

Prayers at Anchor



Tad Dunne

Preface

God graces us with the ability to relish what is truly so and truly good. In our relishing, our spirits are at rest as they soberly contemplate what is true about reality, even though reality is sometimes good and sometimes bad.

These prayers "At Anchor" are prayer that rest in contemplating the reality of the world and of ourselves.

PRAYERS AT ANCHOR

Prayers while resting in contemplation

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Life Giver

God gives life to the dead in two ways:

Calling into existence
what did not exist,
and to raise from the dead
those who believe that God can
and deeply desires
to share eternal life with the dead.

(Rom 4:17-25).

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Fathomless

Beyond what we ever expect to see,
before anybody could fully hear,
by your fathomless grace,
we have come to know
that it is by your grace
that we came to be—
a grace we can
only point to,
only speak of
by our mystery-laden word:

Love.

1 Cor 2:9

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Innermost

All you are you offer us.
Innermost your Love you pour
into our hearts to welcome
innermost your Word:
your Beauty-Word of creation,
your Love-conceived Word among us,
born of Mary, humbled unto death,
raised by you to work through us
your works of Love in our history,
led not by our fears and hopes but his.
By your Love led to ever cherish
your every child.

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Dying Practice

Morning prayer:

Offering up

Letting go

Dying practice

For life's sake today.

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Holy Cunning

To be fully wholesome requires cunning. When we unconsciously avoid certain topics or questions, our minds are biased. To catch our biases in the act requires intelligent inspection, which requires a readiness to critically scrutinize the values we inherit and the values we confirmed in our personal experiences. Another word for "intelligent inspection" is "cunning."

Cunning shows itself in our ability to identify, uproot, and throw away biases:

Bias for what benefits our individual selves
and disregards what burdens other individuals

Bias for what benefits our community
and disregards what burdens other communities.

Bias for commonsense insights into problems
and disregards insights founded on a grasp of theory
or on the study of history.

Bias for assuming the life is obvious
and disregards hunches that God made us
and graces us for loving purposes.

Bias against suspecting that we may be biased.

Inspired by Bernard Lonergan, *Insight*, Chap. 6, Sec.2.7

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Whatever #1

Whatever the innermost life of God may be,
it is welcomed by anyone in whom the Spirit of Jesus abides.

Whatever is the Father's love for the Son
is the Son's love for those who love him. Jn 15:19

Whatever is truly good on earth
is part of God's self-communication to humans.

Whatever may be the full significance of whatever hard work
love prompts us to do for our children, the ailing, or the lost is
to be found in God's loving work.

Whatever the reason for feeling abandoned by God,
it lies in God's self-giving work to strengthen our love.

Whatever death is for ourselves, it is not the wretched end of us
but an essential element of our full liveliness in God.

Whatever happens when someone who loves us dies,
his or her love for us is never dead.

Whatever true human fulfillment may be, it is what truly
becomes actualized wherever one welcomes God's self-gift in
the historical Word and inner Spirit, no matter how one
understands or names these experiences.

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Whatever #2

Whatever one contemplates in the life of Christ on earth is an entry into the present of the eternal life of the Trinity.

Whatever the Father did in Jesus' life, death and resurrection is what the Father does in those who live in the Spirit, living out the self-giving life of Christ.

Whatever is a truly good time in one's life is enjoyed with Christ's own joy.

Whatever it feels like to be fully alive is what Jesus felt all the time and what his followers feel more often than not.

Whatever Jesus wanted his disciples to receive when he said, "Take and eat; this is my body," is received by those who, in faith, receive him in the Eucharist.

Whatever may be the full significance of what happens in a person who embraces the gospel is to be found in the historical life of a community.

Whatever may be the full scope of the passionateness of being is the full scope of God's Holy Spirit of Love at work, the way "the whole of creation has been groaning in labor pains until now."

