

Dear Chaplain,

In addition to administering the Command Religious Program, Navy Chaplains are called upon to perform a variety of special functions or "occasional ministries." Perhaps the most frequent and visible of these is to pray at sea, at changes of command, commissioning, etc. Chaplains are also required to plan or participate in special services such as burials at sea, National Prayer Breakfasts, Memorial Day observances, etc. Such "occasional ministries" are vitally important in the world in which we live and move and have our being as chaplains.

With this in mind, I tasked the Chaplain Resource Board to design and produce a booklet which would inspire, instruct and assist chaplains in the conduct of occasional ministries. The bulk of this material is a collection of prayers "actually prayed" by Navy chaplains. The remainder of the booklet contains suggestions for planning and conducting special services.

As you read and reflect on the prayers of Navy chaplains, you will, no doubt, be inspired. You will also be instructed, if you allow the thoughts and prayer patterns of fellow chaplains to cause you to examine and improve your own methods (some prayers have been edited to increase their value as "model" prayers). Finally, you will be assisted in your planning of special observances if you use the samples and resources given as "food for thought."

The section concerning inclusive language is particularly important. Even though we perform rites and ceremonies in accordance with the manner and forms of our particular faith group, we are charged with the responsibility of ministry for personnel of other faith groups. As we step up to the IMC or the podium mike, let us be reminded to whom and for whom we speak. Our ministry, and particularly our spoken words, must be inclusive. Most of all, let me encourage you to be professional in your conduct of occasional ministries. Public prayers and ceremonies demand our best efforts. Spend some time planning and preparing for those moments when we speak publicly for God and for those we serve. With best wishes for successful ministry,

Sincerely,

*Neil M. Stevenson
Rear Admiral, CHC USN
Chief of Chaplains*

Evening prayer is a long-standing tradition in American Navy vessels. Like many of our traditions, its origin, though unclear, may go back to the early days of the British Navy, preceding the Colonial Navy. It is a time to reflect on a day past, a night and a morning to come; a time to look Heavenward, to look to God for courage, for wisdom, for peace, for rest.

Father: We come before you this evening remembering your presence and sustaining power during the rigorous demands of recent days. It is comforting to know that in every situation and in every place, on land or sea, you are always present, and that you love and care for every member of the (Ship) family.

May everyone aboard this vessel come to the understanding that the greatest power in all of this world is not found in force of arms ...but in love. Love has the power to mold wills... to penetrate lives... to overcome obstacles... or to establish and maintain lifelong relationships. May we be instruments of your peace and love, living out our lives during these days aboard (Ship), serving willingly, supportive of those around us. May we affirm that it is in loving that we are loved. May we be able to say as the Psalmist: "Test me, O Lord, and try me, examine my heart and my mind, for your love is

"For the Lord is the great God, the great King above all gods. In his hand are the depths of the earth, and the mountain peaks belong to him. The sea is his, for he made it, and his hands formed the dry land. Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker; for he is our God and we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care." (PS 95:3-7)

Heavenly Father: We come before you with trust and full confidence... in you. We can do this because, though we sail upon deep waters, you, their Creator, also promise to watch over and sustain us. We ask you to look favorably upon our efforts during this time of training and preparation. In our hearts we bow down before you and worship you because you are our God... our Shepherd ... and our Protector. May we, as an expression of our thanks, do every task as unto you.

Lead our nation also, Lord. May our efforts at home and abroad continue to be a reflection of your character and grace. As the Good Shepherd, lead... guide... and protect our loved ones during our absence. We place them and all of our cares and concerns under your protective watch care this night. We worship you ... we thank you. Amen.

"Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money down into the temple treasury. Many rich people threw in large amounts. But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a fraction of a penny. Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, 'I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything—all she had to live on'." (MK 12:41-44)

Heavenly Father: May we learn a very important principle for daily living from this sterling example of commitment and dedication. May we understand that self-fulfillment and self-worth are not measured in dollars and cents, when we drop all that each of us has to offer into your treasury in order to be placed at your disposal. May we learn not to be distracted by others who give much without sacrifice, but understand how you are pleased not with amounts-but the level of commitment from the heart. Give us the spiritual eyes to see and to put this principle into operation in our life-beginning today. Amen.

Dear Heavenly Father: We come before you this evening with praise in our hearts because we know you to be a God who is present and personal. We have beheld the evidences of your presence and care throughout these many days, weeks, and months of preparation for deployment, and we continue to know that you are always with us.

Father, We pray specifically this night for each individual (Ship) crew-member. Each of us has one or more needs unique to our individual life experience. For the blessings of the past and the present, we give you thanks. For those areas of concern, for ourselves and our loved ones, and those matters which would unsettle us, we ask for your wisdom ... your grace ... your power ... and your forgiveness.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve our country. May we do so with zeal, knowing that each one of us contributes in a valuable way to the overall mission.

"May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer." (PS 19:14) Amen.

"Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: 'Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?' Jesus replied 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.

This is the first and greatest commandment.' And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments." (MT 22:34-40)

Father: May these words be our standard for living. May we understand that in order to experience the fullness that life has to offer, we must surrender our heart, soul, and mind wholly unto you. And may we grow in the awareness that deep and meaningful relationships can also be our life experience as we love our neighbor our families, friends, those who live around us, our fellow (Ship) crewmembers-as much as we love ourselves. May we understand how much of our daily struggle and strife can be eliminated if only we put such teachings into practice in our personal lives. Amen.

Eternal God, it's that time of the day again: 2155. Boy! Where did this day go? As I pause these few moments and reflect over the day's activities, I'm not really sure I found you in it anywhere. The day was moving and I was moving and I'm not sure where we might have passed. Was it down in the engine room? On the flight deck? In aft~steering-or could it have been on the bridge this afternoon? Pm no I at all clear whether I loved my fellow shipmate today or got involved in life in the way I know you wanted me to do. Maybe I just kept life moving along. To tell you the truth God, Pm just too tired to think about it rationally right now. Tomorrow is coming on fast, will it be the same? Slow us down Lord but keep us on course and may we come to a better understanding of what it means for you to be LORD of our lives. Amen.

This may sound a little corny Lord, but sometimes I get lonely out here with all this water around me. Yep-it's true. I get confused and wonder how I'm going to make it through another day. Will you help me? Even as I pray, I remember that I was unkind to a shipmate today and I tried desperately to avoid him. I know that wasn't right. I' ve added to the misunderstanding and confusion. Father, take hold' me, and connect me with these other lives. Give me patience and love so that I can listen when I plug into other lives. Help me to listen and listen and listen... and love by being quiet and serving, and being there. Amen.

O God, how I love football! On that playing field are 22 men giving their all. What excitement! May each sailor on this ship be a real team player, giving his all for the team. Spectators are needed for football games, but we don't need any of them here. I've noticed several things about spectators at a game: they usually are in need of the exercise and they always seem to notice everything the players do wrong, but they leave the work to the few who are willing to play. Father, I see the Engineering Department in much the same way. They are the players this week and there are some who are content to sit back and watch a few do the work. Help each of the men on this ship to realize that unless all get into the action, then none will reap the benefits in the end. I pray that you will, in a special way, motivate all of us and not allow a single man on this vessel be content to be a spectator. May we all work together for a successful testing and operational period these three days. Amen.

Eternal God, some of us feel like the runner coming near the end of the marathon. We are tired, but we can see the finish line. We were fresh and eager in the beginning of this training, just as a runner is fresh and eager at the beginning of a race. But in the middle, some of us got the blahs. This training has been tough and at times it seemed unending. Some of our shipmates lost motivation and the work became boring, monotonous and painful. But we caught our second wind. We see the finish line. This training, with your help, Father, is going to make us one of the best ships in the fleet. And since we have pride in who we are, we will take advantage of all the training we have received. Help us to do every task, including setting Yoke and Zebra, accurately and enthusiastically. Tomorrow, help us to cross the finish line in victory. Amen.

Lord of life, we love you, but not enough. We look for you, but don't spend much effort. We listen for you, but make a lot of noise ourselves at the same time. We try to understand, if it doesn't change us more than we like.

Lord of life, draw us closer to yourself. Make it easier for us to be what you want us to be. Also, help us make it easier for the man beside us to change into his better self when he chooses to improve. Help us all catch on to you so we interfere less with your work in our lives. When we find we are wrong, make us willing to change. And when we find we are right, make us fit to live with. Amen.

Lord, we've had a busy week of UNREPS and it feels good to know we have been useful to our customers, passing our goods to them so they could go about accomplishing their missions successfully. It feels much better to be busy and useful than to sit around idle, and we thank you for all the chances we've had lately to do good work. And that brings something else to mind, Lord. We wonder how often we have failed to call on you for UNREPS for our soul. We need replenishment from you-grace, love, strength, forgiveness-if we are to carry out the tasks you have placed in our hands. We need these things from you in greater measure. Replenish our souls while we are underway in life. Amen.

O God, who has made us for yourself, our hearts are restless till they find their rest in thee.

We thank you for your daily blessings as we pause for evening prayer. For this is the time when important things which we neglect become important to us again.

Grant us your continual guidance so that we may always have good judgment in choosing between the things which invite us in this life. Help us hear your invitation to come up higher. Keep us in your care at all times, and especially when we need it most. Amen.

O God of the seafarer, we withdraw for a minute in this retreat of evening prayer.

We are far from our homes, but closer to you than our own hands and feet.

Help us to live as worthy shipmates-helping, trusting, and working with one another.

Abide with us through the night. When the new day dawns, let all shadows of our lives flee away like the darkness. Remain with us tomorrow as our true light. Amen.

O Lord God, our Eternal Father, with our eyes and ears we sense the beauty and mystery of your creative power in the vast, heaving seas. Perhaps we have missed opportunities in the past to let our thoughts dwell upon your creative power in its more subtle forms as a means of knowing you better.

Give us hearts now to interpret not only the incomparable power of your presence in wind and wave, but to tune our sensitivities so that we will perceive the secret depths and quiet voice of your loving presence everywhere. Amen.

O God of mercy, help us to pray from our hearts this evening.

We do not ask so much for the reduction of our labors, as we ask for strength to do the work before us.

We do not ask so much for deliverance from life's misfortunes, as we ask for an enduring faith to see us through difficult passages.

We do not ask so much for relief from our own loneliness and boredom, as we ask for an ability to console the downhearted and to provide friendship to our shipmates.

We do not ask for help from you because we deserve your blessings, but because we know you are a God of love too good to keep the good things we need all to yourself.

Help us believe in our hearts these words of our lips. Amen.

O Lord, our forecaster says we're in for a rough night on the sea, and all indications are that he's correct.

We join together in prayer for those who must work harder to overcome these adverse conditions—those responsible for determining position and computing course, supplying extra muscle at the helm, straining eyes and ears to avoid danger, and those who work to keep order on a tossing ship. Help all of them to do their best. We put their best and this ship into your hands for safekeeping.

Amen.

Eternal God, as this day draws to a close, let its successes be remembered with gratitude, and may none of its disappointments alter or disrupt us too deeply.

Assist us as we search for the best in life so that we may live joyfully.

Give us new hope and promise for the days ahead. Teach us patience and thoroughness in all our tasks. Protect us and our loved ones from all dangers and harm. Help us to rely upon you for all things that are good for us. Amen.*

Lord, tomorrow we UNREP and UNREP again. It will be a new test as a crew working together.

Be with each man at his post and help him to do his best so that those who depend upon him may also do their best. May we think of our labor as a sacrifice to you. Then help us turn our thoughts to you when our work is over, so that we find more clearly the freedom you have promised us. Take us out of the box we have put ourselves into to keep out of your sight, or help us let you out of the box we have built around you so we could do as we pleased. May we quit playing our games with you and let you be yourself in our life so we can be our true selves. Amen.

Lord God, before we ask you to take our whole lives into your keeping, just give us enough faith to live with you the very next moment-and then the next, and the next. Before we ask you to build up our confidence in the whole human race, just give us enough courage to trust the next man we meet-and then the next, and the next. Before we ask you to make a complete success in our entire life's work, just help us put our honor into the next task we undertake and then the next, and the next. Before we ask you to make us popular or esteemed by all men, just help us mirror your way of life the next time someone takes a look at us-and then the next, and the next. Before we ask you to make us complete masters of our fate, just help us handle the next situation we face, -and then the next, and the next. Amen.

Our gracious Lord, life seems to stretch before us like an uncharted sea, and there are many voices calling us to take different routes. Give us both the faith and the wisdom to choose that route which lies between treacherous shoals where we would run aground. Furnish with the discernment to recognize illusions that would distract us from the best course to follow. May we dare to live as we know we ought, even when tempted or chided to do otherwise. Support us with strength of character so that we may find no pleasure in habits which enslave and no satisfaction in sordid ways. Be our guide and help us find our way to the safe harbor in the homeport you have waiting for us. Amen.

Lord, we want to pray for each other tonight-help us find the words. For the man who hassled the big after-hose rig until the stuck pulley finally slid by, and those who hauled in the front fender on a twisted block and tackle-thanks for the strength you gave them and bless their spent muscles Tonight.

For the Barber who works with steady hands or else catches a reaction from us all.

For the man on watch who endures long hours of loneliness to check main bearing temperatures and oil levels-keep him vigilant, Lord, and let him know we know he's there.

For the man who watched a welding arc so much today his eyes are red and he has a headache trying to start-thanks for giving him the skill and devotion to duty which will provide us with a new arm for the hose rig when we need it next.

For the men on port and starboard lookout, in after steering, on the fantail, and the messengers who tie the ship together-they're doing a great job, Lord. Help them to continue.

For the man now holding his eye steadily on the compass and turning the wheel to hold us on course-help him hang in there, keep him alert and accurate.

For the popcorn makers and the projector operators, and all other shipmates who improve our living aboard-we cannot list each one, but thanks for having them around to help us this evening. Amen.

Lord God, we've had a full day and a full week of work. We thank you that it has been good and without serious injury.

Help us look forward with anticipation and enthusiasm to the coming week-expecting to get more out of it. Help us to celebrate that we are alive in your world and that you care about each of us in a complete way, knowing all that we are and do. Cast out from our lives the restraints of fear and uncertainty. Free us to live joyfully without bounds. Amen.

Most Holy Father, may all voices be still except your own. Speak slowly and plainly to us, for we are slow to hear your voice and we are not wise enough to discern spiritual things readily or accurately.

Bring quiet to our anxious hearts and minds. Keep us from following after transient and alluring pleasures which do not yield lasting satisfaction.

We bring ourselves to you as we are. Have mercy on us. Create us anew, and then let us move again among our brothers as men who have been remade by your act of love. Amen.

Lord, it's night again. What happened to this day?

We are not sure we found you or anything else in it. It was moving and we are moving, and it isn't clear whether we really got involved in this thing we call life. We look back and see chances missed today to make life fuller, but they slipped by. Lord. Why? Why this losing chances to be a brother? Why did we hold back? We enjoy it so much we do let go and get really wrapped up in something or someone else. As this day ends, we feel our life slipping by and opportunities gone forever. Lord, help us understand what it means to believe that you are love, that you are Lord of the sea, sky, stars, and of all things, and yet know each of us by name and understand the secrets of our hearts. Help us to imitate your kind of loving concern toward our shipmates. Amen.

As the navigator charts the ship's course, O God, help us to lay out our life's journey. Give us a sense of direction locked on to your desires for us. Help us to maintain an unswerving plot between the shoals of temptation and the towering waves of recklessness, that we might sail forever in the calm waters of your peace. Bless our navigator and quartermasters that we might accomplish our mission and return swiftly and safely to our loved ones. Amen.

Almighty and all-wise God, our just judge, today was Captain's Mast. Some of our shipmates have been awarded penalties for their wrongdoings. Captain's Mast keeps us from forgetting the inevitability of punishment for our transgressions. We are all conscious of our failures toward our superiors, our shipmates and toward you. We especially pray for the master-at-arms who are appointed to keep order and discipline that they may act fairly, yet firmly to make this a better ship. Amen.

Gracious Father, as we quiet ourselves for the evening, we ask you to bless the hand on the wheel, those who stand the night watches, and the snipes who keep the engines running. We thank you for their faithfulness and sense of duty. In their lonely hours may they talk to you. Amen.

God, give us expectant hearts whenever we bow for prayer, for you have promised that if we ask, we shall receive. May we not face the duties of this night or tomorrow with the same old attitudes when you can give us a new spirit. Take away our depression and give us enthusiasm. We commit ourselves and those we love to your continued "watch care." Grant us quiet and refreshing rest, we pray. Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

Our heavenly father, we thank you for all things. We are grateful for your mercy and protection which enable our damage control situations to be drills and not the real thing. Help us to be prepared for the worst, but trusting you for continued protection. In your name we pray. Amen.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, may our evening prayers be holy with Your presence. Calm with Your peace and cleanse us through Your grace. Father, deliver us from all impure and unclean thoughts and thoughtless actions; free us from anxiety and cause our souls to find their peace in You. Lord, we thank you for this day which now is ending and for the opportunities which it brought; be with those whom we love and hold them close. Support and protect all who are truly working for world peace. And bring us safely to another day. Amen.

Almighty God, Lord of peace and Giver of rest, grant us Your divine and holy blessing that we may awaken fresh, renewed, and ready to meet whatever the morning may bring. Father, you alone are the protector and sustainer of all that is; we beseech Your merciful blessing on us and upon our loved ones. Grant, O Most Holy Father, Your divine wisdom to all world leaders who truly are working to establish a viable and lasting world peace. Amen.

Almighty God, we come to You this evening with thankful hearts for the day now ending. We thank You, God, for the heritage of freedom which we enjoy. We thank You, God, for the blessings of family and friends. We thank You, God, for the challenge of service and duty to our country. We thank You, God, for our lives. Father, may your blessings be acknowledged by all people, and may Your will become our will. Lord, we beseech Your continued presence with our loved ones, support them, and strengthen us in our resolve to them. Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

Almighty God, You do contain all that is grand and glorious. How can we fail to see Your handiwork in the beautiful setting of the sun? How can we fail to feel Your presence in the warmth of family and friends? How can we fail to experience the offer of Your love wherever we turn?

Father, we ask Your forgiveness for our blindness, our blindness which prevents us from seeing Your presence and doing Your will. As this day draws to a close, we beseech Your Holy guidance and support that we may go forth in the morn to serve Your Holy Name. Amen.

Father, we thank You for this day which is drawing to a close. We thank You for the challenges which it has presented. We thank You for the fellowship we have shared.

O Lord God, we ask Your patience with us when we fail to reach out to others in a spirit of openness, and when we fail to do Your Holy Will. Almighty God, we beseech Your tender presence with our families and loved ones. Grant them the assurance, Lord, of our continued love and Your Divine and Holy Grace. Amen.

Eternal Father, we know that when we turn to You we will find rest and comfort from the problems of the day. Be with us, we pray, this night that we may awake refreshed and ready to go forth and meet the challenges which the morn will bring.

Lord God, as we ask Your Peace and comfort for ourselves, we beseech You to be present in the lives of our families and friends from whom we are separated. Grant them the assurance of Your blessings and tender mercies. Amen.

Almighty God, You are the creator and ruler of the world. You are the source of all that is and all that will be. Father, as this day draws to a close, we thank You that no one was injured on the (Ship), and that we have made it safely through the restless seas.

Lord, we pray for calmer seas and winds as we enter port. Grant us wise seamanship and constant vigilance so that safety will prevail. May we awake in the morning refreshed and prepared for the coming day. Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

Almighty God, You are the source of our lives and the guiding light in all that we do which is worthwhile. When we fail to follow Your leadership we stumble in darkness for our selfishness.

Lord, help us overcome our weakness and enlighten our whole lives with the radiance of Your love.

Father, we thank you for the love and support of families and friends; may we ever be worthy of their trust and love. Hear our prayer, O God. Amen.

Almighty and Eternal Father, as we end this day we pause to give thanks to You for Your guidance and protection. Father, we ask Your tender mercy upon us for our shortcomings and our failures. Help us, O God, to do what we know we should do; guide us into loving service for all,- and take from our hearts the sin of prejudice which prevents us from viewing and treating all persons as we would have them treat us.

Lord, we ask also Your divine and holy presence with all world leaders; guide them into ways of peace. Let Your divine knowledge impel them to resolve all problems and potential problems in a peaceful manner. Amen.

Eternal Father, ruler and guardian of our lives, we beseech You to turn our sadness into joy and our failures into success.

By the discipline of duty, teach us self control.

By the lessons of frustrated love, guide us to a holier relation with others.

By the insight of loss and sorrow, open to us the doors of understanding.

By the gall of pin pricked pride, drive us to truer, humbler estimates of ourselves.

In the spotlight of reason, drive us to think more nearly as we ought.

Father, take the miseries of our lives and create from them Your divine and holy mercies.

That we may find in each morn a day's dawn for service and a day's time for soul-growth. Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

O God, our heavenly Father, as the evening shadows fall and the darkness gathers around us, grant us a peaceful night and a quiet resting place. Deliver us, O Lord, from the excitement and cares of the toilsome day, the pressures of worldly anxieties, and the restlessness of the sea. Grant to the young, serious thought; to the old, gratitude for Your mercies; to all who love You, a greater and deeper love; to those who love You not, the beginning of a better life which You alone can give. Father, be with our families and loved ones from whom we are separated. Assure them of our love and concern and of Your divine and holy presence. Amen.

Heavenly Father, this evening at sea we are thankful for the skills of all those who operate this vessel, old hands and trainees alike. Help us to respect one another fully as we work together. Tonight and tomorrow as we stand our watches and perform our duties, help us to do so with efficiency and good humor. Through this night... and at all times ... may a sense of your presence sustain us. Amen.

It's been quite a day, Lord! 900 men have fought, played, and worked together. We have gone from the Northern Hemisphere to the Southern Hemisphere, from Summer to Winter, and now the day is coming to its conclusion. We are thankful for the successful completion of the activities of this day and for the memories and sea stories that have been added to our lives. We are thankful that the dignity which is ours through having been created in your image, still shows through. Continue to be with us now through this night and bring us to the dawn of a new day refreshed physically and spiritually, we pray. Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

*O God, we all stand in need of your grace and mercy as we voyage
- together yet alone;*

*Show us a course and speed to love and justice- each in our own
worlds and situations;*

*Fill our hearts with compassion and forgiveness -for ourselves and
for others;*

*Open up our hearts and minds to be better listeners and more
effective communicators; make our meanings and our every good
intention understood in the spirit of peaceful brotherhood. May we act
as a unit - sharing our faith, our dreams, and our caring with one
another and with the larger world community. Grateful for your
presence and our unity in purpose, we close the day and carry on the
watch. Amen.*

*Eternal Father, ever present source of comfort and consolation, we
pray for safety and good health for the servicemen who today
experienced a life-threatening accident. There are no guarantees, Lord,
that bad things won't happen to us. No one is spared events that act
upon us often times with no responsibility or guilt on our part. Teach us
to make the most of the new, the present - to live fully and completely -
always sensitive to human compassion and human companionship.
Inspire in us a spirit of love - to love God for the beauty and order
around us, for he is our source of hope, strength and courage in our
time of need. Prepare us to accept the unexpected and the imperfection
of the human world, including events beyond our control,- and may we
love and forgive others during conditions and events not of our liking or
choosing. Amen.*

Evening Prayers At Sea

Out to sea again, dear Lord. There are reasons for what we do; may all our reasons include the grace and mercy of God, our redeemer and deliverer. Human life and joy give time a dimension of fulfillment and success. All things, Lord, are fulfilled in our own good time. In our search for joy and our quest for completeness, may each voyage, every venture, and this deployment bring us insight, personal growth, wisdom and happiness. We praise your name, dear Lord - for this beautiful and quiet day in the Tyrrhenian basin on our way to the Ionian Sea. Amen.

Gracious God, there are times when what we do in the midst of the clamor and noise of events is unclear to us and to others, yet we strive to do our best to pull the pieces together;

Give us patience and insight to trust God's guiding hand and direction for us all,-

Grant that with every good intention - every expression of peace and goodwill - all wars will end and all people will embrace in peace and shalom. Amen.

The Lord is our shepherd, our hope for years to come. Every now and then we are reminded of the risks involved in what we do, for this vessel is a man-of-war and the skills of her people are supportive of her mission; General Quarters are drills for survival- though we simulate and practice what it takes to survive and fight - grant us faith and rededication to a life of peace for your glory, dear Lord,

Make us mindful that no man is an island, no one stands alone. We all need each other - may we gladly give to each other what it takes for all to prosper in a world community of love, justice and peace. Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

Eternal father - fountain of life and source of every good and perfect gift; may we always affirm your consoling and comforting presence in manners and common human courtesies as well as thoughtful gestures of goodwill, friendship and helpful support in the performance of our tasks.

Lord, there are so many things outside of our control and events which overtake our preferences and our plans; grant us a willing spirit to carry out our mission with pride and professionalism; may this flexibility and dedication serve to guide us throughout the rest of our day; may our faith in God's abiding presence and strength see us through tonight and the rest of the deployment. Amen.

All Powerful and Eternal God, Ruler of all creation who led your chosen people to safety across the Red Sea, but destroyed their enemies in its waters; grant to us, your servants, a similar protection. So that without fears and apprehensions, but filled with confidence in your mercy and trust in your providence, we may continue to give honor and glory to your name, and be filled with your holiness. In your name we pray. Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

Heavenly Father, we pray for your help in this hour. Give us your guidance, that we may follow You, give us your strength, that we may work for You, give us your love, that we may enjoy doing Your will each day. Give us peace... that all men may live in brotherhood.

May we be one in heart, one in mind... one in Spirit with you ... to serve you and our fellow man in a more faithful and fruitful manner. Amen.

Almighty God, you have supported us all the day long, and now the shadows are falling on our busy lives. We seek your forgiving grace for the wrongs we have thought or committed against our shipmates. Fill us now with your Spirit of love, that we may harbor no ill will or thought of revenge. Take from our lives any foolish pride, or any disposition to troublesome conduct. Give us right attitudes as we pass from day to day ... duty to duty.

Strengthen those who man this ship, reward with success, those who seek to preserve the life you have created. Protect us one and all, who dedicate ourselves to you. This we pray and ask in your name. Amen.

As we pause to lift our hearts and minds in prayer, let us be mindful of those who have laid down their lives in the service of their country. Lord, we ask your strength, that we might dedicate ourselves to perfecting your kingdom of peace and justice among nations. Let us give thanks for the many blessings of freedom which we possess, purchased at the cost of many lives and sacrifices. Fill us with the courage to fulfill our tasks as men and in no way break faith with the fallen. We commend these fallen to your mercy and ask that you give them eternal rest ... this we ask and pray in your name. Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

Heavenly Father, as we pause to turn our minds and hearts to you, we find ourselves deeply in your debt for the many graces and blessings of the past week. We wish now to express our thanks for your generosity.

On fulfilling our mission, we are continually made aware of men's selfish tendencies, which give rise to prejudice, injustice, hatred and war.

Dear Lord, allow the light of your wisdom to shine, that men may see the truth ... infuse the warmth of your love to thaw the chill of men's hearts, so they may be capable of loving you and their neighbor. Give insight, strength and courage to all lawful authority, that men may dwell in brotherhood and peace ... this we ask and pray in your name. Amen.

Heavenly Father, speak to us in the quiet of this night for your servants are disposed to listen. Help us to realize that you are the strength of our lives and we will be filled with confidence even though an enemy threatens us.

Teach us how to walk the decks of this ship acting in the cause of justice, showing mercy, and in true humility before our shipmates and you our Creator. Grant rest this night to all who may be troubled in soul or in body; grant strength to all who share the burdens of this ship and its mission. Give us peace this night and your guidance and strength on the morrow ... this we ask and pray in your name. Amen.

We turn our thoughts to you O Lord, the Ruler of the Day and the Night. Grant that the light of your holy Presence may abide in our hearts and drive from us the shadows of the Prince of Darkness. Deliver us from habits which enslave us and from anxieties that cripple us. May we dismiss from our lives those things which are offensive to you. Keep us under your protection this night, safeguard our families and our friends. Preserve us to your honor, your glory, to your service. This we ask and pray in your name. Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

O Lord, the refuge and defense of your people, revive in us the true respect and love of your Holy Name.

From the evil of our times, deliver us, O Lord.-from all perplexity of mind, from unbelief and fear, from whatever would separate us from one another and from you - deliver us O Lord.

Establish our faith, quicken our hope and our courage. Be our protector in every danger and every trial. Strengthen us so that we may faithfully serve you and our fellow man. This we ask and pray in your name. Amen.

Heavenly Father, enlighten us with your Holy Spirit, so that our faith may be more than a passive watching and a submissive patience.

Fortify us so that we may be able to put our beliefs into action. Teach us not only how to endure disappointments but rather how to transform them to our use. Help us to serve you cheerfully without stumbling or reservation. Keep our families and loved ones at home safe from harm and protected by your providence. This we ask and pray in your name. Amen.

Lord, a lot of living goes on during the course of a week for the men and the loved ones of a ship of this size ... some dying ... and a little hurting ... too ... and we have had our share this week.

So, tonight we bring our needs before you... those whose names we mention now ... and some only you can know about.

If we are blind ... we ask for sight.

If we are afraid ... we ask for courage.

If we are discouraged ... we ask for hope.

If we are threatened ... we ask for faith and for strength.

Lesser men might fold ... but not us, Lord... not as long as you are with us, Lord ... be with us all. Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

Lord, we come now to the close of this day ... an end that is really merely another beginning. No matter how short the time ... tomorrow will be new. We can start again with family, friends, or strangers becoming friends. Help us to be wiser than before ... more understanding ... more tolerant ... and if need be, more courageous. Let us be better men than we may have ever been.

Amen.

Lord, you know us inside and out, Through and through, Everything we do, Every thought, Every step, Every plan, Every word. You know our past and our future; Your presence covers our every move; Your knowledge of us sometimes comforts us: Sometimes frightens us. Tonight again, we place all that we are in Your hands. Amen.

