
my anxieties, worries,
temptations and failings
and everything that I am. Amen.**

WHAT IT ALL MEANT TO ME

Whenever I look at a crucifix, they all seem to be the same, yet I know that they are all slightly different because of the different artists who

created them. The one thing that is always the same is the sense of suffering I see.

Being nailed hands and feet to a cross, and having a Roman soldier's spear thrust into one's side must be intensely painful. On top of this, the terrible pain from a crown of thorns pressed on one's head can only be imagined, and as I think of these things, I remember the passion of Jesus the Son of God, and the painful whipping before it all.

This is how the prayer starts, with me telling God that Jesus his Son died this extremely painful way, offering himself as a sacrifice not just for me, but for the whole world. How selfless.

The prayer continues by saying I want to join in that offering by asking God to accept it from me for my sins and those of the whole world.

I then ask God to look upon his Son and all that pain he's gone through on our behalf, to accept this offering and forgive us our sins, bringing me and everyone His grace and forgiveness and in particular the ones I love, plus giving rest and peace to all who have died—very simple but moving and effective words.

I end it all by saying part of the Doxology used at the end of the Eucharistic Prayer at mass by offering myself **with all my faults**:

**through him,
with him and in him**

This short prayer says so much in a simple way about using the sacrifice Our Lord Jesus Christ made for us.

We are reminded of it during the mass. Immediately after the consecration, the priest offers up the bread and wine which has become the body, blood, soul and divinity of Jesus to The Father as a sacrifice, and we in turn offer ourselves to The Father with Jesus and then the Father gives us back the gift of his Son in Holy Communion.

All this makes the above an ideal private prayer to say immediately after the consecration. I keep repeating it, knowing I could never have thought of the words to create such a prayer. Is it one you could use?

There are many prayers like this available to us. Use them, making sure you are never stuck for words while praying.