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FAMILY
PRAYERS.

FAMILY PRAYERS,

OR, SOME OF THE MORE

IMPORTANT DOCTRINES AND DUTIES

OF

CHRISTIANITY,

THROWN INTO A DEVOTIONAL FORM,

For the Use of Families.

BY THE

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Second Edition.


MANCHESTER:

CAVE AND SEVER, PRINTERS BY STEAM POWER,
HUNT'S BANK.

1863.

ADVERTISEMENT.

It is the devout prayer of the Editors of the following collection, that it may be rendered instrumental, under the Divine mercy and providence of the Most High, in conducting Christians to a true and acceptable worship of their God, by enkindling in their hearts the flame of a devout affection, and at the same time by enlightening their understandings with a true knowledge of their Adorable Father, the one Creator, Redeemer, Regenerator, and Saviour of His people. AMEN.



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FAMILY PRAYERS.

PRAYER I.

For a due Sense of the Divine Perfections of
God the Creator.

O ALMIGHTY and Merciful Lord God, we Thy sinful creatures desire to prostrate ourselves before Thee as our original Creator and continual Preserver, confessing Thy Divine Unity, which is confirmed to us, both by the documents of Thy Holy Word, by the order and harmony of all Thy works, and by the general consent of every rational and intelligent being. Confirm us, we entreat Thee, in this persuasion of Thy blessed Oneness, that we may be preserved evermore from the mistaken and dangerous idea of the existence of more than one

God, since such an idea has a necessary tendency to introduce into the human mind every species of confusion and disorder. We desire also to be preserved in the devout acknowledgment that Thou art not only One, but the only One Being that can properly be said To Be; and that therefore Thy true, and appropriate, and exclusive name is I Am, or Jehovah, who alone Is, Was, and Will Be, because He is the First and the Last, the Beginning and the Ending, the Alpha and Omega. Thou therefore alone art self-essent and self-existent, both as to substance and form; whereas angels and men are substances and forms by derivation from Thee; and so far as they are in Thee and Thou in them, so far they are images and likenesses of Thee.

We further implore Thy Divine Grace to give us a just idea, and preserve us in it, of Thine infinity, or of Thine immensity and eternity, which is confirmed to us by all

Thy works. Enable us to see that Thou art thus in all space without space, and in all time without time, and in every finite thing without being limited by its finiteness. But above all, may a deep sense and clear perception of this Thine infinity, immensity, and eternity, lay us prostrate in the dust of our own comparative nothingness ; that so we may ever be preserved in the blessed and edifying conviction that Thou art All in All, in everything that we call either good, or great, or wise, or happy in ourselves.

We further wish to adore Thee as the Supreme Love and Supreme Wisdom, or, what is the same thing, as the Supreme Good and Supreme Truth, and thus the Essential Life itself, from which all other life is derived. And Oh ! that we may never forget that the essence of Thy Love is to love others out of, or without itself, to desire to be one with them, and to make them happy from itself ; and that as these

properties were the cause of the creation of the universe, so they are likewise the cause of its continual and daily preservation.

Finally we entreat Thee, O Most Merciful Father, to impress on our minds continually the blessed and edifying truth that Omnipotence, Omniscience, and Omnipresence, are the sure effects of Thy Divine Wisdom, derived from Thy Divine Love, but that these effects cannot be known until it be first known what is meant by order, and that Thou Thyself art Essential Order; and at the Creation wast pleased to introduce order into the universe, and into all its parts, and more especially into Thy creature man. Grant us therefore, the grace to understand clearly that Thine Omnipotence proceedeth and operateth according to the laws of Thy own order; and that Thou art Omniscient, by virtue of perceiving, seeing, and knowing all and everything that is done according to Thy order; and by that

means also whatsoever is done contrary to Thy order. Lastly, may we be enabled, by the light of Thine Eternal Truth, to discern that Thou art Omnipresent in all the gradations of Thy own order, from first to last ; and that we Thy sinful creatures have only such a measure of power from Thy Divine Omnipotence, against what is evil and false, and only such a measure of wisdom from Thy Divine Omniscience, respecting what is good and true, and are only so far in Thee by virtue of Thy Divine Omnipresence, as we become wise to direct our lives according to the laws of Thy Divine Order. Grant us then, we beseech Thee, O Great Creator, henceforth so to live, that we may be preserved in Thy blessed order, and may thus be for ever conjoined with Thee in a participation of all the unspeakable bliss resulting from a due sense of Thine Infinity, Immensity, Eternity, and above all, of Thy Divine

Love and Divine Wisdom, together with their Divine effects, Thy Divine Omnipotence, Omniscience, and Omnipresence.
AMEN.

Our Father, &c.

PRAYER II.

For a due Sense of the Divinity of the Redeemer,
 and of the Divine Work of Redemption.

