

Healing Light Reflections

with

Our Lady and St Padre Pio

For the Elderly, Sick, Housebound & Home Alone

&

For all who would like to go on Pilgrimage
(but are unable to do so for whatever reason)

by

Patrick Lynch & Alison Riggott

www.healinglightministry.info

Healing Light Reflections

Do not lose your inward peace for anything whatsoever, even if your whole world seems upset.

Commend all to God, and then lie still and be at rest in his bosom.

Whatever happens, abide steadfast in a determination to cling simply to God – trusting to his eternal Love For You –

St Francis de Sales



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Foreword

Healing Light Reflections is a compilation of:

A Home Retreat of Prayer & Reflection, written for the elderly, sick, house bound and home alone.

A Pilgrimage of the Heart for people not able to go on a pilgrimage for whatever reason.

Pamphlets and Healing Prayers.

Bishop Malcolm MacMahon OP. Bishop of Nottingham wrote in his introduction to *A Home Retreat of Prayer & Reflection*:

“may this spiritual exercise give you a feeling of belonging and help you realize your vocation as valuable members of the Body of Christ”

May all who use this book for prayer and reflection also realize their similar vocation and experience the joy and peace of Christ.

Patrick Lynch and Alison Riggott.

Introduction

Sacredness Of Time

There are seasons for everything and sometimes we are restricted to our home by illness or injury or old age. This can at first appear to be an inconvenience, but if we see it as a grace, it can be a time for spiritual growth, a gift from God, an invitation to grow closer to Him and to Mary, our mother. When Jesus walked this earth, He sought out the isolated, those who felt they had no worth in society, those who needed healing in body, mind and soul. He looked at them with such pure love and said

“Come to Me”.

If you are confined to your home because of disability, illness or old age, take this opportunity to let Jesus love you and then you will hear His call to you, His purpose for your restriction. He will transform it into a Season of Grace and be able to use you in His kingdom here on earth. You may feel that you have nothing to offer society, that now you are on the receiving end of care when you would rather be giving. You may feel forgotten, or lonely or helpless. Or you may be confined to the home because you are a carer.

Jesus calls you to use this time well. When you were more active you probably had less time for God.

Sacredness Of Time

Now you may be physically weak but you can be spiritually strong. He needs you to pray, to be one of His prayer warriors. To pray for lost souls, for others who are physically strong but spiritually weak, to pray for your family and friends, and for people you have never met. You have a divine purpose in your physical weakness to be a mighty spiritual strength. Most of all He wants you to experience His unconditional love for you.



The Autumn Of Life.

As we grow older, much consideration is given to our physical need, but rather less to our spiritual needs.

This “*Healing Light Reflections*” book is an attempt to redress the balance and to see this time as an opportunity to complete our spiritual quest.

The Four Ages Of Life

In **the first age** of our life we are dependent on others. The continuation of our life is only possible because others cared for us. In childhood and youth our characters are formed and our patterns of behaviour and our relationships with others are developed. We develop not only physically, mentally and emotionally, but also spiritually. We learn the difference between right and wrong, we become secure if we feel those caring for us truly love us, we come to appreciate aesthetic qualities like beauty and the heritage into which we have entered. We begin to consider the meaning of life and the importance of caring and sharing. Many of these can be regarded as spiritual matters. Depending on our formation, we may already be aware of God as Creator and guide of our life.

In **the second age** we become much more independent and become aware that others will come to depend on us. We develop significant relationships outside the family, probably resulting in a lasting partnership. In this second age we have many demands on our time; career development, employment, qualifications, the provision of a home and the responsibility of bringing up a family, and personal and family interests. It is a busy time and often spiritual values are neglected but our decisions will be influenced by the priorities in our life.

The Four Ages Of Life

Does our belief system affect our choice of employment, which schools we send our children to?

Do we see it as our responsibility to reach out to others in the community, to ‘love our neighbour as ourselves?’

In **the third age** the claims which others made upon us are usually less pressing. In most cases, we will have secured our home and we will have retired from our employment. We will have more time to spend on leisure activities and with our friends. It is a time to be positive, to continue to learn and to visit new places. It is also the stage in life when we have more time to give to others; many voluntary organisations depend on the help generously given by those in the third age.

In this age however, we may start to feel less in control of our lives and increasingly unsure about the future. We may retire from our career, illness and bereavement may challenge us. At such times of vulnerability we are perhaps more open to God. We are searching for answers to the all-important question: does our life have meaning beyond this world of space and time? Can we draw together the various strands which make up our life and discover a sense of ‘wholeness?’ Carl Jung talked of this part of our lives as a spiritual quest.

The Four Ages Of Life

In **the fourth age** of our life we often once again become more dependent on others. Very few people like being dependent on others, we resist it and resent it, but most have to learn to accept it to some degree. Christians can find a deeper significance in it if they identify with the suffering Christ as a prelude to resurrection victory. We may have certain physical weaknesses but it is a time when compassion and tolerance can flourish. We are also more aware of our own mortality, and need to muster our inner resources to cope with difficulties. Old age is not without it's own benefits. As St Jerome observes, with the quieting of the passions, it “increases wisdom, and brings more mature counsels”

This is the season when we can contemplate the meaning of our existence, be still before our God, reflect on the mystery of life and prepare for the greatest journey ever – to our eternal Homeland.

This *Healing Light Reflections* book is offered as an opportunity for spiritual reflection that we maybe filled with the Holy Spirit, gain Wisdom of heart, an increase in Hope and Courage to face the future and grow stronger in Faith and Holiness through continued Prayer and Meditation.

We begin by joining Our Lady and St Padre Pio reflecting on the great Sacrifice and Prayer offered by Jesus Himself – The Holy Sacrifice of The Mass.

Reflections on the Mass Our Lady

I wish that the Holy
Mass would be the day's
gift to you.

Attend it, wish it to
begin.

Jesus gives Himself to
you in the Mass.

Therefore look forward
to that moment, for then
you are cleansed.

Renew your faith by
attending Holy Mass

Reflections on the Mass St Padre Pio

Keep your mind focused
on the Mystery unfolding
before your eyes.

