



Praying the Eight Pillars of Joy

You are invited to continue your interaction with Mission: Joy through prayer.

The following prayer may be used as a closing for your “watch party”, for personal prayers in the following days, or for other appropriate times you gather as a worshipping body.

Please pray them in whole or in part as speaks to you and your prayer-life.



Praying The Eight Pillars of Joy

Opening:

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

God of Joy, help us to pause in this moment, to tuck ourselves into the curve of your slow arm, that we may know the miracle of now, the gift of this moment, the joy of your presence. **Amen.**

Perspective

For every event in life there are many different angles. When you look at the same event from a wider perspective, your sense of worry and anxiety reduces, and you have greater joy.

Let us pray:

God of Perspective, you are with us always, everywhere, in the deepest depths as well as the highest heights, in the darkness as we stumble along blindly. Help us to see your world and ourselves with your vision. **Amen.**

pause to breathe

Humility

Humility is essential to any possibility of joy. As human beings we can't solve everything or control all aspects of life. We need others. Our vulnerabilities, our frailties, and our limitations are a reminder that we need one another: We are not created for independence or self-sufficiency, but for interdependence and mutual support. We are all born and die in the same way, and at these moments we are totally dependent on others.

Let us pray:

God of Humility, may my humility grow in your presence, and whenever I see someone, may I never feel superior. From the depth of my heart, may I be able to really appreciate the other person in front of me, seeing them as you would see them. **Amen.**

pause to breathe

Humor

When we learn to take ourselves less seriously it is a very great help. We can see the ridiculous in us. Humor really is the saving grace. Ultimately, it's about being able to laugh at yourself and being able not to take yourself so seriously. Humor that doesn't demean is an invitation to everyone to join in the laughter.

Let us pray:

God of Humor, be with us in our laughter, the health it brings, the lifting of spirits, and the community we can build though being together in your presence of innocence and freedom from taking ourselves and our lives so seriously. **Amen.**

pause to breathe

Acceptance

Acceptance is the opposite of resignation and defeat. We are meant to live in joy. This does not mean that life will be easy or painless. It means that we can turn our faces to the wind and accept that this is the storm we must pass through. We cannot succeed by denying what exists. The acceptance of reality is the only place from which change can begin.

Let us pray:

God of Acceptance, in your presence may we see the world as you see it, accepting the world as you have made it and as we live in it. May we move through your world living in the Kingdom you intend, knowing your reality as our own. **Amen.**

pause to breathe

Forgiveness

Forgiveness is the only way to heal ourselves and to be free from the past. Without forgiveness, we remain tethered to the person who harmed us. We remain bound to the chains of bitterness, tied together, trapped. Until we can forgive the person who harmed us, that person will hold the keys to our happiness, that person will be our jailor. When we forgive, we take back control of our own fate and our feelings. We become our own liberator. Forgiveness is a sign of strength.

Let us pray:

God of Forgiveness, I don't understand my anger, it is too much. I ask you to take it; turn it into something useful, something life-giving, an act of reconciliation, a transformation. **Amen.**

pause to breathe

Gratitude

Gratitude is the recognition of all that holds us in the web of life and all that has made it possible to have the life that we have and the moment that we are experiencing.

Thanksgiving is a natural response to life and may be the only way to savor it.

Gratefulness is important; it allows us to shift our perspective toward all we have been given and all that we have. It moves us away from the narrow-minded focus on fault and lack, into the wider perspective of benefit and abundance.

Let us pray:

God of Gratitude, may gratitude for that which you have given us be the pillow upon which we kneel to say our prayers to you. **Amen.**

pause to breathe

Compassion

Compassion is a sense of concern that arises when we are confronted with another's suffering and feel motivated to see that suffering relieved. Compassion is what connects the feeling of empathy to acts of kindness, generosity, and other expressions of altruistic tendencies. Concern for others is very precious. The more time you spend thinking about yourself, the more suffering you will experience. However, when we think of alleviating other people's suffering, our own suffering is reduced. This is the true secret to happiness.

Let us pray:

God of Compassion, help us to know that when we do not have enough compassion for the road ahead, that you do, and that is enough. **Amen.**

pause to breathe

Generosity

The joy that comes from having made another person joyful is something that doesn't compute. When you give to others, it should be that you are subtracting from yourself, but in God's incredible way, when you give you are adding space for more to be given. This is the way God does math. It is in giving that we receive.

Let us pray:

God of Generosity, may we live our lives from the abundance of your way; giving and giving and then returning to you to be refilled and renewed, over and over. **Amen.**

pause to breathe

Closing:

God of Joy, through life lived in your joy, may we become an oasis of peace, a pool of serenity that ripples out to all of those around us. **Amen.**

Resources:

Meditations and prayers were adapted or embellished from two sources: The Book of Joy – His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, with Douglas Abrams, A Rhythm of Prayer – edited by Sarah Bessey, or created by Rev. Lara Gilbert.