O **ALMIGHTY** and Merciful Father, who hast been pleased, out of Thy great and tender love to mankind, to effect the great work of redemption for the blessed purpose of saving Thy fallen creatures, by delivering them from sin, and recalling them to a holy and eternal conjunction of life with Thyself, grant us, we beseech Thee, the grace to believe that this was Thy doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes. Preserve us, therefore, from the dangerous error of supposing,

as some, alas! have been led to suppose, in these latter days of darkness, that this work was either the work of a mere man like unto ourselves, or of some being above ourselves, yet inferior to Thee. Thou hast been pleased to declare in Thy Holy Word, as delivered by Thy prophets of old, that Thou alone art our Saviour and our Redeemer, and that there is none else beside Thee. Keep us constant, then, we entreat Thee, in a blessed belief of this Thy own declaration, that so we may confess continually, in our hearts as well as with our lips, that when the fulness of time came, Thou Thyself wast pleased to descend, and assume a humanity in the womb of the Virgin Mary, by being born as a man, for the purpose of redeeming and saving mankind. Yet Thou hast taught us to believe that this descent of Thyself was effected by Thy own Divine Spirit, or Word, according to what was declared by Thy angel to the Virgin

Mary,—“The power of the Highest shall overshadow thee;” and agreeable also to what is written by Thy evangelist,—“The Word was made flesh.” Give us grace, then, to believe that in this Thy manifestation in the flesh, Thou madest Thyself first known to mankind as a Son, according to the angelic annunciation to the Mother Mary—“That holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.” Give us the grace further to believe that this assumption of the human nature was effected according to Thine own Divine order; since otherwise the powers of darkness could not have been approached and subdued; neither could mankind have been supplied with a medium of approaching, knowing, loving, and attaining conjunction of life with Thyself. For ever adored then be that Divine mercy which inclined Thee thus to condescend to the infirmities of Thy otherwise lost creatures; and after-

wards, when the great work of Redemption was accomplished by the subjugation of infernal powers, to glorify the Humanity which Thou hadst assumed, by uniting it fully with Thyself, until God was made man, and man God, in one Divine person, agreeably to the words of this assumed humanity,—“I and my Father are one:” and in another place,—“Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me.” May we then be wise, in all our addresses to Thee, to draw nigh to Thee in this Thy Glorified Humanity, believing it to be the only door of access to Thy Divine Majesty, and abiding in it as the only source of all holiness, wisdom, and peace, in obedience to the Divine precept of that Humanity to all the children of men—“Abide in me and I in you; for without me ye can do nothing.” AMEN.

Our Father, &c.

PRAYER III.

For a due Sense of the great Work of Redemption.

O HOLY and Merciful God, who, by assuming the human nature and becoming thus the Redeemer and Saviour of all who truly believe in and follow Thee, in this Thy manifestation in the flesh, grant us, we entreat Thee, a right understanding of this Thy gracious and wonderful work of redemption; and at the same time incline our hearts to be so devoutly affected by it, that it may have its due influence on our lives and conversations. We believe, agreeable to the testimony of Thy Most Holy Word, that at the period of Thy coming into the world all the families of the earth had corrupted their way before Thee, and in consequence of such corruption, had plunged themselves into a dreadful confederacy with the powers of darkness, inso-

much that those powers had begun to take possession not only of the souls but even of the bodies of men. We believe further, that unless this confederacy had been broken by the subjugation and removal of those powers, a general destruction of mankind must necessarily have ensued, and no flesh could have been saved. Give us grace, therefore, to believe that the great work of redemption consisted in this removal of the powers of darkness from man, so that he might regain the blessed liberty of returning to Thee, his God, and of cooperating with Thee in the great work of his salvation. Grant us also the grace to believe further, that by this work of redemption, not only the hells were brought into subjection, but the heavens also into order and regulation; so that henceforth a new spiritual church might be established here on earth, in which Thou mightest be worshipped in spirit and in truth, and heaven

and earth be again united. We are the more solicitous to obtain the guidance and direction of Thy Holy Spirit on this all important subject, inasmuch as it is to be feared, not only that the nature of the redemption which Thou hast been pleased to work is, at this day, misunderstood, but also that it is perverted into a mischievous and dangerous error, by supposing that it consisted merely in the passion of the Cross, and that by virtue of this passion all mankind became reconciled to Thee, and admitted again into Thy Divine favour. Guard us, then, we entreat Thee, against this error, by confirming us in the blessed belief that, though the passion of the Cross was conducive, and even necessary for the accomplishment of the great work of redemption, yet in itself it did not constitute the whole of redemption, being only the final trial, by which a complete victory was obtained over the powers of darkness, and at the same

time Thy humanity was glorified, or made Divine. Whilst, then, we adore that Love which was pleased, for our sakes, to endure the passion of the cross, and whilst we believe that the pangs suffered on this occasion were necessary for our salvation, may we be delivered, we humbly beseech Thee, from the great danger of confounding this passion with redemption itself, and thus mistaking the means for the end. So will we praise Thy holy name for ever and ever; and give Thee thanks continually, not only for our creation and daily preservation, but also for that redeeming mercy by which Thou hast saved our souls from death, and opened to us the gate of everlasting life. AMEN.

Our Father, &c.

PRAYER IV.

For a right Apprehension of what is to be understood by the Holy Spirit, and for an obedient Compliance with its Virtues and Operations.