In your mind's eye
transport yourself to
Calvary and meditate on
the Victim who offers
Himself to Divine
Justice, paying the price
of your redemption.

The earth could exist
more easily without the
sun than without the
Mass.

The Mass is the greatest
prayer to God.

That is why you must be
perfect and humble at
Mass and should prepare
yourself beforehand.

Follow the Mass well.

If we only knew how
God regards this

Sacrifice, we would risk
our lives to be present at
a single Mass.

Healing Light Reflections

The Holy Mass

Padre Pio Offering Mass



Body Of Christ Broken For You

Reflections on The Rosary Our Lady

After the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, there is nothing in the Church that I love as much as the Rosary.

I beseech all families to pray the Rosary. Let the Rosary in your hand make you think of Jesus.

Put on the armour of battle. With the Rosary in your hand defeat the evil one.

I promise my special protection and the greatest graces to all those who shall recite the Rosary. The soul which recommends itself me by recitation of the Rosary shall not perish.

Reflections on The Rosary St Padre Pio

...love the Blessed Mother and always make Her loved – always say the Rosary.

Hold on tightly to the Rosary.

Be very grateful to the Madonna because it was she who gave us Jesus.

Love Our Lady and make Her loved always. Recite the Rosary and recite it as often as possible.

Pray, pray to the Lord with me, because the whole world needs prayer. And every day, when your heart especially feels the loneliness of life, pray.

The Fatima Prayer

Our Lady of Fatima



In May 2003 I (Alison) was climbing Podboro hill in Medjugorje with a group and we were praying the rosary. At the annunciation plaque I sat down on a rock and said to Our Lady that I had never liked the middle part of the Fatima prayer and could she explain it to me so I would understand it.

Immediately I was given to understand

Save us from the fires of hell

“is not about when you die but to protect you from the flames of hell licking around your ankles every day”
The ‘flames of hell’ licking around our ankles are the daily temptations and distractions which assail us every day.

Pope John Paul has said
Medjugorje is the fulfilment of Fatima.

Annunciation – The Invitation

*“The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary
and she conceived by the Holy Spirit”*



Imagine the young girl Mary praying for the coming of the Messiah and finding her room filled with a bright light as the angel Gabriel stood before her. She was told she was the favoured one – out of all time Mary was chosen to be the mother of the Christ – and she said

“YES”

Her “Yes” enabled The Word to become Flesh and live amongst us.

Annunciation – The Invitation

Mary's "Yes" was also a statement of willing submission to God's promise and will for her, she willingly accepted God's promise and will for her life including all the inconveniences and risks attached to it.

These inconveniences included the possibility that Joseph would divorce her, that her reputation would be destroyed, that even if Joseph believed her, their wedding plans, and dreams etc., would have to be put on hold.

Given all this potential personal loss, Mary willingly submits in faith to God's Word and Plan.

May we also be graced to say in our lives, as Mary did in hers "Let it be done according to your Word..."

Mary's YES changed life for the whole human race for evermore

"And the Word was made flesh and lives among us"

We now ask Mary to be with us and guide us and remind us to praise and thank God every morning for the gift of life and light, to offer our day to Him and listen to the Exhortation of the Dawn.

Listen To The Exhortation Of The Dawn



Look to this Day!

For it is Life, the very Life of Life.

In its brief course lie all the Verities and
Realities of your Existence. The Bliss of

Growth,

The Glory of Action, The

Splendour of Beauty;

For Yesterday is but a Dream,

And To-morrow is only a Vision;

But To-day well lived makes

Every Yesterday a Dream of Happiness,

And every Tomorrow a Vision of Hope.

Look well therefore to this Day!

Such is the Salutation of the dawn

Our Lady



Our Lady

I am your Mother and I want to help you.

Consecrate yourself to me and to my heart.
Love, Fast, Pray.

I am always with you and God watches over us.

I ask you to be a light for all - live my messages - the messages of peace, conversion, prayer, penance and faith.

I give you strength.

I will always give it to you.

Our Lady



St Padre Pio

Some people are so foolish that they think they can go through life without the help of the Blessed Mother.

May She obtain for us the desire to go to Her immediately.

Let us always stay close to such a mother.

Give yourself up into the arms of your Heavenly Mother.

She will take good care of your soul.

Visitation The Journey



“Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country in Judea,...
When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit” (Luke 1:39)

We expect the evil one to try to distract us while praying and meditating during our Hours of Grace

Likewise, it would be easy to avoid giving Heart Time to God, to give in to distractions at home.

We pray the “Fatima Prayer” to help us overcome these temptations and distractions and ask Mary to help us as we journey with Her.

Visitation The Journey

So let us set some time aside and see this as a time of Grace when we ask Mary to sit with us as she once sat with her mother's cousin Elizabeth.

We are honoured that Mary comes to visit us in our own home. Ask her to be with you now and hear God's Word of love.

As we spend time in the presence of Mary the Holy Spirit will fill us too as He filled Elizabeth.

We will notice the fruits of the Holy Spirit growing within us – fruits of

Love, Joy, Peace,

Patience, Kindness, Goodness,

Faithfulness, Gentleness and Self-control.

(Galatians 5:22-23)

As your heart fills with love, sing with Mary;

“My soul glorifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my saviour”

(Luke 1: 46-47)

Mary, Teach us to Pray

Reflections on Prayer

Our Lady

Pray without ceasing.
That way I can give you
the joy the Lord has
given me.

Do not just pray with
your lips, but pray with
the heart.

May your prayer be a
joyful encounter with the
Lord.

Prayer is then best
weapon we possess. It is
the key that opens the
heart to God.

Find solace in prayer. I,
your Mother, will take
care of the rest.

By means of prayer you
will find joy and peace.

Reflections on Prayer St Padre Pio

Pray, pray to the Lord
with me.

And every day, when
your heart especially
feels the loneliness of
life, pray.

Let us glance at the
Divine Master who
prayed in the Garden and
we will discover the true
ladder which unites the
earth to heaven.

