

RenewalWorks™ FOR ME

Prayers in preparation for worship on Sunday and the Celebration of the Holy Eucharist

For Episcopalians, worship is at the heart of all we do. Our Prayer Book tells us that the eucharist is our principal act of worship. RenewalWorks research has indicated that participation in the eucharist has a transformative impact on people as they move along in the spiritual journey.

But the fact is, for clergy and parishioners alike, this weekly observance can become rote. For some, it can be perplexing. How do we keep worship engaging and meaningful, an encounter in which we meet the living God and in the process find ourselves transformed? Do we expect anything to happen when we come to church?

We ask those kinds of questions through RenewalWorks, as we focus on spiritual growth. We've come to see the Sunday gathering for worship as critical in that individual and communal development. We believe that kind of growth comes not by our own will power or determination. The New Testament tells us that it comes as a gift, as a grace. It is God's work.

But we still play a part. In the language of the RenewalWorks research, there is a call to create a sense of ownership, of personal responsibility for a deeper spiritual life. We are called to open ourselves to that kind of powerful encounter with God, to ask for it to happen, and to do so by using the resources of our Anglican tradition. One of the greatest of these resources is the Book of Common Prayer, an amazing collection of faithful material, polished over the centuries. The prayers will help us prepare for worship, help us prepare for the amazing grace that when we gather in worship, we might meet the living God in some new way.

So try this: Set aside some time each week, even if it's just a few minutes, to get ready for Sunday. Use the prayers included in this brochure. (Thanks to All Saints', Beverly Hills for gathering these prayers). Offer them as directed in the hours before you come to worship. Say them with others in your household, maybe over a meal. Find other prayers that might be more useful for you. Or write your own prayers. Invite God's Spirit to be at work in you, and your community, in some new way.

Who knows what might happen in your life, and in the life of your faith community?

-The Rev. Jay Sidebotham

Director, RenewalWorks

Friday, in the evening

O send out your light and your truth: let them lead me; let them bring me to your holy hill and to your dwelling. Then I will go to the altar of God, to God my exceeding joy; and I will praise you with the harp, O God, my God. Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my help and my God.

-Psalm 43:3-5

Almighty, everlasting God, let our prayer in your sight be as incense, the lifting up of our hands as the evening sacrifice. Give us grace to behold you, present in your Word and Sacraments, and to recognize you in the lives of those around us. Stir up in us the flame of that love which burned in the heart of your Son as he bore his passion, and let it burn in us to eternal life and to the ages of ages. *Amen. (BCP, p. 113)*

Gracious Father, we pray for thy holy Catholic Church. Fill it with all truth, in all truth with all peace. Where it is corrupt, purify it; where it is in error, direct it; where in anything it is amiss, reform it. Where it is right, strengthen it; where it is in want, provide for it; where it is divided, reunite it; for the sake of Jesus Christ thy Son our Savior.

Amen. (BCP, p. 816)

Saturday, during the day

Splendor and honor and kingly power are yours by right, O Lord our God, For you created everything that is, and by your will they were created and have their being; And yours by right, O Lamb that was slain, for with your blood you have redeemed for God, From every family, language, people, and nation, a kingdom of priests to serve our God. And so, to him who sits upon the throne, and to Christ the Lamb, Be worship and praise, dominion and splendor, forever and for evermore.

- Revelation 4:11, 5:9-10, 13

Almighty God, who after the creation of the world rested from all your works and sanctified a day of rest for all your creatures: Grant that we, putting away all earthly

anxieties, may be duly prepared for the service of your sanctuary, and that our rest here upon earth may be a preparation for the eternal rest promised to your people in heaven; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen. (BCP, p. 99)

O God, the source of eternal light: Shed forth your unending day upon us who watch for you, that our lips may praise you, our lives may bless you, and our worship on the morrow give you glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen. (BCP, p.123)

Almighty and everliving God, ruler of all things in heaven and earth, hear our prayers for this parish family. Strengthen the faithful, arouse the careless, and restore the penitent. Grant us all things necessary for our common life, and bring us all to be of one heart and mind within your holy Church; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen. (BCP, p. 817)

Saturday evening

Glorify the Lord, all you works of the Lord, praise him and highly exalt him forever. In the firmament of his power, glorify the Lord, praise him and highly exalt him forever. Let the people of God glorify the Lord, praise him and highly exalt him forever. Glorify the Lord, O priests and servants of the Lord, praise him and highly exalt him forever. Glorify the Lord, O spirits and souls of the righteous, praise him and highly exalt him forever. You that are holy and humble of heart, glorify the Lord, praise him and highly exalt him forever. Let us glorify the Lord: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; praise him and highly exalt him forever. In the firmament of his power, glorify the Lord, praise him and highly exalt him forever.
-The Song of the Three Young Men (BCP, p. 90)

Lord Jesus, stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past; be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts, and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love.