O ALMIGHTY and Merciful Lord God and Saviour, who, at Thy departure out of the world, gavest commandment to Thy apostles to “go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,” and who hast been pleased to instruct us further respecting this Holy Spirit, by calling Him the Comforter and the Spirit of Truth, proceeding from Thyself in Thy union with the Father, grant us, we beseech Thee a right understanding of the proper character and quality of this Holy Influence which proceedeth from Thee. In Thy Holy

Word Thou hast identified this Spirit with Thyself when Thou sayest to Thy disciples—
“I will not leave you comfortless, I will come unto you ;” and in another place—
“He shall not speak of himself, but He shall take of mine, and shew it unto you.” And again,—“If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you, but if I go away, I will send Him unto you.” Give us grace then to believe that this Comforter and Spirit of Truth, called the Holy Spirit, is not any being separate from Thyself, but rather may be considered as Thyself—operative upon the hearts and understandings of those who believe in Thee, to lead them into all truth, and thus to fulfil Thy Divine prediction,—“I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people ;” and again,—“A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you.” May we be wise, there-

fore, to reflect that we have this Holy Comforter and Spirit of Truth ever present in the deep centre of our bosoms, to lead us into all truth, and by that truth to conduct us to the possession of the Supreme Good in the love of Thee and of one another! We confess, with humble and contrite hearts, that of ourselves we are nothing but a mixture of evil and error, loving ourselves more than Thee, and the things of this world more than the great realities of Thy kingdom; and that therefore, unless we be born again of water and of the spirit, we cannot enter into that kingdom. Yet we cannot hope for this inestimable blessing of a New Birth, but through repentance and faith in Thee; and without the aid of Thy Holy Spirit it is impossible we should either repent, believe, or indeed exercise any virtue which is acceptable in Thy sight. Whilst, however, we make this confession, as it is our duty

to do, that it is Thou who workest in us, both to will and to do of Thy good pleasure, guard us, we beseech Thee, against the delusive idea that we ourselves have nothing to do in the way of salvation, but to hang down our hands in the vain expectation that Thou wilt do all for us, without any exertions on our part. Enlighten us therefore, to see that we ought to exert ourselves freely and diligently, as if all depended on ourselves alone; but at the same time to acknowledge humbly and devoutly, that all our power to do so is of Thine unmerited goodness and mercy. Assist us then, we entreat Thee, O Merciful Lord, by the Divine aid of Thy Holy Spirit, so to put away all our sins, by a vigorous repentance and living faith in Thee, that we may go on to the perfect reformation and regeneration, until we finally attain all that purification from evil, and that renovation of life, which Thou hadst in view for us when Thou wast

pleased, in Thine adorable mercy, to declare to all true believers,—“I will not leave you comfortless, I will come unto you.” AMEN.

Our Father, &c.

PRAYER V.

For a just, Scriptural, and edifying Apprehension
of the Divine Trinity.

O ETERNAL God, who by assuming the human nature, and making it one with Thyself in the person of Jesus Christ, hast been pleased, from that union of Divinity and Humanity, to operate on the hearts and understandings of Thy people, as a Divine Comforter and Spirit of Truth, give us grace, we humbly implore Thee, to believe that in Thee, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are united, and make One God, in like manner as soul, body, and operation in

man, make one man ; and that consequently as in addressing ourselves to our fellow-man, we draw nigh and direct ourselves to his body, and through it to his soul, from a clear conviction that this is the only possible way of approach to his soul, in like manner and for the same reason, in addressing ourselves to Thee our God, we ought to draw nigh and direct ourselves to Thy Divine Body, or Humanity, as the only possible way of gaining access to Thy otherwise unapproachable Soul or Divinity. We acknowledge with shame and confusion of face that, in consequence of the doctrine generally prevailing in Thy church at this day, we have been betrayed into the groundless idea that in this, Thy three-fold character, Thou art to be regarded as existing in a tri-personality ; and that thus, as it is expressed in the creed, "there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Spirit." But, from

henceforth, we entreat Thee most earnestly to blot out of our minds this idea, which we now conceive to be utterly repugnant to the testimony of Thy Holy Word, at the same time that it has a direct tendency to perplex and disturb the mind of every sincere worshipper of his God, by introducing a dreadful confusion as to the proper and only true object of that worship. May every member of Thy church therefore be enlightened by Thy Holy Spirit to see and to perceive clearly, that the whole of the Divine Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit now dwelleth, and will for ever dwell, in the one Divine Person of the Lord God and Saviour, whose high and holy name is Jesus Christ, who is at once the Creator, Redeemer, Regenerator, and Saviour of all who believe in Him, abide in Him, and keep His commandments! May we thus be preserved from the great sin and danger of thinking of, and drawing nigh unto, any

other God but this Manifested and Visible God, in whom, as Thine apostle testifies, “all the fulness of the Godhead dwelleth bodily;” and who alone is the resurrection and the life of all that is holy, wise, and blessed in His children! Thus may we hope to be preserved from the terrible error and mischief of dividing our God; and whilst we fix our eyes and our hearts on the bright countenance of Thee our Blessed Redeemer, may console ourselves with the happy persuasion that Thou art our Shepherd, and we Thy sheep, and that to us will be extended the blessing which Thou Thyself hast promised in the consolatory words,—“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand.” AMEN.

