

Prayer for the Holy Year

Almighty Father, so gracious and generous,
you tell us to be holy as you are holy.
Please help us to be holy like your beloved son, Jesus.
Abba Father, be merciful to us,
pour down your graces
and blessings on us all this Holy Year.

Lord Jesus, true God and true man,
you are one with the Father.
Teach us to live loving and holy lives,
to be compassionate and to show mercy towards
all people especially the poor and the marginalised.

Come Holy Spirit come,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
Draw us closer to Jesus and his Father.
May we experience the love of God
who consoles, pardons and instils hope.

Loving Father, we thank you,
Lord Jesus, we love you,
Holy Spirit, we need you.
Lord God, have mercy on us.
Amen.

Diana Sutherland/CAFOD supporter

Hail Mary, Mother of Mercy

Hail Mary, Mother of Mercy,
our life, our sweetness and our hope.

To you, we cry, as children of God,
joined as one with our wounded world,
with hearts full of hope for a home transformed.

Mother of Creation,
look upon us we pray,
so we may come to see God's earthly garden
through the radiant light of wisdom.

Holy Mary, Mother of all,
make us worthy we pray,
to treasure the earth our common home,
and show us the blessed fruit of your womb, Jesus.

Amen.

This prayer is inspired by the Salve Regina.

Meditation for the Holy Year of Mercy

Kyrie eleison.

Have mercy on me, Creator God, you who are like a Mother and Father to me. My Muslim friends know you as God the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate; we Christians know you as the God of Unconditional Love. Of course you will have mercy on me.

But wait. I hear you asking me to do the same. I too must have mercy. That's a bit challenging, but I can give it a go. I can try harder to forgive the people around me. Yes, that's worth a try.

But wait again. Surely you're not asking me to have mercy on *everyone*? The mass murderers and génocidaires? Those who torture, rape and maim? The corrupt leaders who oppress your people? The businessmen and women who make their fortunes at others' expense, producing and selling arms, or denying climate change? Must I have mercy on them as well, despite the campaigns for accountability and an end to the culture of impunity? Surely not them too?

Silence. I don't hear your answer.

I don't need to hear your answer, because deep down I already know the answer, difficult though it be. You made it clear a long time ago when you said do unto others as you would have done unto yourself. Yes, I must have mercy on all your people, all my brothers and sisters, created in your image and likeness, even the fallen ones; for we are all fallen.

Creator God, have mercy on me, a sinner. Loving God, give me the strength and courage to have mercy on others.

Kyrie eleison.

John Ashworth/South Sudan

With you, oh Holy Mother of God

With you oh Holy Mother of God,
we pray for Lord's mercy to bless us.

Like a child by her mother,
moaning and crying in this valley of misery,
we come to you oh Blessed Mother,
confident that you will receive us as we are.

Through you, Immaculate Virgin Mary,
our Lord Jesus Christ redeems us.
We trust in your guidance for the human salvation.
You never forsake those who turn to you for help.
With you we will be safe.

We implore you, Holy Mother:
Wipe away our tears,
Bring us to your son, Lord Jesus who is mercy,
Tell him in confidence all our suffering,
Obtain for us the grace to do whatever he will ask of us.
Prepare our heart to receive his mercy.

Mother of God, with your help
we pray that we will be instruments of the Lord's mercy
for our brothers and sisters throughout the world.

God of mercy, help us in our weakness
through the intercession of Blessed Mary ever-virgin.
Amen.

This prayer was written by Sister Monique Baimopala of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, based in the Democratic Republic of Congo.