Lord, we try hard to follow in your ways. We are disturbed by pitfalls we meet at every turn. Even in the passions of our own nature, we find them. Even as we seek to rid ourselves of these overwhelming forces, They clutch at our souls. They trip us up. They weary us with ongoing conflict. Even the suspicions and criticisms of trusted friends leave us discouraged. Tonight, Lord, have mercy on us and strengthen us.

Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

Lots of fatigue, tonight, Lord, lots of it ... everyone on the ship has been on the move all day long... pouring their vitality into the frame of this big, gray giant ... letting it come alive ... it's fatigue ... but it's a good fatigue. And fresh people have moved in to take over for the night. The ship will pulse now with their energy ... and that's what makes it a ship. It takes on the personality of its crew. Fatigue? Yes, Lord ... fatigue ... but it's a good feeling, and now we can rest. Bless us Lord, Amen.

*Listen to us, Lord...
Listen to what we have to say...
You will not do things for us ... but by faith we can do things for ourselves and not surrender our peace of mind...
Whatever the test...
That is where we are tonight...
Into your hands we commend ourselves...
A men.*

*Each evening, as we pause in prayer ... everything stops - all motion ... all activity halts for a moment as we create a world of our own. Just for a moment, our voices are stilled... silence surrounds us. We remember who and what we are. And, Lord, we remember who and what you are. Just for a moment, we express in stillness our awe, our reverence, our need, our sorrow, our gratitude, and our joy. For a brief moment ... each in his own world... be with us all.
Amen.*

Only too well over the last 24 hours have we been reminded that our way of life is a serious business, involving risk ... risk that is not taken lightly but faced with honor and courage each and every day. For all who, face that risk tonight we pray. Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

Let us pause for a moment and place ourselves in the presence of God. For all of the things which are done on this ship in one day... the sheer complexity of our life together... as we carry out our mission and support one another, we give thanks to you, O God. For the burdens of responsibility which we share, we pray your guidance. For the hopes and aspirations of all our shipmates, we ask your grace. Give us a quiet night, peaceful rest, and a new day in which to serve you. Amen.

Sometimes, Lord, my ambition exceeds my effort... I want to know without learning... I act without thinking... I want to have without trying... Time runs out and I am left with little ...I must begin again ...patience and perseverance ... how badly I need those two things... but why tell you, Lord? You know me better than I know myself... but, it feels better Lord, just telling you anyway. Help me, Lord. Amen.

Lord, what we have done... we feel has been done well... where we may have failed we ask forgiveness ... what may be yet undone... give us the strength to pursue ... and for what lies ahead for us give us the hope to succeed ... the wisdom to perceive ... and if need be, the humility to accept ... Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

Talking to you, Lord... is easy ... listening is what's really hard! My mind gets cluttered up with noise and confusion and activity ... I shut you out ... or turn you off... maybe I'm just afraid of what I am likely to hear ... tonight, Lord... slow me down... make me quiet... I shut out all sounds and distractions and speak to me, Lord. Speak and let me listen. Amen.

Lord, wisdom is an elusive thing... it is more than information: it is akin to knowledge ... it is broader than truth ... more satisfying than experience. It is captured to some extent by insight ... and emerges occasionally through well thought-out opinion. To be a wise man is all of these ... and more ... it is the ability to know myself... My mind open My heart free My feelings genuine. All of my relationships in proper order... with my family, my loved ones, with others, and with you. Give me wisdom, O Lord. Amen.

Lord, we need you every day that we exist... every night that we pass through ... never turn from us... our lives are a constant plea for help ... You have been, Lord, long before the earth was formed ... long after it ceases ... you were and will be Lord. Break into the short span of our existence... help us to see something of your will and purpose for our creation. To discover meaning for our appearance in this world ... imprint upon us your brand of ownership ... you are Lord. And we praise you. Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

*These are heavy days, O Lord... It is so short a time...
But, it seems so long... You seem so silent...
The weather... The movement of the sea...
Holidays ... and loved ones... Seem so far away.
Give us courage tonight as this big gray giant keeps on doing what it
does so well. In the quiet solitude of these few days at sea, Lord, there is
time to reflect. Who we are... What we are... Why we are... Our
purpose... Our goals... Once we understand that life is our common
bond, then the who and the what and the why will take care of
themselves. Amen.*

*The strain of hard work and constant motion and separation from
those I love creates tension. I feel it inside of me ... and around me ... I
want to do something about it ... yell ... or bang my fist against a
bulkhead, or maybe a real head ... when really what I should do is
move more deeply within myself, and in the quiet of my soul find peace
as I find you, O God. Lord, make it so. Amen.*

*Tonight, Lord, we are grateful. The unexpected is never routine ... but
always possible ... and tonight the unexpected has a happy ending
because of people who are alert about people.
For our crew ... for those who fought a fire and those who saved a life ...
we thank you, Lord. Amen.*

Evening Prayers At Sea

*Lord, we stand in awe at the thought of how greatly you respect us...
You offer us life and love but you do not force yourself upon us.
Life is opened wide for us,*

*We are free to love... and free not to love. Free to give... and free to
seek only for ourselves.*

*Breathe your spirit on us tonight that in all the choices we face... we
may never run from life or from love in fear ... but freely be able to risk
for your sake. Amen.*

*Tonight, Lord, our prayers go with the Air Wing who leave us for
awhile ... and to our families and loved ones who wait to receive us.
Though the time has been short ... we are changed... different. Things
will have a new meaning ... if through each of us more love and
goodness ... a little more light and truth ... come into the lives we touch,
then our lives, too, will have more meaning. Amen.*

*Tonight, Lord, we begin again as if there was no before. The work,
the testing, the drills, the skill, the alertness with which each man
performs begin all over. A day or two of rest ... and change... and we
begin anew. Strength, Lord, encouragement, confidence, good humor,
and good will are just a few of the things we need. Hear us, good Lord.
Amen.*

*Help us, Lord, to achieve the vision of peace on earth-good will to
men. May we on this ship and in this air wing with our skills and
equipment be instruments for the betterment of mankind... a bond in
the community of nations ... servants of justice throughout the world.
Keep us prepared to defend against injustice while exhausting every
avenue for peace. Keep us conscious of the great power we wield and
the simple truth that we are only as good as each is humble enough to
admit our weaknesses. Amen.*

Evening Prayers At Sea

Our Father, in your wisdom you chose to create us as unique persons - each different from the other in physical characteristics, with different skills and abilities, likes, and dislikes. But gratefully we acknowledge those things we hold in common -that we all are created in your image and that we all share the potential for being your sons, united in your Spirit. Help us to live, Father, in a way that shows that we are children of yours, and brothers to each other. Bless our families and cherished friends, and keep them safe. We pray in your name. Amen.

It's lonely out here, Lord. Although there are hundreds of other people very close by, sometimes I feel alone. Maybe I'm really missing that one special person back home. Perhaps it's the vast emptiness of the sea which makes me seem so small and isolated. Or it could be that the pressures of the day have seemed to close in on me, cutting me off from other people. Whatever it is, Lord, it's a lonely feeling. Thanks for being here with me, and thanks for listening. Amen.

As we gaze out at the vast expanse of the sea, created by your hand, O God, we acknowledge your greatness. What is man, that thou are mindful of him. Who are we, Father, that you have reached out to us in loving kindness? Who are we, indeed, but your people, your children, the sheep of your pasture. Thank you for being our kind and loving shepherd, whom we know we can trust to be with us through the night. Amen.

We thank you, our Father, for the experiences of this day. You have been with us through the good as well as the not-so-good experiences. Thank you, Lord, for continuing to love us, even when we have not been altogether good or lovable. Be with us and with our families this night. Be with those who will be on watch. As the new day approaches, give us a renewed determination to do all things according to your will. Keep us safe, we pray, in your holy name. Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

"O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come; our shelter from the stormy blast, and our eternal home." We thank you, Lord, for a warm, dry place to sleep, for abundant good food to take away our hunger, for friends whose presence helps to ease the boredom of waiting. We thank you, Lord, for the gift of life itself, and -for the meaning and purpose that our faith in you brings to our lives. Give us now your peace. In your strong and powerful name we pray. Amen.

Come into our hearts, O Lord. In the darkness of this evening, leave us not unprotected. May the light of this evening's moon, the twilight of 10,000 sailor stars, and the silence of the night be again divinely armed. Continue, O Gracious Master, to execute thy universal orders as our heavenly Captain, so that when the morning sun musters us to another plan of the day, may your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

Our Heavenly Father, yesterday the breeze was balmy, the seas calm and warm. Today our ship is rolling, the winds brisk, and we don't care to swim for the moment. Such change reminds us of the changes in our lives - one day we are bright and cheerful - another day down and grumpy. But as the winds and the waves are yours, so are we always yours you love us - redeem us regardless of whether we are cheerful and up - or have the blahs and are down!

Help us to accept each other as you have accepted us.

We want to ask you to bless those many people on our ship who provide an essential service - but who are often forgotten except when things go wrong - those are the mess cooks, the compartment cleaners, the guys in the scullery and the mess men who care for the wardroom and our staterooms - and the men in the laundry.

Bless them as they go about their tasks. Help us to consider them as we expect consideration from them.

Grant a peaceful rest to each of us - and those whom we love -and grant peace in our time. Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

Our Heavenly Father, seems like just a moment ago it was morning and we were ready for G. Q., planning flight OPS, enjoying coffee; and now it's evening. We thank you for your presence - and our safety. Some of our shipmates have problems Lord. Some are worried about their families, some feel very much alone; some wish they could find a place to be alone and some want a place that's quiet. It's hard to find a quiet place in the (Ship). Help us to remember Lord, that the quiet that really counts is the still, small voice with which you bring to us good news about your love; with which you reaffirm our faith and reassure us about salvation. Help us to remember the quietness inside comes from that peace which passes all understanding, that only you can give; and we ask not only for ourselves but for all whom you love; for those whom we hold dear, our families and loved ones, all who need to rest and find calm in their spirit. Affirm in us the faith of your servant of old who wrote: "By day the Lord commands his steadfast love; And at night his song is with me." A prayer to the GOD of my life, how precious is the name of the Lord. Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

Almighty God, you alone are good and holy. Purify our lives that we might reflect the holiness intended when you created us.

From lack of reverence for truth and beauty; from laziness content with half truth; or arrogance that thinks it knows it all,-from artificial life and shallow worship; from trite ideals and cheap pleasures; from mistaking vulgarity for humor; Good Lord - deliver us. In the First Class Mess the days of waiting are almost over; some will become chiefs; some will not.

We pray for all of them -that those selected will accept our praise as acknowledgment of their achievement and readiness for new responsibilities; and those who are not that they will continue to be aware of their value to us and to you and in not losing heart to continue to strive for their chosen goals.

Protect us through the night, and our loved ones, wherever they may be in your vast kingdom. And grant us peace in our time. Amen.

Our Heavenly Father, I watched a friend putting together a puzzle today. Carefully he examined each piece and first put together the outline. As the pieces filled in the center, the beautiful picture began to take form. Help us to discover the outline of our life, that we may discover the beautiful picture you have designed for us as the pieces come together.

Sometimes the pieces didn't fit; carefully my friend replaced them with other pieces; but he didn't throw the others away.

Help us to recognize those pieces of our life that don't fit because we have made wrong choices; grant us grace to carefully select others that do. Let not problems, or troubles, or struggle beat us down; but only point up the need to look to you more honestly for help in our choices; and to trust you that you want only good things for us.

The puzzle wasn't finished when I left; there were pieces yet to be placed.

O Father in Heaven, tonight we commend to your care the unfinished pieces of our life; trusting only in your goodness and your love; and thereby-finding peace in our time. Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

*Almighty and everlasting God, who dwells not only in temples, and before whose altars we offer prayer and praise, who dwells also in the lives and hearts of people wherever they may be in your vast kingdom, we come in confidence tonight, at this time-again-knowing you are present here-and indeed hear our prayer. With us we bring our torn apart selves into the wholeness of your presence; we bring our dark thoughts into the light of your love; we bring all the members of our families before you with our prayers for their safe keeping; we bring all who hurt and are in any kind of pain before you that you would heal them; we bring our anxieties and our fears that you would quiet them; we bring our dreams, and our goals that you might bless them; we bring our tired and weary bodies that you might grant us peaceful and quiet rest; we bring you our very souls that you might keep them in your loving care now and forevermore.
Amen.*

Our Heavenly Father, you remember the old hymn verse that goes: "How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given-when God imparts, to human hearts the wonders of his heaven." It seems that most important gifts come in quiet ways and at quiet moments. That must be it-as you do it so often. Day turns to night-darkness into morning-without a sound-wakefulness to sleep for rest. You forgive our sins-heal our bodies-and our minds-each day you give us grace upon grace.

Your spirit acts upon our lives quietly, yet firmly, often without our knowing. It's so easy in our shipboard environment to let the days slip by-each day the same. Shaped and formed only by how we shape them. Set apart only by the distinctions we make in them. I guess you planned it that way-that we choose the time you give us to give back to you-time passes quietly-the only sounds are those we put into it-we pray we may put praises and thanksgiving sounds in the time as well as the other noises we make.

Bless our shipmates in sickbay, and those who care for them. Guide our ship through the seas, protect and care for those whom we love, accept our praise, and thanks to you for today. And the promise of peace in our time. Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

Our Heavenly Father, I was looking out one of our big bay windows this evening, just before sundown. It's a way to remind myself that the world is larger, and your universe greater than decks and frames, the ladders and standard green tile. That's unimportant, it seems; not that it diminishes us-or makes what we do less important. Rather, it helps us remember we work and achieve not just for ourselves, but for a lot of others out there for a world in need of strength and stability. What we do we do for a larger purpose. That's why it's important to do it very well. We pray we contribute to that. It helps to be patient too, Lord. And it's hard to be patient. But when we consider how patient and understanding you are-with us, it isn't so hard to be patient with one another. It's easy to lose patience when we see the faults of others. Help us to look less at the faults of others, and concentrate more on ours. For loving us, and loving those we care about, and keeping us, and them, we thank you. Now grant to us and your people everywhere peace-perfect peace. Amen.

Heavenly Father, by your grace you have brought us to the close of yet another day. In reflection, it was a day of joy and sorrow; laughter and tears; achievement and failure; friendship and alienation; fulfillment and disappointment; fear and deliverance.

Long ago your servant wrote:

"Whither shall I go from thy spirit; whither shall I go from thy presence? I praise thee, for thou are wonderful,- thou knowest me right well. How precious to me thy thoughts, O God."

O God, as we are left with our thoughts this night; the lights dim and our eyes closed, let our thoughts reach out to you-that our thoughts become yours; Yours on behalf of all those who need our prayers-whom we love and care for. Yours for our shipmates and our captain; Yours to guide our ship and keep it safe-and other ships underway tonight. Yours on behalf of all those in need of comfort, and grace, Yours that there be peace in our time. Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

Our Heavenly Father, it occurred to me today that your loneliness must be similar to ours. You created Adam and Eve to enjoy your creation with you. When they left the garden you sent word to them telling them of your continuing love-and that you cared for them and missed them. That word of love continues yet today.

As you long for-so we long for those whom we love. And miss their closeness. Inspire us to know as your love spanned centuries and fills eternities, so our love crosses oceans and continents. Inspire us also, to follow your examples and write a letter-send a word-to those whom we care for; parents, wives, children, others for whom a word would mean so much. Thank you for them.

Thank you for sharing our loneliness-and easing it by your presence. And Lord, let there be peace in our time. Amen.

O gracious Lord, bless this time of prayer we offer you each night. Teach us the language of prayer that our spirits may be touched by your presence. May the sinner find forgiveness, the weary find rest, the faint-hearted find strength, the sorrowful find joy, the lost find their way in you. On this brief altar of intercession we lay our day's activities and an accounting of ourselves. We pray our stewardship of time and talent is acceptable in your sight.

All those for whom we pray and who need your presence and grace: Our loved ones at home; our captain and those who lead us; those who labor for peace in our time; and our own souls, we commend to you now. Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

Our Heavenly Father, there was good news and bad news today. A baby was born, an anniversary card received, and good news about advancements. The first ever 100 man-overboard score; and the chiefs served steak and lobster. Such are the gifts we receive-miracles of birth, and love; acknowledgment of achievement and hard work; generosity and sharing a meal with shipmates. How blessed we are and grateful. But ours is not a perfect world-and our lives are continually confronted with sadness mixed with joy; disappointment along with success. When our shipmates grieve-we grieve with them. When they hurt-we also feel the pain. And when they pray for comfort, and healing, we pray with them. There is more truth than humor in the saying "We're all in the same boat."

We're glad to be shipmates Lord, and share all of life with each other. Hear our prayers for one another. Bless this ship and her crew tonight, and tomorrow. It's final exam time-we pray we will give a good accounting of ourselves; to do honor to our profession, to our Captain, to our namesake. To that end-grant us peace tonight, rest, to meet your gift of the morrow-the morning. Amen.

Almighty Father, in whom peace abides from age to age: grant us now quiet minds and calm hearts that we lay to rest the cares of this day. Those who must yet continue in the ORSE, guide them to give a good accounting of themselves; those for whom the day has brought sadness give comfort; those for whom anxiety about home, or loved ones, or their future is disquieting give calm; and to each of us your blessing according to our need. Thirteen years ago a naval aviator stepped from a capsule and spoke these words:

"One small step for a man; one giant step for mankind," and the first walk on the moon began. David wrote: "When I look to the Heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou has established; what is man that you are mindful of him; and the son of man that thou carest for him?" We have learned about the moon. Let us not falter in our quest to learn about your love, and therein find peace in our time. Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

O Heavenly Father, again our hearts turn toward you as the day ends and the night is upon us. Some come to you weary from work, others are relieved of the tedium of a long period at a console, too many hours of holding station, the sound of whirring pumps, and the necessity of checking probes. Another is filled with joy as a baby girl came into the world this morning. You gave her good health and protected her mother; and yet another is filled with sorrow, as news from home brought word of loss. Gather in your loving arms all our joys and sorrows; our fears, our hopes, our yearnings; and bless them, O God, as only you can bless O. your children.

Hear us as we join our hearts in these words from the New Testament: Our Father, who art in Heaven, Hallowed be thy name Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us Lead us not into temptation Deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory-forever and ever, Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

Evening prayer is a long standing tradition in American Navy vessels. Like many of our traditions, its origin, though unclear, may go back to the early days of the British Navy, preceding the Colonial Navy. It is a time to reflect on a day past, a night and morning to come; a time to look Heavenward, to look to God for courage, for wisdom, for peace, for rest. Though fast cruise is a time to practice, the evening prayer is not a drill. I invite you to join me in tonight's first ever "Evening Prayer" in O Lord, our God!

We have finally made it. Fast cruise at last! Thank you that we did not lose heart, though it would have been easy to do.

Thank you for victories along the way that encouraged us. Thank you for the failures from which we learned.

On this night which symbolizes so much in its tangible evidence that the ship has really become a ship and not just a place to work, and her crew truly shipmates and not just employees; grant us the grace to set aside the disappointments, the frayed nerves, the fatigue and angers of the past, and with a burst of excitement cause us to leap into the events of this week with enthusiasm and confidence.

We would not shirk from the duty before us; help us to know that the tasks ahead are not nearly as great as the power of faith behind us. More than anything, grant us faith.

We have many things with which to live and work. More than any of these, we need a faith to live for.

O Lord, continue to bless our Commanding Officer; hold him always in your grace.

And each of us; and those who are dear to us; whom we commend tonight to your loving care. And Lord, grant there be peace in our time. Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

Eternal God, today was a Sunday like none we have known before. It began early with expectation and excitement. It closes now with admiration and satisfaction. While what we did was an exercise it was not merely an exercise. It was an affirmation that this extraordinary company of men can and will be ready when called upon to provide relief and protection, care and comfort for those whose very lives may someday depend on the proper use of these same skills so admirably displayed by so many today.

We are proud of the humanitarian mission of this ship and even prouder of the exemplary spirit in which that mission has been demonstrated, at least in practice, as a promise of performance whenever and wherever the need may arise. Whether or not we took time to express it we know that underneath our lives are your everlasting arms, that your strength is the source of our strength, that the cooperation and joint effort came from men who, though they wear different uniforms and insignia, belong to a single humanity created in your image and likeness. Grant now, we pray, a well earned restful night to those who may sleep and to watch standers alertness and peace. Amen.

As we offer our evening prayer to you, O God, we ask your blessing on those who await our return. We have chosen the way of the sea and there is pride in being part of something grand and significant. We appreciate more clearly every day our dependency on one another and the privilege and responsibility of doing our work well for the sake of others.

There is the excitement of ceremonies and destinations, of liberty, new faces and places. But for them there is the ordinary and often monotonous routine of caring for children and coping with the stresses and strains of too many bills and too little money. There's are always tedious hours awaiting our return. As we are confident that you are with us, as we follow our dream, may we also be aware that they, too, are in your care and keeping. Bless, O Lord, our wives and children and deepen our love for them and their's for us.

We ask, tonight, a special prayer that the revelry of our crossing the line may be unmarked by any action which would divide us. May what we do be a bond between us. Let the satisfaction of those who initiate be equalled by the welcomed relief and pride of those received into the closer relationship of men of the sea who share never-to-be-forgotten rites of passage. Amen

Evening Prayers At Sea

Eternal God, we have several new shipmates since we last gave you thanks for this remarkable crew. Though we wish they could have been with us from the start, we are glad that they are now apart of us.

Help we who have shared the exciting birth of this ship to remember what it is like to be the new man on board-the hesitancy, the uncertainty, the uneasiness. May we make an extra effort to welcome them, to communicate our confidence in them and to encourage the very best they have to offer. We thank you for the uniqueness of every sailor, for his special gift of himself which blesses us. We thank you for a gift equal to every man's uniqueness-the ability and desire to become a part of the finest crew of sailors in our Navy, to give our best and expect no less.

Keep our vision clear lest we perish in mediocrity. Keep our devotion firm lest we drown in our own failures. Keep faithful our awareness that you alone are our Lord and God, the source of our dream, our hope, our destiny. Let us live in the quietness and confidence of your presence that we might be able to live with calmness and satisfaction with one another. Amen.

*Thank you God for inconspicuous things that brighten our days:
For a casual conversation with a friend deeper than the words we speak.
For honestly asked questions which open up thoughtful answers.
For rightly timed wit turning tense situations to tolerable ones.
For spontaneous congratulations offered for good news bursting to be shared. For silent sympathy more eloquent than forced words lightening sadness' shadows. And God, when such things as these are hidden grant us eyes to see and ears to hear. Amen.*

Evening Prayers At Sea

At the close of this day which has brought to some the incredible joy and beauty of the sea, in a religious appreciation too deep for words, we pause for our evening prayer.

Father God, we have heard it said, "many are called but few are chosen," and it has new meaning, new depth for us the chosen ones who man this great ship.

We thank you that almost without exception each man sets about his tasks with the earnest conviction that the quality of his service is a gift he offers you joyously from his own integrity, for his own satisfaction and for the well-being of all those on whom his labor depends.

To some you have given much and we know from them much is required.

We pray this night a special prayer for our Commanding Officer to whom has fallen the awesome responsibility and rare privilege of command. You have equipped him well for so formidable a task. We thank you for the challenge and grace of his leadership. To all of us give the peace of your presence whether in sleep or on watch. Amen.

Eternal God, it is so amazing how some days seem so right and other days just have a vague uneasiness about them. The sky was as clear and the sea was as beautifully blue as we could ever hope to see it. But there was a kind of strain, a tension, a pulling in too many directions. It makes us all the more aware how very difficult wholeness, integrity, unity is to achieve and sustain. Our lives depend on so many others. For them we offer prayerful thanks.

We pray tonight for our Executive Officer. He must combine the sometimes thankless task of coordinating and orchestrating, of keeping myriad objectives, programs and approaches on track and on time. We are grateful for his good humor, his openness and honesty about himself, and his fairness and humane concern for others. Give him special grace to enjoy the creative amidst the overwhelmingly ordinary necessities.

And to all of us this night grant a renewed spirit, a belief that you work in us and through us, and that through you we can keep it all together in both our personal and our interpersonal lives. Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

Eternal God, everyday teaches us something about ourselves and others. We have opportunity to see more clearly our strengths and weaknesses. May the lessons we learn teach us even more about you for you are the source of wisdom, our comfort and help in time of trouble, and the strength and hope of our life now and evermore. Amen.

We admire the great works of art, literature and music because they seem so simple, so natural, so inevitable, so right. When we know the artist we know that his naturalness came only because he was faithful in the repetitious, exhausting and often times monotonous exercises which enhanced his art. Since human life is the highest form of art, grant us the love of the art of life which convinces us of the value of practice. While it may not lead to perfection, may it lead, at least, to the rightness of doing what we must. Amen.

Eternal Father, each day brings some new opportunity for growth and insight. Sometimes it is through the extraordinary efforts of ordinary men that we see the virtues often hidden in daily performance. Sometimes it is through the spontaneous act of generosity of a more mature person that we get a clearer picture of what it means to be a leader of men. Personal advantage is set aside for the sake of someone else. Sometimes men already tasked with demanding jobs see an opportunity to realistically provide for the needs of others and seize that opportunity without a murmur or complaint. Greatness of character, like other forms of art, comes about through dedication and perseverance. It is genuine when it appears so spontaneous, and so inevitable when the effort goes unnoticed because of the naturalness of the effect. Caught up as we are in the necessity of demands from without, we sometimes forget that true growth comes when the demands evolved from within. Let the demands we make on others be but a reflection of the disciplined demands we make on ourselves. Let our actions speak more eloquently than our words as we live and work together in this life which we have chosen and for which we have been selected. Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

Dear Lord, set us free from the defenses we put up which keep us from understanding ourselves or other persons. Break down the barriers that separate us. Create within us a strong desire to inspire and lead. Make our commitment to truth and integrity our strong armor against hypocrisy and-cowardice. Open our eyes to ways we may enhance the dignity and worth of others. Shake us free from the worship of idols which have no power to support and sustain us.

Preserve us from being at ease with coercive power which is powerless to win the respect and loyalty of those we lead. Make us more eager to encourage the best in others than to ridicule them for their worst. Help us to examine, realistically, ourselves, to learn whether we expend our energies for destruction more than for constructive growth. Move us a step closer to solutions rather than running headlong into greater problems. Forgive our weaknesses and increase our strengths. Search us and know us and see if there is any right way within and among us. Bless us in all we do that is right and good. Amen.

Dear Father God, soon the incessant whine of helicopter engines will have ceased after a long and exhausting day for pilots and crews. The clanging of tie-down chains will stop as they are dropped again into their slots. Crash and salvage equipment will be put away. A tired and tested Air Department will wrap up its longest sustained operation with a sense of satisfaction. All is still again as we steam on through the night. For your benevolent protection we are grateful, every new exercise brings a greater sense of gratitude for the skill and devotion of so remarkable a crew. How gently you lead us. How kind you are to open our eyes to your loving care in the ordinary experiences of men knowing and respecting and respecting one another more and more. How rich the expressions of faith as they appear in such varied forms. We marvel even more that you have created us with a consciousness that remembers and learns, that ponders and probes, that anticipates and plans. Let the long search lead us eventually closer to you, for then we will recognize our closeness to one another as brothers and be glad. Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

Dear God, let's have a prayer for the little people tonight. Not the short ones or thin ones or scrunched up ones. But the men whose work is not in the limelight or spotlight. Those who sometimes get the idea that because they are not singled out they are not appreciated. While they may go unheralded or unapplauded, help them to feel that we know that if they were not doing their work well none of us would succeed. While we often praise famous men and our fathers who gave us birth, as the biblical writer said, we know there is praise for every man who with quiet, though undistinguished, dignity performs his task. We all need the encouragement of ATTABOYS and BRAVO ZULUS. But help us to find a deeper reason for our work. Let those who can, like Brother Lawrence, polish their pots and pans for the glory of God. Let those who can, do the laundry or PMS equipment because, if they didn't, things would be in an awful mess. Let those who can, feel the assurance that there are no insignificant tasks-only some men who do them insignificantly. And let all know the calm assurance that we are called upon not so much to excel as to persevere, to the best of our unique abilities. Grant now a night of rest through sleep, however short, and strength sufficient for our assigned or chosen labors. Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

Eternal God, our Father, on behalf of this incredibly fine company of naval personnel we offer you our prayer of gratitude this night. There is such a rich diversity of gifts and an amazing breadth of needs. Some have been blessed with an infectious sense of humor that lifts and brightens our days, some have a gift of compassion and are able to sense and share others' hurts and sorrows and needs, some have a gift of insight and understanding and patiently share with us that knowledge that enables us to do our work better or see things more clearly. Some have the amazing power to see problems as opportunities and obstacles as challenges. Some are able to take the ordinary experiences of life and treat them with such integrity that they attain an extraordinary quality. Some have a gift of perseverance which keeps on where weaker men would give up and challenge us to give our best. So for these varied gifts we thank you. Enable each of us to use his special gifts for the good of the other to your glory. Amen.

Eternal God, we look forward to another new liberty port with memories of and those were new and exciting places for many of us part of the adventure we signed up for. Now we have another opportunity to be proud of our ship and increase goodwill for our Navy, to stir new respect and positive feelings for our nation. This remarkable crew has already an enviable reputation. May it become even better. Let each one of us enjoy the pleasures of this liberty. Let the memories we take with us be as satisfying as the experiences themselves-Make us proud of one another when we leave Let neither carelessness nor callousness blind us to the privileged responsibilities we have to ourselves, to those we love, and to our shipmates. Amen.

God, they're listening. Every time we offer a special prayer of thanks for one group of men, others say "why didn't you mention us too?" We're glad that even if we can't lift up every group of men who contribute so much to the life of this ship in a special way, still you support them with your special grace and strength to do their job in the outstanding manner that benefits us all. Let each of us have the satisfaction of knowing there are those who care. Help us to take every opportunity to praise and encourage one another in doing our best. Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

Eternal God, how we marvel at the strength, endurance and spirit of this crew! They seem to thrive on difficult tasks. They prove over and over again that a positive spirit is contagious. They sweat and strain using their muscles and brains exuberantly, enthusiastically. They can be counted on to give their best simply because that is what's expected of them. They've found a secret some people spend all their lives looking for: if you do whatever you have to do with determination, with dedication to doing it to the best of your ability, it brings lasting satisfaction. Why are the men of the (Ship) this way? We find a lot of reasons but even all of these cannot fully answer our question. So it seems God only knows. Maybe that's it, you know who we are and have given us the privilege of working with one another in ways that make us better men. So now as we stop for a little while from our labors, give us a restful night, renew our strength and give us confidence in your grace which is always sufficient for our needs. Amen.