We will discover that
humility, contrition and
prayer make the distance
between man and God
disappear, and act in
such a way that God
descends to man, and
man ascends to God, so
that they end up
understanding, loving
and possessing each
other

Prayer

There is a little door in my heart.



I open it and invite God in.
I close the door and we talk.
(9 year old boy)

The Flight into Egypt – Facing our Fears

“An angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. ‘Get up’, he said, ‘take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt’ (Matthew 2:13)



When Mary was first told she was to bear a child, she chose to visit her mother’s cousin, Elizabeth, who was also expecting a child. When we are faced with a fear or anxiety it is natural to want to share the news with another, to ease the burden. Sometimes we have no-one to turn to, or we may not want to burden family with our fears.

When Mary fled into Egypt with Joseph and her son, she could not turn to her mother or Elizabeth, but she was filled with Fortitude, a gift of the Holy Spirit. Only the strength of the Holy Spirit can help us persevere in times of difficulty.

The Flight into Egypt – Facing our Fears

We can confide in Mary, our mother, with our fears and anxieties knowing she will understand. She has promised to pray with us to her Son. We ask Mary to look deep into our hearts and see what it is we fear most, and to take it to her Son Our Lady tells us through a visionary that if something instills us with fear it is not from God;

“love drives out fear”

When we are afraid we turn to Jesus and hear Him say

“Do not be afraid”

and feel our spirit refill in a flood of love and peace.

St Paul tells us not to fret or worry about anything ... but to pray about everything.

A simple prayer from the heart is better than a long litany
of empty words.

No matter how alone we may feel, we always have our Guardian Angel in whom we can confide our thoughts and sorrows.

Our invisible companion is always there to listen and console,

Praying for us constantly in the presence of God.

Our Lady Queen of the Angels

The angel Gabriel appeared to Zachariah the father of John the Baptist, and predicted to him the future birth of the Forerunner. .

Gabriel announced to Mary the future birth of the Messiah.

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem, the angel of the Lord appeared to the shepherds in the night, and declared to them that the Saviour of the world was born at Bethlehem.

St. Joseph was warned by an angel to retire into Egypt, with the mother and the infant Jesus, for fear that Jesus should fall into the hands of Herod.

Reflections on Angels St Padre Pio

Send me your Guardian Angel, you will receive my help.

Know that this good Angel prays for you: offers to God all the good works you accomplish your holy and pure desires.

Invoke often your Guardian Angel.

Remember that God is within us when we are in a state of grace and outside of us when we are in a state of sin;

but His angel never abandons us...

He is our most sincere and faithful friend even when we sadden him with our bad behaviour.

Guardian Angel



Angel of God, my
guardian dear,
to whom God's love commits me here,
ever this day,
be at my side
to light and guard,
to rule and guide.
Amen

Nazareth – Taking us by the Hand



“And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him”
(Luke 2:40)

Scripture tells us very little about Jesus’ formative years but we know that He lived with His mother for about 30 years and He learnt carpentry skills from Joseph.

Imagine Mary teaching Jesus how to walk, holding both his hands with her back bent over him.

We can ask Her to do the same for us, to take us by the hand and teach us how to live the life God wants us to live.

And so we step out on this Pilgrimage of the Heart as a little child learning to walk.

Nazareth – Taking us by the Hand

Jesus said we must be as little children to enter the kingdom of Heaven. And so in humility we start each new pilgrimage with the spirit of a child.

I remember a time when we were praying for a priest who humbly said “I feel as if all I have done under my own steam in the past has been worth nothing. I feel like a little child learning to walk!”

On the wall behind us was a statue of Mary and the child Jesus.

We prayed that he would surrender to the arms of Mary teaching him to walk the spiritual path prepared for him.

And yet every step is planned, the time before we learn to walk is also crucial, a time of preparation, of weaning, of building up our immunity, a time when we are being ‘seven times refined’.

Jesus tells us:

“Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect” and “let the little children come to Me, to such as these belong the Kingdom of Heaven.”

And so we listen to Our Lady and Padre Pio as they guide us on the path of Christian Perfection.

**Reflections on
Christian Perfection
Our Lady**

I am calling you to the way of holiness, to your individual conversion:

Prayer with the heart
Rosary
Eucharist
Holy Bible
Fasting
Monthly confession

Decide completely for God, surrender yourselves totally, and then you will be able to live everything I have been telling you.

Love your enemies.
Banish from your heart all hatred, bitterness
Instead pray for your enemies and call a divine blessing on them.

**Reflections on
Christian Perfection
St Padre Pio**

Charity, Joy and Peace perfect the soul with what it possesses.

Patience perfects with endurance.

Kindliness.

Forebearance leads one to persevere

Meekness stifles our anger.

Modesty gives restraint over all the senses

Chastity detaches the soul from forbidden pleasures.

Christian Perfection



Be perfect as your Heavenly Father is Perfect

Cana in Galilee

There was a wedding feast in Cana of Galilee and Mary the Mother of Jesus was there (John 2:1)

Imagine the servants' dismay when they realise they are running out of wine.... Mary knows her son can help and tells Him

“They have no more wine”.

Despite Jesus' protest she tells the servants to

“Do whatever He tells you”

Jesus made all water sacred when He, the Anointed One, was baptised in the river and now He tells the servants to fill the six stone jars with water

The water turned into wine and He thus revealed His
glory

Water becomes Wine. This Wine the fruit of the grape
Becomes the Blood of Jesus.

At His last meal with His disciples Jesus took the wine and blessed it and said

“This is My blood poured out for you”

Jesus, the Fruit of Mary's womb consecrates the grape, the Fruit of the vine, and it becomes the Blood of Jesus poured into the earth at Calvary for the forgiveness of sins.

Cana in Galilee



Hear Jesus say:

“My first miracle happened because of Mary.

The very first one.

It is a symbol that Mary is the key to miracles.

I never refuse My Mother anything and because of Her prayer I bring forward also the time of Grace...

