

Morning Prayer in June

Richard A. Rhem
Christ Community Church
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Transcription of the written prayer

For these moments, let us quiet our minds,
letting go of concerns that burden us, regrets that cripple us,
fears that paralyze us, whatever is troubling us.
Let us image that which causes gratitude to rise in us
-the gift and grace of life; the sources of our joy;
those persons who make life rich.

Let us call to mind those images which have shaped us:
The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.
The Lord is my light and my salvation;
whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the strength of my life;
of whom shall I be afraid?
Come unto me, all you who are weary and heavy laden,
and I will give you rest.

Since God is for us, who can be against us?
Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers,
nor things present, nor things to come,
nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor
anything else in all creation will be able
to separate us from the love of God
in Christ Jesus our Lord.
All will be well, all will be well.
All manner of things will be well.

Oh, God.

Those words rise from our depths so naturally –
Oh, God...

It seems that, in moments like these
when we purposefully, intentionally turn to you,
when we turn to whomever or whatever you are, we do so almost with a sigh,
- *Oh, God* –

for we know we are now in the zone of Mystery.
There was something about Jesus when he prayed

that caused the disciples to plead,
Lord, teach us to pray.
We plead, as well,
Oh, God, teach us to pray.

Once, perhaps, we came as suppliants to the Royal Throne of the universe
with requests we must admit on reflection were very self-centered,
reflecting a very small universe in which our hopes and fears loomed very large.
And still there are moments when we flee into your Presence,
totally occupied with our own concerns –
something that threatens us,
or some experience that crushes us,
or some potential happening that involves us
in a loss we fear would undo us.

Saturate our faith and devotion with worldliness,
that we may love the world –
with sensitivity, with awareness, with openness and candor,
with care borne of insight into the world's agony,
with hope borne of the realization of the world's wonder and potential.

Before the world's chaos, pain and anguish,
give us the wisdom to be silent before we speak;
to identify with and immerse ourselves before we offer remedies
too easy, too facile, too self-serving.
Give us insight and sensitivity
to discern that ominous thunder of the shaking of the foundations,
to recognize the recurrent corruptions of power that we see all around us.

Enable us to see beneath the skin of the world its heaving passion,
its loveliness and its horror;
a world that is a ridiculous mixture of good and evil,
of beautiful tenderness and unspeakable brutality.
A world where flowers bloom on manure heaps,
and deadly cancer grows on a beautiful, young body;
a world under the dominion of death,
natural, yet often so unexpected, so violent, so absurd!

Ah, dear God, this is the real world,
the only world we have
with its dreams of Eden and its portents of Armageddon.
O God, as you love the world, we would love it too.
Teach us how to live in it, how to speak to it, how to love it.
Let us sense the truth of Jesus' word:
*That it is in losing our lives that we will find life,
In serving that we will be fulfilled.*

Creator Spirit, brood over this community of faith,
this Christ Community.
Keep us steady; keep us strong, keep our spirits open, our hearts tender,
our whole being full of grace.
Sometimes we wonder, sometimes we waver,
sometimes we want to run, to be done with it all.
But, where would that leave us? Where would we run? To whom would we turn?
So, good and gracious God,
gather us in, hold us close, steel our purpose.
Give us joy in the journey and undying trust in your purpose for us.

And sometimes it is sheer joy, ecstasy, exhilaration
that bursts forth in a torrent of praise,
shutting out everything else for the moment.
But, more and more, we look not out there,
but somehow within, into our own depths,
sensing we are connected deep down, rooted in Being itself,
You being the inexhaustible Source and Ground of all that exists -
the good earth,
the starry heavens,
the ocean's tides
and ourselves, conscious, aware,
groping for some clue by which to know you, to rest in you,
no longer strangers, but at home in the universe, at one with all that is.

Oh, God.
In that address is a deep fundamental trust
in the face of so much in our world that is not well.
We wonder, we imagine an alternative world,
where human frustration, hopelessness and despair
that breed violence and destruction
are recognized
and their causes dealt with.

Spirit of God,
save us from the illusion that a new world order will be born
out of a wealth of resources and sheer military might.
Save us from the pitfall of believing we can simply overpower
and cover our vulnerability
without an honest facing of the world's festering soul.
Before your face, Eternal Spirit,
give us some balance, some perspective
as we wrestle with this complex and dangerous world.

Oh God,
this is the real world, the only world we have.
We celebrate it; we anguish over it.
Holy Presence, we are present here that vision may be renewed,
hope restored,
and courage found to be agents of reconciliation,
bringing peace, justice and compassion,
walking in the steps of that Exemplar
of what He called the Kingdom of God.
Amen.