

Holy Places: Doors of Mercy



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Meditations and prayers of praise
for the Year of Mercy 2015-2016

On the occasion of Lent 2016 and the Year of Mercy, the Commissariat offers to the Catholics of Canada and elsewhere three (3) meditations and prayers of praise. These will establish a connection between a situation and an event of mercy experienced in a place venerated by Christian tradition as a holy site. These short meditations and prayers of praise will be proposed in an exercise of prayer recalling the key manifestations of God's goodness. The historical and geographical settings of such events of mercy are meant to let the faithful enter through the Holy Doors of the main Basilicas of the Holy Land, i.e. the Annunciation in Nazareth, the Nativity in Bethlehem and the Resurrection in Jerusalem.

Structure of the meditation and of the prayer of praise:

Each meditation and prayer of praise recounts an evangelical event manifesting mercy. It unfolds as follows:

- An event and people touched by mercy (a suggested text of Scripture used in whole or in part);
- A meditation that emphasizes the mercy of God as it applies to us in this day and age;
- A prayer adapted to the event;
- A hymn and/or a blessing.

The above or a part may be used for purposes of personal or community prayer, in the context of a pastoral activity like a visit to a Door of Mercy, the organization of a retreat, the initiative of "24 Hours of Prayer"* proposed by Pope Francis. The Commissariat thanks the persons and groups having participated to the creation of these prayer initiatives.



Gilles Bourdeau, OFM
Commissary of the Holy Land in Canada

* The initiative of "24 Hours for the Lord" to be celebrated on the Friday and Saturday preceding the Fourth Week of Lent, should be implemented in every diocese. So many people, including young people, are returning to the Sacrament of Reconciliation; through this experience they are rediscovering a path back to the Lord, living a moment of intense prayer and finding meaning in their lives. Let us place the Sacrament of Reconciliation at the centre once more in such a way that it will enable people to touch the grandeur of God's mercy with their own hands. For every penitent, it will be a source of true interior peace. (Pope Francis, *Misericordiae vultus*, no 17, paragraph 3... "24 Hours for the Lord")

Suggestions for Hymns

Most of the psalms and hymns suggested here are from the Catholic Book of Worship III (CBW), Pew Edition, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2000. Each selection calls attention to an event of mercy evoked by a Holy Place in Holy Land. The reference number is provided for those hymns from CBW III.

Basilica of the Annunciation in Nazareth

The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came, 316

Here am I, O Lord, Psalm 40, 216

The God Whom Earth and Sea and Sky, 464

Mary, Woman of the Promise, 465,

Servant of the Word, 467

Canticle of Our Lady, 674/675/678

Salve Regina, 469

Basilica of the Nativity in Bethlehem

Seasonal Responsorial Psalm, Ps 147, 29 A and/or Ps 98, 29B

Responsorial Psalm, Ps 24, 214

Creator of the Stars of Night, 307

Glory to God, 240-243,

There's a Wideness in God's Mercy, 443,

Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre and Resurrection in Jerusalem

Seasonal Responsorial Psalm, Ps 51, 41 and/or Ps 51, 44/83

The Lord is my shepherd, Psalm 23, 211(53)

Give thanks to the Lord for he is good, Psalm 118, 92

The Lord is Tender and Caring, 638

Great God of Mercy, 361

Take up Your Cross, 353

Christ is the King, 387

Eye Has Not Seen, 482

We Walk by Faith, 495

Blessing: *At the end of each part, when needed, we do suggest the following blessing.*

*The Lord bless you and keep you. **Amen***

*May He show His face to you and have mercy. **Amen***

*May He turn His countenance to you and give you peace. **Amen***

*The Lord bless you, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen***

Halt at the Basilica of the Annunciation in Nazareth



Mary, the door opening on the presence
of Mercy made Flesh

Today nations are awaiting salvation. In a world in the throes of war, let us turn our attention to the refugees journeying towards more hospitable lands, for those couples awaiting a child and for young people the world over hoping for a brighter future. We are invited to feel compassion and commit to the service of others so as to experience in the most concrete terms the Jubilee of Mercy.