*Thank God, for picnic makers, music makers, fun makers;
for church goers, hymn singers, prayers;
for spill cleaners, ship drivers, watch standers;
for library keepers, machine fillers, friendly faces; for all who made
this a good day. Amen.*

Evening Prayers At Sea

God, we dare not rely on our moods for there are days when for no apparent reason we are down, when we wonder at the reasons for what we do, or the place we find ourselves. Our desires are to be somewhere else. Yet, there are other days when, also for no apparent -reason, everything is bright and if not beautiful at least there is no gnawing questioning of who, what, or where we are. It is when we become aware of the inconstancy of our moods that we appreciate anew the constancy of your love. You are the same yesterday, today and forever. You love us even when we could care less about who we are. We offer you our moods, confident that the highs and the lows are both acceptable to you; and that this is good news. Amen.

Lord God, there has been good news and bad news today. How hard it is to receive bad news and not be able to do anything about it. How natural it is to receive good news and share it.

We have listened to men who were glad with the news they heard. Give them responsive men to share their joy.

We have listened to men whose families need them but they can only wait till the time is right to be with them. Give them patience.

We have listened to men who have tried and failed and want to try again. Give them insight.

We have listened to men concerned that other men be treated fairly. Give them continued concern for others.

We have listened to discouraged men. Give them encouragement.

Hear our old familiar prayer:

"God grant us courage to change those things we can change. Serenity to accept those things we cannot change. And the wisdom to know the difference." Amen.

O Gracious God, we turn aside our faces from daily cares to thank you for the goodness of this day, in which we got (Ship) out to sea. Whether we now prepare to retire to our beds for rest for our bodies or wake to the duties of the dark hours, we thank you that we may turn to you for rest for our souls. With your guidance and grace we shall face the morning, not with the same old ways and attitudes but with a new spirit. Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

Gracious God whose majesty is above all earthly power, yet whose concern for us takes on a very real, earthly form-we give you thanks for this hour. It means the termination of one phase-a good learning experience in REFTRA-yet the beginning of another tending ships in our home port, which is our primary mission. We are grateful for the responsibility accepted and for the work shared in accomplishing the tasks laid on us these last three weeks. And we look forward to the responsibility and tasks that will be laid on us in the months to come as we serve you and one another in common service to our country. Amen.

O God of the night and the day, we pray for our ship and all who walk her decks. We lift up to you in a special way our Engineering Department which has worked so hard to prepare for this week's OPPE. May we all see this as another one of those challenges of life which separates the men from the boys. Forgive us if we have been irritable, short tempered, and impatient. Replace all our fears and anxieties with confidence and rest as we look forward to the task before us. Amen.

Teach us, O Lord, to appreciate the little things which have touched our lives in this ship these last 5 weeks-routine duty, a game of bridge, small talk with our shipmates. May we live deeply, drinking of the fountains which are all about us. We thank Thee for the beauty of this night and the fellowship which we enjoy. Watch over our loved ones as we quiet ourselves for this last night at sea. Bless us with such a homecoming tomorrow that the loneliness of separation will be quickly changed into the joy of reunion. Amen.

For our closing thought before taps tonight, listen to the simple, crude, yet meaningful words of this prayer of a long dead slave-O God, I ain't what I want to be, I ain't what I ought to be, and I ain't what I'm going to be, But thank you, God, I ain't what I used to be Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

Everyone on board (Ship) has needs of one kind or another. The secret is to approach these needs in the right way. If you have a particular need right now that has been bothering you, then make this your special prayer. Dear Lord, Your Word tells me that You think in terms of my needs being met... of those things which I have been denied being restored... of torments being relieved. I know you look on my needs in the most positive way. Your Word says, "God shall supply all your need..." So I know that the moment this need faced me, Your "shall-supply" promise went into effect. What a difference this makes. For I am expectant! I am even joyful! In the midst of need, I am looking around the corner, seeking a glimpse of the miracle that I know is coming. So I do not fear tomorrow nor am I afraid, for my trust is in You. Amen.

O God, today is one of those days when routine quickly gives way to anticipation. Tomorrow, land becomes our element again as we work, then relax, then share the comradeship that belongs to men of the sea. Help us in the double weeks to come, O Lord, to retool and refurbish ourselves as well as the machines upon which we labor. Give us a chance to unwind so that we renew ourselves for the continuing journey. Also, O Lord, help us to be in touch with the pulse-beat of a proud people-at times poor, but rich in a sense of history and the deep and abiding values of their ancient, yet viable cultures. As we will find, O Lord, the family of man wears many faces and yet shares together a growing need to interact with common purpose. O God, let us use this time to gather and treasure those events and scenes which make life so inviting and real. Be with us this night. Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

O Lord, today, for many of us, we skirted the edges of our personal history. Cardiff, Liverpool, Dublin, the Irish and now Belfast- these are our roots. From these shores our ancestors once sailed-and now we return. O God, whether we be from the isles about us, or Africa, Asia, or Europe to the south or east; we would ask that you help us to appreciate from whence we have come-our connections, as it were those men and women who people our past and whose blood and hopes flow deeply within our bones. Grant us the gift of remembering. Help us to grasp that what we are is more than simply a result of chance and circumstances for we share the rewards and sacrifices of untold generations. Even more... we are Adam's Children-human beings commonly connected to your creation and restoration purpose. O Lord, join our parents from the past. Take up residence within our innermost parts. Grant us a peaceful rest. Amen.

O Lord, as the passing weeks begin to add event upon event: one of the threads, I find, that holds our developing time together is the universally felt experience of waiting. Although routine punctuates our today's and schedules our tomorrows, increasingly, waiting becomes our emotional element. Where is the mail? Will the exercise ashore go well? Will I make it to How will I spend my Christmas?... Alone?

Waiting, O Lord, is often a hard reality. It can cause us to feel that we are living in wasted times floating, getting nowhere, awaiting better days and more exciting moments. O Lord, help us with the frustrating art of waiting.

More importantly, O God: Help us to turn waiting around and understand that you also wait for us for that moment when we discover you as Father, friend, and brother. Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

O Lord, as most of us know, some of our brothers from the (Ship) were no doubt killed this noon when their helicopter crashed into the sea. O Lord, we never make light of death. Indeed, ours is a dangerous business, where death is a constant companion. And yet, when a comrade dies, we remain torn. The death of a young man is always a deep tragedy—a chosen calculation, but a hard reality. O Lord, comfort especially those who know these men by name and hurry to the side of family and friends. Help them in your gracious concern to see the vision which dispels the sting of death and speaks of life resurrected.

O Lord, death is a moment of ultimate dependence. What we daily deny is then no longer deniable. We rely on your promise—that all of us will meet you face to face. Gather us in your arms and remind us who share the Christian faith that your son has died so that we might live. Grant us this night a peace that passes all understanding. Amen.

O Lord, I normally close my prayer—after I lay my ten o'clock reports before your throne—with a request for a restful night. I'm fully aware, however, that none of us live what we might call a normal life during our tenure at sea. Ever changing patterns of operations and the staccato pace of watches structure our waking hours. Time for us has lost its patterned meaning and—sustained by youth and resolve—we respond not so much to the consistent tick of the clock as to the shrill sound of the boatswain's pipe. He is our town crier—calling us to duty; announcing the day's events. O Lord, ours is a wearied-eyed lot. Men of service first, self later. Amen.

O Lord, I find routine to be a burden at times. That's probably why I envy the men who go ashore—their animated conversation suggests life revisited. O Lord, as we get underway for a time no longer in the fog—we are made aware again of the joy of activity and change-of-being an adult, secure in what we are and do and yet willing to risk tomorrow. Help us to break out of fixed patterns, O God. Many of us are dead tired—the body weighing down the mind. As we drag through the day, our patience draws thin. Refresh us. We know the work must be done, and yet cause us to respect one another and to seek out the man behind the polyester and cotton togs. Be with our brothers who again fly beyond the beach, O God. Protect them and hold them in your hands. Grant us your peace, O Lord. Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

O Lord, as the sea pounds against our sponsons, exploding to our beam with the sound and feel of close-in cannons, we are struck by an increasing truth-life, as we have chosen it to be, never asks whether we can take it or not. What is, is, and nothing, not even our innocent reminders of childhood past, can bring us back to that time when every bridge we build makes it across the river. Ours is a world not of give, but of take- a reminder that we have stepped into fast forward waters. We have traded the boredom of nine to five for a walk into a world of no guarantees. At times we draw back, but more often not, we go unconfident that an incomplete life is no life at all.

O Lord, our dreams turn to begging. Fill our cup with your assurance that you will not betray us-but test, encourage, and guide us. Without you our words and deeds are but shallow expressions of vain and meaningless men. Bless us and keep us this night. Amen.

*O Lord, we praise your Name.
We praise you for birth of life to come, for now and forever now.
We praise you for the day and the night, for beauty born of earth and sea, for the warmth of the sun and the tug of the moon.
We praise you for those we love, for letters that gladden our hearts and soften the dull throb of separation, allowing us to carry on-and on.*

We praise you for alive, creative minds and bright, welcoming faces; for hello's and thank-yous; for work and play, when it replenishes body and soul, for foul weather friends for these shared moments with you.

*O Lord, we praise your Name.
Grant us a peaceful and safe night. Amen.*

*O Lord, as the majestic gates of Africa and Europe seemed to unfold before us this day, we began a new chapter in our present history. What a fine preface and introduction it was! The air was mellow and clear and, for at least a while, we felt relaxed and refreshed again each to a man. O Lord, what a beautiful world you have made!
As we transit this sea, O God, help us to remember that on these shores that create our horizon we trace the borders of our spiritual home and history. Cause us to be true to the Covenant you have written on our hearts and woven into the fabric of that which is good and of value in our particular civilization.*

*O Lord, when to starboard we again pass Gibraltar's stark face allow us to clear that portal with clear conscience and thoughtful hearts, for you are our guide and protector, a just and living God.
Bless us on our journey and grant us a peaceful night. Amen.*

Evening Prayers At Sea

O Lord, as we enter the Aegean we make passage and pilgrimage astride the roots and stumps of much of our common heritage. Names like Tinos and Andros and Mikanos may mean little to most, but Sparta and Athens, Corinth, Thessalonika, Thermopoly, and Marathon conjure memories of deeds and ideals which provide the leaven of much of modern civilization. Democracy, science, philosophy, religion, drama, and The Acts all pay homage to these shores. From Greece, the man we now call secular began his leap across the void, fed by a vision of greatness. It is this same man, O God, who now finds himself not at Olympian Heights, but rather at the Abyss-with chance to pay a borrowed coin for a ride across the river Styx. It seems,

O Lord that pride and arrogance have proven failed companions. In the belief that your Covenant still holds, O God, for our children's children's sake-allow mankind another chance to return to you and carry on. Give us life and bless us for we are but simple men in need of Hope. Grant us peace this night, O Lord. Amen.

O Lord, at times we find ourselves on hold-turned out of the rhythm of life at hand on pause. Cashing in today for the uncertain state of tomorrows yet to come. We become masters of avoidance skilled at perpetual non-emotion. Life dances and our toes do not tap. Life cries and we do not reach to wipe its tear. Your Spirit beckons, and we slowly turn-away. Help us, O Lord, to see and hear and feel more clearly. Shake us out of our sometime doldrums and give us courage to negotiate the world we presently occupy. Show us that we are not alone-merely imitators of life, but brothers in your Spirit, companions on the Way. O God, grant us a safe tomorrow, but first a restful night. Amen.

O God, we pray that this time may be for us a gathering of the broken glass of our everyday lives. An unhindered expression of gratitude for Your presence among us. A moment to pause-to share our hurts and minds and lives with you. We call upon you, our eternal Father, captain of our souls. Help us to find in prayer the strength we discover when we touch base with thoughts and feelings about ourselves that we do not normally express in the confusion and activity of daily shipboard life. We tend to be shy though we have much to say. Help us to hit the mark. Give us the confidence and faith that our words do not fall upon the void, but are heard by the creator and sustainer of the world within and the world without. Amen.,

Evening Prayers At Sea

O God, we thank you for giving us a chance today to rest our minds and bodies. The warm sun feels good. Certainly, the few free hours we spend allow us to go beyond the press of time to relax and open ourselves-if even for a moment-to that which is truly of value to us. We know that we cannot separate ourselves from the hard facts of our surroundings; and yet it's good to fantasize a bit and think backward and forward to those events and persons-no matter how commonplace or taken for granted-that have special meaning for us and add flesh and blood to the bones of our experience. Memory can be a welcome companion.

O God, how exciting it was this early evening to steam in tandem and stretch our cabled arms from ship to ship. As we use our developing skills to replenish our special needs, so we ask that you would continue to replenish our spirits as you have done this day. O Lord, a good night. Amen.

And now we begin, O God. Sailors and marines practicing for a wedding of men and machines to do our nation's bidding. As with all new relationships, we need time to get to know and trust each other. Help us to use these days of change and stress to hone our skills and yet, more importantly, to seek out the inner man. What we began today is very serious business, and yet I pray that you would help us to retain our sense of humor, our appreciation of each other's humanity, and our respect for the gift of ourselves that we bring to this community. O God, when everything is said and done, all that we are and do is in your hands. Help us to sensitize ourselves to your presence. Strengthen us in your Word. Comfort us with your Spirit. If we have forgotten you, wake us up. If we remember you in our prayers and praise, give us rest and peace. Be with the men who fly this evening and those who would bring them safely home. Grant us a good night. Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

O Lord, it's been hot and miserable for the last few days. It's tough; but we make do. Most of us are not strangers to discomfort. We've been there-a room called home without heat or coal, the broiling sun on our backs, the odor and stress of a rush hour subway, the unrelenting ache of overworked muscles... we've been there...

But now we're here-and it is hot and humid and our pores seem to weep for relief... at times like this our bodies take over. What is real is immediate and felt. Nerves get taut. If we're not careful, tempers flare.

O Lord, what we ask is at the level of our skin-a reminder of our humanness. Give us relief and at the same time console us to praise you for the cooling night air and the brisk refreshment of a breezy sea. In sum, help us to relax and find solace this night in our common concern: Take us to tomorrow, another busy day. Amen.

O Lord, so often in the demands of the moment we tend to take each other for granted, forgetting to put ourselves in the other man's shoes. I pray this evening for those of us who deserve, but do not always receive, the recognition and consideration that is due them. This ship is more than a mass of metal-being ribbed and encased in steel. It is a community of men often of common and interlocking interests. Bring us to that. There are days when we will need each other. We watched the weapons at work today. It's exciting, and yet a reminder that we are men of war as well as peace. We play hard-ball. Give us direction, for quite soon we come on the line in these complex times. Hear our concern. For now, bring us safely home. This evening as always, we place ourselves into your hands. Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

We're returning to port soon again, O Lord. Each his own way. Soon however, the times will be upon us when our homecoming will be six months distant. Love drawn thin. I ask, O Lord, that you would help each of us now to begin in earnest to prepare our families and friends for our time of deployment. Help us to deal with the hard reality of separation and yet help us to create and sustain lines of communication and eventual reunion. Keep us from leaving home either in silence or a whirlwind. This is a vessel of souls and stories-each different, each of infinite value in your eyes, O God. Help us to pick up in five weeks where we as a community leave off tomorrow.

Be with the Marines who go ashore at dawn's light, O Lord. They are (Ship) reason for being. And the safety of our citizens-represented by the players coming aboard-belongs to all of us. Be with us this night. Amen.

O God, I really loved the glorious, large faced sunsets in the last few days followed as they were by a full, pop-up moon. Thank you for the occasional reminder of your constant watch over us. We need that. All too often our world begins in the morning mirror and goes no further. Keeping to ourselves, mystery eludes us, and burdened by work and worry, we go dead in the water, lifeless infixed isolation.

O Lord-often in the blind-help us to stumble over you once in a while. Keep us from walking right by your liquid figure, blended as it is into the world at hand. Punch holes in our darkness. Bring light so that we might see you more clearly in our brothers and by our side. O God, when true night comes may we rest the peaceful sleep of those who live beyond themselves and complete full-circle, the gift of life given to us from the opening to the closing of our eyes. O Lord, may we rest in You this night. Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

Heavenly Father, as we reach the middle of this week, we look back with gratitude on the many blessings you have bestowed upon us; not the least of which is our continuing fellowship and the safe grasp of your hand. If we've kept our eyes open, O God, we've learned to see evidence of your presence all about-in the food that unfailingly appears before us, in the gentle touch of a friend on our shoulder as he recognizes a fallen face and a saddened heart, in the skillful hand and alert ear of a mechanic who goes back a second time-and then again-to check an errant sound, and in the man of authority who sees the anguish behind the scream. For all of those, O Lord, who bring your blessings, we thank you. Cause them to know that they are instruments of your grace and peace among us. O God, we often discover you in the most unexpected places for in darkness we find, light; in loneliness and despair, hope; and in guilt, forgiveness. How overwhelming is your love! No wonder we praise your name. Grant us good rest this night. Amen.

O Lord, every time the pony express goes to work our emotions begin to mill around and kick up dust until they're finally satisfied by a quick, staccato, "Mail Call!" It's then, O God, that just under the skin questions begin to get answered "Any for me?" "Has she finally written?" "Did that bill get paid?" "More form mail from my folks?" Words on paper, O God, to test our spiritual tissue.

O Lord, I have a special concern this night. What do you do with an "I love you" that's seven days old' How do you hold a son whose tears are already dry on his pillow? How do you capture laughter that is overtaken by events?

O God, how good it is that with you there is no time and space-no then and now, no here and there. You are indeed the Word above words-the Lord of Life who bridges the void to bring us and hold us together in your loving and powerful arms. Remind us, O God, of your continuing presence the next time our hearts and minds are awakened by a quick, staccato, "Mail Call!" Bless us and grant us a good night. Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

O Lord, each of us seems to have found a niche for ourselves aboard (Ship)-apace and style that allows us to cope with the hassle and the routine of long-houred sameness which tends to visit a man on lengthy station. The monochromatic design of unchanging obligations and patterns of watch and work weighs heavily upon us. Mood replaces more subtle emotion and life is sought outside of the skin-in fantasized worlds of what could be, if only.

O Lord, help us to vary our expectations of what the next day will bring. Sharpen our minds and tune our senses. Keep us alert to the variety life affords. Allow us to see past the faceless expressions of men caught on a merry-go-round that has run out of brass rings and find even in them the quiet joy of friendship that makes our life worthwhile.

O Lord, we need you. Send us your Spirit. And grant us a peaceful rest. Amen.

As we steam across the sea, O Lord, I find my whole sense of time slowing down. Everything has become more obvious-blown larger-stretched broadly across the canvas of our elongated twenty-three, twenty-four hour days.

O Lord, help us to focus-to seek out time and space for ourselves after a busy watch and before the onrushing schedule of operations for which we prepare. Cause us to use spare moments to remain suspended in silence-if only for a time-not just to take in the world outside of us, but to bring out those feelings and thoughts that have stayed on the sidelines ready to go, but never called into mind or action.

Tonight is not exactly Friday night on the town, O God. And yet there are things to do. Maybe the best thing to do is no thing. Simply to listen-to feel-and to do as Stevie Wonder suggests, "Have a talk with God." Grant us peace this night, O Lord. Amen.

O Lord, the sky and sea are hauntingly beautiful this evening and yet the reality of the present is the stormy ocean about us that heaves and sighs and calls us to do its bidding. Help us to ride out the gale. It's exciting and yet brings us into your loving hand. Most importantly, keep us from injury as we toss and turn in turbulent seas.

O Lord, ours is a mariner's prayer echoing through the centuries, but one which rings true for the sea is the great humbler of self sufficient men. Hear our simple prayer. Guard and protect our brothers this night. Keep your Sabbath promise. Bring us rest. Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

I meant to speak of the past tonight, O Lord, but the present has caught up with me. The mail is here! Our hearts are alive. O Lord, I ask that our letters be a blessing for us. Help us to find private places to be alone with those we love. Hear our joy, share our pain. Grant us a good night. Amen.

O Lord, we impoverish ourselves if we do not focus with informed imagination upon what lies before us-here at hand. This place-this very spot-echoes and resonates with the rumble and gathering cries of rank upon rank upon limitless rank of heroic-at times despotic men whose armies have sought to conquer the world beyond the reach of more limited folk. The ghosts of Xerxes, Alexander, and Attila still linger, having left their indelible mark upon our common past.

O God, this place is more than the traditional point of contact between Orient and Occident, East and West. It is an abiding symbol of the confluence of opposites-those passions for good or evil that so often rage within our very soul. O Lord, still us, calm us. Let peace reign. Help us to take your Word out of our pockets and off our shelves and begin the difficult uphill struggle of trusting and turning to you.

O God, tomorrow our brothers practice and present their skills. Our prayer continues-bless them, keep them, and return them safely to our side. Grant us a good night. Amen.

O Lord, entering stage left many of our number are about to move across fertile plain to exit again stage right-all the while flexing our muscle, voicing our intent: "Don't tread on me and mine." O Lord, I pray that we do what we do so that we don't have to do what we do. During these tinderbox times, O God, grab and resist the cynic's dark vision. Make peace believable; hope a constant companion.

*O God, the early morning-to-come sums up long months of dedicated service to this ship and its task. We have finally arrived at the end of the beginning. We thank you for our thus far safe journey and we especially pray that you would keep and sustain the young men who fly ashore on the morning light. Keep them in your loving care. Let them know that our prayers go before and follow after them.
Amen.*

Evening Prayers At Sea

O Lord, stretch out your arms and hold us. The day has been long and many are tired. Muscles are tight. Emotions did strain and vibrate at full power or else go on hold. O Lord, we often grow weary from responsibilities and decisions that we constantly make simply to survive and keep above water. As the cruise lengthens, work seems to pile up more quickly and we accomplish less. Help us to release some of the pressure, O God, and to turn to you for peace of mind. Quiet us,

O Lord, and confront us in your Word. Help us to relax this night so that we might quicken ourselves to do your will. As we prepare for a new year, O Lord, motivate us to rework our lives and review our priorities. For now, grant us an eventless night. Amen.

O God, keep us from half-truths that inhibit us. Move us to understand that the truth we recognize does not drive us, but only that which we deny and refuse to face. Transform us, O God. Cause us to know that you are incarnate in the real as well as the ideal. In effect, help us to grasp your presence in the world at hand. Bless us and grant us rest this night. Amen.

More and more, O Lord, we find ourselves thinking home thoughts. Our growing sense of anticipation allows us to shorten the distances between ourselves and those we love and long for. In their own way, O Lord, these are days of sustained turmoil. Pushed down feelings have begun to surface and the closely guarded secret of one's essential humanity is beginning to be made public. Laughter comes quickly and tempers flare. And yet, O Lord, as with anything in life, reality still impinges upon us. Time and space continues to hold us tightly and our sense of duty and fear of failure remain to fix the boundary of a day that begins well before nine and ends far beyond five. In this time of change and transition from here to there, O Lord, be our rock and our shield. Carry us through so that we may bless your name, for you are El Shaddai-the unchanging, eternal one. Grant us rest this night. Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

O Lord, we have completed another day on our pilgrim path in the unfolding process of eternal life. The final enemy still awaits us, so the road is not as easy as we would like. No wonder that every now and then our courage falters and our vision fails. If our salvation becomes unclear-lost in the wake of stressful days-remind us of your promise, O God. Give us the faith we need to carry on. Help us to remember that in three-part time we are essentially transients, gathering persons and events that will provide the source and content of life to come. In effect, O God, we are travelers heading for home, ET's in blue or green.

O Lord, may we live each day in the perspective of eternity. Keep us from being overcome by our troubles and afflictions; help us rather to lift them up and present them to you. Grant that the constant vision of our homeland and the joy awaiting us will sustain us and revive our spirits as we prepare for another day. Grant us peace this night and bring us safely through tomorrow. Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

Almighty Father, it's that time again and we're all a little tired and ragged around the edges. But that's okay because with your help we can handle it. We thank you that tonight's man overboard turned out to be a false alarm. But did you notice, Lord, the way this crew responded? The concern they shared? We're learning that we are a team, we need one another. Our Ship's Bos'n asked to be remembered tonight, Lord. Not only for him but for all Bos'n mates. Take good care of them Lord. They're all rough and tumble people but everyone of them would be at your side in a crisis. Amen.

Tonight Lord, we're saying goodbye to our friends of the various squadrons who have been riding with us. There are many of them whom we will never see again but they have made their mark with us and we will never forget them. During the course of this at sea period we've worked together, played together, and on occasion even cried together. These men have supported us in countless ways and they have unselfishly given of their talents and expertise to help make (Ship) number one. We couldn't have done it without them. To all of them Lord we say "GOD Speed" and we ask that you bestow upon them and their loved ones the choicest of your blessings. We ask also that you bless and protect our loved ones. Grant us a peaceful rest, and Lord, let there be peace in our world. Amen.

Tonight Lord, we look back at the past two months that we've been together. At the outset of this brief cruise many of us were strangers to each other. Tonight we look upon each other not only as friends but rather as loyal comrades. We thank you for the loyalties and bonds that have been established. We are no longer a group of individuals but now we are a team, with each member both ready and willing to assist and support a teammate. That's "caring" Lord-that's what it's all about-and this crew functions that way. Bless all of us tonight. Love and protect our families. Grant us a peaceful rest and Lord, let there be peace in our world. Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

Almighty Father, we've come to the end of another day. Lord, lights are important to a sailor at sea. Always before we became so electronically sophisticated and sometimes even in our day and age, a sailor navigated by the sun during the day and by the stars at night. Ships use running lights to avoid collisions at sea, and lighthouses and beacons warn us of dangerous rocks and shoals, while the lights of harbor signify safety and friends. Tonight Lord, we pray that you may always be the guiding light of our transit through this earthly life. Bless our families and loved ones, grant us a peaceful rest, and Lord, let there be peace in our world. Amen.

O God... You are versatile beyond any understanding... You have made the giant stars and the tiny atom. You make galaxies turn and flowers bloom: while we down here remain often unsure of what our purposes may be in this great, mysterious creation you have made... so, we pray for light and understanding. Help us to see our individual calls to whatever purpose you have established for our lives. Amen.

Eternal Father, we marvel at the vastness of the sea; we marvel at the power that can create oceans and continents and whole solar systems. We stand in awe of a force that is so powerful, and at the same time so personal and what's more, Father, you have made us human beings and given to us enormous capabilities: the ability to create and build, the ability to love and be loved. O Lord, our Lord, how great is thy name in all the earth! Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

Almighty God, as we find ourselves passing the Cape of Good Hope and entering the Indian Ocean, we become increasingly aware of the responsibilities that are ours as members of (Ship) crew. For many people, the responsibilities and the hours will increase. We ask for your strength and guidance as we enter a more intense period of our cruise. Help us to be mature and wise in our decisions, diligent in the performance of our duties, and harmonious in our dealings with one another. Amen.

Eternal Spirit, you who are the course of all high hopes, we lift our hearts in your holy presence. We need you in our troubles and our confusions. There are so many choices before us and the battle between practicality and idealism goes on unabated. Help us always to walk with faith, courage, and strength of character. Keep us from all short-cuts and willful compromises. Amen.

O God, whose spirit searches the heart of man, bless us with an understanding of our ways. We do not ask for new tasks... but for new attitudes toward our present duties. May we see in our time of need the shadow of your presence ready to bless even before we are to ask. Take us, Lord as we are, and make us by your grace what we ought to be. Amen.

Lord, sometimes you are like the snipes; you are not always very visible, but your power is always felt. Sometimes you are like the mess men; you are always so regular in your service to others that you are often taken for granted. Sometimes you are like the radio or signalmen; you are always very concerned with communications and maintaining close relationships. Always, Lord, you are like our various repairmen, saving what appeared to be unsalvageable. Lord, when we think about it, we have to believe you are not unsympathetic to our situations in life. Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

God Bless our mailmen for bringing us in touch with home, our families, our wives and sweethearts.

If there was no letter for me today, well maybe tomorrow or the next.

For surely, we are always in the minds and hearts of our loved ones, as they are always in our thoughts.

We cannot be forgotten anymore than we can forget those we love and cherish. Amen.

Thank you, Lord, for staying with us, for making your course our course, our course yours.

You have brought us through Tropical Heat, Water Spouts, Gama Globulin Shots, Malaria Pills, Foreign National Anthems, Water Hours, No Showers, Lost and Stuck Tour Buses, Urban Thieves, Communist Slander, Sea Sickness and Lord, if you can just get us through this last Cold Weather to the safety of homeport, to our families and friends, you might say we owe you one. Amen.

Lord, sometimes we allow a lot of rust to gather in our relationship with you. Seldom do we pray. We just don't give much time or thought to you. Help us Lord to chip out the rust and not to take any holidays from you. Help us deep down in our hearts to be more red-blooded in our commitment to you. Help us be more true-blue in maintaining our commitment despite life's twists and turns. Finally, Lord, we count on your goodness and grace to be the finishing coat which protects us from eternal corrosion. Amen.

Lord, an UNREP dramatizes how great our needs can be and how difficult it can be to supply them with all the planning, ordering, transporting, delivering and stowing.

Lord, we stand in awe of your great VERT REP to our world in which you not only supply the means for our physical and material well being but also our personal spiritual needs.

Thank you Lord for your care. Bless our men, especially those in supply. Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

We are not supposed to be a wooden Navy anymore but we are.

We float on tons of paperwork; logs, chits, reports, forms, messages, and POD's.