Besides I wanted to make Her power known to the world, together with mine, since She was destined to be joined to Me in the flesh it was fair she should be joined to Me in the power that is shown to the world.

Because we were one flesh, I in Her, She around Me, She was united to me in sorrow and we were both on the Cross, I with My body, She with Her soul.

I say to you what I said to the guests, Thank Mary, it is through Her that you had with you the Master of the miracle and you have My graces, particularly those of forgiveness”

Mary Meets Her Suffering Son



When we meditate on the passion of Jesus it is most powerful if we walk behind Him with His mother, Mary.

How helpless she feels as she watches Him being scourged, crowned with thorns, and falling under the weight of a heavy cross, knowing that He suffers for sinners and saints alike.

And Jesus does not want His mother to see Him in His agony, yet He needs her so much.

When Mary meets her Son, they look at each other and understand that this has to be done.

They give each other strength with a look of love.

Memorare



Remember,
O most gracious Virgin Mary
that never was it known
that anyone who fled to your protection,
implored your help
or sought thy intercession,
was left unaided.

Inspired with this confidence,
I fly unto thee,
O Virgin of virgins, my mother;
to you I come before
you I stand, sinful
and sorrowful,

O Mother of the Word Incarnate,
despise not my petitions,
but in your mercy
hear and answer me.

Amen

**Reflections
the Cross
Our Lady**

Entrust your problems to
me.

No one will understand
you as I do

Health of the sick.

Comforter of he
afflicted.

My Son carried the
Cross.

My Son suffered on the
Cross.

My son died on the
Cross.

He died to save the
world.

When sufferings come,
offer them as a sacrifice.

**Reflections
On the Cross
St Padre Pio**

We must never separate
the Cross from Jesus;
otherwise it would
become a weight which
in our weakness we
could not carry.

Our Lord sends the
crosses; we do not have
to invent them.

Endure tribulations,
illness and pain, for the
love of God and for the
conversion of sinners.

One day when we re able
to see the full mid-day
light, we will know what
value and what treasures
our earthly sufferings
have been that have
made us gain our
everlasting Homeland.

WHY?



“This Is My Body Broken For You”

In the Upper Room

After witnessing the death of Her Son, Mary held Him in Her arms before He was placed in the tomb.

Then we imagine she was supported back to the place she was staying with the other women in Jerusalem.

Probably back to the upper room where Jesus had presided at the Passover meal the previous night.

Even though she is the mother of God the depth of her anguish and pain was still as great as it would have been for any other mother.

How did she get through that first night? The disciples, with the exception of John, had fled.

Did Mary understand Jesus' words that 'on the third day He would rise again?' Her heart was truly pierced as Simeon had promised long ago.

Yet she was the Mother to welcome the disciples as they returned to the upper room, to forgive their cowardice.

She was the Mother to forgive those responsible for Her son's crucifixion, remembering His words

"Father forgive them, they do not know what they do".

Imagine her absolute Joy when He rose again.

Pope John Paul II suggests that Jesus first appeared to Mary, and then to them all.

In the Upper Room

Then, as He ascended to His Father she knew her role on earth was accomplished. Her “YES” over 30 years ago, had enabled God’s will to be done through her. After the Ascension she would remind them of His words “to stay in the upper room until the Father sent the Holy Spirit”, for she knew the power of the Holy Spirit because she had experienced it when Angel Gabriel visited her to tell her she was to bear the Messiah.

Look at the Pieta and place yourself in the arms of Mary, your Mother. Now place all those you need to forgive in Her arms too, and be reconciled.



And with Mary and the disciples we remember words of the prayer Jesus taught

“Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us”

**Reflections
on
Confession
Our Lady**

Do not go to confession through habit, to remain the same after that. No, it is not good.

Confession should give an impulse to your faith.

It should stimulate you and bring you closer to Jesus.

Make your peace with God and among yourselves.

For that, it is necessary to believe, to pray, to fast, and to go to confession

Pray, pray!

Repent, Repent, Repent.
(Our Lady of Lourdes)

**Reflections
on
Confession
St Padre Pio**

In our thoughts and in confession, we must not dwell on sins that were previously confessed.

When disturbed by passions and misfortunes, may the sweet hope of His inexhaustible mercy sustain us.

Let us have no doubts about the solemn pardon pronounced over our errors.

Let us place a tombstone over them, just as the Lord has done.

Remember that our soul is the temple of God.

Return of the Prodigal Son



Homecoming

Mary's home in Ephesus



Mary travelled with John as the disciples obeyed Jesus' instruction to go out to the whole world and proclaim the Good News. We don't know where they journeyed but legend tells us that Mary lived for a while in Ephesus. *"Dear woman, here is your son" ...and to the disciple "here is your mother"* (John 19: 26-27)

These are the words that Jesus spoke to Mary and John as they stood at the foot of the Cross. We are invited to share in this love, and to accept Mary into the home of our heart as our Mother.

Imagine Mary in Her home in Ephesus, welcoming all who come to visit Her, giving counsel and advice, retelling the visit of Angel Gabriel, sharing Her memories of Jesus as a boy growing up, reminding everyone of His teaching –how She felt when She had to watch Him dying on the cross, how she felt when the disciples doubted Her and Her Son, how grateful She felt for the friendship and support shown by the women at the foot of the cross in Her hour of greatest need.

Homecoming

She would tell of the expectant wait in the upper room and the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples and the women gathered there.

Just as she would have encouraged them from her own understanding and experience of the infilling of the Holy Spirit, she encourages you now and prays for you. As we get older we look back over our life, remembering the good, and reflecting on the challenges.

As Mary and her Son forgave all who needed forgiveness, we, through their intercession, forgive ourselves and all who we feel need our forgiveness. We can now join the circle surrounding Jesus and hear Him say as He looks at us:

“Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does God’s will is my brother and sister and mother”

(Mark 3:34)

To do God’s will is simply to accept His love and to live it in your heart and in your home as a true disciple empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Come Holy Spirit



Prayer for the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit

O Lord Jesus Christ, Who, before ascending into heaven, promised to send the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth to enlighten the minds and hearts of Your Apostles and Disciples, grant the same Holy Spirit to me, that He may perfect in my soul the work of Your grace and Your love.