Our Father, &c.

PRAYER VI.

For a right Apprehension of the Nature and Quality of the Word of God, or Sacred Scriptures.

ALMIGHTY and Heavenly Father, who hast been pleased to reveal Thyself to Thy sinful and ignorant creatures, by and through Thy most Holy Word, and hast moreover, taught us the necessity of incorporating this Word into our hearts and lives, by instructing us that man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God, and also by teaching us to address Thee in this short but edifying prayer,—“ Open Thou mine eyes, that I may see wondrous things out of Thy law,” grant us, we beseech Thee, a right apprehension of the nature and quality of this Thy Divine communication, that so we may both understand and obey it, according to Thy most gracious purpose in imparting

it to us. With this blessed design in view, may we be enabled to discern that, as the speech of every intelligent being must of necessity consist of two parts, viz., external expression and internal meaning, without which parts it cannot properly be called speech, in like manner we are bound to believe that Thy Holy Word, which may fitly be called Thy Divine Speech to angels and to men, could not be Thy Word, unless it also was a compound both of meaning and of expression. But Thy meaning could not possibly be any other than a Divine Meaning, adapted to the wants of those to whom it is addressed, and as these wants relate principally to the wills and understandings of intelligent beings, who can never be fully satisfied, until they be filled with the knowledge and love of Thee, their Great Creator and Merciful Saviour, grant us, further, the grace to see and acknowledge that Thy Word must necessarily be replete

with Thy Divine Love and Wisdom, to the intent that these Divine treasures may be imparted to Thy otherwise ignorant and perishing children. Thou, indeed, when here on earth, wast pleased at once to instruct and console Thy followers by this declaration, "The words that I speak unto you they are Spirit and Life," thus teaching them to believe that in every part of Thy discourse there was involved the Divine Spirit of Truth for the illumination of their Understandings, and the Divine Life of Thy Love for the purification and vivification of their wills. Whilst, then, we adore Thee for having favoured us with the blessed knowledge of the heavenly contents of Thy Holy Word, we humbly and earnestly beseech Thee to give us a due sense of the sacred marriage of these two Divine principles of Spirit and of Life, or of Truth and Goodness, which is discernible in every part of those contents. Above

all, guard us, we entreat Thee, against profaning and dissolving this holy marriage, whether it be by separating Spirit from Life, or Life from Spirit, that so we may receive Thy blessed precepts, not only in our understandings but in our wills, and not only in our wills but in our understandings. Grant us the grace, also, to discern clearly that Thy whole written Word is a kind of parable, in and by which the great spiritual realities of Thy Eternal Kingdom are expressed by natural images, figures, and histories, so that we can never hope to attain the knowledge of Thy Divine Speech, only so far as we look through the shadows of its external expressions, that we may feed on the substance of its internal meaning. So will we give Thee everlasting praise, for having imparted to us this Bread and Water of Life, and, incorporating both into our wills, understandings, and lives, will hope finally to become Thy regenerate

children, being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. . AMEN.

Our Father, &c.

PRAYER VII.

For a right Understanding and obedient Practice of
the Decalogue, or Ten Commandments.

O GREAT and Holy God, who art not only our Creator, Preserver, and Redeemer, but also our Most Wise and Holy Lawgiver, to guide us by Thy precepts to everlasting life and peace, we desire to praise and adore that infinite mercy, by which Thou wert pleased to deliver to Thy people of old, from Mount Sinai, the laws of the Ten Commandments. Open, we beseech Thee, our eyes, as Thou once openedst the eyes

of Thy disciples, to understand the Scriptures, that we may have a clear and distinct idea of the Divine Sanctity of these laws, so fully evinced by the circumstance of their being written on two tables of stone with Thine Own Finger, as well as by the many other awful and significant signs which attended their promulgation. And whilst we are led, in the spirit of profound humiliation, to acknowledge this Divine Sanctity of Thy Ten Precepts, grant that this acknowledgment may have its right effect on our hearts and lives, by leading us to, a due obedience to the Spirit and the Life in which that sanctity is grounded. But we are fully sensible, and we thank Thee for having made us so, that we can never, by any possibility, obey Thy Commandments until we understand and comprehend their meaning; and therefore we further entreat Thee, not only to give us a due sense of the holiness, but also of

the import and blessed tendency of the precepts which Thou hast condescended Thyself to write for our edification and salvation. Whensoever then we hear Thee say—"Thou shalt have none other gods but Me," "Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image," &c. give us grace to believe that Thou not only forbiddest the worship of images and dead men, but also the love of any person or thing, with the chief and governing love, more than of Thee. Teach us also to see, that by these words we are forbidden to worship any other god but Jesus Christ, since He alone is Jehovah, and thus alone is Infinite, Immense, Eternal, Omnipotent, Omniscient, and Omnipresent—the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End, who Was, Is, and Will Be. When we again hear Thee say, "Thou shalt not take the name of Jehovah thy God in vain," &c. enable us to elevate our thoughts above the more