Lord, we ask your blessing on the men who keep the paperwork from sinking us, especially the YN's, PN's, DK's, RP's, and AZ's. With your blessing Lord, let our wooden Navy sail on. Amen.

We who live with the reality of war, who must be the first to go in harm's way into battle, we pray that we might not have to use our power with a vengeance. Rather, Lord, we ask you to help the people of our world overcome their fears and mistrusts. Enable them to speak and comprehend one another, enough to reach an understanding whereby all of us might enjoy the treasure which surpasses all other treasures. Amen.

Lord, sometimes I sure do get tired of looking at water. Most of the time when we are underway it's just gray sky, gray water, and gray ships. But water is a very special sign of life. April showers, a long cool glass of water, children running through a hose, snowball fights, going swimming-these are all unique celebrations of life. Water is also a special sacrament of freedom. The Hebrews went through water into their freedom and a new land. People from all lands and races passed over the waters, looking for freedom in a new land. The water of baptism washes our slates clean. Water is for growing, cleansing, cooking, playing, drinking, crying, and laughing... and yes it's even for steaming around South America on. But without it, we, and most of creation, would shrivel up and blow away. Water is life. Somehow Lord, this gray water doesn't seem so cold and bleak to me any more. Thanks Lord. Amen.

I wonder if I'm the only one, Lord, who sometimes has nothing to pray about. Oh, I'm sure I could think of some things, but right now I just feel like enjoying some of the things you have given me today like good health, clean skivvies, a friend's smile, a good meal, and on and on. Come to think of it, Lord, maybe I am praying to you when I use the gifts that you give me each day. Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

This morning was really something, Lord, for the deck apes it was cold and wet, but kind of fun too. We thank you that no one was injured. It's very dangerous being at sea, one little slip-up and we're in trouble. It's the little things that get us in trouble. And it's the little things that we often overlook. And yet, often it's the little things that we really should be thankful for. Lord, today I'd like to thank you for the small things in life. I thank you for them because they mean a lot to me. I forget about small things in life, Lord. Fm so busy looking at the big things that I just walk over the incidentals. But when I stop to think of it, it's the small things that add a lot to my life. Thanks, Lord, for the little things in life... it's really big of you. Amen.

This ship is a city, Lord-it's our city. We live and work in its brightly lit spaces, its darkened bridge and CIC, in the heat of the engine room and the scullery, the confusion of the mess decks, and in our cramped living quarters. And I love this haze-gray city, Lord, but not because of its physical structure or its mission, but because of its people-all kinds, all races, all religions, and even those with no religion. I love the hustle and bustle of a working party, the noise, the swearing and the quiet of the mid-watch, or those long boring hours with nothing to do but to think of home or to read Playboy. And of course, though we don't often think of it, there is always the danger. Help us, your new breed of cliff-dwellers, through the next few months. Help us bear our responsibility-for your sake. Amen.

It's almost time for tonight's movie, Lord. Some statistics show that a 17-year-old has been to over 500 films in his life. I don't know who counted, but regardless, that's a lot of movies. Movies are a powerful force in people's lives, both in a good sense and in a bad sense. And you know, Lord, I really love movies. I can watch them one after another and never get tired. But it's almost getting to the point that movies are becoming more "true to life" than life itself, and that's kind of frightening. Lord, keep speaking through the movies we see, and keep our minds open as we view the good ones and the not-so-good ones.

Help films show us that your love speaks to the many problems in the world. And help us to laugh at some of the films too. Don't let us take life too seriously and lose the excitement and joy that you still put into it. Amen.

Evening Prayers At Sea

Lord, I'd like to thank you for the popcorn. That's right, nice, ordinary salted, hot buttered popcorn. I bet a lot of us popcorn lovers forget to thank you for such trivial things as popcorn. So this prayer is dedicated to trivial things like popcorn. What would a movie be without popcorn? Nothing. A good movie becomes a great movie when popcorn is served. So thanks for the popcorn, Lord. If you think enough of us to give us the little things like popcorn, you must think enough of us to give us the essential needs too. I pray that I always think enough of you to thank you for popcorn. Amen.

Evening Prayers at Sea

We thank you, O Lord, for the friendships we have established during this cruise. Companions help us to be at ease, ourselves, comfortable.

O Lord, we know who they are. They are people who come to our rescue-not to save us for we often bring pain upon ourselves-but those whose laughter, loyalty and respect allow us to relax and to gather our forces and come alive again. Help us to recognize that your goodness and blessing is neither an abstraction or an illusion,, but evidenced by the gift of others you have given us. Cause us to realize that among our friends we experience your presence-your grace during difficult times. Some say that hell is other people. True, but so is heaven. Lest we forget, O Lord, we thank you this night for our friends. Amen.

O Lord, in moments of reflection we often find that if we were to paint a picture of our inner selves-that spiritual center known only to ourselves-we would find not clarity, but a confusion of form and color. For each of us is in our own way incomplete, half men, spiritual dwarfs, ever having reached maturity. And yet, our dreams this night confirm what visions, even greatness, lie within us. We often write ourselves off as has-beens, collections of discarded and broken promises, 2.8 on the intimacy scale. And yet, O God, your living Word confirms that we are worth dying for. Why, O Lord, do you think more of us than we do of ourselves? O God, bring us in line with your Truth. Help us to die in you so that we might live in you. It's that important. For this night, grant us peace. Amen.

Evening Prayers at Sea

O Lord, we come to you this evening for no other reason than to simply acknowledge that you are God, the King of the universe, the Lord of Life. All that is, O God, rests in You. You are the Alpha and Omega, the one before whom we bow our heads in reverence and devotion.

O Lord, you know well that it hasn't been easy to find You. Our faith has often slipped between the cracks. Reality has pressed us to the wall. And yet we conclude, O God, that even though it is often hard to believe, it is even harder not to believe. We need you as a son needs a father, a student a teacher, a friend a companion and a wanting man a savior.

O Lord, we thank you for being with us, especially in the dangers that surround us. Help us to continue to approach you with confidence and prayer. Be with us and bless us, O Lord, as we begin a new day. Give us peace this night. Amen.

O God, in a world that loves but little and distrusts in megatons, we need more evidence of your sustaining presence, your promise of peace. Cynical men continue to point out the many wooly-clad wolves that roam about. Help what we do to be more than gesture,

O Lord. Affirm us as we stand our ground and thus sacrifice our safety so that others can be provided a forum for their separate needs. Allow our courage in the face of constant threat to bring hope to this troubled land. Peace remains a slippery and elusive affair, O Lord. We can't quite make it on our own. Amen.

Evening Prayers at Sea

O Lord, from the evening shadows we call your name. Into your hands we commit ourselves and seek your mercy and peace. Help us to recognize your grace that enables us to complete and make sense of what we started at morning light. Heal us from sin-made wounds. Assure us of your pardon and comfort us with your Word. Bring us through the night rested and refreshed.

O Lord, each of us has fears that betray; worries that capture and shake out our joy. We find ourselves in limbo because we are neither here nor there. We are in a time of transition, of getting ready. Change and chance surround us. Help us, O Lord, to return to your presence. Cause us to find the point and purpose of each day. All we ask is that you keep us on our feet so that we might walk with you. Bless us this night and grant us rest. Amen.

Holy Father, the men of this ship work hard. They work long hours, often in hot, dangerous, or difficult circumstances. They work whether tired or rested. For the life of our ship and the performance of our mission requires-no, demands-that we all put our shoulder to the wheel. But let us remember, Lord, why this ship exists, and what we are really about. For the labor we give is a labor for the defense of our land. We work for our families, for our friends, for our freedoms and for a better world. We work that our nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal, shall not perish from the earth. And we know, Lord, that in large measure, the measure of a man is his work. Give us strength, we pray thee, to do our work as laborers who need not be ashamed. Amen.

Evening Prayers at Sea

Lord of the Sea,

We know how to supply ourselves materially, but only You can supply our deepest needs

We know how to run an engineering plant, but only Your fire within us can give us power for life

We know how to repair broken equipment, but only You can repair the brokenness within us

We can do preservation work, but only You can preserve us beyond death

We know a lot about healing bodies, but only You can heal our hearts and minds

We can arm ourselves with weapons, but only You can defend us against evil

We can keep records of official service, but only You can record us in the Book of Life

We know how to take a ship across the ocean, but only You can chart our course to that final shore

Quiet our souls this night that we may, listen and hear you say, "Peace, be still."

In your Name we pray, Amen.

Evening Prayers at Sea

Psalm 90

*"Lord you have been our dwelling place through all generations.
Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the world, "*

*Lord, God, during deployment, we leave our family homes behind,
and our ship becomes our physical home. Yet the saying, "Home is
where the heart is, "reminds us that home is a state of love and trust, a
feeling of being secure and cared for.*

*To those who trust in you, you have promised never to forsake. We
can have the security of home wherever we go. Amen.*

*O God our help in ages past
Our hope for years to come
Our shelter from the stormy blast
And our eternal home-*

*Give us the faith to confess you and our Heavenly Father, our
home, our refuge, our security. May the small frustrations and
the large problems we encounter in our earthly dwellings never
obscure that belief.*

*Bless our families, and comfort them with the faith that we are
all linked to your protection and care.*

In Your Name we pray, Amen

*Evening Prayers at Sea
O Lord,
Today is today
tomorrow is another day
yet not here.*

*My prayer. . . ? Help me
to live in peace with you,
myself and others.*

*May the moment of the
here and now be the focus
of my spiritual vow*

*Yesterday is gone forever
I ask but to cherish it-but
to live it again, never,
For you call me forward
day by day. . . And more than that,
Moment by moment as my spirit yearns for the
potential for which I am meant*

Today, O Lord, is today. Amen.

I-74

Evening Prayers at Sea

Father,

*Thank You for this day And the things You did for us. Most of us Found
a bit of quiet time In which to think And be peaceful.*

For that, We are grateful.

*And, You know, Father, Most of us Are a bit anxious about being ashore
In a foreign country... Anxious To get there, And anxious to know How it
will be. . .*

So, Lord, As ever, We need Your help tonight. . .

*Calm our anxieties, Help us to put our values In order, .And Keep us
reminded We belong to You...*

Give us A restful sleep And peace in the days ahead.

Amen.

Evening Prayers at Sea

Father,

We've been busy The last few, days.

We haven't talked to You Very, much, or Taken time to listen To You either...

So, In this set-aside time Of evening Prayer, We do our best To wait Before You now. . .

Not asking a great deal. But thanking You For understanding us And being patient With us.

It isn't We do not care, Father, It 's just we get Our priorities twisted Sometimes...

So, Receive us In Your mercy, tonight. Grant us A safe and blessed sleep And a good day Tomorrow.

Amen.

1-76

Evening Prayers at Sea

*Father,
Some days,
In our shortsightedness,
We see only
People and decks and paint
And wrenches and paper and gauges
And setting zebra and yoke...
But, sometimes,
In our best moments,
We stumble, unaware,
Across Your greatness...
Like
In a quiet midwatch
On a bridge wing
With your moon
Lighting Your ocean...
Or A moment's glimpse
Of a sea bird
Sailing above Your waters...
Thank You, Father,
For such times.
And,
Will You please
Give us eyes to see
And ears to hear
And hearts to be grateful
For Your wonders...
Amen.*

Evening Prayers at Sea

O God, tonight we are aware of the bountifulness of Thy world. We pause to thank Thee for the fullness of Thy love, which we so often have experienced through people to love and friends to cherish tasks to work at and to accomplish-beautiful skies and seas to sail-and most of all-through thy ever-present grace. Amen.

*The Lord is my pace-setter, I shall not rush;
He makes me stop and rest for quiet intervals;
He provides me with images of stillness which restore my serenity;
He leads me in ways of efficiency through calmness of mind, and His
guidance is peace;
Even though I have a great many things to accomplish each day, I
will not fret, for His presence is here;
His timelessness, His all-importance will keep me in balance;
He prepares refreshment and renewal in the midst of my activity by
anointing my head with his oil of tranquility;
My cup of joyous energy overflows; surely harmony and effective
ness shall be the fruit of my hours;
For I shall walk in the peace of my Lord, and dwell in His house
forever.
May the peace of God be yours as you give of your best in service to
those in your care.
Amen.*

Evening Prayers at Sea

Eternal God, you have made each of us something special. Help us to work and develop our unique personalities. You intended for each of us to be an original, not a carbon copy of someone else. Thank you for making me different. Grant that I will always put my individuality, to its best use for Your work. Amen.

Eternal God, we live in a day of instant replays. Only minutes after an exciting play has taken place in a game or event, it can be seen again. But I am aware that life cannot be replayed like that. I know that a bad day can never be taken back and a good day can never be erased. Help each of us to see that we cannot live on yesterdays. May we understand that each day must be lived with fresh vitality. May we see each day as a new gift from you to use for your glory. Amen.

O Lord, as we come to the end of this day, we invite you into our lives. We have been busy. The pace is hectic and in many cases dangerous. We are under a lot of pressure. We have responsibilities to both those over us, and those who work for us. It seems there is no time for us to be quiet with all the activity that surrounds us. Oh Lord, in this moment, may all this stress drain away. Help us to relax, to recuperate, and in this night's rest to be renewed in body, mind, and spirit. Give us your peace. Amen.

Evening Prayers at Sea

Oh Lord, tonight we ask your blessing upon our children at home. We remember the joy and freedom of childhood. Help us to be childlike as we experience life and enjoy it. Teach us how to have fun in the midst of the seriousness of our tasks. Be with our families this night we pray. Amen.

Our Father, your fondest feelings must be reserved for the least pretentious and most genuine of us. Sailors must be your favorites. Some of us haven't found the virtues of humility, soft spokenness or gentleness. Some of us tend to lead with our jaw and seem more ready to fight than switch. After long days at sea, you can tell your sailors by their red eyes and grubbiness. but their wills match their strong backs, and their respect and concern for each other is a wondrous thing. They are the salt of the deck-and their saltiness is honest and open. We are grateful for them as you love them especially. bless each one on we ask. Amen.

O God, it has been a busy and demanding day for many of us. Others will just be starting their watches and working hours. Help us to stop and catch our breath-to give you thanks for these moments in our lives. May we feel a sense of accomplishment for a difficult and dangerous job, done well. Give us, tonight, a very special sense of personal pride in ourselves, our jobs, and our ship. May that pride be obvious to all with whom we come in contact. Bless each man on this ship tonight. Amen.

Evening Prayers at Sea

Our Father, we are busy with so many things to be done in this great ship. Sometimes we have the impression that we are not important and our jobs don't mean very much. Some of us tend to be so wrapped up in our own little worlds-our shops, piece of equipment, airplane, or division-that we fail to notice or even care about other shipmates. A ship, so large, can be very impersonal. We may fail to appreciate others who live and work throughout the ship.

Help us to realize that we are important in your eyes and that we are important to one another. Our lives really depend on each other. We are brothers. Amen.

Oh God, sometimes this ship seems so big, so many people, and sometimes we feel lost. Help us to feel a sense of belonging especially those who are new aboard. We remember what it was like when we first reported. Remind us of our brotherhood and our common bond as shipmates. Be close to each of us-help us to reach out and be a friend Amen.

Oh God, you must know in your infinite wisdom that sailors and marines are the most unique creatures of all your creation. Sailors and marines come in all shapes, colors, sizes, and both sexes; we are serious, happy, frustrated, professional and sacrificing. You have called us from a humdrum world and challenged us to go the extra mile and be a part of a great team. Help us to always do our best, teach us to always do the right thing-it will gratify some and astonish the rest. Amen.

Evening Prayers at Sea

Oh Lord, tonight we are reminded of our humanity again-that we are not God. We require sustenance, rest, and other essentials to keep our bodies going. As we are replenished at sea so that our mission might be accomplished and our bodies fed, we ask you to replenish our spirits with hope, love, and a sense of purpose. We ask in the name of our Lord. Amen.

Oh God, in your presence we think of those from whom we are separated by distance, misunderstanding, circumstances, and death. You know the ache we feel for those who matter. Strengthen us to hold out and win. Grant us faith to entrust those we love to your care. Thank you Lord. Amen.

Lord, many of us are like gale-beaten ships, arriving at last at a calm and sheltered cove.

Our lines are frayed from incessant tension.

Our sails are battered by sudden gusts of unexpected hardships...

Our spars are broken where we were unable to withstand the force of temptations.

Our decks are soaked, having been awash with the tears of worry and doubt.

Refit us as we draw close to you in this quiet moment.

Restore us with renewed courage that we each may set sail again, as stout ships able to head high into the wind and hold our course.

We thank you that we can set our hearts like sextants upon you and navigate even perilous, uncharted seas with confidence because you are our North Star: absolute, constant and dependable. Amen.

Evening Prayers at Sea

Lord, thank you for not answering all my prayers. Most of my life I've prayed for special favors. I've pestered you for many selfish things. I've asked you to solve problems of my own creation. I have prayed that you would make life easy for me.

I have prayed for sure ways to success and short cuts to material things when I should have been working to attain spiritual goals that really satisfy. I have asked for good health instead of exercising my body and being more careful about my diet and health habits. I have asked you to help me understand my fellow men when I should have been listening and trying to help them with their problems.

I realize now that if you had answered all my prayers, I would be weak, dependent, and perhaps lazy. By forcing me to work out some of my own problems, you have helped me to become strong.

Now my days are full of opportunities to live unselfishly. That's the most important thing for which I could have prayed.

So thank you, Lord, for not giving me every wish and refusing to answer my prayers in my way; thus, you are helping me to become the person you wanted me to be. Amen.

Evening Prayers at Sea

Dear God: Help me be a good sport in this game of life. I don't ask for any easy place in the lineup. Put me anywhere you need me. I only ask that I can give you 100% of everything I have. If all the hard drives seem to come my way, I thank you for the compliment. Help me remember that you never send a player more trouble than he can handle.

And help me, Lord, to accept the bad breaks as part of the game. May I always play on the square, no matter what the others do. Help me study the Book so I'll know the rules.

Finally, God, if the natural turn of events goes against me and I'm benched for sickness or old age, help me to accept that as part of the game, too. Keep me from whimpering that I was framed or that I got a raw deal. And when I finish the final inning, I ask for no laurels. All I want is to believe in my heart that I played as well as I could and that I didn't let you down. Amen.

Our Father in Heaven, may we learn from you, the only all powerful being, how to use the power that each one of us possesses in different degrees.

You have been merciful and understanding to us; yet we have often closed our hearts to others.

You have forgiven us so many times, yet we are slow to forgive those who have wronged us.

Teach us that only the truly powerful can be kind and merciful and forgiving, because only the truly powerful need not show off their might. Amen.

Evening Prayers at Sea

Lord, a wise man once said:

"Watch your thoughts, they become words, watch your words, they become actions; watch your actions, they become habits; watch your habits, they become character; watch your character, for it becomes your destiny. " Help me watch more closely. Amen.

Almighty God,

We know that you plot the course of our character with skill and patience. We ask for strength that comes from above, that we might faithfully respond to the Pilot of our souls. Amen.

Our Father, God and Creator, we turn again to You for refuge from the hustle and hurry of the world without, and from the fury and fears within. Help us, O God, to find that peace and rest which can be found only in You; that we may meet the future with grateful hearts, the difficulties with willingness. And keep us, Father, from petty irritations.

We pray for those among us who have been struck by illness or misfortune... or who are suffering any trial, . . .for those who have been taken from our midst. . .and especially for those loved ones and family who anxiously await our return. May You keep both them and us in the palm of your protecting hand. . .this night. . .and evermore. Amen.

Evening Prayers at Sea

*I asked for strength that I might achieve;
He made me weak that I might obey.
I asked for health that I might do greater things;
I was given grace that I might do better things.
I asked for riches that I might be happy;
I was given poverty that I might be wise.
I asked for power that I might have the praise of men;
I was given weakness that I might feel the need of God.
I asked for all things that I might enjoy life;
I was given life that I might enjoy all things.
I received nothing that I asked for, all that I hoped for,
My prayer was answered. Amen.*

Our Heavenly Father, there is so much we want to talk over with You tonight; thank You for; ask You about; entrust to You. How grateful we are that You know our deepest thoughts even when our minds go blank in Your presence. We pray for all involved in fight ops tonight-those who are flying; who are working the flight deck; those in the hanger-continue them in safety. Bless our Captain and those who have charge over us, and those on whom responsibility rests-especially those who stand the watch. As we pray for rest tonight, keep in Your care those whom we love-and Lord-grant that there may be peace in our time. Amen.

Evening Prayers at Sea

Dear God. I opened m,,s pat envelope today. You guessed it, I got what I was told I d get. (I'm always hoping Christmas will come early). The thought strikes the that most of us get what we deserve. Others get a lot less. Some of us owe the bank. But all of us hope the DK 's know what they are doing. Most days are like pay days, It takes a lot of faith in ourselves, each other, and in You. You won't always see that faith with because it down `t flash like a neon .sign. but it's deep inside, inside each one of its. Amen.

Dear God. This afternoon during GQ, in the midst of heavy .seas and rain, I saw off the stern a perfectly shaped rainbow. I was reminded of Noah and his Ark and how the rainbow became for him a sign of your blessing and a promise of your presence. Times have changed considerable since Noah got underway. He never had to pass as man ,engineering examinations as we do. But we've got the people and the know, how to get the job done. And today in the rainbow we saw the promise of your blessing and presence. Amen.

Dear Goth Tonight we think of the talks back home. Frequently we avoid thinking about them, primarily because thinking about them pulls on the heart strings. But seldom are they out of our minds. We re-read old letters, look at pictures with such regularity that we see fine details, and of course we count the days. Bless our loved ones and keep them in Your protection. Amen.

Evening Prayers at Sea

Heavenly Father,

She said she did not want a Christmas present. "Sure you don't, "I laughed, "and when Christmas morning comes and you don't get anything, I'll be in a world of trouble. ""No you won't, "she insisted, "we can't afford a present right now. You can get me one when we have more money. "She was right! We didn't have much money. The car payment, the rent, groceries, the children's clothes all seemed to require that more money go out than we had coming in. So, I decided that she was right. I would wait and buy her present as soon as we could afford it. On Christmas morning we watched the children open their presents and as they rushed outside with their brand new toys, there was one gift left. It was for me. She had managed to get it out of the grocery money. There was nothing there for her! She never said a word, but I do not think the day was a very happy one for her. I know it wasn't for me. Father, help us to love one another. Not that we have to give things to each other, but that we do find ways to make each other feel special. It hurts to be forgotten or taken for granted. There are a lot of important people in our worlds. Our wives, our children, our parents and friends . . . the people we work with. If it is in our power to make them feel good then let us do it. Let us give that gift, speak that word, offer that touch, that says "I value you. "Amen.

Evening Prayers at Sea

Heavenly Father,

In many ways our lives are like those thunderstorms we moved in and out of this morning. Sometimes things run smoothly and sometimes we are battered by winds and sea. We did not see the sun or know when the lightning would stop streaking down at us. It's the same for all of us tonight, for none of our lives run exactly parallel courses, but sooner or later we all experience the same things. So Father, if this is a happy night, we offer thanks. If it is a difficult time, we pray for reassurance. We are all Your children, unique and individual, and we pray that together we will be faithful to one another, true to the trust placed in us and comforted by the grace that you hold out to us. For even though we live among the storms, we know that because of you, we will see the sun again. Amen.

Heavenly Father,

A little boy once asked his father who had just returned from sea, "Dad, why is it I always had to put on a sweater whenever mom felt cold?" His dad answered, "Son, I know you don't understand this, but it's because she loves you!" The little boy might have asked another question similar to the first. "Dad, why did mom always get mad at you every time I did something wrong?" And the answer is similar too. "Because she missed me son. " Father, a lot has been going on back home while we've been gone. Help us to say very tender, very loving words of thanks to those important people who love us and miss us. Bless us Father and those we love. Amen.

Evening Prayers at Sea

Heavenly Father,

These evening prayers come from all of us. Chaplains say the words, but the prayers belong to the ship, to everyone, and come from our hearts more than from our mouths. In some ways none of us really knows how another feels, because each of us must struggle with his own fears, cope with his own problems, hurt from his own pains, search for his own goals, forgive and be forgiven his own failures. In such matters Father, when we seek understanding and hope for encouragement, it is to you that we turn. In moments such as these, we reach beyond ourselves and our troubles to you . . . asking not so much for things, but for a second or two of your presence. Just your slightest touch, and the day will be blessed, the raw spots will be healed and there will be peace in the hours ahead. And so we pray to you Heavenly Father, Almighty, Everlasting God-all of us-giving thanks for this moment, your touch and our healing. Amen.

O Lord our God, we confess that in dealings with our shipmates we often are like a clam, 98% mouth covered with a hard shell. A friend has a problem and rather than listen, we sound off. A job doesn't go quite right and rather than learn, we spout off. Lord, you made us with two ears for every mouth. Help us to take this hint from Your creation. Make us slow to speak and ready to listen, that we may better understand and pull together to get the job done and this great ship safely home. Amen.

Evening Prayers at Sea

Dear God, Somedays its a pleasure to he lave. Blue skies above and blue seas around, No pressing engagements. No last minute deadlines. Some time to play little basketball or cards or Just kick back and relax. For many of us that was the kind of day we enjoyed. Thanks Lord. Amen

Morning Prayers At Sea

A number of chaplains submitted copies of morning prayers for inclusion in this booklet. Although the practice of morning prayer aboard naval vessels is not widespread, there is something to be said for beginning the day at sea with prayer.

Lord, You are Creator of all that is. We come into Your presence this morning with thankful hearts. We give thanks to You for the bounty of Your blessings, for the opportunities of travel, for the sharings between peoples, and for the love of our families and friends. God, we ask Your strength and guidance throughout this day that we may do our best to serve You and each other in all our tasks. Amen.

Father, another day is dawning and we awake refreshed from our night's sleep. Let us begin this day with joyful hearts and work hand-in-hand so that when our tasks are done we may look back and say we did our best together.

Lord, thank you for the opportunities which You have given us, and thank You Lord for our lives and the lives of our families whose love is our strong support. Hear our prayer, O Lord. Amen.

Almighty God, as we stand in Your presence we are humbled at the sight of Your mighty works. When we look at the sunrise and the moonset, we see your handiwork. When we look at the vastness of the mighty ocean, we know Your strength and power. And when we look at ourselves, we know Your love.

Father, be with us and our loved ones throughout this day, and may all that we do be in the service and honor of Your holy name. Amen.

Morning Prayers At Sea

O Lord our God, light up the morning with Your mercy, that we may rejoice and be glad all the day. Father, be our safe harbor from the raging storms and from the demands of our daily lives. Father, be our protected anchorage from the winds of strife and deliver us from the becalmed state of selfish thoughts and moods. Go forth, Lord, and lead the way; let us be still and know that You are God, and that we can find fulfillment in You. Amen.

Father, as we begin this new day which You have made, grant us the assurance of Your presence that we may face today unafraid and with the courage which You alone can give.

Lord, we seek Your holy inspiration. As You inspired the prophets of old, inspire us to stand against what we know is wrong. Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, for the living of this day. Amen.

Father, take our lives and make them as You would have them be. By the discipline of duty, teach us self control. By the lessons of frustrated love, guide us to a holier relation with others. By the insight of loss and sorrow, open to us the doors of understanding. By the gall of pin pricked pride, drive us to a true and humble estimate of ourselves. In the spotlight of reason, drive us to think more clearly, that we may find each morn a dawn for service and a day's time for soul-growth. Thus Father, draw us near to You. Amen.

Lord God, we come into Your presence this morning beseeching Your guidance and support. Be with us Father, in all that we do today, instruct us and support us in making decisions so that whatever we do we may do to the glory of Your holy and divine name. Father, be with our families, protect and support them and loved ones throughout this day, in Your holy name we pray. Amen.

Morning Prayers At Sea

Lord God, You alone are the creator and sustainer of this glorious universe. We thank You, Lord, for the beginning of this new day, in which we can do our best to serve You and to help one another.

Father, grant us the ability this day to see those small things which need our attention, to take the initiative to greet each other with a warm and sincere smile, and to show our love and concern for everyone in all that we do. In Your holy name, we pray. Amen.

Most holy and gracious God, who turns the shadow of night into morning, satisfy us early with your mercy, that we may rejoice and be glad all the day. Let the light of Your countenance calm every troubled thought, and guide our feet into the way of peace. Perfect Your strength in our weakness and help us to worship You in all that we do. Amen.

Almighty God, as we begin this day we thank You for the opportunity of making new friends and seeing new places. Father, grant that we all may come to appreciate the true beauty and meaning that friendship can bring into our lives. Grant also the ability to grow in understanding of other peoples that we may become the vehicles of understanding to others.

Father, as we end this visit, turn our minds and our hands to the tasks before us that we may accomplish them to the best of our ability and to the glory of Your holy and divine name. Amen.

Father, as we face this new day, grant us wisdom, strength and love to serve You in all that we do.

We acknowledge You, Lord, as the creator and ruler of all that is. When we look at the sunrise, we see the beauty of Your handiwork; when we look at the force of the sea, we are aware of Your power and might; and when we encounter one another in love, we know Your love. Thank You God, for our lives and for the world in which we live, in Your holy name we pray. Amen.

Morning Prayers At Sea

Eternal Father, we come to You in prayer at the dawn of this glorious day. We come to You when we are in need and when we are sorrowful. Father, we seek Your forgiveness for not coming to You with our joys and successes as readily as we come to You with our sorrows and failures.

Almighty God, we beseech Your divine and holy presence with our families and loved ones, assure them of our continued love and concern for them. Amen.

Lord, many of us come this morning to this place this gale-beaten ships, arriving at last at a calm and sheltered cove.

Our ropes are frayed from incessant tension...

Our sails are battered by sudden gusts or unexpected hardships...

Our spars are broken where we were unable to withstand the force of temptations...

Our decks are soaked, having been awash with the tears of worry and doubt.

Refit us this morning as we draw close to you in this quiet moment.

Restore us with renewed courage that we each may set sail again, as stout ships able to head high into the wind and hold our own course.

We thank you that we can set our hearts like sextants upon you and navigate even perilous, uncharted seas with confidence because you are our North Star: absolute, constant and dependable. Amen.