Grant me the Spirit of Wisdom that I may act always according to the spirit of Your Commandments

The Spirit of Understanding to enlighten my mind with the light of Your divine truth.

The Spirit of Counsel that I may ever choose the surest way of pleasing God and gaining Heaven.

The Spirit of Fortitude that I may bear my cross with You, and that I may overcome with courage all the obstacles that oppose my salvation.

The Spirit of Knowledge that I may know God and know myself and grow perfect in the science of the Saints.

The Spirit of Piety that I may know and revere God as my Father.

The Spirit of Fear that I may be filled with a loving reverence and awe towards God, and may dread in any way to displease Him.

The Gift of Wisdom

Opening Prayer

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and enkindle in them the fire of Your Wisdom and Love.

The Gift of Wisdom corresponds to the Virtue of Charity and enables us to act in accordance with the Spirit of the Commandments.

With you is Wisdom who knows Your works
Who understands what is pleasing in Your sight
And what is right according to Your Commandments
(Wisdom 9: 1-6. 9-11)

God, give us the grace to accept with serenity the things that cannot be changed, courage to change the things which should be changed and the wisdom to distinguish the one from the other.

Reflection.

Love is the keystone of Wisdom.....Wisdom means always acting according to the spirit of the Commandments.

Jesus summed up the Commandments as Love and Reverence to God and Love and Respect to Neighbour for God's sake

The Gift of Wisdom

Wisdom means understanding the consequence of our action and words before we speak.

Wisdom means having the knowledge and understanding to recognise the right course of action and having the will and courage to follow it.

Following the ways of Wisdom helps bring us in harmony with God because these ways are in accordance with his will, and they bring us in harmony with other persons because respect for others is the very basis of the Commandments.

Acting with Wisdom brings us in harmony with ourselves, giving us a sense of self – worth and inner peace.

This inner peace is achieved because we are acting in accordance with our conscience and in the knowledge we are doing God's will.

How blessed is the man who finds Wisdom and the man who gains Understanding.

For its profit is better than the profit of silver, and its gain from fine gold

She is more precious than jewels; and nothing you desire compares with her.

The Gift of Wisdom

Long life is in her right hand; in her left hand are riches and honour.

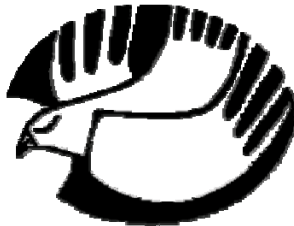
Her ways are pleasant ways, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her, and happy are all who hold her fast. (Proverbs 3: 13 –18)

Our growth in Wisdom is according to the growth of our love for God, reflected in growth of love for our neighbour. This is shown again in a different way by St James when he writes “If there are any wise or learned people among you, let them show it by their good lives, with Humility and Wisdom in their actions”

So great was this gift in our Blessed Lady that she has been titled “Seat of Wisdom” and in Jesus we see Wisdom lived to the full in His Life.

Reflect now on this gift and with the Psalmist pray:

“Lord, in the silence of my heart teach me Wisdom”



The Gift of Understanding

Opening Prayer

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and enkindle in them the fire of Your Understanding.

The Gift of Understanding - Spiritual Intelligence - corresponds to the Virtue of Faith and can be compared to a spiritual "x-ray" whereby the Holy Spirit helps us penetrate more deeply into the hidden meaning of things. St. Thomas Aquinas referred to the Gift of Understanding as a supernatural light whereby we are enabled to penetrate into the heart of things.

Understanding – Spiritual Intelligence - helps us to grasp the truths of religion and helps us to live with a renewed sense of purpose.

By Faith we know these truths but by Understanding we learn to appreciate and relish them.

Understanding comes with Forgiveness ... one of the greatest gifts the Lord has given to us

The Gift of Understanding

Reflection.

In the Gospels the Jesus refers to this gift many times. In the parable of the sower, when He explained it later to His disciples he said “When anyone hears the word of the Kingdom without Understanding, the evil one comes and carries off what was sown in his heart, this is the man who received the seed at the edge of the path”. He went on to say “And the one who received the seed in rich soil is the man who hears the word and Understands it, he is one who yields a harvest and produces now a hundred fold, now sixty, now thirty.” (Matt13: 19 and 23)

We need the gift of understanding to make us aware of the evils that surround us, we must pray constantly to be filled with this great gift and we must pray for others to be filled with this great gift also.

St Paul in one of his letters writes “we never failed to pray for you, and what we ask God is that through perfect Wisdom and Understanding you should reach the fullest knowledge of his will. So you will be able to lead the kind of life which the Lord expects of you, a life acceptable to him in all its aspects, showing the results in all the good actions you do and increasing your knowledge of God” (Col 1: 9 - 10)

The Gift of Understanding

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart; and lean not on your own Understanding.

In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight” (Proverbs 3:5-6)

“I shall light a candle of Understanding in your heart, which shall not be put out”(Ezra 2:14 25)

And St Thomas Aquinas states

“In this very life, when the eye of the spirit is purified by the gift of Understanding, one can in a certain way see God”

Reflect now with the psalmist (Psalm 14:2)

“From the Heavens the Lord looks down on the people of the earth

To see if any are wise if any seek God”



The Gift of Counsel (Right Judgement)

Opening Prayer.

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and enkindle in them the fire of Your Counsel and Right Judgement.

The gift of Counsel, known also as the gift of Right Judgement corresponds to the Virtue of Prudence and enables us to see and choose correctly what will help most to glorify God, our own salvation and the good of the Church.

Reflection.

It is through the gift of Counsel that the Holy Spirit gives us special light and guidance.

It is like a new breath in the conscience, suggesting to it what is right, what is becoming, what is more fitting for the soul.

In some ways this gift could be defined as common sense in the spiritual life.

In everyday life we have often met people with great knowledge but little common sense, and we see how this hinders them in daily living.

Without the gift of Counsel, even if we have other great gifts, we experience the same handicap in our spiritual life.

The Gift of Counsel (Right Judgement)

This gift guides us not only to choose the right from the wrong, but the best from the better.

This applies not only to the actual decision itself, but whether it should be carried out immediately or delayed to a more opportune time.

Failure to take account of this has ruined the best of decisions, there can be so many factors involved and the Holy Spirit should be called upon for help as he has full knowledge of all the factors.

However this precious gift is not usually given in blinding flashes of perception and light.

We have to do our part, and use our reason to the best of our ability. Indeed we must seek guidance and the relevant advice when necessary.

But through it all, if we have prayed for this great gift of Counsel, we shall be guided even in our very seeking of help. As Pope John Paul wrote:

“When we pray for help from on high, the Spirit of God responds to this plea through the gift of Counsel, by which he enriches and perfects the virtue of prudence and guides the soul from within, enlightening it about what to do, especially when it is a matter of important choices (for example, of responding to a vocation), or about a path to be followed among difficulties and obstacles.”

The Gift of Counsel (Right Judgement)

The writer had personal experience of this when aged 17 he was testing his vocation for the religious life - the African Missions no less!

A better cause would be difficult to find but discernment through the gift of Counsel showed it was not part of God's plan even though there was a crying need for vocations. Reason and logic said one thing Counsel through the Holy Spirit said another.

Reflect now on a situation in your life which is causing you anxiety

“Go back to the crossroads which put you in good stead and take the same path” and ask for the gift of Counsel and God's guidance to:

“Make me walk in your truth and teach me For you are my God my saviour” (Psalm 25:5)

You will guide me by your Counsel and so you will lead me to Glory (Psalm 73: 24)



The Gift of Fortitude (Courage)

Opening Prayer

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and enkindle in them the fire of Your Spirit of Fortitude.

The Gift of Fortitude (sometimes called strength, courage, or might) corresponds to the Virtue of Fortitude and is also one of the four cardinal moral virtues which ensures firmness in difficulties and constancy in doing what is right.

“Fortitude is the guard and support of the other virtues”
(Locke)

Reflection.

This is an awesome gift. With this gift of Fortitude, it is as if Our Lord says to us with new impact;
“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I go to the Father.

Whatever you ask in my name, I will do it, that the father may be glorified in the Son;
if you ask anything in my name, I will do it”
(John14: 12-14)

The Gift of Fortitude (Courage)

God is calling each one of us to the heights of holiness. The call, and all the instructions for fulfilling it, He gives us in the Gospels.

Everything that we need to achieve this has been provided, even to the smallest detail, moment by moment, throughout our lives. The more trying our circumstances, the more potential there is for holiness. It is all there for us to avail of, if, in love, we freely choose to do so.

However, without the Holy Spirit's precious gift of Fortitude, we shall never persevere in our efforts.

We are surrounded by temptations, the gift of Fortitude helps us to overcome them, not with our own strength, but fortified with that of the Holy Spirit, dwelling within us, awaiting our call to Him for help. Fortitude helps us to respond to the Lord when He says

“If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

For whoever would save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake, will save it.” (Luke 9: 23 –24).

It is one thing to take up our cross and deny ourselves in moments of fervour for the love of the Lord, but to continue daily as Our Lord asks, on days when we do not feel like it at all, only the gift of Fortitude makes this possible.

“My Grace is sufficient for you: My strength is made perfect in weakness”

The Gift of Fortitude (Courage)

St Paul in his letter to the Romans, when telling of all the hardships trials and tribulations he has undergone says: “these are the trials through which we triumph by the Power of Him who loved us”

Reflect now and pray for this gift of Fortitude to cope with any trials and tribulations you yourself are experiencing and with St Paul and the Psalmist sing out “As for me, O Lord, I trust in your merciful love Let my heart rejoice in your saving help” (Psalm13:6)



The Gift of Knowledge

Opening prayer

Come Holy Spirit, fill the heart of your servant and enkindle in them the fire of Your Spirit of Knowledge.

The Gift of Knowledge corresponds to the Virtue of Faith and is the ability to speak in a way that gives true Knowledge to people especially knowledge of Scripture and knowledge of God and is the guiding light and travelling companion on our journey through life.

Reflection.

It is by the power of the gift of Knowledge speaking to us through our conscience that we instinctively judge what is good and what is evil in all that concerns our salvation.

Knowledge helps us to be able to counsel one another in the Christian life, as Paul writes to the Romans

“I myself am satisfied about you, my brethren that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all Knowledge, able to admonish one another” (Rom 15: 14)

The Gift of Knowledge

Peter encourages Christians to “grow in the Grace and Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ”
(2 Peter 3 :18)

Paul prays that the Colossians “may be filled with the Knowledge of God’s will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding” so they may “walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the Knowledge of God (Cor 1: 9-10)

Many wonder what difference there is between Knowledge and Wisdom.

The direct object of the pursuit of Wisdom is God Himself.

Knowledge on the other hand, is a guide and travelling companion on our journey through life.

The gift of Knowledge constantly comes to our aid, speaking to us through our conscience:

“You know that is wrong!”

“You know that is not true”

“You know what you should do in this situation”

The Gift of Knowledge

Sometimes we do not want to know.

Sometimes we become so distraught, and make so much noise within, we cannot hear the gentle guiding voice calmly telling us what should be done.

The more we listen and take heed, the more our knowledge is deepened, and the less we are overcome by temptation.

Reflect now and pray for the gift of Knowledge and with the Psalmist:

“Know that the Lord is God, Our Maker to whom we belong.

We are His people, sheep of His flock”



The Gift of Piety

Opening Prayer

Come Holy Spirit, fill the heart of your servant and enkindle in them the fire of your Spirit of Piety and Reverence.

The Gift of Piety corresponds to the Virtue of Justice enabling us to fulfil our obligations to God and neighbour and enables us to live a life of devoutness and reverence for God our Father.

It is by this gift that we show love and reverence for God as a loving Father, living with Him truly as a child of His and we respect others because they, too, are God's children, created as we all are - in His image.

Reflection.

