

Prayers before Communion

Psalm 42. *Quemadmodum.*

LIKE as the hart desireth the water-brooks, * so longeth my soul after thee, O God.

² My soul is athirst for God, yea, even for the living God: * when shall I come to appear before the presence of God?

³ My tears have been my meat day and night, * while they daily say unto me, Where is now thy God?

⁴ Now when I think thereupon, I pour out my heart by myself; * for I went with the multitude, and brought them forth into the house of God;

⁵ In the voice of praise and thanksgiving, * among such as keep holy-day.

⁶ Why art thou so full of heaviness, O my soul? * and why art thou so disquieted within me?

⁷ Put thy trust in God; * for I will yet give him thanks for the help of his countenance.

⁸ My God, my soul is vexed within me; * therefore will I remember thee concerning the land of Jordan, and the little hill of Hermon.

⁹ One deep calleth another, because of the noise of thy water-pipes; * all thy waves and storms are gone over me.

¹⁰ The Lord hath granted his loving-kindness in the daytime; * and in the night season did I sing of him, and made my prayer unto the God of my life.

¹¹ I will say unto the God of my strength, Why hast thou forgotten me? * why go I thus heavily, while the enemy oppresseth me?

¹² My bones are smitten asunder as with a sword, * while mine enemies that trouble me cast me in the teeth;

¹³ Namely, while they say daily unto me, * Where is now thy God?

¹⁴ Why art thou so vexed, O my soul? * and why art thou so disquieted within me?

¹⁵ O put thy trust in God; * for I will yet thank him, which is the help of my countenance, and my God.

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

Psalm 83. *Quam dilecta*

OHOW amiable are thy dwellings, * thou Lord of hosts!

² My soul hath a desire and longing to enter into the courts of

the Lord; * my heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God.

³ Yea, the sparrow hath found her an house, and the swallow a nest, where she may lay her young, * even thy altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God.

⁴ Blessed are they that dwell in thy house; * they will be always praising thee.

⁵ Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee, * in whose heart are thy ways,

⁶ Who going through the vale of misery use it for a well; * and the pools are filled with water.

⁷ They will go from strength to strength, * and unto the God of gods appeareth every one of them in Sion.

⁸ O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer; * hearken, O God of Jacob.

⁹ Behold, O God our defender, * and look upon the face of thine Anointed.

¹⁰ For one day in thy courts * is better than a thousand.

¹¹ I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, * than to dwell in the tents of ungodliness.

¹² For the Lord God is a light and defense; * the Lord will give grace and worship, and no good thing shall he withhold from them that live a godly life.

¹³ O Lord God of hosts, * blessed is the man that putteth his trust in thee.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son, * and to the Holy Ghost.

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, * world without end. Amen.

Psalm 121. *Laetatus sum*

I WAS glad when they said unto me, * We will go into the house of the Lord.

² Our feet shall stand in thy gates, * O Jerusalem.

³ Jerusalem is built as a city * that is at unity in itself.

⁴ For thither the tribes go up, even the tribes of the Lord, * to testify unto Israel, to give thanks unto the Name of the Lord.

⁵ For there is the seat of judgment, * even the seat of the house of David.

⁶ O pray for the peace of Jerusalem; * they shall prosper that love thee.

⁷ Peace be within thy walls, * and plenteousness within thy places.

⁸ For my brethren and companions' sakes, * I will wish * thee prosperity.

⁹ Yea, because of the house of the Lord our God, * I will seek to do thee good.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son, * and to the Holy Ghost.

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, * world without end. Amen.

A Prayer of St Ambrose

TO the Table of thy most sweet Feast, O loving Lord Jesus Christ, I, a sinner, presuming nothing on my own merits, but trusting in thy mercy and goodness, approach with fear and trembling. For my heart and my body are stained with many and grievous sins, my thoughts and my lips have not been carefully kept. Wherefore, O gracious God, O awful Majesty, I, in my misery, being brought into a great strait, turn to thee, the Fountain of mercy, to thee I hasten to be healed, and flee under thy protection: and thee, before whom I cannot stand as my Judge, I long to have as my Savior. To thee, O Lord, I show my wounds, to thee I discover my shame. I know my sins, many and great, for which I am afraid: but I hope in thy mercies, of which there is no end. Look therefore upon me with the eyes of thy mercy, O Lord Jesus Christ, eternal King, God and Man, crucified for man. Hearken unto me whose trust is in thee: have mercy upon me who am full of misery and sin, thou Fountain of mercy that will never cease to flow. Hail, Victim of Salvation, offered for me and for all mankind upon the Altar of the Cross! Hail, noble and precious Blood, flowing from the wounds of my crucified Lord Jesus Christ, and washing away the sins of the whole world!

Remember, O Lord, thy creature, whom thou hast redeemed with thine own Blood. It repents me that I have sinned, and I desire to amend what I have done. Take away therefore from me, O most merciful Father, all my sins and iniquities; that being purified both in soul and body, I may be made meet worthily to taste the Holy of Holies; and grant that this holy foretaste of thy Body and Blood, which I, unworthy, purpose to take, may be for the remission of my sins; the perfect cleansing of my faults; the driving away of shameful thoughts, and the renewal of good desires; the healthful performance of works well-pleasing unto thee; and the most sure protection of soul and body against the wiles of my enemies. Amen.

A Prayer of Thomas Aquinas

ALmighty, everlasting God, I draw nigh to the Sacrament of thine only-begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. I draw nigh as one sick, to the Physician of life; unclean, to the Fountain of mercy; blind, to the light of eternal brightness; poor and needy, to the Lord of heaven and earth. I implore, therefore, the abundance of thine exceeding bounty, that thou wouldest vouchsafe to heal my sickness, to wash my defilements, to enlighten my

blindness, to enrich my poverty, and to clothe my nakedness; and that I may receive the Bread of Angels, the King of kings, the Lord of lords, with such reverence and humility, such contrition and devotion, such purity and faith, and with such purpose and intention, as shall be expedient for the health of my soul. Grant me, I beseech thee, that I may receive not only the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of the Lord, but also the substance and virtue of the Sacrament. O most merciful God, grant me so to receive the body of thine only-begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ, which he took of the Virgin Mary, that I may be worthy to be incorporated into his mystical Body and accounted among his members. O most loving Father, grant me, that thy beloved Son, whom I now purpose to receive veiled from sight, I may at length behold for ever face to face. Who with thee, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth God, world without end. Amen.

Prayer to the Blessed Virgin Mary

O MOST Blessed Virgin Mary, mother of gentleness and mercy, I, a miserable and unworthy sinner, flee to thy protection with every sentiment of humility and love; and I implore of thy loving kindness that thou wouldst vouchsafe graciously to be

near me, and all who throughout the whole Church are to receive the Body and Blood of thy Son this day, even as thou wert near thy sweetest Son as He hung bleeding on the Cross, that, aided by thy gracious help, we may worthily offer up a pure and acceptable sacrifice in the sight of the Holy and Undivided Trinity. Amen.

Prayer of Humble Access

WE do not presume to come to this thy Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We be not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy Table. But thou art the same Lord, whose property is always to have mercy: Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the Flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his Blood, in these holy Mysteries, that we may continually dwell in him, and he in us, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his Body, and our souls washed through his most precious Blood. Amen.