Opening Hymn

1. Greeting of the Word: Mary in Nazareth (Luke 1, 26-38)

Mary is one of the great figures of Israel, who, in the wake of Abraham, Moses, David and the prophets, desired and awaited the realization of the promises made by God to his people.

The Annunciation to Mary, in her humble abode of Nazareth, comes in response to the wait and the hope of an entire people over millennia.

Announcement of the Birth of Jesus, Luke 1, 26-38

26. *In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth,*
27. *to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary.*
28. *And he came to her and said 'Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.'*
29. *But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be.*
30. *The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God.*
31. *And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus.*
32. *He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David.*
33. *He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.'*
34. *Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?'*
35. *The angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God.*
36. *And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren.*
37. *For nothing will be impossible with God.'*
38. *Then Mary said, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be, with me according to your word.' Then the angel departed from her.*

2. Meditating the Word of Mercy

Over the course of the Jubilee of Mercy, Pope Francis invites us to discover in Mary a privileged figure of divine mercy.

"My thoughts now turn to the Mother of Mercy. May the sweetness of her countenance watch over us in this Holy Year, so that all of us may rediscover the joy of God's tenderness. No one has penetrated the profound mystery of the incarnation like Mary. Her entire life was patterned after the presence of mercy made flesh." (MV, no 24)

Joy and tenderness, such is the initial face of mercy that reveals itself to Mary of Nazareth.

Joy in the greeting of a messenger of good tidings. The visit of Gabriel has Mary enter in the great sequence of visits that God has granted over the centuries to reveal that his love is patterned after the love of a mother who will never abandon her child. "Mercy: the ultimate and supreme act by which God comes to meet with us." (MV, no 2).

Joy of a hope fulfilled: every young girl hopes to someday become a mother. This desire, in fact the greatest desires in the spiritual realm are like open doors through which the breath of the Holy Spirit enters. Grace works our aspirations like a potter carefully shapes a vase prior to its baking in the oven. Liturgy recognizes as much in a hymn (morning of July 26, Joachim and Anne):

God was ever closer like the fruit of a long-drawn desire,
Like the seal of a covenant for which he was the future.
He was responding to the hope of a nation journeying towards him.

The God of mercy can no longer be put off. He rushes out to meet with the children that he snatched from the servitude of Pharaoh, as well as from the dangers of idolatry and the loss of identity. He increases to an extreme degree the power of his love: to defeat all resistance he announces the coming of a child. The Almighty God full of kind mercy makes himself the servant who waits for the consent of Mary. He is a God that never imposes his love or the generosity of his mercy.

To what lengths God will not go as he pours on humanity the waters of his mercy? This is the same God who has the wicked bear the brunt of his wrath but who expresses through the voice of the prophet Isaiah (54, 7c) : *"...with everlasting love I will have compassion on you."* His love recognizes no boundaries.

This is a love so loyal that it resists all forms of destruction. *"For the mountains may depart and the hills be removed; but my steadfast love shall not depart from you, and my covenant of peace shall not be removed: says the Lord who has compassion on you."* (Is 54, 10).

The gift of mercy at this point is fruitfulness.

The messenger who comes to Mary does not arrive empty-handed. He offers the assurance of an immeasurable fecundity. He provides immediately another sign of the fruitfulness of the Word: Mary's cousin, Elizabeth, sterile and elderly, is also pregnant. Mary can exclaim *"Sing, O barren one who did not bear"* (Isaiah 54, 1). In this second announcement, Mary recognizes that her God lifts up the humble by responding to their entreaties. In so doing, God shows that he is *"able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine..."* (Eph. 3, 20). When the angel declares: *"Greetings, favored one, the Lord is with you,"* he evokes all the benefits and divine blessings that this child will bring to the world.

"How can this be, since I am a virgin?"