literal meaning of these words, which prohibits only the abuse of Thy Holy Name in our ordinary discourse, and in unnecessary oaths, that so we may discern Thy spiritual meaning in this Commandment, and how we are enjoined by it to venerate everything that is taught from Thy Word concerning Thyself, and the true worship of Thee; and to take good heed lest we apply it in vain discourses, false assertions, lies, and incantations; and especially in denying the Divinity of Thy Humanity, and the Sanctity of Thy Word. When again we hear Thee say, "Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy," &c. may it please Thee to open our eyes to see that, in these words, by the Sabbath-day is not only meant one day in seven consecrated to Thy service, and for a cessation from human labour, but every state of regenerate life, which leads to conjunction with Thee and the eternal rest of Thy Blessed Kingdom, promoted by

that conjunction. Again, when Thou commandest, saying—"Honour thy father and thy mother," &c. give us the grace to discern, that by Father and Mother are not only meant our natural parents, but all others who are set in authority over us, whether they be temporal or spiritual governors; and not only our natural parents, and temporal and spiritual governors, but Thou Thyself and Thy Holy Catholic Church, since these latter are our Father and Mother in the highest and most proper sense of the words. Lastly, whensoever we hear or read the five following Commandments, "Thou shalt do no murder,—Thou shalt not commit adultery,—Thou shalt not steal,—Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour,—Thou shalt not covet," &c. may we be enabled to see, that by committing murder is meant, not only every injury done to the temporal life of man, but every violation of the spirit of

love and charity one towards another ; and that by committing adultery is not only meant the commission of that sin, but also the cherishing of filthy or obscene desires, and especially the adulteration, falsification, and profanation of the sacred truths of Thy Holy Word: and that by stealing is to be understood, not only open theft and robbery, but every kind of fraud and imposition practised upon our neighbour ; and not only all injury done to his temporal property, but to the higher property of his immortal soul, by depriving him of the truths which lead to salvation ; and not only every act of injustice against our neighbour, but against Thee, whether by claiming Thy power, or by appropriating to ourselves Thy merit and righteousness ; and that by bearing false witness against our neighbour is intended to be expressed, not only false witness before a judge, but all kinds of lies and hypocritical artifices,

together with every cunning device and stratagem against him; to which may be added every attempt to impose, by making good appear evil, and evil good, or by confounding truth with error and error with truth; and that in the term covetousness is involved, not only every act of evil, but all concupiscence of evil, consisting in an inordinate desire to possess our neighbour's property, whether external or internal; and that it is therefore prohibited, with the blessed intent that every man may be content in the state in which Thou hast been pleased to place him here below, whether it be a state of abundance or of poverty, under the full persuasion that in Thee and Thy mercy he possesses all things. Thus may we hope to praise and glorify Thy holy name both in our wills and in our understandings, whilst we direct our lives according to the heavenly wisdom taught us in Thy own weighty words, "If

ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them;" and again, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." AMEN.

Our Father, &c.

PRAAYER VIII.

For the Grace of a genuine Evangelical Faith,
and for the right Apprehension of its Heavenly
Character and Qualities.

O BLESSED Lord and Saviour, who hast been pleased to declare concerning Thyself, "I am the Resurrection and the Life; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live, and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die," impress on our hearts, we beseech Thee, a due sense of the infinite value and importance of that faith, or belief, to which Thou hast annexed such glorious promises and privileges, and enlighten our eyes to discern

what are the constituent principles of this holy and heavenly grace. May we thus be enabled to see, that a genuine saving faith is a faith directed towards Thee, the Lord God the Saviour Jesus Christ, because directed towards a visible God, in whom is the invisible, and that the first principle of this faith is an acknowledgment that He is the Son of God. May we be enabled, further to discover that man, of himself, hath no faith, and that he receives this inestimable gift in consequence of approaching Thee, O Lord,—of learning truths from Thy Most Holy Word, and of living a life in conformity to those truths. We lament to say, and are humbled under the painful consciousness, that there prevails in the world a mere natural faith, which in itself is only a persuasion that hath a semblance of faith, but which, being grounded in self-intelligence, and not in Thee and in Thy love, leaves the soul alto-

gether unsanctified, and void of all the purifying principles of spiritual and evangelical faith. Teach us then, O Merciful Lord, we earnestly implore Thee, to shun this deadly persuasion, and for this purpose to consider well that a true spiritual faith can only be derived from Thee, and that it is exalted and perfected in proportion to the store of truths collected from Thy Holy Word, and cohering together in the mind of the true believer. Grant us also the grace to believe that faith without charity is not faith, and that charity without faith is not charity, and that neither faith nor charity hath any life in it but from Thee, O Lord, yet that man hath continual power from Thee to procure both faith, charity, and the life of charity for himself; whilst nevertheless nothing belonging to faith, or to charity, or to the life of each, is from man, but from Thee alone. Grant us further the grace to believe that man, who

divideth between Thee and charity and faith, is not a form receptive either of Thee, of charity, or of faith, but a form destructive of all three; since Thou art charity and faith in man, and man is charity and faith in Thee. We desire also to see and acknowledge that salvation and eternal life consist solely in conjunction with Thee, O Lord, but that this conjunction can only be effected by means of charity and faith, united in good works. Lastly, we would supplicate Thy mercy, to enable us to discern that there is a spurious faith, and an hypocritical faith, but that there is only one true faith, and that this one true faith is directed towards Thee, the Lord God the Saviour Jesus Christ, and that it abideth with those who believe Thee to be the Son of God, the God of heaven and earth, and One with the Father. So will we give Thee thanks for ever, and will cherish the blessed hope of finally attaining that pure and holy

faith, of which Thou hast been pleased to declare, "All things are possible to him that believeth." AMEN.