Piety is the most misunderstood of all the gifts of the Holy Spirit, we all have a picture of the “pious type” and usually it is a very unfavourable one as so many of us are upset at the idea of being branded “the pious type”.

This is very sad because many so called “pious types” have scarcely any knowledge or experience of this gift either, and it has no place in their “piety”

The Gift of Piety perfects the virtue of Justice enabling us to fulfil our obligations to God and neighbour.

The Gift of Piety

St Paul tells us:

“Before the world was made, he chose us, chose us in Christ, to be holy and spotless, and to live through love in his presence, determining that we should become his adopted sons through Jesus Christ for his own kind purposes, to make us praise the glory of his grace, his free gift to us in the Beloved, in whom, through his blood, we gain our freedom, the forgiveness of our sins” (Ephesians 1:4 –7)

Again in his letter to the Galatians he writes:

“God sent his Son, born of a woman, born a subject of the Law, to redeem the subjects of the Law and to enable us to be adopted as sons.

The proof that you are sons is that God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts: the Spirit that cries:

“Abba, Father and it is this that makes you a son, you are not a slave any more; and if God has made you son, then he has made you heir.” (Galatians 4: 4-7)

It is by our living as His heirs, His sons and daughters that we experience the gift of Piety the Holy Spirit living within us. “God sent his Son, born of a woman”

The Gift of Piety

This is the only occasion in which St Paul refers to Our Blessed Lady that Christ came to us through her, to redeem us and to enable us to be adopted.

It was on Calvary, in the great act of loving redemption on the cross that the “Son born of a woman” gave that woman to be Mother of all for whom He was making adoption possible.

Through the Holy Spirit, Mary has conceived Him and given Him for us, to enable us to be adopted, to be made sons of God.

Mary, through the Holy Spirit, helps us to realise our divine adoption, through this precious gift of the Holy Spirit – the gift of Piety

Reflect now on this gift, and pray that through this gift you will really come to know God as your Father,

“Our Father who, art in Heaven



The Gift of Fear and Awe of the Lord

Opening Prayer

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and enkindle in them the fire of Your spirit of Wonder and Awe.

The Gift of The Fear and Awe of the Lord corresponds to the Virtue of Hope it is not a servile fear, it is fear only made possible by Love.

It is a fear of the loss of the Beloved a Reverential fear which moves us to do God's will and avoid sin because of love for God.

Reflection.

In listing the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, that of the Fear of the Lord is usually placed last.

This serves a very useful purpose, for we cannot receive this gift fully unless we have the other six.

The fear considered here is not a servile fear. It is a fear that only love can make possible.

Fear of the Lord consists wholly of Love, a Fear that can be learned – as scripture says - “come my children, listen to me, I shall teach you the Fear of the Lord” and we learn by Obedience to the Commandments, Holiness of life and Knowledge of the truth.

The Gift of Fear and Awe of the Lord

Fear is the fear of loosing of the Beloved through any thought, word or action of our own.

Our reception of God's gifts draws us closer to Him; and the closer we draw to Him in love, the greater our fear of losing Him or offending Him, of separation from Him in any form.

Thus, the greater our love, the greater our Reverence and Fear of offending so loving a God and Father, aware as we are of our weakness and frailty.

The Psalmist though, comforts us with:

“As tenderly as a father treats his children,so the Lord treats those who Fear him; he knows what we are made of he remembers we are dust. (Ps 103: 13-14)

Again in the Book of Proverbs we are told:

“By kindness and loyalty, atonement is made for sin; with the Fear of the Lord goes avoidance of evil.

(Prov 16:6)

And Psalm (112: 1)

Happy are those who Fear the Lord,
Who take delight in all God's commands.

It can be seen how deeply this gift will affect our daily living for and in God.

The Gift of Fear and Awe of the Lord

As the Psalmist says:

How great is the goodness, Lord
That you keep for those who Fear you
That you show to those who trust you
In the sight of all. (Ps 31: 20)

The more we reflect on all that this gift of the Holy Spirit entails, the more beautifully we shall see how it is portrayed in Mary.

Mary proclaimed the greatness of the Lord in her life as well as in her Magnificat; but in praising she tells us:
“Holy is his name, and his mercy reaches from age to age for those who Fear Him”

Reflect now on this gift as with Mary we lift up our hearts in Wonder and Awe and sing – Holy Holy Holy Lord ... and reflect on the wonderful promises He has made to us.



The Promises of God



The Promises of God

Isaiah 41:10

So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.

Jeremiah 30:17

But I will restore you to health and heal your wounds,' declares the Lord because you are called an outcast, Zion for whom no one cares.

Joel 3:10

Beat your ploughshares into swords and your pruning hooks into spears. Let the weakling say, 'I am strong!'

Mark 16:15-18

He said to them:

"Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation.

Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.

And these signs will accompany those who believe:

In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues;

They will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all;

They will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well."

The Promises of God

Psalm 23

Lord you are my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.
Fresh and green are the pastures where you give me
repose.

Near restful waters you lead me, you revive my drooping
spirit.

You guide me along the right path; you are true to your
name.

If I should walk in the valley of darkness
no evil should I fear.

You are there with your crook and your staff;
with these you give me comfort.

You have prepared a banquet for me
in the sight of my foes.

My head you have anointed with oil;
my cup is overflowing.

Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me
all the days of my life.

In the Lord's own house shall I live for ever and ever.

The Promises of God

Forgiveness and Love – A cornerstone for healing.

James 5:16

Therefore confess your sins to each other and **pray for each other** so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.

Hebrews 13:1-2

Keep on loving each other as brothers. Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it.

John 15:12-14

My command is this: **Love each other** as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command.

1 Corinthians 13:4-7

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, *it keeps no record of wrongs.* Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

The Promises of God

The Importance Of Prayer

Luke 18:1-7

Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up.

He said: *In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared about men.*

And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea,

‘Grant me justice against my adversary.

For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, ‘Even though I don't fear God or care about men, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won't eventually wear me out with her coming!’”

And the Lord said, *"Listen to what the unjust judge says.*

And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night?