Lord, may what we begin today in effort and cooperation be done with your inspiration... continue with your help... and be completed with your guidance. Lord, guide us in our efforts... help us to persevere with faith, courage, and sincerity. Amen.

Morning Prayers At Sea

Proverbs 13:4 "No matter how much a lazy man may want something, he will never get it. A hard worker will get everything he wants. "

O Lord, in whose hands are the sands of time, we awake to the fresh demands of a new day. May we not be empty-handed at the close of day but have our nets filled with cheerful faces, grateful memories, and a knowledge of things well done in your sight. Amen.

Proverbs 13:18 "A man who will not learn will be poor and disgraced. One who listens to correction is respected."

Dear Father, as life moves on and we move on with it, may we have wisdom to accept advice. Let us not stumble over the mistakes of yesterday, nor rest on the laurels of past good works, but strive to perform our duty better. Make us strong in self-control, and may our words and thoughts be acceptable to you. Amen.

Psalms 4:1 "Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness; You have enlarged me in my distress."

We begin this week realizing that there are many unknowns coming our way. There will be thrills, joy, happiness mixed with sadness, sorrow, and mistakes. Dear Father, grant us to receive whatever lot comes our way. We know that when you are for us nothing can destroy us. We begin this week with the confidence of your presence in our midst. Amen.

Habakkuk 3:17-18 "Though the fig tree does not bloom... the olive fails... the fields yield no meat, the flock be cut off and no herd in the stalls: I will rejoice in the Lord..."

Increase our faith dear Father, save us from weak, simpering instability. May we grow in maturity, in our relationship with you, ourselves, and our neighbor. Amen.

Morning Prayers At Sea

Romans 12:21

*"Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."
Dear Father, often it is difficult to return good for evil, right for wrong, love for hatred, kindness for meanness. However, we know that true love works no ill. May we demonstrate today your love in all our actions and attitudes. Amen.*

Genesis 1:31

*"And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good."
Thank you Father for the creations of your hand - May we comprehend that it is all very good. May we use your creation to your honor, our fulfillment, and to bless our fellowman. Amen.*

Matthew 7:7

*"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find knock, and it shall be opened unto you."
Dear Father, teach us to set worthy goals, help us to keep them in focus, strengthen us not to be turned aside by meaningless and mundane chores. Fill us with patience, persistence, and performance. Amen.*

Mark 4:24

*"The measure you give shall be measured again unto you."
Dear Father, we thank you for the full measure this day offers. Let us give in greater measure than we receive. When this day closes may we have the contented satisfaction of a job well done, a life well lived, and a faithfully demonstrated. Amen.*

Matthew 23:11

*"He that is greatest among you shall be your servant."
Dear Father, teach us the value of serving our fellowman. May we be more interested in giving than receiving, in performing than talking, doing for others than in having them do for us; thus, we share who we really are and become our greatest. Amen.*

Morning Prayers At Sea

Psalm 116:12

"What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me?"

Dear Father, such as we have, and all that we are we offer to you today. Assist us to mold the events of our life so that we remain pliable, `growing, and alive. Amen.

1 Corinthians 3:7

"God gives the increase."

Dear Lord, help us grow towards our maximum capacity. Where there is discouragement, give us hope, where there is doubt give us trust, where there is weakness give us strength, where there is hostility give us friendship, where there is laziness give us industry, where there is hate give us love. And so we will beat unity with you, ourselves, and mankind. Amen.

Psalm 116:14

"I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people."

Dear Father, we thank you for the adventure of life which this new week offers. Let our attitudes and activities reflect the vows we have made and the faith we hold. Bless all those who work together today. Amen.

James 1:14

"A person is tempted when he is drawn away and trapped by his own evil desires."

Dear Father, may we never weave a web lest we are entangled in it; dig a pit lest we fall into it; nor set a trap lest we be caught in it. Give us the courage to live honestly, openly, and righteously before you and our shipmates. Amen.

Ecclesiastes 12:1

"Remember now thy creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not..."

Dear Father, grant us the wisdom to commit the strength of our youth to your righteousness, lest our latter days come upon us and we have no pleasure in them. Amen.

Morning Prayers At Sea

James 3:13

"Is there a wise and understanding man among you? He should prove it by his good life, the deeds he performs with humility and wisdom."

Dear Father, we realize that our actions speak so loudly that our words can seldom be heard. Help us to live each day to demonstrate the faith and the love that is within us, that we may experience true contentment and fulfillment. Amen.

Song of Solomon 1:6

"They made me keeper of the vineyards; but mine own vineyards have I not kept."

Dear Father, often we are lost in our own importance ignoring the needs of those for whom we should care. Forgive us for our gross selfishness. Help us to become caring, concerned shipmates, children, husbands, fathers, and friends. Amen.

Psalm 107:2

"Let the redeemed of the Lord say so."

Dear Father, we express our gratitude for your retrieving us often from the pitfalls of life. May we never be ashamed to give answer and evidence of the faith we profess, the promises we claim, and the hope we possess. Amen.

Ecclesiastes 11:7

"Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun."

Good morning Lord, how sweet it is! For some sunrise brings an end to a night of hard work; for others the beginning of the day's labor. In both cases, Father, we rejoice, knowing you are with us. Fill our days with satisfaction, accomplishment, and the knowledge of a job well done. Amen.

Morning Prayers At Sea

James 4:17

*"He that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin."
Dear Father, we thank you for the spark that you have put in all of us. So often we speak without thinking, act without consideration, and do evil rather than good - forgive us. May your image come forth from the words of our mouth and the deeds of our life.
Amen.*

1 Corinthians 14:8

*"If the trumpet gives an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself for the battle?"
Dear Father, thank you for this day of opportunity and service. May we always be positive in our leadership, clear in our instructions, and detailed in our demonstration, using all our resources to the fullest. Amen.*

Matthew 6:33

*"Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness." Dear Father, as we order our priorities today, grant us grace to seek you with our whole hearts. In so doing may our words and actions reflect your character through our conversation and our work.
Amen.*

Proverbs 5:1

*"Pay attention, and listen to wisdom and insight."
Dear Father, we thank you for that great and wonderful computer, our brain. Give us the will to use it more effectively and to fill it with the good, the positive, and the worthy. May we be alert as we guide our body through this day to a more effective and abundant life. Amen.*

Dear Father, we realize that this is the first day of the rest of our life. As we endeavor to grasp each opportunity and awake the potential within us, may we never give up nor be content with less than our best performance. Amen.

11-9

Morning Prayers At Sea

Proverbs 3:5

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Never rely on what you think you know. Remember the Lord in everything you do and He will show you the right way."

With gratitude we begin this day, dear Father. Help us have worthy interests and goals lest life become a dull chore filled with boredom. Let us need no device to aid us, except our trust in you. As the mighty tide of your boundless love moves into our lives, we will find victory and meaning in living. Amen.

Ecclesiastes 10:18

"When a man is too lazy to repair his roof, it will leak, and the house will fall in."

Dear Father, may we care enough for our self to repair the leaks in our moral character, lest we decay from within. Grant us the motivation, the observation, and the articulation that is commensurate with our position of leadership. Amen.

Proverbs 27:4

"Anger is cruel and destructive, but it is nothing compared to jealousy."

Dear Father, as we write today's page in our life, keep us from narrow, arrogant complacency. Open our lives to you and our neighbor. Help us to be understanding, kind, and cheerful, never giving place to anger or jealousy. Let us face today with increased faith in you and with undaunted courage. Amen.

Morning Prayers At Sea

Psalm 103:1,2

*"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits."
Dear Father, we thank you for this great day which you have made. Make us adequate to receive the blessing it holds. Develop our character, strengthen our courage, and intensify our dedication as we live each moment. Amen.*

Micah 6:8

*"He has shown you, O man, what is good, and what does the Lord require of you, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly. with God."
Dear Father, give us judgment to live as we know we should, and not as we want. May we have the backbone to practice those of your principles which we know. We desire that faith, justice, love, and mercy tempered with firmness be incorporated into our daily lives giving us purpose and direction. Amen.*

Joshua 24:14

*"Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve Him in sincerity and in truth..."
Dear Father, we stand in awe at the magnificence and might of your power. Teach us to serve you in sincerity and in truth, never taking lightly your relationship to us. Amen.*

Psalm 9:13

*"Have mercy upon me, O Lord consider my trouble which I suffer ."
Dear Father, we are thankful that you do have mercy and consideration upon us in our trouble. Often we make our own trouble; deliver us from such blunders today. Help us to show the same mercy and consideration that we desire to receive.
Amen.*

Morning Prayers At Sea

Colossians 1:10

*"... Walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God."
Dear Father, we examine our purpose, plans, and performance as we begin this new day. May we be worthy of the space we occupy and the faith we hold. Help us to fill each hour with good work and with increased knowledge of you. Amen.*

Matthew 5:16

*"Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father in heaven."
Dear Father, may all our actions identify us as your children. Make your qualities of love, peace, consideration, and dependability foremost in our character. We pray that the action of our lives will fortify the faith we claim.
Bless those returning from the long weekend today. Amen.*

Job 16:4

*"I also could speak as you do: If I were in your place, and you in mine; I could heap up words against you, and shake my head at you."
Dear Father, teach us compassion, lest we judge our shipmate harshly. Grant us wisdom to give good advice and leadership. Help us to be fair and firm in the direction of our own life. Amen.*

Mark 4:35

*"... let us pass over to the other side."
Dear Father, save us from the cesspool of stagnation and complacency. May we be alert to our need when we are tired for rest, when we are irritated for calming, when we are in a rut for new direction, when we are troubled and hurt for healing, and when our faith falters for renewal. Help us to be whole and well persons.
Amen.*

Luke 11:4

*"Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us."
Dear Father, let us never dehumanize ourselves so that we become unforgiving in our personal and interpersonal relationships. Help us always to be forgiving so that we may be forgiven.
Amen.*

Morning Prayers At Sea

Psalm 27:1

"The Lord is my light and salvation, whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid."

Dear Father, we thank you for the dawn and promise of a new day. Give us courage and strength with the light of wisdom that we may know fullness of life.

Thank you for keeping those who stood watch by night. Now guide those who watch by day. Amen.

Matthew 5:7

"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."

Dear Father, teach us to be merciful, to give the benefit of a doubt, to be concerned. Help us have the quality of self-esteem that will allow us to extend a helpful hand without fear. May the walls that have separated us from fellowship and communication be broken down. Forgive us when we have hidden ourselves from those who need us. Amen.

1 Chronicles 16:29

"Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name ...worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness."

Dear Father, may this first day of the rest of our life be filled with adventure and accomplishment for you, ourselves, and our fellowman. Amen.

Matthew 16:26

"What has a man profited, if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?"

Dear Father, teach us so to order our priorities that we put first things first. May our faith be in Him who made all things, not in the things themselves; in the eternal and not the temporal; in the building up and not in the tearing down. Grant us the wisdom and courage to conquer inner space that the quality of our life may grow. Amen.

Because the world has never been a "safe" place... and never will be... we ask not for the easy job and a soft, comfortable life. Instead, we ask for the strength and the courage to face bravely anything and everything that life with its surprises may yet throw our way... that we may come through these encounters unashamed and with heads held high. Be with us all. Amen.

Morning Prayers At Sea

Good Morning, Lord! We take time out now to thank you for the crisp beauty of this young day. We ask you to help keep us from being bored with the jobs we have to do and with the lives we end up living. Instead, fill us with a sense of challenge that we may be able to face each day with enthusiasm and anticipation of what it may bring into our lives. Be with us all. Amen.

Forgive me those things in my life, O Lord, for which I am today ashamed and help me live today in such a way that the list of these things may not be as long tonight as it must have been last night. Be with us all. Amen.

O Lord God, you alone know what lies ahead for me in this new day... grant that in every hour of it I may remain true to my beliefs in you. Give me the courage to live in this day in accordance with the best that lies within me... keep me today from doing anything you would not want me to do or think or say. Be with us all. Amen.

Some of us are hurting, Lord, deep down inside where we don't allow anyone else to ever really see... others of us are anxious, Lord, worried about what may happen next in our lives... and all of us, whether we admit it or not, need you in our lives. So, come into our hearts, Lord... soothe our hurts, calm our fears, provide for our needs, and hear our prayers. Be with us all. Amen.

Help me to realize, O Lord, that there has to be a reason and a purpose for me to be where I am and doing what I'm doing... make that reason and that purpose clear to me, Lord, and be with us all. Amen.

Give me the courage this day, Lord, to do those things I know I should be doing... give me the strength to keep from doing those things I know I should not be doing... give me the ability to properly tell which is which. Be with us all. Amen.

Morning Prayers At Sea

We acknowledge thee this morning, O Lord, as the source of everything good and clean and decent in our lives. May we this day live our faith in thee the same way we wear our uniforms... unashamed of what either represents... so that the things that we do and the things that we say today may reflect only good, of ourselves... of our country... and of thee, Our God. Be with us all. Amen.

O Lord God, I want to thank you for the beauty of yesterday and the challenge of today. I think I know what's right and what's wrong in my life, God... but I get mixed-up sometimes and I need your help. So be with me today... help me do what's right... help me keep from doing what's wrong... and help me know which is which. Be with us all. Amen.

Bless, guide, and comfort those we love, Lord... wherever they may be... give them the ability to handle wisely whatever problems they may be facing during our absence... and perhaps because of our absence... and bring us all safely together again. Be with us all. Amen.

Special Occasions At Sea

As chaplains, we find ourselves at sea on special days such as Thanksgiving, Christmas, Memorial Day, etc. At such times, our public prayers reflect upon these occasions, their meaning, and their significance as they are observed and celebrated far from home.

Evening Prayer - Thanksgiving

O Lord, it's been a long day - a successful day, but a long day. We've again completed our appointed task -that heavy, necessary obligation that is ours - but at least we've found some time for ourselves, and each other. In a way we were family -trying as best we could to lighten the emotional load we share. We even succeeded in bringing a touch of class to our normally regimented lives. It was good. I thank you, O God, for a country that allows, even encourages us, to pray, to give thanks, and to share our spiritual needs in public fashion. In such moments the sacrifices of the past make sense and the mystical fellowship of free men continues togel and take hold. I ask, O God, that the sacrifices we now make, however limited, may add to the tradition evidenced and honored today. So often, O Lord, the love and service to our fellow man we intend is much greater than the love we actually give. Help us, O Lord, by selfless deeds to make up the difference. Give us a good night. Amen.

Evening Prayer - Thanksgiving

Father, we come to You in prayer on this Thanksgiving Eve. We thank you Lord for the bountiful gifts which we have received, for the blessings of freedom, and support of friends and families, we thank you Lord. Father, You are the One Eternal Creator from whom all blessings do flow. Grant, we beseech You, Your holy presence to everyone. May all creation come to know Your name and give thanks. Amen.

III-]

*Special Occasions At Sea
Evening Prayer - Christmas Eve*

Heavenly Father, open our hearts to hear the song of the angels and to share the spirit of a peaceable Christmas. O Lord, make your salvation known to people the world over. As darkness descends from East to West, raise up your faithful in carols of praise and good cheer.

Cause us to rejoice with them that we have not been abandoned to the night, but are now called to the light - your grace and truth, once wrapped in swaddling clothes and held closely to the chest by those who treasured the gift to mankind that was entrusted to their care and keeping.

*O Lord, we pray for the precious little ones of the earth. Help us to create for them a world of possibility and hope. Keep us from giving up and giving in -for they feel the touch of our decision. Bless us all in our many moods this night, O Lord, and grant us your peace.
Amen.*

Evening Prayer - Christmas

O Lord, this is going to be a difficult few weeks for many of us. Christmas is family time. Even more, many of those rough, hard-to-handle emotions that we so deeply felt when we left home in August are beginning to surface again. They are tough to keep down. At times, O Lord, remembering is not such a great gift.

O God, I pray that you would help us to deal with our loneliness over the next few weeks. Being separated as often as we are, we become expert at diversion and denial. And yet, there must be a better way. Keep us from glossing over the truth of our present situation. For every gain there is a loss, and right now we are paying a price for our sacrifice and our chosen profession. Make this for us the "fullness of time." Grant us rest this night. Amen.

Evening Prayer - Christmas

Almighty God, as this day draws to a close we confess that we have failed to keep alive the joy of Christmas; we have said or done things to one another out of spite or fear or anger. Father, forgive our shortcomings and create concern for each other.

*Christmas, we know, is not a day, but a spirit, a way of life. Let us lead that life and let the Christmas Spirit shine forth in our lives. Be with our families and loved ones, protect them, guide them and assure them of our love and concern, in Your holy name we pray.
Amen.*

Special Occasions At Sea

Evening Prayer - Christmas

Almighty and Eternal Father, we thank you for this Christmas season, even though we are separated from our families and friends. Father, we thank You for the true meaning of Christmas and Your divine and holy concern for us. Lord, we pray that all peoples may come to know Your love and presence in their lives. Hear our prayers, O God. Amen.

Morning Prayer - Christmas

Lord God, we ask Your blessing upon us this day as we begin yet another part of our voyage. Grant us, Lord, the ability, strength and wisdom to meet the challenge of the new day and all that it may bring.

Father, we thank you for the joy of the Christmas season and the opportunity to share it with others. We pray that the true spirit of Christmas may become and remain our guiding light throughout the approaching New Year. Amen.

Evening Prayer - New Year's Eve

Almighty Father, this evening marks once more the transition of one year into another, and again prompts the reflection of where we have been and where we are going. The past is evident, the future, as usual, is unknown. Please grant, Father, that whatever this future year may hold, may it be one of continuing creation, so that, in union with our fellow man, we may develop lives marked by peace and good will to all. Amen.

Special Occasions At Sea
Evening Prayer - New Year's Eve

O God, how does one adequately sum up a year of days? How do you bring to mind and to prayer those memories, those children of-time, that crowd our present past and give definition to what we have, become? Tonight, O God, help us in our attempt to bring together, rummage through, and draw out the feelings and thoughts which cause us to recognize our common community and our oneness in you. In prayer, O Lord, bring us to see that emotional cloth which covers the contours of another year in our lives so that we might find ourselves complete, dressed as servants of your holy will.

O Lord, whatever comprises our history together - our fears and sorrows, joys and successes - we bring before your presence this night, this eve of another year. For you are the Ancient of Days and the Eternal Yes - the same today as you were yesterday and will be in our hoped for tomorrow. O God, we commend ourselves and those we so deeply love to your gracious care. Keep us in your hands and bless us both now and forevermore. Grant us your peace this night. Amen.

Evening Prayer - New Year's Day

O Lord, we plan and purpose and yet in actuality we know little of the future -that empty end of the hour-glass that is filled by the events and emotions that mark the days to come. We ask this night, O God, that you would lift from us the weight of the past year and allow us again to renew our vision of a world in which we can celebrate the gift of life which you have given us.

O Lord, we are presently surrounded by an example of man's taken-for-granted dark side. Because our heads and hearts lie elsewhere, it is easy for us to fashion an image of ourselves as mere spectators in the ugly game before us, tourists among the trenches. O Lord, help us to place ourselves in proper perspective, for we share a common need for your forgiveness. As difficult as it is to face and find, bring peace to this land and bring us and those who are to follow, safely home so that we - and all - might indeed have a good and blessed new year. For tonight, bring us rest. Amen.

Special Occasions At Sea Evening Prayer Holy Week

We come to You, O Heavenly Father, in this Holy Week. Holy Week brings so much to mind; the passover, the passion story, pain and, suffering. Help us to see how suffering builds character and makes deep our faith. Make us to know joy, and give us strength so that we are able to face sorrow. Help us to rejoice with our shipmate who received news of a newborn baby. Help us to feel the pain with our shipmate who has received news of the death of a loved one. Amen.

Evening Prayer - Yom Kippur

Lord God, for thousands of years communities of worshippers have expressed what everyone of us knows: sin and evil are ever present companions on life's way. While some persons are more sensitive to their sin, all honest men know its power. It doesn't matter whether we call it breaking the commandments, missing the mark, defiance, alienation, estrangement or self-centeredness, sin is a persistent reality. Everyone of us has known the experience of Paul.- "the good that I intend to do I don't do, and the evil that I try to avoid I fall into. "Even we escape the more blatant sins of cruelty, theft, lying, cheating, or murder none of us can claim with a straight face that we have always cared for others as much as for our own selves. We have not always treated others with the kindness we miss when others have acted harshly against us.

We have learned to live with our sin in a world where moral purity is a luxury few can afford. If we had to bear the full weight of our failures piled one on top of the other we would be crushed. You are a just God holding us responsible for our acts. Forgive us we pray and cleanse us. Take from us the oppressive burden of guilt. Create within us a new heart and a right spirit. You are a God of mercy treating us far better than we deserve. So on this day of atonement, this Yom Kippur, blot out our sins, cast them behind your back and remember them no more. Amen.

*Special Occasions At Sea
Evening Prayer - Rosh Hashanah*

Lord God, on this first day of Rosh Hashanah, may we cast our burdens and sins into the depths of the sea, and may love and justice rule in every heart and mind throughout the world, dwell amongst your troubled people and make our lives your home;

Call forth your peacemakers from every land - and enable all warring factions to lay down their arms and in unity reconstruct this your ancient land to its glory - a land of milk and honey where all faiths and all people will live in peace and harmony.

Steady each and every man on the (Ship)- that every skill and talent, every duty, every watch and every evolution - may be exercised with professional pride and confidence.

Remember your presence with us as we continue our task. Amen.

Evening Prayer - Sabbath

Help us each Sabbath day, O Lord, to lay aside our worries and cares and turn to you - praising your Name in voice and song for your many blessings. Cause us to know that the truly grateful man dances across the fullness of life and leaps beyond the void to begin the someday process of holding court and conversation with his Creator.

O God, we ask that our prayers, however halting and humble, would echo from quark to quasar to catch the attention of the Lord of the Universe, the God who holds in his grasp the mysteries of life and dark death.

O Lord, let prayer be our window to the dimension beyond dimensions and the word picture that opens to us a world still unknown - yet hinted at when we discover the calm and steady voice within that stills our anxieties and causes us one day to finally get the point - that you are the object of our struggle and the source of the gift called life. Grant us peace this night, O God, and be with our brothers still ashore. Amen.

Special Occasions At Sea
Evening Prayer - All Saints Day

O Lord, for some of us today is All Saints Day. I know that in your eyes every creature is precious and, if chosen to be so, a saint. Yet, Lord, I still appreciate those among us who have become heroes of the faith. I think not only of marbled, pedestal bound figures, but also of the lady in Beirut whose son has died at the hands of revengeful men and yet refuses to seek or return the disfavor, or the young man aboard made helpless by contracted separation who loads on his back another pound of family displeasure and yet, trusting you, moves on. Saints aplenty, O God, marching to distant dreams and visions missed by most. O Lord, help us to understand this night that the best way to get faith across is to wrap it in a person. Saints are not simply for the fabled past, but are in fact the present tense of God- living examples of Being and blessing at work in the world. Bless them and us all. O God, and grant us rest this night. Amen.

Evening Prayer - Delayed Return

You know us well, O Lord, and therefore we can't hide what we feel. Disappointment clouds over us tonight. Most of us have been here before, and still delay strikes a low basso cord in our ranks. O God, at times we have trouble accepting what we must. We tire of giving, just giving. We've made it thus far. We've had our tragedy. We simply want to bring our time apart to its proper conclusion. In effect, P Lord, our life comes down to yet another confrontation with reality. As always, we need you to lighten our burden. O God, allow us to share our frustration - however felt - without forsaking loyalty or our proven appreciation of the real world we face and daily serve. Just the fact that we're going home is enough. In actuality, O God, our deepest concerns are for our families and friends. They often don't have the support which we have. They've had enough. Enough! O Lord, hold them when we can't. Whatever, Lord, one thing we know for sure - March will indeed come in like a lion. The roars and cheers of well-deserving sailors and marines will be heard across the land. Home at last! Home at last! Give us peace this night. Amen.

Special Occasions At Sea
Evening Prayer - Start of Deployment

Almighty God, our thoughts turn to you as we sail for distant places. You know the future and we are confident that you will defend us from all adversities to body and soul, if we put our trust in you. Watch over wives, children, and loved ones at home through all the days of our separation, that our return may be a blessed homecoming. Enable each of us to accept cheerfully our place of duty within this ship and, with true devotion, attend to our appointed task as a service with good purpose. Grant us the ability to maintain a good ship's spirit, the fortune of a happy voyage, and a safe return. Amen.

Evening Prayer - Start of Deployment

Almighty and Everlasting God, as we begin our deployment to we are keenly aware of our feelings and emotions. We are excited with a sense of adventure; we are still a little numb from the shock of physical separation from our loved ones; and we are a little apprehensive at what the future holds for us.

Minister to us, Father, according to our need. Give us the strength to do our jobs, give us a spirit of co-operation and harmony, grant to us and our families your protection, your guidance, and your peace. Amen.

Special Occasions At Sea
Evening Prayer - Start of Deployment

Eternal God, it's happened, so smoothly, so beautifully, so well that day, for so many among us, that very first day, at sea. The days of preparation, the weeks and even months of long hours and tedious labor by so many are now somehow well worth it. Some among us will work while others sleep as we make our way across the silent seas. Bless those who stand watch this night as well as those who sleep that both may have a sense of satisfaction and pride at being a vital part of this magnificent ship and its marvelous crew. You have blessed us richly, bless us still by a grateful awareness of your creative power and love. Amen.

Evening Prayer - Start of Deployment

Eternal God, today we set sail again. As always there was both joy and sadness. Increasingly we say good-bye to shipmates who have been with us through memorable experiences, and we welcome new men who have come to assume their responsibilities though not to take their places. Human life is such a unique thing. No two of us are the same, yet all of us share the same needs for acceptance and recognition, accomplishment and satisfaction. Our lives are like our days. Each one has something that sets it apart even while it is made up of the same number of seconds, minutes and hours. Keep us open to the appreciation of each person's distinctiveness even as we engage in operations or exercises which require our becoming part of something larger than ourselves. We thank you, O God, that you haven chosen to make us so much alike but with such interesting differences. Amen.

Evening Prayer - Start of Deployment

O Lord, it's good to be at sea, to establish a new routine. It is also painful to leave those we love. The tears still linger. As the days and nights unfold cause us to remember, to enjoy our life when we can, and to relax when we must. Keep us from being and becoming faceless people. Add spirit to our muscle and bone. In the end bless our journey and bring us safely home when our time and task is done. Grant us a good night. Amen.

*Special Occasions At Sea
Evening Prayer - Start of Deployment*

Now we can say we are truly beginning, O Lord. The Marines are on board - our time has come. We are underway. We are complete. Bless us, O God. Help us to mold ourselves into a like-minded community, respecting our differences because we respect each other. As we are bearers of the sword, allow us ultimately to bring peace, for we seek to affirm rather than to negate life. These are not empty words, O God, for we are taking the point - we approach the front line of history. What we do is very real. Yet, when all is said and done, cause us to understand that while we plan and determine and act - you still remain the Lord of history. Your will be done. Amen.

Evening Prayer - Start of Deployment

Heavenly Father: As we spend our first night at sea on this particular voyage, we pray that you will be with and sustain our families and loved ones whom we have left behind. As the hours of darkness stretch before us, give those who stand watch through the night strength equal to their tasks. When the time for sleep comes, now or later, give each of us a good rest and a refreshed feeling on the morrow, we pray. Amen.

Evening Prayer - End of Deployment

Our Father, ageless God of all those who go down to sea in ships, on this last night before homeport we thank you for the constancy of care you have shown us during the past days at sea. We know you were there in the middle of it all and we thank you for seeing us through complicated and dangerous evolutions. Your strength has become our strength whenever we turned to our appointed tasks. Forgive us our thoughtless pride which led us to assume, at times, that we were working all on our own, or riding a streak of good luck. We have had some bad moments here and there, but you were holding us in your hands and we are truly grateful. As we return from sea to shore and home to families and friends, help us to shift from the character we adopt at sea once again into being whole men with eyes to see, ears to hear, arms to hold -- men once again living to love. We know you would have us be more like you, O Lord, so help us on our homeward way and bless us and our loved ones with happy reunion. Amen.

*Special Occasions At Sea
Evening Prayer - End of Deployment*

Eternal God, as we watch the nightfall around us, we find ourselves searching for your presence. We are filled with mixed feelings about coming home. Sometimes we feel good about the end of the deployment but other times we feel that we need more time to get ready for our homecoming. But then we think of the new day that you 'have promised. So tonight we commit to Your care all our cares for You care for us. Amen.

Evening Prayer - End of Long Line Period

Lord, may the end of a long line period be marked by a simple sentiment--gratitude for what we are--safe, and gratitude for those who made it so--our shipmates. Amen.

Evening Prayer - End of Deployment

Almighty God, our thoughts turn to you as we sail toward home again. Months ago we rolled up our sleeves to get into a dirty fight. Most of the time we didn't seem to be as close to you as we used to be. Well, Lord, we've had our time away from the finer things in life, but now we're going back. Back to loved ones who count upon us to be whole men and not just fighters.

Help us shift gears and make the transition to being more human and more manly again. Steady us up. Open our eyes to see, our ears to hear, our arms to hold, and our lives to love once again. We know you would have us be more like this Lord, so help us on our homeward way. Amen.

*Special Occasions At Sea
Evening Prayer - End of Deployment*

The Psalmist says of us:

"They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; These see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep." 0 And let us praise the Lord for this day, because we come to him with pride in our accomplishments, with thanksgiving that we have been kept safe, and with hopefulness that our future may be one of continued achievement.

Lord our God, we thank you for joy this day, and ask you to bless our work in preparing for the future. Encourage us when we need it, comfort us when we hurt, and pour your love on our Nation and on those we love, this day and forever. Amen.

Evening Prayer - End of Deployment

Lord, as we begin to wind-up the cruise, we thank you for your help over the past months. At sometime-or-other all of us were hurting either in mind or body or soul. We are thankful that you didn't CASREP us, but helped us hang in there. Help us Lord, now to finish-up in style. Amen.