Our Father, &c.

PRAYER IX.

For the Divine Grace of Charity, or Love towards our Neighbour, and for a right Apprehension of the Nature and Qualities of this Love.

O LORD and Heavenly Father, whose holy and distinguishing name and character is love, and whose first and great commandment to Thy sinful creatures is, that they should love Thee above all things, with all their heart, and soul, and strength, and whose second commandment is like unto it, that they should love their neighbour as themselves, and who hast further been pleased to declare that, on these two commandments hang all the law and the

prophets, pour into our hearts, we entreat Thee, this Thy own blessed Spirit of love and charity, that so it may be the ruling principle of all our thoughts, words, and works. But whereas it is impossible for us to fulfil all the duties required of us by this heavenly grace, until we are enlightened by a right knowledge of their extent, both as to the persons on whom they are to be exercised, and in the way and manner in which they are to be exercised; Grant us, we further beseech Thee, a right understanding on these interesting subjects, with which our salvation and eternal happiness are so closely connected. Enable us, therefore, to see that every individual man is the neighbour whom we ought to love, but according to the nature and quality of his goodness, and that man considered collectively, or as a lesser or larger society, is the neighbour also who ought to be loved; and that according to this view, the church

here on earth is our neighbour, whom we are bound to love in a still higher degree, and that Thou and Thy kingdom are our neighbours, and ought to be loved in the highest degree ; since neighbourly love doth not consist in loving the person of our neighbour, but the good which is in his person. May our eyes be further opened to discern clearly that real charity consisteth in acting justly and faithfully, in whatsoever office, business, or employment we are engaged, and with whomsoever we have any commerce or connection ; and that such a regular mode of action constitutes those good works which Thou, in Thy mercy, hast promised to reward hereafter with life eternal ! May our eyes be further opened, to see that besides these good works, consisting in the faithful discharge of the duties of our respective callings, there are beneficent acts of charity, such as giving to the poor, and relieving the indigent ; but

that these ought to be regulated by prudence, lest the alms we bestow be converted into the means of mischief, by being given to those who will pervert them to mischievous purposes. But above all, O Merciful Lord, be pleased to impress deeply on our hearts the important truth, that the first part of charity consisteth in putting away from us all that is evil, or whatsoever is grounded in mere selfish and worldly love, and the second part in doing what is good and profitable to our neighbour, out of a pure regard to Thee and Thine eternal kingdom, disclaiming all idea of merit in our works, and ascribing to Thee, the Divine Source of all good, the praise and the glory. Thus will we hope to escape all delusion in the exercise of our charity, whether by making it spurious, hypocritical, or dead, and looking continually unto Thee as the only true source of real love one towards another, will indulge in the delight-

ful idea, that we shall finally be found perfect in the fulfilling that new commandment, which Thou wast pleased to deliver to Thy followers here on earth, in these emphatic words,—“A new commandment I give unto you that you love one another.” Thus, too, shall we find marked on our foreheads, the sign of true discipleship, pointed out in Thy own blessed words,—“By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one towards another,” and at the same time shall bear in our bosoms the delightful testimony,—“We know that we are passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.”—

AMEN.

Our Father, &c.

PRAYER X.

For a right Apprehension of the true Ground and Nature of Free-Will, and for the proper Regulation of that inestimable gift.

ALMIGHTY and Merciful Lord, who, by the two trees in the garden of Eden, the one of life, and the other of the knowledge of good and evil, and especially by the permission to eat of the former, and Thy prohibition against tasting of the latter, hast given to mankind, in all ages, a full demonstration of the freedom of their wills to choose either good or evil, which freedom Thou wast afterwards pleased to confirm, by Thy question to two blind men—"What will ye that I should do unto you?" impress deeply on our minds, we humbly beseech Thee, a full conviction of our possession of the inestimable gift of free-will, which Thou in Thine adorable mercy hast con-

ferred upon Thy creature man from the beginning, and which Thou still continuest, and hast promised to continue, to all generations. We are grieved to think that, in an evil hour, a mistaken and destructive doctrine insinuated itself into Thy church, by which the above freedom was denied, and the members of the church were taught the horrible dogma, that Thou, by an arbitrary appointment, hast doomed one part of Thy intelligent creatures to inevitable and eternal destruction, and the other part to necessary salvation ; thus making Thee the author of misery, and turning Thy Divine mercy into infernal vengeance. From this shocking and detestable idea, be pleased, Good Lord, to deliver us, by convincing us that, during our abode in this world, we are held in the midst between heaven and hell, thus between good and evil, between truth and error, and that in this spiritual equilibrium free-will consisteth.