Amen. (BCP, p. 124)

We give thanks, O God, for revealing your Son Jesus Christ to us by the light of his resurrection: Grant that as we sing your glory at the close of this day, our joy may abound in the morning as we celebrate the Paschal mystery; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen. (BCP, p. 134)

Everliving God, whose desire it is that your people worship you in Spirit and in Truth: Send forth your Holy Spirit upon our parish family that your Word may be preached with power, your sacraments celebrated with joy, and your praises sung in the beauty of holiness: through Jesus Christ our Great High Priest. *Amen.*

Sunday, in the morning before worship

You are God: we praise you; You are the Lord; we acclaim you; You are the eternal Father: All creation worships you. To you all angels, all the powers of heaven, Cherubim and Seraphim, sing in endless praise: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. The glorious company of apostles praise you. The noble fellowship of prophets praise you. The white-robed army of martyrs praise you. Throughout the world the holy Church acclaim you; Father, of majesty unbounded, your true and only Son, worthy of all worship, and the Holy Spirit, advocate and guide. You, Christ, are the king of glory, the eternal Son of the Father. When you became man to set us free you did not shun the Virgin's womb. You overcame the sting of death and opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers. You are seated at God's right hand in glory. We believe that you will come and be our judge. Come then, Lord, and help your people, bought with the price of your own blood, and bring us with your saints to glory everlasting.

(The Te Deum, BCP, p. 95)

Blessed Lord, who caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Amen. (BCP, p. 236)

O God, you make us glad with the weekly remembrance of the glorious resurrection of your Son our Lord: Give us this day such blessing through our worship of you, that the week to come may be spent in your favor; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen. (BCP, p. 98)

Be present, be present, O Jesus, our great High Priest, as you were present with your disciples, and be known to us in the breaking of bread; who live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

Amen. (BCP, p. 834)

O Almighty God, who pourest out on all who desire it the spirit of grace and of supplication: Deliver us, when we draw near to thee, from coldness of heart and wanderings of mind, that with steadfast thoughts and kindled affections we may worship thee in spirit and in truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen. (BCP, p. 833)

A prayer after worship

Grant, we beseech *thee*, Almighty God, that the words which we have heard this day with our outward ears, may, through *thy* grace, be so grafted inwardly in our hearts, that they may bring forth in us the fruit of good living, to the honor and praise of *thy* Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen. (BCP, p. 834)

A prayer for clergy

Almighty and everlasting God, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift: Send down upon our clergy, and upon the congregation committed to their charge, the healthful Spirit of thy grace: and, that they may truly please thee, pour upon them the continual dew of thy blessing. Grant this, O Lord, for the honor of our Advocate and Mediator, Jesus Christ. *Amen. (BCP, p. 817)*

Prayers for clergy and staff

Lord Jesus Christ, Savior of our world, we place our clergy and our staff in your loving hands. Grant them your peace, energy and wisdom. Help us all to listen for your guiding voice so that together we may be ministers for you in this pain-filled world.

Dear Lord, who has blessed our congregation with our clergy and staff: (insert names of your clergy and other staff members at your church). We thank you for their ministry, for their response to the promptings of the Holy Spirit, and for their sharing those promptings with us. We thank you for their leadership in word and action. Give them strength to continue to guide us, and help us to nurture them as they seek to nurture us. This we ask in Jesus' name.

A prayer for church musicians

O God, whom saints and angels delight to worship in heaven: Be ever present with your

servants who seek through music to perfect the praises offered by your people on earth; and grant to them even now glimpses of your beauty, and make them worthy at length to behold it unveiled forever more; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen. (BCP, p. 819)

A prayer for all ministers

Almighty and everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of your faithful people is governed and sanctified: Receive our supplications and prayers, which we offer before you for all members of your holy Church, that in their vocation and ministry they may truly and devoutly serve you.

Amen. (BCP, p. 246)

Pray for the church staff

Make a list of clergy and other staff members. You may want to include Wardens and Vestry members. Pray for these people in their leadership roles. Let them know you are praying for them. It will mean the world.