Special Occasions At Sea
Evening Prayer - End of Deployment

Our Father who art in heaven, we pause now to give Thee our thanks... For Thy providence over us during our weeks on the sea. For families and friends and homes to return to, the thought of which fills our hearts with warm anticipation. For close friendships formed while out... For returning home a little wiser and more appreciative than we were when we left... O Thou who hast given us so much... Give us now a grateful heart.
Amen.

Evening Prayer - End of Deployment

Eternal God, we pray tonight with the anticipation and excitement of men who having shared the labors and learning, now look forward to the joys and comforts of home. We have learned much about our ship, her capabilities, her idiosyncrasies, her performance in different situations. We have learned even more about one another – our strengths and weaknesses, the points at which we are sensitive or vulnerable, our personal hurts or public pride. We know ourselves a bit better, also. We know too well that none of us are gods. But, we know that to be a man is great; even a man with fantasies, fears and failures. Help us to accept one another without the necessity of making others over into a likeness of ourselves. Let us receive from others such acceptance as will set us free to strive after the best of which we are capable.

While our public prayers will not be shared for awhile, help us to continue our private conversation with you. For you alone are our God, the Lord and giver of life. From you we have come and to you we will ultimately return. We have been given the privilege of being creators with you of our destinies for which we bear the responsibility of gratitude and the accountability of fulfillment. As wise men before us, we pray; "Protect us all the day long of this troublous life until the day is spent and the evening shadows lengthen and the noise of life is hushed and the fever of life is over and our work is done." Amen.

Special Occasions At Sea
Evening Prayer - End of Deployment

Dear Lord, as we end this long deployment, we lift up our prayers of thanksgiving. You have watched over us and our loved ones. You have helped us to make this ship a good home away from home. You have brought into our lives, shipmates who have taught us how to suffer misfortunes with moral victories. You have calmed the seas and quieted the winds and during times of perilous storms have protected us with Your Divine Power.

As we turn our thoughts homeward and breathe a prayer for our loved ones, we thank you that we have done our duties well and have made our mark with the Fleet. Amen.

Evening Prayer - Mid-Deployment

O Lord, it was another day of dangerous, but necessary labor for many of our crew as we spread rubbery fingers across the rushing waters to regain our strength. Thank you, O Lord, for your protective hand and yet another reminder that we still retain connections to the outside world -those umbilical-like ties to loved ones and land that continue to sustain us.

O God, as we approach the half-way point of our present voyage, I sense that stress brought on by long, tedious days and nights and the time-lengthened distance from family and friends is beginning to catch up with us. We carry around August 23 feelings like an old bag of potatoes - dried, heavy, but still alive.

O Lord, teach us the skill of emotional survival. Grant us the grace of time and place for ourselves. Give us the wisdom of respecting each other's needs to the same degree we demand and require his skills. Give us a calm and peaceful rest. Amen.

*Special Occasions At Sea
Evening In Port*

*O God, help us expect to receive something from you now in this moment of pause. Help us to open up to every possibility of what you have in store for us. You have promised us that if we ask, believing, we will receive. Okay, Lord, we are open to you and we ask these things: Don't let us face tomorrow with attitudes which permit us to do less than our best today or yesterday.
Give us new spirits: We need them, Lord.*

Take away our repressions and depressions and give us a song to sing tomorrow. Keep us and those we love in your watchful care. Give us the gift of quiet rest for both body and soul. Amen.

Evening In Port

The busy daytime activity of this ship draws to a close, O Lord God and the relaxation and rest of night draws around us. Quiet the strivings of our hearts and bring peace to our souls. Create in us an appreciation for the things of the spirit and a tenderness in dealing with the precious values of life. May we not make sport of your power, nor discredit the workings of your spirit in this world. Amen.

*Special Occasions At Sea
Evening In Port*

Eternal God, there are many men on this vessel. In our years of youth we find we want to get out there in the world and explore; we must discuss our doubts and we must examine our beliefs. This is exciting. But, Lord, the temptation that is resident in each of us is to put off making some basic commitments in our lives. We rationalize our delays by saying we are searching. We find it easy to delay moving into the gusto of life until suddenly we discover that life is passing us by. May each of us firmly fix in our minds that we are no longer children and that we need to consider seriously the important issues and decisions in life. Father, to make the most of life and to make it more meaningful now and for the future, teach each of us to see that the present is the best time to think about our beliefs, doubts, fears, and values, and to explore the true meaning of life. Amen.

Evening In Port

Eternal Father, sometimes the jobs on this ship assigned to me seem so small and insignificant that they hardly seem worth doing. But will you help me to do those minor jobs faithfully and in doing them may I find that the responsibilities given me later will become broader and more challenging. Help me to know that the first experiences are necessary in order to do a good job at bigger tasks. May each of us always do our best with the abilities you, O God, have given to us. Amen.

Evening In Port

God, its hard to know who is wetter, the men in the boats or the men on the lines who have moved so much cargo so faithfully. Strengthen them we pray. This morning we saw a rainbow off the portside of the ship while to starboard the clouds were dark and rain showers were intense. We thought of Noah and the promise and hope the rainbow held for him and his family. His world had been destroyed and everything had to begin again. The rainbow was a sign from you that the rebuilding would be worth all the hard work. We also thought of Kermit the Frog and the rainbow connections. Amidst the darkness of misunderstanding or ridicule, there is a beauty and symmetry where people live and work together in hope. So whether you speak to us through Noah or Kermit may we hear your voice and see your sign and be filled with hope. Amen.

*Special Occasions At Sea
Evening in Port*

Lord, I guess you know what a really "fantastico" time most of our men had in . It was really great. And I think for the most part, it showed us how really nice it is to get along with other people who are different from us. It's kind of like "symbiosis," being all interrelated. There are at least two kinds of symbiotic living arrangements in your world, Lord, parasitism and mutualism. Parasites live or sponge or take advantage of other plants, animals, or even humans. But man must live together, not by parasitism but by mutualism - by working and playing together for the mutual advantage of both, not taking all you can get, and saying "to hell with the other person." And it's not just the ability to get along with our neighbors, but it's the fact that we cannot live without them. It's like having a "thing going." We sure had a "thing going" with the people of Lord. Thanks. Amen

Evening in Port

Night before last, Lord, out on the landing waiting for the launch to bring me back to the ship, I watched a little scene being played out. There were two sailors, one must have had enough pisco to float this ship, he was really soused, but happy and not making any trouble. There was another guy there, who was sober, but he was a do-gooder. He was afraid that this other fellow is going to freeze, so he takes his blouse off and tries to get the drunk to put it on, "for his own good." The more the one fellow tries to put his coat on the other guy, the more hostile the other fellow gets, and for a few moments I thought there was going to be a fight. The do-gooder thought it was his bounden duty, his right to "save" the other from his misery. Well, Lord, we all like to do good, and we should, but there is a time and a place and a way. Someone said one time, "I found me a place where I can do good without doing any harm." I think that's what we all need, Lord. Help us to do good, without doing any harm. Amen.

*Special Occasions At Sea
Prayer for Entering Port*

Lord, we thank you for our safe return to port. The shelter of this harbor reminds us of the haven of rest we have in you. We are pleased we have given a good account of ourselves in these trials. It really feels good to do well Lord. And to hear the Bravo-Zulu: Well done! Grant we may always please you as well, that in that day you will say to us: Well done, thou good and faithful servant. Amen.

First Evening Prayer at Sea

Did you hear it Lord? Did you catch the crescendo of excitement that burst upon us when all the planning, and building and training came to fruition in the announcement, "Underway!" Underway! the completion of the builder's dream. The final exam for the designer and all the craftsmen. The "at last" moment for those whose life is the way of the sea and who do their work plying ships upon great waters. We are intruders out here, Lord. But we feel secure because we have learned what the seas require of us; and we have built this ship to conform to this alien place. It bespeaks our respect for the power of the sea, and you who command the wind, the waves and the tides on which we move.

Grant we never take you for granted, or the laws by which we survive in this place. Grant a sense of satisfaction to all who have worked so hard in these successful trials.

Help all of our guests to feel welcome. Bless those who received messages of sorrow and sickness today. Lift them out of their grief; heal those who are ill. Be present with those who watch for all of us during the long night. Care for those whom we love. And one more thing, Lord, let there be peace in our time. Amen.

Community Occasions

Navy Chaplains are frequently invited to offer prayers of invocation and benediction for various community occasions. The following prayers are presented to spur your imagination and to provide examples of what some chaplains have done.

Civic Group - American Red Cross

O Gracious and Heavenly Father, we pause and bow our heads before you to humbly ask thy Blessing and to give thanks for the goodness you have shown to us. To assist us to overcome our human weaknesses and needs, you have urged us to feed the hungry and give drink to the thirsty, and to aid the poor and needy. May your blessings be graciously bestowed upon our American Red Cross, and upon those who have accepted in such a special way, the fulfilling of your admonitions. Remember especially in your love, these volunteers, who give so much of their time and talent to your service and to their fellowman. Amen.

Civic Group

Eternal Father, we are humbly grateful for the good and gracious land in which we live. We are grateful for the earth that is our home, and for the sea and air in which we have our being. As we recall with pride this evening the courage and initiative of those who have found excitement and adventure in the exploration of air and space... we are grateful for their success, and for the knowledge that they have brought to us, which has given us new ways of living, and made this life of ours on earth a better thing. Eternal Father, may we pray for your continued grace and support in our human effort to explore and to understand the universe that you have made. Amen.

*Community Occasions
Civic Association*

Thank you for the privilege of praying the invocation tonight. Whatever your religious persuasion and background, let us take a moment together to invite the Spirit of God to be present. One of my earnest hopes is that Almighty God might have a hand in the development of this community.

LET US PRA Y.. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Almighty God, ruler of heaven and earth, Heavenly Father: Your servant and king, David, once wrote, "the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof." We thank you, Lord, for the land, and all the things you have created.

We thank you especially for creating this beautiful part of the earth which we call home. Help us to be good stewards of it. Yet, more importantly, we thank you for each other. We pray that you will help us to be the kind of people for which we were created. Help us to learn to have better fellowship with each other. May we here in (Location) be an example to others as we live together in freedom, creating a spirit of brother and sisterhood among peoples of different backgrounds. May the American Dream exist here now and forever. Thank you God who creates among men and women real togetherness. Amen.

Civic Meeting

Father God...

You know why we are here. You know the hearts of all men. Remind us today of the urgency of being prepared to serve our fellow human beings in time of need. Help us, as helping agents, always to be available to the collective, as well as the individual, needs of others in times of emergency and when people are in stressful and hurting situations. Give us an understanding of the reasons why we exist and serve. We affirm today, O Lord, that a better community and a better America begins with us. Bless now this gathering. Amen.

*Community Occasions
Little League Game*

Almighty God, Lord of the Universe, Our Heavenly Father, as we pause now in a moment of prayer, we recognize that you are the source of all life and animation and that in You we live and move and have our very existence. We pray now for the Little League that Your Spirit would under gird its administrators, the coaches and managers, and all those involved in this growing and developing of youthful bodies.

Bless every family represented here today and especially the players coming together in this sports program. May they give of their best, and have a good time in the good spirit of athletic competition. Amen.

Graduation

Our Eternal God, You who are the creator and sustainer of our universe, we pause here this day to recognize You as the source of all knowledge. Within these walls many have learned the wisdom You give to mankind and many have discovered unlimited potential which You have placed in us all. Bless these students with a continuing desire to grow in wisdom and understanding of their world, their fellows and themselves. Bless also their teachers who have so unselfishly shared God-given knowledge and skills... May the candles they lit in these boys and girls always burn bright to light up the darkness in our world. In Your holy name we pray. Amen.

*Community Occasions
Graduation*

Who taught the bird to fly, And the tree upward to grow? Who taught the river to flow, And the sea waves to roar? Who taught the sun to rise, And the earth to grow food for the living? Who taught life the art of living, And the mind to perceive things and know? Who taught man to write and compose, And what drives him to feel and hope? Who organized knowledge to feed the soul, And established discipline, That our behavior may be controlled? All of us are students born to be taught, And to be guided to our set goals. In this graduation commencement, The students are receiving their rewards After many years of hard work. And now they are ready to face the reality of life. They used their talents well which God has Given them; and therefore, they ought to rejoice in reaping the fruits of their labor. Let us thank the Lord our God, who has given us our bodies and minds, And let us be grateful to Him for His love and compassion. Amen.

*Community Occasions
Graduation*

Eternal God of life and truth, at this commencement season we commit to you the most precious treasure of our home and nation -these boys and girls of the graduating class. With them we thank you for the hopes and labors and sacrifices of their families, for the long expectations and devoted efforts of their teachers, and for the unstinted support and abiding confidence of this community. May your blessing go with them as they graduate on to higher grades and further education. May they look upon this day as one of the first of a series of unending graduations into ever higher experiences of wonder. Amen.

Cub Scouts

O Lord, the family is the only true institution that has the power to build new civilizations, and to cultivate new cultures. It has the power to bring up new responsible generations to guard and protect the rights of all the living beings in this world. Therefore, O Lord, bless the family, and bless all the Cub Scouts, their sponsors, their parents, their brothers and sisters, their relatives and their friends. Also, we beseech you to bless the food and drink which we are about to receive for you are holy and blessed. Amen.

High School Football Game

Almighty God, Lord of the Universe, Our Heavenly Father, as we pause now in a moment of prayer, we recognize that you are the source of all life and animation and that in You we live and move and have our very existence. We remember the words of the Psalmist, "the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof."

We pray for our schools - that your Spirit would undergird the administrators, those who teach, and all others involved in the education process. May they impart not only academics, but patriotism, friendship, and a sense of spiritual morality. Though we observe the separation of church and state, we recognize that our roots lie in theism. May we ever remember that.

Bless every family represented here tonight. Be with the coaches, their staff, and especially the players coming together in this sport's program. May they give of their best, and have a good time in the spirit of competition. Amen.

*Community Occasions
Elementary PTA*

Father God, thank you for the many gifts You have given to us. Thank you especially for the friendship and service expressed in this organization. Help us all to be more useful in fulfilling Your purpose of being peacemakers and the purpose of assisting in the proper education of our children.

May those gathered here tonight be guided by Your help and strength. May they look to no reward other than the good feelings that come by helping others.

We pray for all our schools - that Your Spirit would undergird the administrators, those who teach, and all others involved in the education process. May they impart not only academics, but patriotism, friendship, and a sense of morality.

Bless now every family represented here and may this be a most productive meeting. Amen.

Elementary PTA

Father, God, we know that we are different in so many ways. We are all individuals with our own particular backgrounds and our own particular needs. And yet, our Father, we recognize how much alike we are. Give us proper direction as we seek unity of purpose for our service in the proper education of our children. Take away any confusion and create a deep sense of direction. Give us understanding of each other and the needs of others.

We affirm tonight that a better school, a better community, and a better America begins with us. Bless now every family represented here. Amen.

Ladies' Night

Let us pray to the Lord.

O Lord, the family is the cornerstone upon which our society stands. We entreat you to bestow your love, mercy and care upon the families, members & supporters of the club. We ask you, O Lord, to bless us and the food and the drink which we are ready to receive from Your bounty, for You are holy and blessed now and forever. Amen.

Community Occasions

Heart Association

The heart that feels love is in agony

For those whom it loves are suffering.

The heart that knows its friend is in pain.

For they are in emotional turmoil.

The heart that feels sorrow is weary,

For those who lost their loved ones and are alone.

The heart that feels sympathy for humanity, is limping along the road, for it is sick and depressed.

May the hand of the Lord reach out and touch it, bless it, and then heal it.

And may the hand of man be more generous and skilled, to aid the ailing heart;

That it may live longer - to thank God and man -for it now feels a reason for its Life.

Hence, it shall love, forever and ever. Amen.

New Organization

"If the Lord does not build the house, the builders labor in vain."

O Lord, you established the earth and the heaven, and all are your handiwork; and you make them all in wisdom.

O Lord, our God, look upon this newly formed association, and guide its members by your wisdom to reach their goals. Make this organization prosperous, and give it the strength to help those in need of assistance in vocational training, and let it be an instrument of good fellowship, and of inspired hope and a place for sound ideals.

O Lord, our God, let Your Holy Spirit be upon us and bless us all. Amen.

After Banquets

We thank you, O Lord of heaven and earth for enriching our souls and bodies with Your love and grace.

We thank you for the drink and the food which we received from Your bounty.

We lift our hearts up to You; hear our prayers. Be with us. Save our nation from moral corruption. Fill our hearts with faith and justice.

For You are good, and unto You we ascribe glory now and forever. Amen.

Community Occasions

Chamber of Commerce

Let us pray to the Lord.

Let us thank the Lord our God for His blessings.

Let us acknowledge His gifts to us.

Let us do His will at all times in order to be called truly His children.

The Lord is our guide in time of crisis, and in time of peace.

So let us call upon His holy name when we are in need of him, for He is our God.

We thank You, O Lord, for listening to our prayer.

We thank You for Your gifts; and we thank You for protecting our souls from evil. Amen.

Prayer at Meals

Eternal Father, for the continued blessing of Heaven we give you thanks. As you feed our bodies so may our minds partake of that which is wholesome and pure. With this physical and mental nourishment grant that we may so live in a way that brings honor to the corps, our country, and ourselves. Amen.

Community Occasions

Prayer at Meals

Lord, as we remember the trip You made to Jerusalem to face the cross, come travel with us as we face our trials and testing grounds. Be with us through this day and at this meal. Amen.

Prayer at Meals

They that hunger shall eat and be satisfied, they that seek after the Lord shall praise Him; their hearts shall live forever. Bless us, U Lord, and these Your gifts of which we are about to partake, for You are blessed and glorified now and forever. Amen.

Prayer at Meals

Our Father, we are mindful of those who have friends but no food... and those who have food but no friends. We thank you this day that we have both. Help us to befriend the friendless and to share our substance with those who hunger. Amen.

Prayer at Meals

We approach you in reverence tonight, Lord, as we prepare to share this meal with each other. Let your presence be felt in our midst by our speech... by our appreciation... and by our respect for each other. Amen.

Community Leaders

Let us pray:

U Lord, let your mercy be upon us, and let your love be in our hearts. Guide us to know the truth in this life, and help us in the time of decision making.

O Lord, these community leaders are assembled to express their good faith and willingness to serve their fellow men according to their ability. Help them to achieve their task successfully. Guide them to know your will at all times. Fill their minds with useful knowledge.

We ask you, O Lord, to bless these earthly gifts which we are about to receive for the nourishment of our bodies, and take away evil from us and our families. Amen.

Community Occasions

Ecumenical Gathering

O Lord, thank you for the opportunity that brings us together to explore better ways to serve those who believe in your holy name.

So we beg you:

To give us the wisdom to make the right decisions in the right time.

To give us the courage to carry out our duties wherever we are.

To give us patience to ease our frustration and difficulties.

To give us insight to avoid misjudging our fellow men.

To give us power and the humility to respect one another as human beings.

To give us the knowledge to understand each other at all times.

To give us the proper means and methods to serve those who are in need of our help with joy and gladness. Amen.

Convention

O Lord our God, let Your Holy Spirit be present in this Convention. Guide the delegates to do Your will. Grant them the spirit of love and tolerance. Let them be instruments of Your love and of Your peace. And by doing that, they will glorify Your Holy Name now and forever. Amen.

Church Meeting

O Lord our God, guide us to be wise and open-minded in discussing matters of importance to the well-being of your Church. Direct us in our service to others. Be with us when we are in need of You, for You are our God, and to You we ascribe glory now and forever. Amen.

Blessing of the Food

Bless us, O Lord, our food and drink which we are about to receive from Your bounty.

Bless this house and those who live in it, granting them health, peace and progress: For you are good and to You we ascribe glory now and forever. Amen.

Community Occasions

Before Meeting

O Lord our God, in time of peace and in time of crisis, help us to understand one another. And let us be mindful of the needs of others. Let us learn to be patient, fair and tolerant in our views and convictions, in our discussion and in our deliberation in all matters. Guide us, O Lord our God, to do Your will now and forever. Amen.

Family Day

O King of light, on this day of light, Grant our families your love and compassion. Grant us and our families joy, peace and wisdom. Prosper our ways, and heal our infirmities.

We pray you to touch our hearts with your love and care. We pray you to protect us, and to shield us from evil

We pray you to respond to our petitions with your fatherly affection and mercy.

Bless us and our families, O Lord, on this FAMILY DAY:

Brighten our hearts to enjoy your gifts, and to praise your holy name now and forever. Amen.

Benediction-Interfaith Meeting

We thank You, O Lord our God, for Your heavenly and earthly gifts which we have received from Your bounty.

Thank You for Your love and care with which You have provided us.

Thank You for giving us Your blessings in this assembly in order to discuss matters of importance to You and to Your Holy Church.

Thank You for providing us with a responsible leadership to minister to the well-being of the community. Amen.

Community Occasions

Benediction-Parish Dinner

*Thank you, O Lord, for guiding us towards achieving our goals.
Thank you for giving us the opportunity to rise in the morning
and appreciate life. Thank you for your heavenly and earthly gifts
which you have granted us.*

*Thank you for your love and compassion for mankind. You are a
good God, and to You we ascribe glory now and forever. Amen.*

Miscellaneous

*Increase our faith, Lord... increase our faith... It is so easy to
forget, Like a piece of sand on the beach, Or a drop of water in the
ocean, A moment in eternity, To be absorbed into what we are and
what we do, So easy to be so involved in the gift that we sometimes
forget the giver. Help us not to forget. Amen.*

Miscellaneous

*Many words pass between us during the course of a day... some
wise... some foolish... some clever... some vulgar... words fall lightly
from our lips,... yet they are the only chain that links our minds with
others. Their service is truth... they mirror what we feel and what
we really are. Even now, as I speak... if my words do not reflect the
true thoughts of my mind... the true feelings of my heart... the
dignity of all who hear me has been lessened and diminished.
Guide us with your word. Amen.*

Miscellaneous

*Prayer, Lord, is an awareness of our individual relationships
with you. It is as special and as unique as each one of us.
We realize that words, and ideas, and mental images are needed
too... but above all, we must let you, God, work on us. To that end,
be with us. Amen.*

Community Occasions

Miscellaneous

Lord, we never seem to have enough time. We rush and rush from one activity to the next... one experience after another. There never seems to be enough time... time to finish... time to be with... time to listen... time to write. Time is a perishable gift -- the hours are too short... the days are too short... our lives are too short. Tonight, Lord, I ask not that you give me more time... or time to do this or do that.. but the wisdom to do well whatever you want of me in the time you have given me. Amen.

Miscellaneous

Lord, the only things that last and stand the test of time are the things I have come to know by my own efforts... by personal intimate contact with sweat and hard work and pain and effort and people... these I cherish. Bless them, Lord,- they are now part of me. Amen.

Community Occasions

Miscellaneous

We are grateful, Lord For those here who inspire us For those with courage enough to lead us For those with wisdom enough to challenge us But, above all, For those with backbone enough to be themselves With us. Amen.

Miscellaneous

A transistor, Lord, makes it possible to hear more composers in a day than the composer heard in a lifetime. An art gallery gives us more masterpieces in an hour than the artist saw in a year. Magazines provide more news in ten minutes than medieval man discovered in ten years. But, we wonder.. are we gaining touch with the world at the expense of losing touch with ourselves? Guide us, Lord, Amen.

Miscellaneous

Lord, we must do more than imagine what you are saying to us... we must listen to you speaking to us in our lives and in the world ..through every event ...even the most insignificant. Active we must be, yes ...but still also from time to time quiet enough to hear your voice. Amen.

Miscellaneous

Lord, nothing worth doing is ever really completed in one lifetime. So, we must be men of hope. Nothing worthwhile makes complete sense at any particular moment of history. So, we must be men of faith. Nothing we do can be accomplished alone. So we must be men of loyalty. Grant us hope, faith, and loyalty. Amen.

Community Occasions

Miscellaneous

Father,

You have trusted us by letting us have the gifts of life, intellect, and free choice. May our thoughts and actions prove worthy of your trust. Amen.

Miscellaneous

Father,

Sometimes you seem very distant - like an absentee landlord who could care less. And then I ask myself - but who tossed the planets into their orbits? And piled high the mountains and walked in the sea? And who made this computer brain of mine and programmed it to think? And then I know that you are closer to me than this tongue of mine that coughs up sounds and spits out these words. Father, may The ever conscious of your presence. Amen.

Miscellaneous

Father in Heaven,

Some people say you are dead. If so, I'm sure you died of neglect. But we, who believe, know you are alive - we feel your presence in the eyes of loved ones, in the sparkle of the stars, in the roar of the breakers, in the holy words of scripture, in the gifts of life that have given us the chance to be and to do. For all this we thank you, O Lord, Our God. Amen.

Community Occasions

Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace!

Where there is hatred let me sow love.

Where there is injury pardon.

Where there is discord union. —

Where there is doubt faith.

Where there is darkness light.

Where there is sadness joy.

O Divine Master, Grant that I may not so much seek

To be consoled as to console.

To be understood as to understand.

To be loved as to love.

For It is in giving that we receive.

*It is in pardoning that we are pardoned. It is in dying that we are
born to eternal life.*

Occasional Prayers

The following prayers were used by chaplains in observance of special days and occasions. They are offered to stimulate your imagination as you prepare your own prayers for these important times.

Memorial Day

O God, our Heavenly Father, you who would not willingly bring suffering to humanity, your creation; you have brought us to this place today -- that our sensibilities might be shaken; -- that we might weigh the peace of this garden setting against the pain and terror which brought thousands who died in wars to rest here and in countless other gardens. The contrasts are so stark that we would like not to see, much less experience them.

But it is for us the living to bear remembrance. To remember first, Father, then rejoice, that it was not we who sacrificed self before the enemies of each age of war, but some other son, daughter, brother, father. Few are the names we know on the gravestones, but they read not with our names imprinted and we are glad. And then to remember, Father, that those who sacrificed could well have been us. That all too soon the gifts of war--the torn body, the early grave--could have been ours; a price that we would have paid, were it not but for fate. WE WERE WILLING, not cowards or heroes, BUT WILLING.

And finally, to remember that time underscores the futility of wars -- that foes become friends -- that friends become foes until the confusion of friend and foe makes us wonder at it all--and recognize the mindlessness of warring.

Dear God, help us to remember the significance of a "Memorial Day" and pray indeed for the implements of war to be forged anew into the plowshares and pruning hooks of our great-grandchildren. This is our prayer that we offer in your Holy Name, in memory of those of the past and in the hope for a future of peace, O God our Father. Amen.

Occasional Prayers

Memorial Day

God, tomorrow is our nation's Memorial Day. There was a time when people in small towns all across our land gathered in parks or cemeteries and heard the flowery oratory, felt the stirring marches, stood in silence at the crack of ryes and the haunting notes of taps that spoke an Amen to the list of local heroes while some elderly relative sat teary-eyed on the stand. We were there to remember our nation's history and her heroes. But that is apart of another age. We don't live in small towns anymore and high school bands no longer march five miles to stand among the graves of men they never knew. So why bother you with a prayer for Memorial Day. Because you know how badly we need a sense of both heritage and destiny, at least a hero or two we can call to mind, an event that stands out because it was the point at which those values which nourish us were preserved. We can be no greater than the men and women we most admire. So keep our memories alive with our gratitude and gratitude alive with faithfulness. Amen.

Memorial Day

*At times, Lord, we wonder at the mystery of nature...
The height of great mountains --
The vastness of the sea...
The complexity of an insect...
The simplicity of season's spring and forget, Lord to wonder at ourselves. Help us to remember.*

Amen.

Occasional Prayers

Memorial Prayer

In the midst of life we are in death; from whom can we seek help? From you alone, O Lord, who by our sins are justly angered.

Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy and merciful Savior, deliver us not into the bitterness of eternal death.

Lord, you know the secrets of our hearts; shut not your ears to our prayers, but spare us, O Lord.

Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy and merciful Savior, deliver us not into the bitterness of eternal death.

O worthy and eternal Judge, do not let the pains of death turn us away from you at our last hour.

Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy and merciful savior, deliver us not into the bitterness of eternal death.

Eternal Lord God, you hold all souls in life: Give to your whole Church in paradise and on earth your light and your peace; and grant that we, following the good examples of those who have served you here and are now at rest, may at the last enter with them into your unending joy. Amen.

Memorial Prayer

Almighty God, we remember before you today your faithful servant (N), and we pray that, having opened to Him the gates of larger life, you will receive Him more and more into your joyful service, that, with all who have faithfully served you in the past. He may live and reign with you, for ever and ever. Amen.

Memorial Prayer

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, in whose hands are the living and the dead, we give you thanks for all those of your servants who have laid down their lives in the service of our country. Grant to them your mercy and the light of your presence, and the assurance of your peace. Amen.

Occasional Prayers

Memorial Prayer

May the Lord our God bless us all present here, to memorialize those who died to preserve liberty and freedom in our nation and in the world. And may the Lord our God remember all those whose sacrifice gave this nation its greatness, progress and richness.

May our memory of them be an honorable one, full of thanksgiving to the Lord who accepted them into His kingdom.

The Lord is for all, and in Him we believe, and to Him we pray remember all who died in the service of their country, whether in the air, or on land or in the sea.

O Lord, be gracious and merciful unto them, and let Your light shine upon them, for You are our God, and unto you we ascribe glory now and forever. Amen.

Memorial Prayer

We pause now in the busy routine of this new day to pay our last respects to the memory of a shipmate (name) who died (when). Be particularly close, O Lord, to those who loved him most in this their hour of greatest need. Help them survive and enable them to bear-up under the burden of their pain and loss. Be with us all. Amen.

Memorial Prayer

Eternal God, the Source and Giver of life, the destiny toward whom all life flows, we have gathered in this memorial service to remember (Name). Sanctify every good memory and cut short every vain attempt to treat his death lightly. In his death give us the honesty to appreciate him simply for who he was among us. In the awful waste of death for one so young, we are dismayed at how transient and fleeting life is. Give us the grace to give to him the integrity of his death. Comfort those who knew him well and mourn his loss. Bring peace to the troubled spirits of all those who have the courage to face their own death. Let his death be a bond between us as we are never far from death. Speak comfortingly to us that we need never fear the terror of death nor flee from the rare privilege of life. Amen.