Will he keep putting them off?

Healing Prayers

And

Reflections.

Healing Prayers and Reflections

Snowdrops

On a dry February morning, a few degrees above freezing and too overcast to feel the sun, I went out to clear the leaves and there I found a clump of SNOWDROPS....

Why does a clump of snowdrops fill me with such ...what? Hope, Peace, Anticipation, Perseverance.

The fragile bell-shaped flowers, white as snow. How can they grow and flower in Winter? What beckons them from the earth? Is it to give us a sign that life continues when all seems dead, that resurrection always follows crucifixion. They have their purpose and keep us going when our bodies have had enough of winter. We know that spring is just around the corner.

If you're in a situation when you've had enough and feel you just can't carry on then think of snowdrops and receive Hope. If you have reached the end of your tether, then spend a moment alone, tell God how you feel then Be Still, just Be and let God love you.

He will give you whatever it takes, in whatever form, to keep going. A shoot of hope will appear, a leaf of perseverance, a bud of energy will renew you and you will know your spring is just around the corner.



Healing Prayers and Reflections

A Prayer for Courage

Father, I pray for courage as I begin this day.

Grant me the courage to be silent that I may hear Your voice; to persevere, that I may share Your victory; and to remember, lest I forget, the way by which You have led me.

And when this day is done, O Lord, may I have the courage to see Your guiding hand in the friendships that have been made, in the hurts that have been healed, and in the strength that has been given.

Amen.

I am still confident of this; I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.

Wait for the Lord: be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord (Psalm 27 : 13, 14)

If I should walk in the valley of darkness

No evil should I fear.

You are there with your crook and your staff

With these you give me comfort

Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me
all the days of my life.

In the lords own house shall I dwell

For ever and ever. (Psalm 23: 5.6.)

Healing Prayers and Reflections

A Prayer in Loneliness

Lord, I turn to You as my source of strength when I feel so alone. I think of Christ and know that the loneliness He felt in Gethsemane and on the cross must have been far greater than I feel now. Still, I find my feelings difficult to bear. Help me to overcome my isolation and to reach out to others once again. In Christ's name, Amen.

God comforts us in all our sorrows (2 Cor 1: 4)

Hear my prayer, O Lord,
let my cry for help come to you.
Do not hide your face from me
when I am in distress
Turn your ear to me;
when I call, answer me quickly
(Psalm 102: 1, 2.)

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.

(2 Corinthians 1:3-4)

Healing Prayers and Reflections

A Prayer to Sleep

O God, as I lie here seeking a night of restful sleep, give me the peace of mind and the ability to relax.

Fulfil my needs for mental and physical restoration so I may wake up ready for another beautiful day which I hope You will allow me to live to enjoy with praise and thanks to You and our Lord Jesus.

Amen.

I will lie down in peace and sleep in peace, for you alone,
O Lord, make me dwell in safety.

(Psalm 4: 8)

Come to me all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.

(Matt 11: 28)

And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered for a little while, will Himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.

To Him be the power for ever and ever. Amen

Healing Prayers and Reflections

Prayer on Finding God (St Augustine)

Late have I loved you
Beauty so old and so new;
Late have I loved you.
And see,
You were within me
and I was in the external world
and sought you there,
And in my unlovely state
I plunged into those lovely
Created things that you made.
You were with me,
And I was not with you.

The lovely things kept me from you
Though if they did not have
Their existence in you,
They would have no existence at all.
You called and cried out loud to me
And shattered my deafness.
I tasted you,
And now I feel nothing but hunger
and thirst for you.
You touched me,
And I am set on fire
To attain the peace which is yours Amen

Padre Pio Prayers For Healing.

Recited by him every day for all who asked for Prayer and Healing

1. O my Jesus, you have said: "Truly I say to you ask and it will be given you, seek and you will find, knock and it will be opened to you." Behold I knock, I seek and ask for the grace of _____

Our Father ... Hail Mary ... Glory be to the Father ...
Sacred Heart of Jesus, I place all my trust in you.

2. O my Jesus, you have said: "Truly I say to you, if you ask my Father anything in my name, He will give it to you." Behold, in your name, I ask the Father for the grace of _____

Our Father ... Hail Mary ... Glory be ...
Sacred Heart of Jesus, I place all my trust in you.

3. O my Jesus, you have said: "Truly I say to you, heaven and earth will pass away but my words will not pass away." Encouraged by your infallible words I now ask for the grace of _____

Our Father ... Hail Mary ... Glory be ...
Sacred Heart of Jesus, I place all my trust in you.

4. O Sacred Heart of Jesus, for whom it is impossible not to have compassion on the afflicted, have pity on us and grant us the grace which we ask of you, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, your tender Mother and ours.

Come Holy Spirit

Holy Spirit sweep through my mind removing all Anxiety, Fear, Despair, and Hopelessness and fill me with all the Hope, Strength, Trust, Courage and Perseverance I need at this time and in the times to come.

Holy Spirit sweep through my body, Heal me, Free me from All Pain and Fill me with renewed Health and Strength and Energy.

Holy Spirit sweep through my Soul, Refresh it and Purify it and Fill it with God's Love and Peace.



Closing Prayer

Lord support us all the day long
'til shadows lengthen and evening falls
and the busy day is hushed
and the fever of life is over
and our work is done. Then
in Your mercy
may You give us a safe lodging,
holy rest and peace at last. Amen
Blessed John Henry (Cardinal) Newman

Forgiveness

If we accept that death is part of life
And that we die a little every day
Then we will not postpone The
showing of affection
The kindly deed
The loving word But
we will do it now
Because the time now
If we forgive as we
Would be forgiven
And do it now
Before it is too late
We will have no regrets
When loved ones, friends or others die
And go their silent way
We will not fret
Or have that nagging doubt about
What might have been If only!
What might have been
What could have been
What should have been
Too late!
The time is now to do what we would do
If we but knew
Today was the last day the listening ear could hear
The words we meant to say

THE TIME IS NOW!

Patrick Lynch & Alison Riggott