Mary's question is laden with our own uncertainties regarding the unfolding of world events. Indeed the history of mankind is composed of hope and doubt as the journey of nations wavers between wisdom and folly, advances and setbacks in the development of a more humanized planet. Carried by great aspirations and an ardent faith, Mary is no way in denial of reality, as her question to Gabriel relative to what she is to make of such a manner of child bearing clearly shows.

"The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you." The promise of the angel brings an inner certainty that makes it possible for Mary to give her consent. She will then have an entire lifetime to murmur in her heart the words said to her in secret, for a mission extending far into the future. She will meditate for a long time the meaning of God's loving attention for her and for her people.

Our perplexity echoes Mary's when we seek answers with regard to our personal and collective future.

In times of great ecological and social upheavals, millions of people are forced to abandon their homes and families and to search beyond the borders of their own countries a place of refuge. These uprooted families experience the cold reality of long periods of waiting, sometimes for months and years on end. Their lot is to endure uncertainty and anguish but they keep alive the hope of a better future. The asylum seekers are the icons of the great march of peoples towards freedom.

When strangers come to our home, are they recognized as messengers carrying an appeal addressed to us personally? If we choose to open our doors and our hearts to the stranger, on a personal level or through a community response, we participate to the divine mercy that filled with joy the home of Mary in Nazareth. We will experience the joy of the meeting and the solidarity that allows us to defeat the *"globalization of indifference"* (Pope Francis).

Just like the humble abode of Mary of Nazareth, our homes are places where hope can grow by leaning on the promise that God has made. *"Her entire life was patterned after the presence of mercy made flesh."* (MV, no 24).

Let us not underestimate the value of ordinary family ties. The patience of parents is sometimes severely tested. Accompanying children day in and day out towards adulthood presents a wide range of challenges. The tenderness that brings together children and adults is made possible solely through mercy and forgiveness, given the fact that all of life's learning processes suppose a progress resting on trial and error. The face of the merciful Father can bring back the sons to their father and restore joy in the household.

Another all-important call rings out now that the citizenry of the whole world expresses the will to cooperate in safeguarding the common home of humanity. Arising from all continents, and especially from the poorer regions of the planet, a distress signal is triggered in response to the havoc created by pollution, the excesses of a materialistic society and irresponsible industrial production practices.

Since *"...the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God."* (Rom 8, 21), it is expected of us to listen to *the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.* (Laudato, Si', no 49).

A call may be recognized as coming from the Spirit when it is heard in many places the world over. As Mary carried the expectations of her people, let us enter in this global movement of conversion that Pope Francis proposes to all men and women of good will, and

more particularly to the disciple of Christ. An opportunity is offered to us to rediscover the meaning of being one with all of humanity, including future generations. Taking action in separate individual Initiatives however may not prove the best response. *“The ecological conversion needed to bring about lasting change is also a community conversion.”* (*Laudato Si’*, no 219).

Mary rushed to the home of her cousin to assist her and share in her happiness. The announcement received becomes a word of solace and praise for the wonders accomplished by God through the ages in favor of the men and women that partake in his will of salvation.

Monition

By being spiritually present in the Basilica of the Annunciation, may the Lord look kindly on us and allow every one of us to share in the experience of Mary composed of joy, fruitfulness and hope.

Pause of silence and/or musical support

3. Praying the God of Mercy with Mary

Mary occupies a special place in the Church because the Lord accomplished great things in her. By addressing to her our salutations and prayers, we ask her to intercede on our behalf with the God of the impossible.

(Each intercession may be read by three voices)

R/ Virgin Mary, with you hope is reborn

- **You are beautiful, o Mary you are the reflection of the Heart of God!**
- Praise to you for being the home of the incarnate Word, the Woman full of grace.
- Teach us to let shine our joy of believing in a God full of love, forever at work in the history of mankind. **R/**

- **You are beautiful, o Mary you are the humble servant of the project of God!**
- Praise to you for being the friend of the humble and the downtrodden, the women who remembers the God of mercy.
- Teach us to share what we have freely received, in charity and unconditional openness to others. **R/**

- **You are beautiful, o Mary you are the joy and the honor of the Church!**
- Praise to you for being a women of the spiritual life, of faith and communion in the midst of the disciples who are called to that boldness needed at the launch of all initiatives and to have faith in tomorrow.
- Teach us to overcome our fears, hesitations and refusals by remaining attentive to the Spirit and the Word and loyal to a sense of commitment to solidarity. **R/**

- **You are beautiful, o' Mary you are fully blessed by God, mother of mercy!**
- Praise to you for being for us and for all upcoming generations a grandiose sign of hope and peace.
- Teach us to heal the wounds of division and conflict, to reject violence and discrimination, to build up peace. **R/**

Closing Prayer

"Holy Father deign answer our prayers that Mary, Mother of Mercy, presents to you on our behalf. Send your Spirit and consecrate every one of us with its anointing, so that the Jubilee of Mercy may be a year of grace from the Lord, and your Church, with renewed enthusiasm, may bring good news to the poor, proclaim liberty of captives and the oppressed, and restore the sight to the blind. We ask this of you, Lord Jesus, through the intercession of Mary, Mother of Mercy; you who live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, forever and ever. Amen."

(From the prayer of Jubilee of Mercy, Pope Francis)

4. Singing and blessing the merciful God

Hymn: Salve Regina or another hymn

Blessing



Halt at The Basilica of The Nativity

Messianic Wait and Hope:
The Birth of Jesus in Bethlehem

In Bethlehem, God will no longer be content to proclaim his Word through a new prophet like John the Baptist. This time, God himself comes in his Son. Bethlehem becomes the model of all nativity scenes of the world and a light for all renewal of life.

1. The Greeting of the Word of God in Bethlehem (Luke 2, 1-10)

- 1. In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered.*
- 2. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria.*
- 3. All went to their own towns to be registered.*
- 4. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David, called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David.*
- 5. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child.*

6. *And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.*
7. *In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.*
8. *Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.*
9. *But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people.'*

Hymn: Glory to God

2. Meditating the Word of Mercy

We find ourselves in Bethlehem. The town's name means literally *House of bread*. It is here that Jesus was born. A visitor coming in this urban area, in the evening or at night, finds the cluster of houses so characteristic of the region lit up. An onlooker cannot but feel awed as a mantle of stars seems to have been thrown across the night sky. Indeed this hamlet bathes in the atmosphere of a crèche year round. And how could it not! Bethlehem is the model of all the nativity scenes of the world. In Bethlehem, this church door is always open! The building of the great Basilica of the Nativity speaks of the boundless gratefulness of Christians throughout history for the visit of the Lord's mercy.

From the esplanade, in the centre, a small door can be seen. Anyone using this entrance must bow, symbolically acquiescing to the fact that only the humble can penetrate God's mystery, since God offered himself humbly. The door is painted pink to underscore that God became flesh. The long-awaited King was born a few metres away: what mystery in the ways of Mercy! Countless Christians have gone through this door and now our turn has come to enter the Basilica, in the spirit and by imperceptible degrees, with eyes open or closed.

Let this ancient Promise that comes to us in its eternal novelty take us by the hand. This promise has been called the Good News. It is mercy that in this place has become perceptible to the eye and ear, carried by a true Word!

Going forward let us enter in the great Basilica known as the Church of the Nativity. Here Mercy began showing the full extent of its divine splendor. Everywhere the angels indicate the Door where the wait was experienced and where was realized the prophecy proclaimed and announced for centuries by the messengers of the Lord. That prophecy is now in full view. The stars have recognized its great brightness and have come together from an unimaginable distance to celebrate and rejoice in a dance of light, as if to cry out: the long-awaited one is here and we are the insignia of his kingship!