Occasional Prayers

Invocation-Memorial Service

O Lord Almighty, remember those who died fighting to protect the dignity and the freedom of mankind.

Let our spirits be proud of them. Let our hearts be compassionate, and our minds clear and determined in giving them honor and respect. And let us be dependent on the loving kindness of the Lord our God.

As we remember the departed, let us be true soldiers in war and in peace. Let us be courageous protectors and true guardians of freedom. Let us be the true masters of brotherly love.

O Lord, guide us in the way of moral responsibility; enlighten us true believers in ethics and justice.

Let this day be a day of commemoration and honor to those who sacrificed their lives in order to give us liberty, and our nation security.

Remember them, O Lord, in your mercy, and have compassion on us. Make us a generation of wisdom, discipline and good faith. Amen.

Invocation - Memorial Prayer for Mass Casualties

Our Father, at this time of profound grief, we do not know how to pray as we ought. But You, O God, who searches the hearts of men, can interpret our sighs which are too deep for words.

We, as a People, as a Nation, invoke your healing presence... Your comfort... Your strength... Your wisdom. Amen.

Benediction - Memorial Prayer for Mass Casualties

*A benediction for our dead brothers and sisters:
May the God of grace and mercy grant you peace. May He give comfort and hope to those who knew and loved you. Amen.*

Occasional Prayers

Patriotic Occasion

O Lord, grant us freedom with discipline, motivation with understanding, and determination with compassion.

O Lord, give us the will for self-preservation, and the strength and power to help those who are willing to help themselves.

O Lord, give us insight and patience, wisdom along with a sense of duty, and ability coupled with restraint to adjust to the changes in nature and men.

O Lord, show us your ways, and never deliver us into the hands of any enemy.

Bless us with your heavenly and earthly bounties, and never let us be in want.

Guide us in being friendly and generous toward one another.

Instill in us faith and knowledge, and let all of us have the ability to live at peace within ourselves. O Lord show the people of our nation the right way to serve and guard the sacredness of all orderly freedoms. Let us realize that you have given us riches not given to any other nation under the sun, let us be ever grateful, and accept the responsibilities which they entail. You are our God, and to you we would ascribe glory and honor, now and forever. Amen.

Breakfast at 8th and I for Members of Congress

Our Father, we invoke your blessing upon our President... our Legislators... our Commandant... our Marine Corps. Bless the authority here represented. Help us to learn that he who leads is called to be a servant; and to whom much is given, much is required. Help us to be faithful in support of one another as we work for justice and the common good, for peace itself. We ask this in Your Holy Name. Amen.

Occasional Prayers

Armed Forces Day

*Who are we, Lord...? Why are we here...?
We are American fighting men... we stand vigil over the free world.
We are held together by a common bond... our love of life and
liberty for ourselves and our loved ones... and our right to worship
you without fear of oppression. Whatever is said about us and our
ship, when the chips are down, we pull together. It is this that makes
us a team set apart... we are a floating fortress of men and
machines, striving to make the world a better place. Keep us aware
of our heritage. Amen.*

Labor Day

*Almighty God, you have so linked our lives one with another that
all we do affects, for good or ill, all other lives: So guide us in the
work we do, that we may do it not for self alone, but for the common
good, and, as we seek a proper return for our own labor, make us
mindful of the rightful aspirations of other workers, and arouse our
concern for those who are out of work. Amen.*

Independence Day

*All men enjoy the gift of life; many enjoy the privilege of
freedom; some enjoy the quality of courage. Life without freedom is
intolerable. Freedom without courage is impossible. The Navy and
the Marines have made courage a way of life. The courage of the
past is in the hands of history. The courage of the future is in our
hands. As we recall those who have fallen, let us rededicate
ourselves to the tradition of courage. Give us a deep sense of
reverence for life, a passionate desire for freedom. Continue in us
the courage of those who have woven this tradition into the history
of our country. Amen.*

Occasional Prayers

Independence Day

*Lord God Almighty, in whose Name the founders of this country won liberty for themselves and for us, and lofted the torch off freedom for nations then unborn: Grant that we and all the peoples of this land may have grace to maintain our liberties in righteousness and peace.
Amen*

Independence Day

Lord God Almighty, you have made all the peoples of the earth for your glory, to serve you in freedom and in peace: Give to the people of our country a zeal for justice and the strength of forbearance, that we may use our liberty in accordance with your gracious will. Amen.

Independence Day

As a nation we were convinced early that we could not endure half .slave and half free. No man can celebrate liberty as long as his brothers and sisters are in chains or shackled by poverty or ignorance or a denial of basic rights which enables them to contribute to the good of society.

Our most elusive dream has been the pursuit of happiness, for no person can give happiness to another. It is a state which each must find for himself. Help us to discover the secret that happiness comes not from selfish pursuit of ingrown indulgence but from sharing not just what we have but who we are.

Re-create in each of us the dreams of our founding fathers, who by your grace knew that where there was no dream there could be no destiny. Amen.

Occasional Prayers

Independence Day

God, our Father, on this Independence Day, we pause for a few moments to give you thanks for a nation conceived in liberty and dedicated to the principle that all men are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

Life has been extended for rich and poor alike. Dread diseases that cut short human life in infancy have been virtually eliminated. Now we grapple with the killers of our technological age - death on the highways, disorder proliferating from stressful urban existence - heart attacks, hypertension and cancer, and the awful spectre of nuclear holocaust. In the pursuit of life help us to realize it isn't how long we live but how we live long that is important. Amen.

Veterans Day

I pray this evening, O Lord, not as a political man, but as a pastor and a human being. For I am one of those who came back from Vietnam and now am committed to sharing the proud task of remembering my brothers and sisters who have fallen and who are memorialized in the land of our birth this day.

O God, how does one summarize the valor, pain, and eventual disenchantment of a generation of young, well-intentioned Americans, who fought and gave their life-blood to fight a war that has yielded little more than bitter fruit? Was their courage of less valor or their sacrifice less sacred than those who have gone before?

On this Veterans Day, O Lord, I pray for our dead and missing in Vietnam - 56,000 plus souls who went beyond the borders of self interest and who continue to cry for more than stone-cold recognition. Their memory demands an honest acceptance that a man who follows his convictions from a clear sense of duty and love for his people represents the highest good a nation can offer - be he friend or foe. Those, O God, were our brightest and best - marked by the cynical and clever, but ever remembered by you.

O God, Vietnam remains, as it should, a matter of moral contention for all Americans. That suffering land has made dust of our innocence and caused us rightly to question our national intent. O Lord, lift the veil on this tragedy. Help us to work through the war- but never at the cost of refusing our fallen brothers the love and dignity they deserve. Grant us this night an ever peaceful rest. Amen.

Occasional Prayers

Invocation-Veterans of Foreign Wars

*There is always a soldier who lies in the field,
And once he defended his country.*

*There are those who have worn the military uniform,;
And still carry in their heart the spirit of patriotism.*

*There are those who stand tall to salute their flag.
And their hearts beat with glory and greatness.*

*There are those who are always ready to carry arms to defend
their country.*

*And there are many people who would stand to greet them when
they pass by.*

*We are proud of those soldiers who have stood with courage to
protect liberty, justice and equal opportunity for all.*

*There are many soldiers who are proud to see their country
great among all nations.*

*The greatness of a nation and people are a gift of the Lord to
those who know him at all times.*

*The Lord brings his people out of war in victory to live in love,
honor and peace.*

*Let us honor all soldiers with respect and appreciation, and be
proud before all nations. Amen.*

National Prayer Breakfast

O GOD our Father,

*You have commanded the light to shine out of darkness and
awakened us again to praise your goodness and to ask your favor.
Accept now the sacrifice of our worship and thanksgiving. Make us
to be children of the light and of the day, heirs of your everlasting
inheritance. Remember O GOD, all our brothers and sisters who
stand in need of your favor on land or sea, in air or space. May our
lives ever praise your wonderful and holy name. Amen.*

Occasional Prayers

USMC Birthday

*O Lord our God,
With your love, touch our hearts;
With your mercy, forgive our sins;
With your wisdom, correct our ways;
With your compassion, overlook our iniquities;
With your grace, bless our souls;
With your care, protect us from evil;
With your bounty, satisfy our hunger.
Grant us a sound mind and body.
Sustain us with love and charity.
Protect our families, and bless
Their going and coming.
Bring understanding and peace to the world.
Enlighten our minds to know the truth.
Keep us strong, free and loyal to you,
to our nation and to our families.
Fulfill our legitimate goals.
Guide us to serve humanity with justice.
Guard our families and our nation with your holy angels.
Embrace us with your fatherly love and affection
Sustain us with strength in times of pain,
in times of anguish, in times of suffering, and
in times of loneliness, distress and oppression.
Brighten our lives with hope, courage and happiness.
Dwell in our hearts, and never abandon us for your name's sake.
Amen.*

USMC Birthday

Eternal Father, Holy God, in whom we live and move and have our being: we invoke Thy divine presence among us as we pause to honor the birthday of the United States Marine Corps. We remember with pride and gratitude the sacrifices made in behalf of the Corps, Our Nation and free men everywhere. Help us to serve Thee and our cause that all men will be blessed by a just and enduring peace. We also invoke Thy blessing upon the families and loved ones of the Marines. Their loyalty and sacrifices have also helped to make the Corps great. Keep us all faithful to Thee and to human dignity. Amen.

Occasional Prayers

USMC Birthday

Our Father God, we pause here today to give thanks for this special day when we celebrate the birth of the United States Marine Corps. We remember with special gratitude those who have carried the Corp's banner throughout its noble history. Some have fallen in defense of our nation, but others have marched on keeping alive our heritage of freedom and justice for all. Grant, Lord to each of us the courage and strength to continue the high ideals and expectations of the Marine Corps. May we keep faith with those who have gone before us and may we take the torch of freedom on into future of this nation and the world. In your name, we pray, Amen.

Occasional Prayers

USMC Birthday

Ever remembering, O Lord, that if you are a God of love, you are a God of peace, I pray this evening a patriot's prayer - a request for your blessing upon the men and women of the Marine Corps. I do this because of the hard realities of the world I know and because I appreciate so deeply the fact that the heritage and freedom we enjoy as a people is not a simple given, but the summation of the sacrifice and devotion of those who have shared their life-blood and youth to defend and give heart to our nation. O God, it is in this tradition that we stand today as we make history and prepare for remembrances to come. Help us to keep the present peace so that men and women of good will can revive hope among suffering people everywhere. Grant us this evening a safe and good night. Amen.

USMC Birthday

Let us pray: Almighty and Everlasting God, in whom we live move and have our being, we invoke your blessings upon all who faithfully serve in the Marine Corps. Make them solid in the ideals of the Corps in which they serve. Keep them mindful of the traditions of those who have gone before them. Give peace and rest to those comrades in arms who have made the supreme sacrifice.

Reward all their efforts with a just and lasting peace. This we ask and pray in your name. Amen.

Occasional Prayers

Navy Birthday

Eternal God, we celebrate our birthday today. Not our individual birthdays or even that special birthday of our ship. Rather, we celebrate the birthday of our Navy, a for mid able force in war, a potent power in peace. For over two hundred years men have accepted the rigors of our nation's naval service often without either adequate pay or the recognition by their nation which they rightfully deserved. They often endured cramped quarters and unpalatable food. They were often tossed about in those sailing vessels we speak of romantically, but in which few of us would have signed on for a second tour. They knew the biting cold, fiercely blowing wind and burning sun. When they turned from sail to steam they were covered with the dirt and grime of coal. So much of what made their lives a constant hardship has been changed. But some things haven't changed, and we share their sorrows and their joys. We share the mystical experience of the sea so hard to describe to someone who has never known it. We share the disciplined training in preparing for events we hope will never happen. We share their sadness at leaving those we love and their joy in returning to them again. We share their conviction that no other job would be quite so satisfying as serving at sea with men we respect and admire. We share their sense of adventure in looking forward to new ports and as yet unsailed seas. And we share their faith that you are our strength, our very present help in time of trouble, our maker, defender, redeemer and friend. Amen.

Occasional Prayers

Commissioning

Eternal God, for as long as men have gone to sea in ships, they have felt the awesome urging and mystery which takes them from those they love and to whom they long to return. For as long as men have known that life lived only for oneself is too constrictive, they have taken up arms for lives more precious than their own. This magnificent ship brings together the sailor's dedication to successfully sail the unobstructed seas and the Marine's tenacity in combat on land or in the air. As the (Ship) is commissioned to take her place in our nation's Navy, we pray that those who have contributed to her planning and construction may never have cause for shame; that those whose valor is commemorated in her name may be properly honored by her outstanding service; that those who sail her may devote themselves to the fullest accomplishment of their every responsibility.

May her nation look to her with pride and as a model of excellence in execution of every task. May she be a respected adversary in conflict, an effective deterrent to war, and a welcomed means of compassion and assistance to those whose misfortunes make her the means of survival and hope.

We celebrate this glorious day with deep gratitude. May we ever draw our strength and support from you whose perfect love is our peace and whose peace is our power. Amen.

Commissioning

Eternal Father, from whom we come and to whom we ultimately return, we commend this ship, the (Name of Ship) to your care and keeping. Make her name great among those whose judgment is honored; spread her fame throughout the land so that the young may desire her service and the old admire her deeds. Bless those who sail her. Sustain them always in their pursuit of peace through power.

Lord bless us and keep us. Lord, may your face shine upon us and be gracious to us. Lord lift up your countenance upon us and give us peace forevermore. Amen.

Occasional Prayers

For Ship and Crew

Creator God, who founded the seas and equipped them with the very resources that sustain life on this planet - we acknowledge our need to be mindful of humanity's dependence on the seas for food, minerals, communications and climate - we seek your will for our nation in meeting its obligations to maintain the freedom of the seas and ask your blessings on this ship and crew in meeting its commitments to that end. Amen.

Launching/ Commissioning

Almighty God, we commend to your gracious care and keeping all the men and women of our country's Navy ashore and afloat. Defend them day by day with your heavenly grace; strengthen them in their trials and temptations; give them courage to face the perils which beset them and grant them a sense of your abiding presence wherever they may be: through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Launching/ Commissioning

Almighty God, who has given men vision and skill to devise and construct all manner of works, we praise you for the men who have labored with brain and hand to build this ship, and we ask your blessing on all their labors. Amen.

Launching/ Commissioning

May Almighty God save, sanctify, and bless you and this ship; and carry you with favouring winds over the sea and into harbor, according to his good will,- and, as your divine and heavenly pilot, bring you at last to the haven of his peace. Amen.

Occasional Prayers

Commissioning

Almighty God, in whom we live and move and have our being, we ask your presence and blessing as we gather to commission this ship for the United States Navy. Give us loyalty and devotion so that we will not lose faith in our glorious heritage of freedom, the gift of so many from the past. Help us to be peace-seekers and peace-makers in all our works. Bless the officers and crew who will serve in her with fidelity in all their tasks. Watch over our families in times of separation. Give us courage and faith to meet the challenges which will be placed before us. Preserve us from the dangers of the sea and the violence of the enemy; for you are the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Amen.

Launching

O Almighty God, the sovereign commander of all the world, at whose word even the wind and the sea obey, we turn to you as we gather to launch this ship for the United States Navy. We ask you to bless this occasion. We ask that this ship may always travel in peaceful waters, but if conflict is thrust upon us, may she bring credit to the traditions of our Navy. Bless the officers and crew who will sail her. May they see the wonders of the deep and always invite your hand to steady her course. May her voyages be made in safety and may we be ready to express our thankfulness for your providence by constant devotion to duty and sincere faith in you. Amen.

Occasional Prayers

Commissioning

Almighty and everlasting GOD, in whom we live and move and have our being, we humbly pray that you will bless us with your spirit as we gather to commission this vessel of the United States Navy. Endow us with such loyalty and devotion that we will not lose faith with the glorious heritage of freedom which has been handed down to us by the patriots of old. Keep us from finding our security in arms alone, but in the conviction that right makes might. Bless the officers and crew of this ship, giving us fidelity in all our tasks. Create and maintain among us cheerfulness and a good ship's spirit. Grant fair weather in all our voyages, and if dangers confront us in the midst of the sea, may you always be our strong tower of defense. Preserve us from the dangers of the sea and violence of the enemy. Make us strong in the fear of GOD and the love of righteousness that we may gird ourselves in support of the high ideals upon which our nation was founded. This we pray in your name. Amen.

Commissioning

Our Heavenly Father,

We are gathered this morning to commission and present this ship to the nation for service in its behalf. It represents the collective efforts of thousands of your people, who, pursuing their vocation as stewards of your gifts, gave not only the work of their hands and minds. They await now an accounting of their stewardship as this ship comes alive and is put to the test of prolonged service in the fleet. We invoke your blessing upon them, this ship, and those generations of sea service personnel who will serve in her. We bless you for the memory of life-long example of our name sake, . We pray that this ship, we who will first take her to sea and those who follow, will be equal to the high standard he set. As he was known, may this ship be known for loyalty, vision, integrity, courageous and honorable service.

May you especially bless in this hour he who will assume command, Captain . We know him as a talented and trustworthy leader. Cause us to be loyal and trustworthy followers.

Being mindful of the imperfect world in which we live and the complexities of world leadership, we ask your forgiveness that we have not yet found a more perfect way to peace. Cause us who serve, along with those in the public trust, to engage this ship only in the pursuit of honorable and lasting peace, and the preservation of tranquility among the nations. Amen.

Occasional Prayers

Blessing of the Fleet

Eternal Father, maker of the seas and the earth, keeper of our log, may there be no unworthy entries concerning our loyalty and industry.

May all our soundings be true.

We invoke your blessing upon our maritime community, the Coast Guard, the Navy and especially our fishermen and their families.

Father, we come to pay tribute to our fishermen today. May they always return safely to port from their adventures at sea. Bring them through the deep waters of life, not to drown them, but to cleanse them.

May they and their loved ones find the blessing of Your care, protection and good health. As they view the beauties of Your sunset, may they thank God for their eyes to see. As they hear the sound of the wind and the waves--yes, the lonely gulls--may they thank You that You gave them ears to hear. As they embrace the invigorating salt air, may they thank God who gave them taste and smell to appreciate the good things in life.

Give us all a greater harmony within ourselves and a better understanding in our relationships with others. Grant us Your love and peace to share with mankind everywhere ...in our joys and in our sorrows, in our hopes and in our disappointments, until we cross that bar and meet our Pilot face to face.

Grant us, our heavenly Father, the sense of accomplishment as we are anchored in that final haven of rest. We pray in Your name. Amen.

Change of Command

We pray, O Creator of the world without and the world within, asking that these moments be more than a ceremonious exercise, but rather a heartfelt expression of joy and praise for your presence among us and a sense of the possibility and purpose which your Spirit instills within our hearts.

We thank you, O Lord, for the Wisdom inherent in the change of command ceremony, creating within us, as it does, a sense of continuity and strength amidst change.

We ask that you be with (Captains and whose authority to command we acknowledge, confirm, and pass on this day. Cause them to be proactive to the responsibilities granted them and yet ever aware of their humanity. Let them know that we cheer them on and are thankful for their commitment and good will. Bless them and the men they serve, O Lord. Amen.

Occasional Prayers

Change of Command

*Lord God, Creator of the Universe,
Our pride in past efforts causes us to stop on this occasion and give thanks.*

Today we celebrate past achievements and ask your support in a new beginning.

May your presence, peace and care always accompany Captain _____ and his family.

We pray that wisdom, compassion and creative leadership will mark the Command of Captain _____. May all our people in positions of authority be sensitive to the demands of the faith we entrust to them, and the needs of the people they serve. Amen.

Change of Command

Eternal Father, we ask your continued blessing on the men and women of the (Command); the many individuals whose many sacrifices and dedication have shown them to be people of integrity and professionalism. We pray, Lord, that as a nation, our strength will be rooted in our commitment to justice and our constant quest for freedom for all your people. May every member of (Command) continue to be a clear, strong example of that commitment and that quest. Amen.

Change of Command

O Lord, let your mercy be upon us, and let your love be in our hearts.

Guide us to know the truth in this life, and help us in the time of decision-making.

O Lord, these officers are gathered here in a moment significant to them and to us -- to change command, to pass the baton, that they may serve effectively their nation and the Marine Corps.

Guide them to know your will at all times. Fill their mind with useful knowledge, and their hearts with compassion.

For you are good and to you we ascribe glory now and forever. Amen.

Occasional Prayers

Change of Command

Almighty God, Creator and Sustainer of us all, as we begin this ceremony we invoke the power and presence of your Holy Spirit. As the command passes from _____ to _____, may we be reminded of the responsibilities and opportunities of leadership, of the commitment and sacrifice of those who go down to the sea in ships, and of those families who support them. Let us use this occasion to celebrate the ideals of freedom, courage, honor, and peace, and to dedicate ourselves anew to those values we hold so dear. In God's most holy name we offer our prayer, Amen.

Change of Command

Dear Father, as the torch of leadership is passed may this awesome responsibility be coupled with your blessing and wisdom and a consciousness of your presence. May our godly and patriotic duty be performed at our highest level of expertise. Now to the only wise God who is able to keep you from falling, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, and may He keep you in the security of His presence. Amen.

Change of Command

Our Father God and Divine Creator, we ask for Thy blessing upon this change of command ceremony. May we once again be reminded of Thy concern for man and for the dignity of life that this nation and ship are dedicated to preserve. Bless those who lead us with wisdom and vision and strength. Particularly bless (Name) who departs for another assignment and (Name) who now becomes our new captain. Grant to us all a sense of loyalty and trust in our way of life, our nation, our ship, and our captain. Amen.

Occasional Prayers

Change of Command

Heavenly Father, we ask your blessing upon all who are gathered here and pray that You be with us at this transfer of responsibilities. Inspire us with Your Wisdom, that we may appreciate the true nature of command and the serious consequences that flow from it.

*May the spirit of justice, care, concern, and dedication to duty be CAPT_____ legacy to his shipmates of the USS
May You continue to be with him and his family as they leave to serve others.*

We pray Your support for CAPT_____ as he assumes the burdens of command. May he feel a sense of confidence and assurance when he turns to You in those lonely moments of decision. Guide and direct him always that Justice, Truth, and the quest for Peace may be served.

We ask that you be present to us all, that all our actions may give honor and praise to Your Name in which we pray. Amen.

Change of Command

Father of us all - we pause to remind ourselves of your presence, to render you honors, and to invoke your blessing. We are present to witness a change of command, a transfer of power.

Jesus once said to a man in authority, "You have power only because it comes from God" Help us, Lord, to remember that power is your gift - that its purpose is to accomplish your will. Bless those who must command; bless those who must obey; that thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

Change of Command

God of our fathers, who kindled in us the love of liberty and granted us such faith and courage in Thee, that wide seas and strange shores were overpassed and eagerly embraced, bestow upon us, a love of liberty; and direct us by Thy hand, that we neither grow faint in faith nor fail in courage. Bless and guide those who now lead us in our nation's course... to him who goes to other duty and to him who comes to be our new captain. Guide them both with understanding and strength of purpose. With this we invoke Thy divine blessings upon these proceedings. Amen.

Occasional Prayers

Change of Command

Eternal Father, Almighty God, we ask for Thy divine blessing upon this change of Command. May we be aware of Thy interest in such activities and thus strive to serve Thee and our country with added conviction. Bless always the men of this ship, those who command and those who carry out the commands. In the name of our Lord, we pray. Amen.

Change of Command

Eternal Father, Creator of land and sea, grant to us gathered here, an appreciation for responsibility and command. To all who are called to lead, bless with strength of purpose and courage. Keep them firm and yet understanding, wise and yet learning, brave but not foolhardy. May they be rocks of confidence and trust for those who follow them. Our special prayer today is for Thy divine blessings upon him who leaves us for another assignment and upon him who comes to receive command of this ship. May she always sail with pride in the free life she defends. Amen.

Military Graduation

Eternal Father, we pray that your blessing may rest on these young men that we have come here to honor today. Instill in them a lasting desire to maintain and defend our great nation's high principles of freedom, justice, and dignity for all. Make them this day aware of the great responsibilities being placed upon their shoulders and those of their generation. Bless them with wisdom, courage, and compassion. Bless also those who have so unselfishly given of themselves to train these young men and to prepare them to stand at the gates off freedom. Amen.

Occasional Prayers

Graduation-National War College Invocation Gracious God, Lord of the Universe,

We pray your blessing on these graduates, who in the tradition of the Centurion know that they are men and women under authority: -responsible to honor Your holy name; -obligated to seek peace and pursue it in the name of humanity; -sworn to uphold the laws of this land and to use their professional skills in the interest of the citizenry; -charged to represent their families in the being and the doing of good,, and accountable to self for the satisfaction of success deserved and enjoyed. Amen.

Benediction Almighty God who makes all things new- You have ordained that all rites of passage, like this graduation, will simultaneously conclude one phase of life, while commencing a new phase of life. So be it. Bless now, O Lord, these graduates to begin anew. Amen.

Convocation - National War College

Our Father, we are taught to ask, and it will be given us... seek, and we will find... knock, and it will be opened to us. At this beginning of a new academic year, we ask for Divine wisdom... we seek understanding... we knock at the door of truth. Bless our endeavors, we pray; and grant that what we are given... what we find... and whatever is opened to us... will be employed for the furtherance of justice, unity and peace among the peoples of this earth. Amen.

Military Graduation

Almighty God, we ask for Your blessing for these young men who have completed a difficult and challenging period of discipline and training. We know that You have taught us that whatever is good must be sought after with great persistence and effort. We therefore are grateful for these who have persevered and are now ready to serve You, their country, and their Navy as only a sailor can. Grant, we pray, that they may always bring honor to the Navy and to themselves. Amen.

Occasional Prayers

DI School Graduation

Almighty God, we gather here today to lay the mantle of responsibility and leadership on these men who have worked hard for many weeks to prove themselves worthy of this honor. For them we ask a special blessing that they may see in the task of building Marines an honored trust. Guide them and grant them wisdom, honesty, patience, determination, understanding, and honor. We would not forget also those who stand beside them-their wives and families.

May their support give strength and encouragement to these men as they go forth now to help prepare the future of the Marine Corps, a Corps dedicated to preserving the freedom and human dignity of all mankind. Amen.

RTC Graduation

Our Father, we ask you for your blessing on these young men and women who have worked many difficult weeks and have given so much of themselves to arrive at this moment. Be their constant companion as they now take on the awesome responsibility of guiding and molding other young men and women into well disciplined and confident United States Marines. Keep them always aware of the high honor and trust placed on them by the Corps and their country.

Grant also to the wives and families of these men your blessing as they standby their husbands and fathers supporting and encouraging them in their honored task. In your name we pray. Amen.

Military Graduation

Eternal Father, you have fashioned and created us as a people, and called us as a nation to a place of trust and leadership in the world.

We honor this evening young men and women who will shortly become apart of the Naval community. We pray that you may bless their intentions and their commitment to the welfare of our nation.

Guide them with wisdom, judgment and prudence in the careers they have chosen.

Bestow upon our country's leaders, wisdom and courage, that in their leadership we may be successful in maintaining peace with justice in this our day. Bless us all, as we go about the duties and responsibilities of our lives. Amen.

Occasional Prayers

Equal Opportunity Luncheon

Father God, Creator of the universe and giver of life, thank you for the opportunity to seek after life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Help us, as agents of goodwill, always to be available to the collective as well as the individual needs of others. Give us a better understanding of the reasons why we exist and serve.

Thank you for the many gifts you have given to each of those present here today. Thank you for the friendships and service expressed. Help us all to be more useful in fulfilling your purpose of being peacemakers and the purpose of assisting in providing equal opportunity for all.

We affirm today, O Lord, that a better community and a better America begins with us. Bless now this gathering. Amen.

Hospital Prayer

Bless us, Lord, as we watch with those who wake, or watch, or weep... bless us as we tend your sick ones... rest your weary ones... bless us as we pray for your dying ones... soothe your suffering ones.. give sympathy to your afflicted ones... shield your joyous ones... bless us that we may do these things for your name's sake. Amen.

Chaplain Corps Seminar

Almighty and Eternal Father, you sent the Holy Spirit upon the apostles, who had gathered in the upper room, and enlightened their minds and strengthened their wills and inflamed their hearts so that they went forth with courage and confidence to proclaim Your word and will.

May we ask for the same outpouring of your grace in our hearts and minds this day.

Direct and guide our thoughts and minds during the days of this seminar, so that influenced and guided by your grace we may be instruments to strengthen and establish the Kingdom of God on earth. May it be a Kingdom of justice and truth, a kingdom of love and peace. Amen.

Occasional Prayers

Medical Corps

Our Father God, we pause in this ceremony to ask for your divine blessing on all those who bind up the wounds of the injured and give relief to the sick. Especially on this occasion we remember the honored profession of the Navy Corpsmen who with courage and faithful devotion have carried so often their healing trade into the valley of the shadow of death. May their compassion for their fellowman inspire us all and guide us in our daily relationships with one another. Grant also Your blessing on this ceremony as we honor that nobleness and spirit that makes heroes of common men. In Your name we pray. Amen.

ARC Commencement

God, our Creator and Sustainer, we ask your blessing on all who are here this morning to celebrate this commencement. Bless especially those who are leaving to start a new way of life -- give them sobriety and serenity.

Bless the staff with renewed faith in your power to heal. Bless the guests with understanding and patience for their recovering alcoholics. Bless the people just coming in this week and those continuing in the program with honesty, open mindedness, and willingness to recover. We ask all these blessings in your holy name. Amen.

Retirement

A lot of men serve with honor... a lot of men come and go. Their spot is soon filled and the memory fades. Occasionally an unusual person emerges whose qualities are obvious. He makes all of us proud of what we are because of what he is. Such a man is (Name,) soon to be retired. Some of you may not know him but most of you do. We pray the Lord may be with him... grant him god speed, fair winds, and following seas. Amen.