May we be enabled further, to see that without free-will in spiritual things, Thy Holy Word would be rendered entirely useless, by being addressed to those who had no power to keep and observe its Divine precepts ; the terrible consequence of which must necessarily be that no church could exist amongst them, since no man can properly be called a member of Thy church, who is not conjoined reciprocally with Thee in love, which reciprocity results solely from a state of freedom. But above all, excite in us, we earnestly entreat Thee, a due horror at the thought that, without free-will in spiritual things, we make Thee chargeable as the cause of all evil, and consequently destroy all idea of imputation, whether of good or evil. Preserve us then, O Merciful Father, in a constant and firm belief, that we are at perfect liberty, at all times, to choose either good or evil, either life or death ; and thus

either to eat of the tree of life, and live for ever, or to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and in so doing die eternally to all the holiness, peace, and happiness of Thine everlasting kingdom. Under the influence of this blessed belief, we desire to conclude our prayer in the words which Thou Thyself hast taught us, by Thy servant of old, who, amongst other petitions for Thy saving grace and mercy, added this,—“Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, and uphold me with Thy Free Spirit.”—AMEN.

Our Father, &c.

PRAYER XI.

For the Grace of Repentance, and for a true Sense of its Nature and Importance.

O MOST Holy and Merciful Lord, who hast been pleased to teach us the preëminence

of the evangelical duty of repentance, by giving it so high a rank in Thy Gospel, and placing it, as it were, at the head of all other duties, and who hast taught us further, the absolute necessity of this duty, by Thy solemn and awful declaration,—“Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish,” Grant us, we beseech Thee, Thy heavenly grace, to enable us to discern rightly and fully both this necessity and preëminence. For this purpose, may we be enlightened to see that repentance is the beginning and foundation, both of heaven and of the church in man, inasmuch as man is born in evils of every kind; and therefore, unless he removeth them in part by repentance, he remaineth in them, and whosoever remaineth in them is incapable of receiving the saving graces of heaven and heavenly life, and of course must perish in his evils, since good and evil can never dwell together in the same mind. For by

nature, it is evident, man loveth himself and the world more than Thee and Thy kingdom, and consequently, so long as this evil love has the ascendancy, or is the ruling love, so long the love of Thee and neighbourly love, which are the ruling loves in Thy kingdom, are cast out, and leave man to the direful and infernal government of his own concupiscences. Preserve us, then, we humbly entreat Thee, from the dominion of these disorderly and destructive loves; and, since we can never hope to escape this dominion, only so far as we attain the knowledge of the evil tendency of those loves, by a particular examination of ourselves and all our purposes, enable us further, to regard such examination as the beginning of repentance; since to know what is evil is the first necessary step towards its removal, whilst the second step is to open our minds towards Thee in devout supplication, and a sincere purpose

to lead a new life according to Thy commandments. We earnestly implore also, Thy Divine aid, to enable us to extend this examination, not only to our outward actions, but to our inner thoughts and affections; thus, not only to what we do, but to what we are inclined to do, and not only to evil in general, but to particular evils, and especially to those to which we are most prone, and with which we are most easily beset. Preserve us also, we further entreat Thee, from resting in a mere lip-confession of our sins, which, we lament to say, is too often regarded as constituting of itself real repentance; and may we be enlightened by Thy Holy Spirit to discern clearly, that it is not the mere confession, but the steady purpose to oppose in ourselves, and by opposing to forsake, all sin, which marks the true penitent, and distinguishes him from the pretended one. Thus may we hope, like the returning

prodigal in the Gospel, to arise and come to Thee, our Heavenly Father, and to be received by Thee with those words of blessed welcome,—“Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him ; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet ; and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it ; and let us eat and be merry ; for this my son was dead, and is alive again ; he was lost and is found.” AMEN.

Our Father, &c.

PRAYER XII.

For the Graces of Reformation and Regeneration.

ALMIGHTY and Merciful Father, the Creator, Redeemer, and Regenerator of men, who hast been pleased to instruct Thy sinful children that unless they be born again, and as it were created anew, they cannot

enter into Thy kingdom, give us grace, we beseech Thee, to consider well, so as to comprehend clearly, the infinite importance of this new and spiritual creation. Enable us thus to discover that Thou alone art the Father of this new birth, whilst it is our duty to coöperate with Thee in charity and faith, as the two means or mediums of its accomplishment. Open our eyes to see, further, that all mankind have a capacity to be regenerate, because all are redeemed, every one according to his state, and that the several stages of regeneration answer to those of man's natural birth, in that he is conceived, carried in the womb, brought forth, and educated. We further supplicate the grace to discern that the first act of the new birth is reformation, or what relates to the understanding, and the second act is regeneration, or what relates to the will, and thence to the understanding; and that thus the internal man ought first to be

reformed, and by it the external, since this is the order of regeneration. And since on this occasion there must of necessity commence a combat between the internal and external man, on the issue of which depends the dominion of one over the other, grant us, we beseech Thee, the additional grace to be faithful in this combat, by continuing with Thee in Thy temptations, and thus advancing through combat to a blessed victory over ourselves, the devil, the world, and the flesh. Thus may we hope to attain not only that new understanding which sees Thy blessed kingdom, but also that new will which enters into it; and thus too may we have the consolation of believing that our sins are removed, or remitted, which can never be effected without a new will, and a new understanding, or without charity, and the heavenly truths by which faith is formed. And thus too will we for ever praise and adore Thy Divine Mercy,

which, by assuming and glorifying the Human Nature, "hath given us power to become the sons of God, being born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." AMEN.