Rom 8:22

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Song of a Spouse

Intro - Instrumental Only



Song



For every day. For every night. For every meal. For all delight. For



all you are: in love with me. For all we've been, and all we'll be:



Our thanks to God, who in our hearts, is always there:



the Love we share.

- Tad Dunne

Verse 1: Use Intro Melody

You chose us, O Lord, | to make your love complete.
Brimming in our hearts | toward every one we meet.

Verse 2: Use Intro Melody

All our freedom, Lord, | your gift we know is true
to free us deep inside | and make a home for you.

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Vita Mea

Life of my life, I shall always try to keep my body pure,
knowing your touch is the life in all my limbs.

I shall ever try to keep untruth out of my thoughts,
knowing you are the truth
who kindles the light of reason in my mind.

I shall ever try to drive out gain from my desires,
and keep my love in flower,
knowing you make your home
in the inmost shrine of my heart.

And as heir of the love in Jesus,
it shall be my endeavor to be for others
your loving body and mind and heart,
knowing your love is
all their daring and strength.

Adapted from a prayer of Tagore

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Kin God

Kin God: Ourselves and everything ours are your gifts.

You give us all you can
to bring your Kingdom of love to earth.

May your self-giving be welcomed
and imitated by all:

<Here, mention by name those you often recall>

As nature always trembles in your praise,
may history do as well.

May your whole family share bread today.

Give us your eyes to see our world,
your confidence that all shall be well,
and your love with which to love.

May I forgive bullshit and pride,
as you help others forgive mine.

Come: Drive evil from our hearts,
that the whole world may become your glory.

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God's Loveliness

"Is it true that the divine loveliness
making the humanity of Christ
beloved of the Father
also is bestowed on us?"

Bernard Lonergan,
"The Mystical Body of Christ,"
in Robert C. Croken and Robert M. Doran, eds.,
"Shorter Papers", *Collected Works of
Bernard Lonergan* 20 (2007) 108.

The True Story

Shut my ears today to untrue stories—stories like these:

Fate: Life is futile.

Just good and bad luck.

Autonomy: Humanity is self-sufficient.

God is just a person's "belief system."

Group Animosity: Our world is a patchwork of competition.

World peace could never happen.

If it ever did happen, it couldn't last.

Religious Morality: Religion is mainly about being "good."

God made us mainly to do good and avoid evil. The love of neighbor is our duty. After we die we enter the eternal reward or punishment we deserve.

Truth:

A personal possession. You have yours. I have mine.

Love:

Essentially a subjective feeling: not a self-surrender to a shared and more fully wholesome life.

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Like You

You know me from within me.

You will not force me about anything today.

You made me free.

Like you

And creative.

Like you.

Trying, ever trying, to make the new

of every now and every here

less dark, less fractured,

less shallow, less empty.

Less hollow.

More hallowed.

Like you.

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Unfinished

I am incompetely made.

You made me out of love and for love.

Made me to bring your love to completion
through the same self-emptying love for others
that moved you to make them,

and me.

1 Jn 2:5 and 4:12

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Escapes

Gracious Lord,

you know us as we are.

For our escapes from love that still leave us meandering,

Lord have mercy.

Christ our model, you show us how to love one another.

For hording that love only for those who love me,

Christ have mercy.

Lord within, you flood our hearts with love.

For the many times we neglected you there,

Lord have mercy.

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Nursing

Kind God, you draw us to yourself.
For preferring to keep to ourselves,
Lord have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you invite us to follow you.
For preferring the comfort of our shelters,
Christ have mercy.

Spirit of love, you nourish us with your consolations.
For all the times we nurse our resentments,
Lord have mercy.

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Burdened

God of light, you show even popes their sins.

For fearing to be shown our own,

Lord have mercy.

Son of God, your yoke is easy, your burden light.

For forgetting that on your back

you bear the burden of our sins

Christ have mercy.

Spirit of Jesus, within us you groan

to free all creation from sin.

For assuming that we can free ourselves all by ourselves,

Lord have mercy.

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The Banquet

Lord of joy, you draw all people to your banquet.
For disregarding those who would welcome our company,
Lord have mercy.

Son of God, you are still human with us.
For failing to see you in the flesh,
Christ have mercy.

Comforting Spirit, from within us you reach out from us.
For holding back your reach of love to others,
Lord have mercy.

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Healing

Kindly Father, you always labor to heal.

For fearing to let your love heal us,

Lord have mercy.

Jesus healer, you see wounds in everyone.

For being blind to our blindness to the wounds of others,

Christ have mercy.

Creator Spirit, you pour out many gifts among us.

For not fanning the fire of your love in others,

Lord have mercy.

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Sacred Heart

God our Father,
you created us to be perfect as you are perfect.
For being oblivious of how your perfection
is a self-giving love, Lord have mercy.

Jesus, you intimately know
those handicaps we hide and those we cannot.
For meandering in stupid bliss as if we had none,
Christ have mercy.

Spirit of God,
you are the Sacred Heart of Jesus.
For the times he offered you to us
and we just tightened our grip
on that cold hard stone in our chests,
Lord have mercy.

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Bodies

Father of all,
the bodies of all your children are formed in your image.
For seeing only surface beauty
in the bodies of your every child.
Lord have mercy.

Jesus our brother, your living touch
healed the bodies of many.
For treating our bodies badly,
Christ have mercy.

Spirit on fire, you warm the hearts of all.
For regarding my physical needs as love,
Lord have mercy.

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Housekeeping

Wise Father, you kindle the light of reason in our minds.
For letting untruth infect our thoughts,
Lord have mercy.

Jesus, you always desire what the Father desires.
For allowing personal gain to dominate our desires,
Christ have mercy.

Consoler Divine, you make your home
in the inmost shrine of our hearts.
For neglecting the housekeeping
that might make you feel at home,
Lord have mercy.

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Passionate Spirit

All-seeing Father,
For not seeing the world with your eyes,
Lord have mercy.

Kingdom-bringing Son,
For losing your confidence that all shall be well,
Christ have mercy.

Passionate Spirit, who loves in us,
For our many efforts to lead our lives without you,
Lord have mercy.

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Suckers

Gracious Lord, you know us as we are.

For the old sins that ever leave us sad,

Lord have mercy.

Christ our model,

For being suckers to the myth that self-love is all we need,

Christ have mercy.

Lord above, you flood our hearts with love.

For the many times we bailed you out.

Lord have mercy.

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God Weeps

The bread of life,
The light of the world,
True God from true God,
The one for whom and through whom
everything was created,
Full of grace and truth
Born of God,
God's only son,
Who is nearest the Father's heart
Who, according to the shortest verse in the Bible
When his dear friend Lazarus died,
Wept.

Jn 11:35

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Jesus Groans

God of light, you show even popes their sins.
For being afraid of being shown our own,
Lord have mercy.

Son of God, your yoke is easy, your burden light.
For forgetting that our sins
truly weigh you down, Christ have mercy.

Spirit of Jesus, within us you groan
to free all creation from sin.

For assuming that we can free ourselves
all by ourselves,
Lord have mercy.

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Reaching Out

Lord of joy, you draw all people to your table.

For disregarding those who would welcome our company,

Lord have mercy.

Son of God, you are still human with us.

For failing to see you in the flesh,

Christ have mercy.

Comforting Spirit, you reach out from within us.

For holding back your reach of love to others at your table,

Lord have mercy.

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Giver of Life

Giver of all life, you offer us your own life.

For neglecting the lives of those who seem least alive,

Lord have mercy.

Jesus our life, your greatest desire

is the Kingdom of your Father.

For our seeing earth with earthly eyes,

and our hoping with just earthly hearts,

Christ have mercy.

Lord and giver of life, you dwell in every heart.

For not seeing you alive there in others,

Lord have mercy.

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Labors of Love

Kind Father, you always labor to heal.

For fearing to let your love and labors heal us,

Lord have mercy.

Jesus healer, you see wounds in everyone.

For being blind to our blindness to the wounds of others,

Christ have mercy.

Creator Spirit, you pour out many gifts among us.

For not fanning the fire of your love in others,

Lord have mercy.

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Being Perfect

God, you created us to be perfect as you are perfect.
For being oblivious of how your perfection
is a self-giving love,
Lord have mercy.

Jesus, you intimately know
the handicaps we conceal
and those we cannot.
For carrying on as if we had none,
Christ have mercy.

Spirit of God,
you are the Sacred Heart of Jesus.
For the times he offered you to us
and we ignored his gift
Lord have mercy.

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Images of God

Father, the bodies of all your children
are formed in your image.

For seeing only surface beauty
in the bodies of your every child.

Lord have mercy.

Jesus our brother, your living touch
healed the bodies of many.

For treating our bodies badly,
Christ have mercy.

Spirit on fire, you warm the hearts of all.

For letting our hearts cool to ice,

Lord have mercy.

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Givens

Every given is a gift.

Every present is a present.

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Negative Theology

God is stupid, mean, lazy and ugly.

Au Contraire

Au Contraire

Au Contraire

Au Contraire . . .

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Assumptions

Nobody can list their unnoticed assumptions

Clay Jars

Artist above,
you are the potter.
We are your clay.
For trying to slip your grip,
Lord have mercy.

Christ our brother,
you are the living image
of the unseen Father.
For trying to fashion ourselves
in some Hallmark image,
Christ have mercy.

Spirit of love, you are
poured into our hearts like wine.
For diluting and polluting
your wine in these cold clay jars
Lord have mercy.

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On Your Mind

Passionate God,
we are always on your mind.

For the days you were not on ours,
Lord have mercy.

Jesus our founder, you always know
what each person really needs.

For averting our eyes
from the persons behind people's masks,
Christ have mercy.

Fire of love, you always burn in every heart.
For insulating ourselves
from the heat of your love in the heart of anyone,
Lord have mercy.

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Healthy Eyes & Heart

All-seeing Father,

For not seeing the world with your eyes,

Lord have mercy.

Kingdom-bringing Son,

For losing your confidence that all shall be well,

Christ have mercy.

Passionate Spirit, who loves from within our hearts,

For everyday failures to let your love lead our lives,

Lord have mercy.

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Unknown Sins

There are basic sins of acting against my own clear-headed judgments.

There are sins of omission, when I could have —and should have— acted responsibly, but did not.

—James 3:13

Life has made me more painfully aware of messes I made.

There are attitudes, assumptions, and expectations that blinded me about my own responsibilities.

I recall only a few times when this happened in me.

But you God, and only you, know the zillion other times.

What makes any sort of bias successful is that it first represses the question, "Am I biased?"

Same goes for the people who know me.

Which tells me that I must forgive them for their trespasses against me,

intentionally or not. — Bernard Lonergan, *Insight*. Chapter 7, section 6

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The Lone Ranger

Nobody can be alive by themselves.

You made me weak
to find my strength
not in being a lone ranger

but a ranger who smells
the whiff of weakness
in his brothers and sisters,

and stretches out
the work-wrinkled, aging hand,
keeping company.

—2 Cor 12: 7-10a

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God at Work

God conducts himself as one who labors. . . . in the heavens, the elements, the plants, the fruits, the cattle, etc.

Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius, para. 236

When observant Jews accused Jesus of breaking the Sabbath by curing a crippled man, Jesus replied, "My Father continues to work, and I must work too."

Jn 5: 17

We never labor by ourselves. Whenever we create good things, whenever we create routines that put order into our lives.

God labors in us, with us, and through us,

Each morning, we primp at the mirror:

Is not our first work of art ourselves?

Is not our creativity a share in God's creative labors?

Bernard Lonergan, Insight, Chap. 6, sec 2.5

Are not most of our labors
efforts to make and keep beautiful
how we act, how we look, where we live?

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Web Weavers

Your plan of creation
is a web of lovers
in which each child of yours
reaches beyond boundaries of age, race,
gender, sexuality, language, authority,
to become web-weaving spiders
ever responsive to disturbing vibes
nearby
or far away.

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Being Responsive

Being responsible is a demand in every soul.

So is being responsive to the voices of love:

Voices that direct and enlighten us

about being responsible;

the voices within us:

of those who love us,

the voice of God who made us out of love

and for love.

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Being Beautiful

Not a beauty to behold
but a beauty to become:
a beauty of selfless love
 most often a "we"
 with a beloved one:
a Beloved Community;
Thy Kingdom come.

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World Splendor

A chair may be present in a room,

but not to the room.

I am present to myself when I am conscious.

You may be present to me, and I may be present to you.

You and I may be present to the "we" that we are.

Bernard Lonergan on the arts:

the "splendor of the world is a cipher, a revelation,
an unveiling, the presence of one who is not seen,
yet is present."

Got it!

The arts can reveal God's

loving presence to the world.

Yet while to God, each human is present,

God is not present to every human.

Getting it. . .

Topics in Education, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan 10
(Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1959), 222

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A Fall

He fell when he tried to vault.

They all had their laugh

At such a sissy.

Dag Hammarskjold, Markings

Ballantine Press, 1985

This citation is for educational purposes only.
It does not impair the marketability of the original,
nor is it a critical portion of the book where it appears.

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God's Wisdom

Divine wisdom flows from God's love.

An ever-active, ever-engaged lover.

We are made in God's image and likeness.

Reason: Where is thy victory?

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Eternal Life

God created everything.

God meant each one of us.

God offers each of us an intimate share in divine life during our lifetimes.

God meant us to share with each other
the same love on earth that moved him to make us.

This share in God's own life of love on earth is a share in God's own "Spirit."

God meant us to share in that same Word God spoke into history, gracing us in the person of Jesus the Nazarene — that Word by which God created everything, ourselves included

God created the time and space that condition our human living.

When we die, what God meant for every time and place
in our lives will be revealed to us.

Each of us will be present to all those to whom we were present in our lifetimes.

We will each become present to every grace in our lives—
everything we thought was unremarkable
will become entirely forgiven,
or awesomely remarkable

The joy God meant to share with us all
will be revealed in our every time, every place,
and without end.

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Grace, Conscience, Beauty

There is the intelligible into which we inquire in order to understand

the intelligence with which we formulate what we have grasped

the reasonableness by which we reflect on our formulations, check them out, pronounce in the light of the evidence we have brought to light.

Such spontaneity, intelligence, reasonableness are themselves conscious.

Just as we cannot be reasonable and not pass judgment beyond or against the evidence, so too we cannot be responsible without advertent to what is right or wrong.

We enjoy the peace of a good conscience to choose what is right or suffer the disquiet of a unhappy conscience when we choose what is wrong.

Bernard Lonergan, "Second Lecture" in R. M. Doran and J. A. Damosky, eds, *A Third Collection* (University of Toronto Press: Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan vol. 16, 124-139; at 138-39.

The 5-level ascent of being authentic corresponds to the 5-level ascent of a vertical finality that opens us to beauty:

Authenticity is gained through the vertical finality of being attentive, intelligent, reasonable, responsible, and being actively engaged in a loving community.¹

Our vertical finality toward beauty is driven at each level of our self-transcendence by an aesthetic desire:

the allure of the possible

the harmony of order

the uniqueness of each person, place, event

the splendor of goodness

the liberation of being engaged in a community of love.

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¹ For Lonergan's confirmation that his reference to "being in love" regards being an active agent in a community based on love, see my interview notes with him in "Being in Love," in *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 13/2 (Fall 1995) 161-175, at 167.