Shepherds also heard the song of the angels. They have come also, but through the entrance of a grotto. They entered in the mystery of the angel's voice and of the words: *"Do not be afraid; for see I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people."* Such a strange and special place of entry! But they did come through it! They probably could not envisage the Savior clearly and their hope of salvation had remained "humble", somewhat as is the case for us when, as young children, we lived in a world of impossible dreams.

And now Mary and Joseph! The mystery relating to them becomes even greater, which means « humble ». Most likely they did not see a star tagging along behind them, or experience some earth-shattering event; they could only hear the cry of the newborn Jesus. I see the faces of Mary and Joseph marked by emotion, their clear-mindedness echoes the following words: *"the Promise has been accomplished. It has come to pass..."*

It has become largely taken for granted that such an ancient promise was the object of much expectation. But looking more closely at the history of the holy land, it dawns on us that since the last prophet, Malachi, God had ceased speaking. A terrible shroud of silence had covered the history of the beloved people of the Lord, announced well before by the prophet Hosea (Chapter 8) and then by Malachi. This silence can be interpreted perhaps as a consequence of a turning away from God and as a result of the pride that comes from pretending to no longer need the fatherly and merciful face of the Lord. Let us take stock of the length of this period: more than 500 years had gone by.

Like a bridge of light and hope in the return of God, the angel Gabriel was sent to the priest Zechariah to announce that the long period of silence had expired and that God was to once again proclaim his Word through John the Baptist, the new Elijah. But, this

time around, all would be different, things would no longer be as in the past, for now is the time of the accomplishment of the Ancient Promise and of the project of God concerning all of humanity. God will no longer be content to proclaim his Word through a new prophet like John the Baptist; this time it is God himself who comes in the Son.

His word is incarnate in this design of love freely given, tenderly and humbly. Beyond our capabilities to respond in kind, the Lord has opened his Door to greet us, to take us by the hand with a tender love and bring us back home. In his mercy he could see that through our own efforts we were utterly unable to make our way back to Him. So God came to us, giving us what is the most precious: Himself, the Shepherd, the Messiah: "... *he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep*" in the Garden of Eden (Isaiah 40, 11).

Let us go meet with Mercy, let us go through the scented door. It is not a matter of personal merit. Simply put, God's Mercy has made its way into humankind. It is the warm light of the love of our Creator freely offered to us. The night is dark. The heavens are magnificent. The moon is almost full, beautiful as always, laden with white hues and mystery, ancient and bright, with the knowledge of the faces of each age, of each period of history, as well as of the present day.

3. Praying the God of Mercy with the Shepherds

At the birth of Jesus, angels proclaimed peace to the world. We worship him now with joy, and we pray with hearts full of faith:

May your birth bring peace to all.

- *Lord, fill your holy people with whatever good they need, let the mystery of your birth be the source of our peace.*
- *King from all eternity, you desired to be born within time and to experience the day-to-day life of men and women, share your gift of unending life with us weak people, doomed to death.*

- *Awaited from the beginnings of the world, you came only in the fullness of time, now reveal your presence to those who are still expecting you.*

Our Father

Let us Pray:

Lord, Father full mercy, we thank you for the gift of your great love. You know of what stuff we are made and of our need for you. You have come so that we may become participants to your great joy; you have opened up for us your boundless grace and love. Even as we all too often forget you, grant that we remain always with You. Amen.

4. Singing and Blessing the God of Mercy

Canticle of Our Lady or a hymn

Blessing

Halt at The Basilica of The Holy Sepulchre



Door of the Holy Sepulchre: The Door of Life

For the first disciples the experience of the empty tomb became immediately a moment of no-return: the end of a mission and annihilation, openness and salvation. At the door of this tomb, many disciples begin to "see and believe".

1. Greeting the Word of God at The Holy Sepulchre (John 20, 1-9)

1. *Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb.*
2. *So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one that Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb and we do not know where they have laid him."*
3. *Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went towards the tomb.*
4. *The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first.*
5. *He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there but he did not go in.*

6. *Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there,*
7. *and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself.*
8. *Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, went in and he saw and believed;*
9. *for as yet they did not understand the scripture that he must rise from the dead.*

Psalm of meditation

2. Meditating the Word of Mercy

Approaching this door of mercy, we are invited to approach and be transformed. Just as the disciple "went in, and he saw and believed" so too we have this opportunity to pass through, see, and believe.

Let's take a moment to reflect: imagine you are this disciple. You have been following Jesus for three (3) years; you are one of his earliest followers. You have been touched as you experienced friendship with Christ deeply for three (3) years. You have seen Jesus perform incredible miracles, and you have watched the crowds grow around him. Your excitement grew for Jesus, as king, to take his throne.

And, you are now at a total loss. You're confused. You have just seen God be crucified. You watched as he was scourged and crown with thorns. You saw him carry the cross up to Calvary. You saw him be crucified. You saw Jesus die. You were there when Jesus' body was taken down from the cross. You watched his body be placed in the tomb, and the tomb sealed.

You are confused. "How can my king, die?"

The next morning, in your distress, you hear Mary Magdalene come back from the tomb distraught that the tomb is empty. You drop everything to follow Peter to the tomb, you reach the tomb first but wait for Peter to come first and provide direction.

Peter walks in, and you follow. You are shaking- so filled with grief, fear, and adrenaline. You walk in and instantly you are transformed. You feel calm, consoled, peaceful- filled with hope, joy, and consolation.

You see the empty tomb, and you believe in Jesus as your king.

Imagine what this disciple experienced. His emotions running through extremes, and then he passes through the door of the tomb, "sees and believes". Although at this point in the scripture, the disciples didn't yet know of Jesus Resurrection and Ascension, this is the moment of transformation; the moment where God overcame death, and brought victory to all humanity- giving us a doorway of transformation.

God's action of transformation is available to you and I today, just as powerfully as that moment over 2,000 years ago. In this extraordinary jubilee year of Mercy, we have a magnificent opportunity. Receiving God's mercy is the key to transformation.

Asking and accepting God's mercy is the key; we need to ask God and be open to accept 100% of his mercy.

And so, I invite you today, what do you want to bring to God for transformation?

In what areas are you hoping for a miracle? What area of your life are you living in confusion? Where in your life are you lacking hope and joy? What are you burdened about?

I invite you to approach God's mercy- come through the door of the tomb, to "see and believe". Give God total permission to change your life. Abandon all to God- all your thoughts, actions, desires, time, money, struggles, burden, guilt, shame, ambitions...everything. God wants to fill you with more of his Love than you ever experienced before. Encountering, and receiving God's mercy is the key to receiving more of God.

Pause of silence and/or musical support

3. Praying the God of Mercy

Christ is the Lord of life, raised up by the Father; in his turn he will raise us up by his power. Let us pray to him saying:

Christ our life, save us.

- Lord Jesus, light shining in the darkness, you lead your people into life, and give our mortal nature the gift of holiness, may we spend this day in praise of your glory.
- Lord, you walked the way of suffering and crucifixion, may we suffer and die with you, and rise again to share your glory.
- Son of the Father, our master and our brother, you have made us a kingdom of priests for our God, may me offer you our joyful sacrifice of praise.
- King of glory, we look forward to the great day of your coming in splendor, that we may see you face to face, and be transformed in your likeness.

Our Father

Let us pray:

Jesus, we give you permission to do as you will. We acknowledge you as our intimate lover, and the loving king and father of our lives. We invite you to be the center of our life. Jesus, we desire to choose you above everything, yet we are scared; we invite you to love us in our fear.

Come, Holy Spirit, and transform us. Specifically, we give you the areas we wish for transformation today (each person silently speaks this to God). We entrust these areas to you, and we approach you, going through the door of mercy, the door of the empty tomb. Transform us, now and forever. Amen.

4. Singing and Blessing the Merciful God

Hymn

Blessing

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