Our Father, &c.

PRAYER XIII.

For a right Knowledge and Apprehension of the Uses and Benefits of the Sacrament of Baptism.

ALMIGHTY and Merciful Saviour, who, in the days of Thy sojourning here on earth, wast pleased to submit to the rite of baptism, and to ordain it as a holy sacrament, to be for ever celebrated in Thy church, by giving commandment to Thine apostles to "Go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," give us, we beseech Thee, a right under-

standing of what is implied in this sacred ceremony, and of the inestimable benefits intended to be conveyed by it. For this blessed purpose, may our eyes be opened to discern that by baptism is meant washing, and that by the washing of baptism is meant spiritual washing, consisting in purification from our natural evils and errors, and in the regeneration which is a consequence of such purification. Grant us the grace, further, to consider and understand that baptism was instituted in the place of circumcision ; because by circumcision was represented the circumcision of the heart, which is only another expression to denote the purification of the heart or will, from all affections, thoughts, inclinations, and purposes which are opposed to the purity, peace, goodness, and truth of Thy most Holy Word. When we are thus enlightened to see the meaning of this Thy holy institution, may we, in the next place, through

the illumination of Thy Holy Spirit, be permitted to see the blessed uses and benefits to which it was intended to conduct us; by introducing us, in the first place, into the Christian church, with a view to our instruction in all the precepts and duties of Thy most holy religion; and in the second place to conduct us to the knowledge and acknowledgment of Thee the Manifested God, and to a life in agreement with Thy most pure example and commandments; and in the third place, to perfect us in the regeneration. Finally, we most earnestly supplicate Thy protecting aid, to guard us against the delusive idea of being saved by the mere outward ceremony of baptism, separate from the inward and spiritual grace which that ceremony represents, and to which it was intended to conduct us. Make us, therefore, ever watchful over all our purposes and thoughts; our affections and inclinations; that so they

may ever be directed towards the true and inward baptism of our spirits ; and that thus we may regard every day and hour of our lives as the day and hour of our baptism. So will we hope finally to attain all that renovation and blessedness for which the Psalmist prayed, when he says, "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean ; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."—"Make me to hear of joy and gladness, that the bones which Thou hast broken may rejoice."—"Hide Thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." AMEN.

Our Father, &c.

PRAYER XIV.

For a right Knowledge and Understanding of the
Uses and Benefits of the Holy Supper.

O MERCIFUL and Gracious Lord, who wast pleased, at the time of Thy last supper with Thy disciples here on earth, to institute the holy sacrament of Thy blessed body and blood, to be continued for ever in Thy church as a memorial of Thyself, grant us, we beseech Thee, a right view and apprehension of the invaluable uses and benefits of this most sacred ordinance. For this purpose, open our eyes to discern what is properly to be understood by Thy body and blood, which, under the outward elements of bread and wine, according to Thy own express declaration, are conveyed to the faithful. We can easily see that body and blood, when predicated of Thee, the Great and Holy God, cannot mean

anything material, since our own reason convinces us that there is nothing material in Thee ; neither can anything material tend to nourish in us that eternal life of which Thou art pleased to testify, “ Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.” We are constrained, therefore, to believe that Thy body and blood must of necessity be things spiritual, and since all spiritual things have reference to the divine good of Thy love, and the divine truth of Thy wisdom, we are compelled to believe further, that by Thy body (or flesh, or bread) is to be understood all the former good, and likewise all the good of charity ; and that by Thy blood, and by wine is to be understood all the latter good, and likewise all the truth of faith ; and that by eating and drinking is signified appropriation. Enable us, therefore, to believe that Thou and all the effects of Thy redemption

are entirely and completely present in Thy holy supper, since Thou hast been graciously pleased to declare—"He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him." May we also have the faith to believe, further, that to those who approach Thy holy supper worthily Thou art ever present, and openest the doors of Thine everlasting kingdom, since where Thou art, there heaven must of necessity also be; consequently, that as baptism is an introduction into Thy church, so the holy supper is an introduction into Thy heaven. Finally, we beseech Thee to inspire us with a true knowledge of the qualifications necessary to make us worthy receivers of this Thy holy supper, by convincing us that they consist in a right faith towards Thee, the Manifested God, and a right charity towards our neighbour; thus in cherishing in ourselves the two grand principles of regenerate life. So may we

hope to approach Thy holy supper worthily ;
and, in so doing, to attain a blessed con-
junction of life with Thee, by abiding in
Thee and Thou in us, which will be to us
a sign and seal that we are Thy beloved
children, and inheritors of Thine everlasting
kingdom. AMEN.

Our Father, &c: