

Suggestions for Holy Week Prayer Vigil

The suggestions which follow are meant for your help. Please feel free to use any of this material which is helpful. Remember, the object of this time is to spend time in prayer. May the Spirit of the Lord be with you.

Find a quiet place where you can focus on what God is saying to you. You should have no distractions for the next hour.

Begin by reading Hebrews 10:35-39

35 So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded.

36 You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised. 37 For,

*“In just a little while,
he who is coming will come
and will not delay.”*

38 And, “But my righteous one will live by faith.

*And I take no pleasure
in the one who shrinks back.”*

39 But we do not belong to those who shrink back and are destroyed, but to those who have faith and are saved.”

-Who is Christ to you right this moment? What is your chief delight?

-What are your fears and anxieties today? Name them before the Lord. What is God's Spirit saying to you?

Meditate on these words:

“Prayer is not a check request asking for things from God. It is a deposit slip – a way of depositing God’s character into our bankrupt souls.” -Dutch Sheets

“There is a mighty lot of difference between saying prayers and praying.” - John G. Lake

“Prayer is not monologue, but dialogue; God's voice is its most essential part. Listening to God's voice is the secret of the assurance that He will listen to mine.” - Andrew Murray

Ask the Spirit of Christ to fill your heart in this moment and help you to be obedient. Pray one of the following, or a similar prayer, concentrating on each word:

O Lord Jesus Christ, who upon this day did conquer death and rise from the dead, and who are alive forevermore, help us never to forget your Risen Presence is forever with us.

Help us to remember:

That you are with us in every time of perplexity to guide and to direct;

That you are with us in every time of sorrow to comfort and console;

That you are with us in every time of temptation to strengthen and to inspire;

That you are with us in every time of loneliness to cheer and befriend;

That you are with us even in death to bring us to the glory of your side.

Make us to be certain that there is nothing in time or in eternity which can separate us from you, so that in your presence we may meet life with gallantry and death without fear. You turn our darkness into light, in your light we shall see light.

Risen Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer. Most High, glorious God, enlighten the shadows of my heart, and grant unto me a right faith, a certain hope and perfect charity, sense and understanding, Lord, so that I may accomplish Thy holy and true command.

Now try to simply listen to God. You may do this in silence. Perhaps close your eyes and hear the Spirit speaking. Or open your eyes and observe the beauty of wherever you are. You may wish to read the words from favorite hymns or scripture passages. Here are some examples:

O Sacred Head, Now Wounded

Bernard of Clairvaux

1 O sacred Head, now wounded, with grief and shame weighed down,
now scornfully surrounded with thorns, thine only crown!
O sacred Head, what glory, what bliss till now was thine!
Yet, though despised and gory, I joy to call thee mine.

2 What thou, my Lord, hast suffered was all for sinners' gain.
Mine, mine was the transgression, but thine the deadly pain.
Lo, here I fall, my Savior! 'Tis I deserve thy place.
Look on me with thy favor, and grant to me thy grace.

3 What language shall I borrow to thank thee, dearest Friend,
for this, thy dying sorrow, thy pity without end?
Oh, make me thine forever, and should I fainting be,
Lord, let me never, never outlive my love to thee.

Scripture Passages:

John 18:1-11

Matthew 27:33-56

Luke 23:50-56

Romans 8:1-11

Matthew 28:1-10

John 20:1-18

Next, intercede for known needs. *You may pray for anything which the Lord directs you. Please remember your church and its staff, those suffering from illness, the grieving, the unemployed, for an end to this pandemic.*

Please include prayers for healing for Cathey Roth, Marguerite Priest's sister, as she continues recovering from a broken arm and shoulder after a fall.

Prayers for Bryan Evenson as he continues to adapt with the COVID restrictions and waits for his Special Olympic sports and other activities to resume.

We pray for those who have small businesses as they continue to struggle to recover both economically and physically from the effects of the pandemic.

We pray for all members of Spring Branch Presbyterian Church as we continue to find ways to keep our church open and connected to each other and our community.

Please continue to pray for Delia Nix's nephew John Villegas as he lives with his terrible disease. We ask for continued strength and will for him as his health recovers.

We continue to pray for Delia Nix's brother, George Ferrel, as he begins a new job in Huntsville, AL.

We continue to pray for Brian, Jennifer Miller's Nephew, as he improves and continues his recovery from a recent car accident.

We ask for prayers for Margaret Ford's daughter Lisa Ford as she recovers from a fall this past week.

End with one of the following, or your own prayer of dedication:

Heavenly Father, I come before you and present my prayer unto you, as your amazing sacrifice is before me. Speak your Word into my very soul. As I bring this prayer of grace before you, accept it and bless me as you did my forefathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Let your kingdom come in my life and in the earth as it is in heaven and may the grace that is beyond all understanding rest upon my family and myself. Once again, thank you for loving me so much that you sent your one and only Son Jesus to die on the cross so that I can be free. Thank you for listening to my prayers to you, my beloved Father in heaven. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.