Occasional Prayers

Decommissioning Invocation

O Lord, Our Heavenly Father, we invoke your divine blessing as we gather to decommission this United States Ship. She has rendered many years of distinguished service on behalf of freedom loving peoples and has upheld the highest traditions of the our Navy. We pay respect and tribute to the officers and men who sailed her on the high seas in times of war and peace. We express our gratitude for the preservation of this ship from the dangers of the sea, and the violence of the enemy and for bringing her safely to this hour. May we, like her, live our lives with a similar devotion that when our tour on earth is over, we may hear your "Well Done." In your holy name we pray. Amen.

Occasional Prayers

Decommissioning

Our Heavenly father, we pray for your divine blessings upon us as we have gathered to bid farewell to a grand lady of the sea. She has been a sister and a mother to many a seafarer. She is a proud lady in her haze gray coat. She bears her years well. We will miss her!

For every man who walked her decks, for every engineer who gave her life, and for every officer who guided her, we give thanks. May they have fond memories of this lady, who brought romance and responsibility into their lives.

We ask that the unselfish spirit _____ of who gave her his name, live on in each of us. We pray that when we are called upon to defend liberty, we will quickly heed the call, and if necessary give our all that others may have the blessings that we now enjoy. May the sacrifice _____ of and the thousands like him, not soon be forgotten, but ever be our example.

And now, Eternal Father, be with every sailor, every marine, their families and their loved ones. Grant our leaders your wisdom, and grant us your continued presence and love. Amen.

Occasional Prayers

A Marine's Prayer

*Dear God, in a world that's racked with war,
Let me think of the coming years
When the cannon's core has ceased its roar,
And the nations dry their tears.
Keep Thou my heart unblemished. Give
Me strength to wait release;
And let me live as a man should live
In a fight for the God of Peace.*

*O Father, grant that I may last
To build the world again;
To know when pestilence is past
A brotherhood of men.
Bless Thou the aged with Thy light;
Protect our troubled youth;
And let me fight as a man should fight
In a war for the God of Truth.
Thy will be done, if Thou decree
That I shall die a field.
But let me go face to the foe
Sustain me, lest I yield.
Let no man cry he saw me fly
The battle's agony.
And let me die as a man should die
In a fight for Liberty. Amen*

*Written by PFC G.E. Lord, USMC, in 1943 right after the 1st
Marine Division left Guadalcanal.*

Occasional Prayers

Marine Corps Birthday

Our Father, in whose name and trust we pray, we give you thanks for the blessings of liberty and freedom.

We are thankful for the honor and courage of United States Marines, both past and present.

We are grateful for the skill and determination of marines who have contributed to the continuation of that liberty and freedom. We are aware that those contributions have often been made at great personal sacrifice.

May those same values which have made the Marine Corps strong be renewed as marines celebrate this birthday.

We especially lift our prayer and thoughts for those marines and their families, and persons of other services, who are prisoners of war, and those missing in actions. Amen.

Benediction

Almighty Father, help us to remember that freedom does not automatically perpetuate itself; that we have to work at it, nurture it, protect it, and pray for it. That freedom, like faith, needs our attention and our cooperation. Lord, be with us now to strengthen us; about us, to keep us; above us, to protect us; beneath us, to uphold us; before us, to direct us; behind us, to keep us from straying; 'round about us, to defend us. Blessed are you, Our Father, forever and ever.

Amen.

Occasional Prayers

Change of Command Invocation

O God our Father, as we face a change of command, give us faith to believe that you make all things work together for good to them that love you.

Strengthen our conviction that your hand is upon us, to lead us and to use us in working out your purposes in the world. Even though we may not see the distant scene, let us be willing to take one step at a time and trust in you for the rest.

Give us a boldness of faith that has conviction as well as sentiment, and take from us all fear except the fear of failing to do your will.

Today we pray especially for open minds, a willingness to receive new light and to respond to new challenges. Let not the past be so dear to us that we attempt to enshrine it and thus limit the future. Keep our eyes and ears ever open to your truth and your word-so that we always may be ready to respond to you, however and whenever and wherever you happen to speak to us.

In your holy name we pray. Amen

Occasional Prayers

Navy Birthday Invocation

O God our Father, on this festive occasion, as we pause to celebrate the great heritage which is ours as members of the United States Navy, help us to make this a genuine celebration. Remind us, O God, of just how many fantastic accomplishments and achievements we can celebrate.

Remind us, that we can celebrate the maturation of thousands of young Americans-both male and female-who because of their service in the U. S. Navy, have sharpened their understanding of responsibility and honor.

Remind us that we can celebrate the countless hours of selfless sacrifice and devoted service evidenced by so many of our shipmates.

Remind us that we can celebrate the patience of those who accept without protest the hardships of shipboard life: living with seasickness, undergoing lengthy separations, enduring cramped living environments.

Remind us that we can celebrate an institution determined to eradicate every sign of prejudice and to provide equal opportunity for every human being.

O God, tonight as we eat and drink, and laugh, and dance, help us to do even more! Help us to celebrate! Amen.

Occasional Prayers

Prayer for Memorial Day

Eternal Father, who alone rules the destinies of nations and who has deemed that men should live in freedom and not fear, awaken in us a new appreciation of our land that we may apply ourselves to the great work of keeping alive a sense of freedom. Grant us your spirit as we honor those who have fought a good fight and finished the course. On this day we call to remembrance those who served in far off places and have laid down their arms to march into that land of eternal peace. We remember the sufferings, the fears and the horrors of what they endured. It is a time for us to realize that much of our best blood has been spilled-all over the world-so that we might live free and unchained! May they, and those who suffer wounds for peace, as well as their families who valiantly and silently also serve, receive rest from their struggles and a "well done" from you, Captain of their souls. Permit us never to forget our comrades-in-arms from whose fallen hands we have taken up the sacred cause of freedom. Today, we consecrate unto you the debt of our national gratitude which is their rightful due. Keep sacred their sacrifice in our hearts. Keep holy our course in your sight. Enkindle within us a flame of ceaseless unwavering devotion to duty that we may never be found wanting in those qualities of spirit and mind which alone are able to preserve hearth and home, the peace of our nation, and the tranquility of the world. We earnestly implore your providential care as we face the grim and great task which lies ahead. May the day soon come when we can lay down arms and more earnestly give our attention to do justice, to live in kindness, and to walk humbly in your sight. Amen.

Occasional Prayers

Change of Command Invocation

O God, who art the confidence of all who dwell upon the earth and of them that are afar off upon the sea, hear our prayer for thy servants who defend their country on the oceans and maintain justice and freedom. Safeguard their lives amid the violence of foes. Keep them strong in faith, in courage, and in self-control. Let thy presence calm their minds in the hour of danger and hold them fast from temptation in times of ease. Enable them to fulfill their duty with fidelity throughout the voyage of life. Especially do we pray for our captain as he is relieved and as he assumes new duties, and for our new commanding officer as he assumes these responsibilities. Guide them both. We ask in your name. Amen.

Change of Command Benediction

Our heavenly Father, we ask for your benediction to rest on us this day. As you have graciously preserved our nation through the years and have led us in wondrous ways, grant that we may be worthy of our high calling as a nation. Make us reverent in the use of freedom, just in the exercise of power, and generous in the protection of weakness. Inspire the men and women who direct our nation, that they may guide it wisely and well. Especially do we pray for our former commanding officer as he moves to new responsibilities and for our new commanding officer. Grant them in all their duties, your help; in all their perplexities, your counsel, in all danger, your protection; in all sorrow, your peace. Amen.

Occasional Prayers

Ship Launching Invocation

Almighty God, we acknowledge your master design in all creation and your authority to direct our every act. How small our accomplishments seem when compared to the majesty and wonder of your works! Yet we stand with pride before this symbol of what human hands and minds can do, and celebrate the commitment of the men who will breathe life into this structure. We give you thanks for the skills and dedication that will keep this ship afloat and efficient through many miles of trackless oceans. May those who lead in this ship be granted wisdom in the ways of ships and men, and a tireless commitment to fair treatment of those in their charge. May those who serve aboard this ship be given patience and a firm sense of their own value as persons. But Lord, let not our enthusiasm distract us from a prayer for what even this ship cannot provide: peace on earth and good will toward all people. We pray that the people of this planet might receive the divine gift of your peace, and know justice, security and hope. Amen.

Change of Command Benediction

Eternal Father, we pray that your blessing might rest upon this ship, her commanding officer and this crew. May they face with courage the dangers of the sea and the menace of hostile forces. Bring them safely through all threats. Strengthen and sustain their families who endure the stress, the separation and the sacrifices required to transform these many individuals into one efficient crew. Grant to each of us your grace. Grant to all of us your peace. Amen.

Occasional Prayers

Commissioning Prayer

Eternal Father, whose power is unsurpassed and whose desire is to give all nations peace on earth, help us to see with your eyes the significance of this event today. We ask that we maybe humbled and inspired by the willing sacrifice of the one we honor today whose name will forever honor this ship.

We commend to you, Lord, the honest labors of the men and women whose hands have given birth to this great vessel. We pray for your blessing on them and their families.

Father in heaven, we also pray for the sailors who will give life to this ship-the thousands over the years who will run her engines, cook her meals, fix her machines, hoist her flags, and guide her ways upon the great waters of this world. Grant to them the endurance to master the rigors of their duties. Grant them consolation in separation from families and home. Grant to them the courage needed for the dangers of war with angry seas and hostile forces.

O God, bless this ship; may she be in your hands an avenger to all who would disturb peace in the world. Make her a symbol of justice and freedom for all the world to see. And with her great might, may she always deter and never have to destroy. Bless the captain and all who have authority under him, that working together we may be pleasing to you, to whom authority belongs.

We ask this in your name. Amen.

Occasional Prayers

Memorial Service

Two centuries ago Benjamin Franklin challenged a fledgling nation with these words: "Let us ever remember that our interests are in concord and not in conflict, and that our true greatness rests in our victories of peace rather than those of war. "

It is in the spirit of that challenge, that we offer this prayer: "Almighty God, we stand here today to pay tribute to brave people, living and dead, who have gone down to the sea in ships. Accept our thanksgiving for their sacrifices and the sacrifices of their families, that have purchased for us a free land. Cause us never to take for granted their devotion to liberty.

Grant, we pray, joy and fulfillment to those still living; and for those who are at rest, grant thy peace, until men everywhere `shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks . . . and learn of war no more'" " Amen.

Marine Corps Birthday

O Lord, throughout the years the United States Marines have served with pride and dedication. The mission of the Marine Corps is not an easy one. Those of us who are marines are grateful to serve our country in its bravest Corps. We are grateful for past examples of readiness, courage, persistence and dedication. O God, help us as we seek to be always faithful, serving as you would have us serve, in this age and the ages to come. Amen.

Occasional Prayers

Independence Day

God of our fathers, hooray for the fourth of July. Back home I people are celebrating our liberty with a holiday. They are having picnics and beach parties. They are enjoying county fairs and base ball games; eating hot dogs and drinking beer and cokes. In stadium bleachers or on grassy slopes, they are watching super colossal fireworks displays. They are hearing the Star Spangled Banner played. Maybe for a few brief moments they remember that our nation was "conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal "or that "all men are endowed b y their creator with the inalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. " For our men on the _____ today certainly wasn't a picnic or holiday. There were no bands playing stirring marches; no baton twirlers leading parades. There was instead devotion to duty. Men doing their jobs-whether moving stores and supplies, taking on fuel oil, transferring ammunition, sending and receiving messages, preparing and serving meals, or whatever each one of us does. There was not much freedom here, except the freedom to do our job well so that our countrymen can enjoy the freedoms we all hold dear. Bless this incredible company of professionals who love liberty so much that the v sacrifice their own celebration of it to work at preserving it. Grant to them restorative sleep and deep satisfaction. Amen.

The Marine's Prayer

Almighty Father, whose command is over all and whose love never fails, make me aware of Thy presence and obedient to Thy will. Keep me true to my best self, guarding me against dishonesty in purpose and deed and helping me to live so that I can face my fellow marines, my loved ones and Thee without shame or fear. Protect my family. Give me the will to do the work of a marine and to accept my share of responsibilities with vigor and enthusiasm. Grant me the courage to be proficient in my daily performance. Keep me loyal and faithful to my superiors and to the duties my country and the Marine corps have entrusted to me. Make me considerate of those committed to my leadership. Help me to wear my uniform with dignity, and let it remind me daily of the traditions which I must uphold.

If I am inclined to doubt, steady my faith; if I am tempted, make me strong to resist; if I should miss the mark, give me courage to try again.

Guide me with the light of truth and grant me wisdom by which I may understand the answer to my prayer. Amen.

POW-MIA Day

Eternal God, for few moments tonight ree remember our ship-mates who have been prisoners of war are missing in action , As our nation observes a POW-MIA day of remembrance may their heroic example cause us, to look deep within ourselves to see what resources we might have to persevere. We have known the grief of death and the agony of not knowing about or loved ones. We pray, therefore, for fathers and mothers, wives and children who are not even given the cleansing of grief because hope still flickers. We are grateful to our compatriots for their sacrifice, their tenacity, their faithfulness. From them we learned again that you are our rock and salvation, our fortress and shield. Let it be so for us always,

Marine Corps Anniversary

Our God, our Father, on the occasion of the anniversary of the Corps, we ask that you grant your blessings upon all marines everywhere, but especially upon the marines of this _____ Grant that each may be aware of the tradition of which we are a part, and which has been entrusted to us by those who have gone before. May we strive to maintain the high standards of the Corps and so continue to serve our country and the cause of freedom, always trusting in you, our God, Amen.

Occasional Prayers

Change of Command

Dear Lord God,

As we gather to commemorate this changing of command, we are thankful for the promises of assistance we receive from you in your Word. We are reminded of the words of Isaiah

"Don't you know, haven't you heard? . . . the Lord is the everlasting God, the creator of the ends of the earth! . . . the Lord cannot grow weary or tired . . . the Lord gives strength to the weary and power to the weak Youths grow tired and weary, young men stumble and fall.

*Yet those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength
- soar like eagles
run and not grow weary walk and not grow faint*

Father, we are thankful for the hope that these verses give us. We pray that you would give strength to these two men as they each assume new responsibilities and duties. For the individuals within this command, Father, we pray that these promises would be a reality in their lives as they accept the responsibility to be prepared for action anytime and anywhere. May your wisdom guide these two men in the many areas of challenge they will face. Amen.

Occasional Prayers

Marine Corps Anniversary

O God, our Father, we come to you with grateful hearts on this the anniversary of our Corps. We are grateful for the illustrious history and honored tradition which is our heritage for the past years. But, we are equally grateful for the opportunity we have to add to that history and enhance that tradition. We serve you, our country and our Corps with great pride.

As we reflect on past years, we are deeply saddened by the tragic loss of our comrades in Lebanon and Grenada. But, by this tragedy, our resolve is strengthened and our courage renewed. By their sacrifice, we are made to reassess our commitment. May we never lose our loyalty and thereby dishonor their memory.

We are saddened by the loss of all friends and former members of this command. They will be sorely missed. We honor their devotion and contributions.

Now, O God, grant your blessings on each of us so that we may always serve honorably, putting our trust in you. Amen.

Change of Command Benediction

Now as we pass the mantle of responsibility from one person to another, O Eternal God, we would call upon You to bless. Help each person to realize the great responsibilities which are placed upon him/her by those in higher authority. May we dedicate to him/her our loyalty, our industry, and our best. May we take a fresh hold upon our duties that we may bring credit to our new commanding officer.

This is our prayer in God's name. Amen.

Occasional Prayers

Change of Command Invocation

Eternal God, in whom we live and move and have our being, we ask Your blessings today as we participate in this most impressive Navy tradition . . . the change of command ceremony. Today we honor the outstanding leadership _____ has given through these past years as _____

We offer special thanks for the personnel in this command who have given of their talents and dedication in service. For the spouses and families who have given encouragement and exercised more than their share of patience, we offer special thanks. Grant, O God, that each of us might realize our own self worth and the need for our talents exercised to the best of our abilities in this command, in our Navy, in our beloved country and in this Your world.

We pray that _____ may have good memories of the years he/she has commanded _____ Bless him/her in his/her new duty. Amen.

Occasional Prayers

Navy Day

*O Eternal Father, strong to save, we pause to remember this
_____ the anniversary of the founding of the Navy.*

*We remember all who have served in the air, on land, on sea,
and under the sea.*

*Those whose lives were given in dark jungles, ocean depths,
desert sands or on far distant bases and beaches.*

*May we recognize their contributions to the security of our
nation.*

*Grant, O God, Your blessing and protection on all men and
women who now serve in our Navy-on watch and on station around
the world, from the Caribbean to the Mediterranean, from the
shores of Lebanon to the Eastern Pacific and in the Middle East.*

*Preserve them from the dangers of sea and air and bring them
safely to port. Put new meaning in our national commitment of
"Peace through Strength" that we may truly strive to be instruments
of peace in a distrustful world.*

Amen.

Occasional Prayers

Commissioning Invocation

*Dear Father in heaven,
Many ships and many men have gone to sea.
Some have sailed for conquest,
Others to explore new worlds.*

*The officers and crew of _____ stand
As you have created them.
With blood from Europe, Asia, and Africa.
Their colors are different,
Their accents are different, even
Their prayers are different.*

*But one quality is common –
They are free!*

*Believing that all are created equal and
That all share the same freedoms,
Our Navy seeks no reward other than the
Peace and Freedom that you have promised.*

*Lord, we now commission
A new vessel of liberty.
Medal it with honor,
Forge it in faith so that
All the world can say,
"There is hope, there is freedom.
Here comes the _____ "Amen.*

Occasional Prayers

The Prayer of a Midshipman

Almighty God, whose way is in the sea, whose paths are in the great waters, whose command is over all and whose love never faileth: Let me be aware of Thy presence and obedient to Thy will. Keep me true to my best self, guarding me against dishonesty in purpose and in deed, and helping me so to live that I can stand unashamed and unafraid before my shipmates, my loved ones, and Thee. Protect those in whose love I live. Give me the will to do my best and to accept my share of responsibilities with a strong heart and a cheerful mind. Make me considerate of those entrusted to my leadership and faithful to the duties my country has entrusted in me. Let my uniform remind me daily of the traditions of the service of which I am a part. If I am inclined to doubt, steady my faith; if I am tempted, make me strong to resist; if I should miss the mark, give me courage to try again. Guide me with the light of truth and give me strength to faithfully serve Thee, now and always. Amen.

Two Bell Ceremony

[“Eternal Father” played very low at the beginning of the ceremony.]

*The toll of the ship’s bell.
Reminds us of the reverence.
We owe to our departed shipmates.
And to those who guard the honor.
Of our country.
Upon the seas.
Under the seas.
In the air.
And upon foreign soil.
Let us who gather here.
Not forget our obligation.*

[Stop playing “Eternal Father.”]

*And in silence [delay while taps is played, lights off,
spotlight on the bell only.]*

*[Lights on.]
Breathe a prayer.
For our absent shipmates.*

*Occasional Prayers
Coast Guard Anniversary*

Dear Father in Heaven,

On this day, we ask your blessing on a unique group of men and women. They represent all the continents and all the islands. They respond to all languages. They touch all nations, colors and creeds. They are, in fact, humanity at sea. That's why they are so precious to you, dear God, because they believe, just like you, that no call for help shall go unanswered. Like you, they labor long and hard to save all. Like you, they never give up until all are safely back in harbor. Like you, they give hope to the hopeless, rescue to the threatened and life to the dying. Who better deserves your blessing than they who share your providence so thoroughly.

Dear Father, you who breathe upon the waters, grant them all, on this anniversary, some of the joy and happiness that they have given to so many. And may the men and women of the United States Coast Guard be forever in your mercy, always part of your providence and close to your home port. Amen.

V-50

Occasional Prayers

A Prayer for the Coast Guard

To breathe upon the waters and give life, to safeguard the law, to rescue floundering souls from their pride or peril, these are the traits of the God of history. In their own way, dear Lord, the men and women of the Coast Guard have striven to imitate your mien and manner since those first cutters set sail in 1790. Their boldness and courage have encircled this land with a new prayer of hope, a cry of salvation rising from your imperiled, abandoned and lost, a phrase cherished by all the people of this land of promise. It resounds from coast to coast with the simple declaration, "Thank God, here comes the Coast Guard!"

On this anniversary, we invoke your blessings upon the oldest service of our nation. Bless our ships and our crews, bless those who command and those who serve and since, in your timelessness, you are as present to 1790 as you are to this day, bless this new world laden with old sins. Bless our country and especially bless our Coast Guard. And we promise you, dear Lord, that since you will not abandon these turbulent waters, then neither shall we. Amen.

Occasional Prayers

ARC Commencement

*O Lord, we pause today to recognize Your presence among us at this important time in our lives. We may know you by different names: Higher Power, Father, Friend. We may sometimes doubt your love for us, or even your existence. Yet you continue to guide us, sometimes despite ourselves, and we are amazed at the miracles we see taking place in our lives. We thank you for even the hard times that have led to growth, for "tough love," and for true friends who cared enough to tell us the truth. We thank you, most of all, for a second chance at life. When the excitement of this ceremony fades, when we grow tired of working a program, when we grow restless, give us such a hunger for growth and serenity that we will have the courage to reach out for help. Teach us self-acceptance and patience so that we can face the truth and live one day at a time. Most of all, teach us how to truly live so that we may see the exciting, the unique, even the miraculous all around us. We commit ourselves to your care.
Amen.*

Inter-faith Benediction

*May the Lord bless and keep us;
May He grant us strength to live through troubled times;
May He fill us with grace equal to every need and His peace which
passes all understanding
May He grant us the wisdom-and the will-to do justice, to love
mercy, and to walk humbly with Him; and
May He surround us with His love, and lead us in the paths of
everlasting life. Amen.*

Occasional Prayers

Launching

Almighty and eternal God, who art the fountain of all wisdom and power, we invoke Thy blessing upon this ship. We praise Thee for this memorable and climactic moment of human achievement. We rejoice that under the dispensation of Thy providence, in this particular moment of history, Thou has made it possible for the ingenuity, skill and labor of free people to bring this ship into being. May there come now, to those who have been laborers in its planning and construction, the inner satisfaction of having done their tasks worthily and well.

As we christen the we commend her to Thy guidance and care. Grant that her services may be used in the preservation of peace, and for war only when the defense of freedom shall so dictate.

To this petition we add also our supplications for the President of the United States and all others in authority. We ask Thy blessing, too, upon all who serve in the armed forces of our nation, particularly those who are making sacrifices in the troubled areas of the world. Be pleased to protect and uphold them with Thy love and care.

Finally, O God, unite us all in an eternal purpose, to preserve and bear aloft the torch of freedom and peace among nations. To Thy honor and glory we offer this prayer. Amen.

Occasional Prayers

Commissioning

O Thou Eternal God, who in the beginning did cause light and life to break forth out of darkness and chaos. Who didst separate the heavens from the earth, the land from the sea. Who with lavish hand didst cause broad prairies to appear for the growing of grain, streams and flowing waters for the giving of life, vast oceans for the bearing of commerce. Who didst create man in Thine own image to the end that in the enjoyment of life he might glorify Thee. We ask Thy blessing upon us and Thy presence with us in this time of dedication.

We are gathered on this solemn occasion to do honor to those who, by the ingenuity of mind, conceived this vessel; to give praise to those who by dint of mighty effort and sacrifice caused her to evolve from a naked keel into a great and proud ship. We pray for the officers and crew of this ship: for the young seamen too soon, perhaps, torn from the guiding influence of home and family; for the Petty Officers who have learned well the lessons taught in the school of experience; for the Officers who carry the heavy burden of responsibility; and for our captain who, in the loneliness of command, must make those final decisions that will affect the destiny of us all. We pray also for mothers and fathers, spouses and children who must one day stand upon a lonely shore and watch the departure of this ship on her mission of peace. Be with them in the quiet watches of the night and give them strength for every time of testing.

Occasional Prayers

In our larger purpose, keep constantly before us our true mission as an instrument of peace and not of war. Expunge from our hearts and minds all hatred that causes divisions among Thy people. When decisions must be made that require moral courage, help us to choose that which is right and forsake that which is wrong, that honor might appear more desirable than personal gain, that loyalty might be revered above life. When the time comes for us to stand up and be counted, we pray that we might be numbered among those who are found faithful.

Be with us, Our Father, on all occasions that we may proudly bear the flag of the United States and the good will of her people to lands beyond the seas. Amen.

Retirement

Eternal Father, we ask for a very special blessing. A blessing upon _____ who has given many years of service not only for his country but also for the God-ordained dream of peace in our world. Such service has meant sacrifices, chief of which has been the long separations from home and family. We rejoice with him on his retirement day. Bless the future years. May they be a time of enjoyment and peace, filled with the presence of loved ones and friends. In your name we pray. Amen.

Occasional Prayers

A Marine Memorial Prayer

For all of your blessings of the past, O Lord, we give you honest and humble thanks. For our homeland, with its torch of liberty shining bright welcome to exiles and refugees of oppression and persecution throughout the world, we praise you. Through your providence, O Lord, you have given our nation a position of high responsibility among the nations of the world and we entreat you for strength to shoulder the burdens of duty which you have placed upon us.

For the tenacity, courage, strength, and skill of fighting marines who on wild seas and hostile beaches, in steaming jungles and mud filled valleys, on icy mountains and in rubble-strewn cities, suffered and died for all the families of our land, we give you praise, O Lord, and in their memory dedicate ourselves anew to you, our country, and our Corps.

Occasional Prayers

We remember with solemn appreciation the heroic deeds of the marines who fought at Trenton, Bladensbury, Tripoli, and bloody Chapultepec. We commemorate the "devil dogs" of Belleau Wood Soissons, St. Mihiel and the Argonne. We remember with deepest gratitude the valor and sacrificial struggle of our fathers and brothers of the United States Marine Corps who gave their lives in the defense of Bataan, Corregidor, and Wake Island. We remember those who died in the offenses of Guadalcanal, Tulgi, New Georgia, Bougainville, and Tarawa. Tinian, Peleliu, Iwo Jima, and Okinawa. On the Pusan Perimeter and Inchon and the Chosi Reservoir. We hold in hallowed remembrance over 12,000 marines who gave their lives in Southeast Asia at Chu Lai, DaNang, Khe Sahn, Quang Tri, Cam Lo, Con Thein, Phu Bai, and Hue. We remember, Heavenly Father, those tragic hours of Lebanon.

For all marines who have given their lives in action on land, at sea, and in the air, we pause in tribute, O Lord.

[Playing of TAPS]

Indicates a single toll of the bell.

Occasional Observances

From time to time, chaplains are called upon to plan special observances such as Memorial Services, Thanksgiving celebrations, National Prayer Breakfasts, etc. The following resources and sample services are presented to assist you in your planning.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Scripture Resources:

PS 8, 77:11-20, 87, 126, 133

GEN. 37:12-20

EX. 3:7-12 AMOS 5:25

ZEPH. 3:8-10 IS 40:1-5, 42:1-7

ECCLESIASTICUS 44:1-4, 8-9, 10-15

MATT 5:1-2 MATT 22:34-40

MA TT 25:41-44 LUKE 6:26 36

I JOHN JAMES 2:5-9, 12-17

REV 21:1-7

REV 22:3-5

VI-1

Occasional Observances

*A Service of Remembrance
For Martin Luther King, Jr.*

*Opening Hymn "Lift Every Voice and Sing"-
Invocation*

Commanding Officer's Tribute

Special Music "If I Had a Hammer"

Old Testament Reading Amos 5:25

Prayer

We give thanks to you, O Lord our God, for all your servants and witnesses of time past: for the patriarchs, lawgivers, apostles and martyrs. We remember before you with grateful hearts the men and women of our country who in the day of decision ventured much for the liberties we now enjoy. And especially today, we remember your servant, Martin Luther King, Jr. Grant that we may not rest until all people of this land share the benefits of true freedom and gladly accept its disciplines. This we ask in your holy name. Amen.

*New Testament Reading Matthew 5:1-2,
25:41-44*

Special Music "His Eye is on the Sparrow"

Message

Special Music "Precious Lord, Take My Hand"

*A Reading "I Have a
Dream"*

Closing Hymn "We Shall Overcome"

Benediction

Occasional Observances

A Litany of Commemoration

LEADER: In the grand order of the universe, our Lord God wisely has chosen men and women to serve Him in each era. Such a servant of our Lord God was Martin Luther King, Jr., whose birth we now commemorate. We are thankful for the life of this 20th Century Prophet of Freedom, who joined the prophets of history in the cry:

CONGREGATION: In the name of freedom, let my people go.

LEADER: Martin Luther King, Jr. envisioned the ultimate freedom: the freedom achieved in struggle; the freedom reached in brotherhood; the freedom fired by the dream of a man; the freedom inspired by the lot of a people; the freedom free of hate; the freedom full of love.

CONGREGATION: In the name of the freedom of love, let my people go.

LEADER: He came into our lives when the yearning of people to be free had turned their attention to justice. For justice, and only justice, we shall follow, that we may live and inherit the land which the Lord our God gives us.

CONGREGATION: In the name of justice, let my people go.

LEADER: He reminded us that the spirit of man soars from depths of despair with the strength and belief in the promise of the Creator of the universe. We know and we testify: The Lord loves justice... He will not forsake his saints.

CONGREGATION: In the name of the Lord, let my people go.

LEADER: And so he set off with us on a journey for justice. It was a journey proclaiming the words of the ancient prophet, Amos.- "Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream." It was a journey calling forth the modern Christian ministry to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to set at liberty those who are oppressed.

CONGREGATION: In the name of the prophet, Amos, and in the name of the suffering people, let my people go.

Occasional Observances

LEADER: The journey went to Montgomery, to affirm human dignity and courage; to Birmingham, to defeat the sickness of separating human life; to Selma, to ensure the equality of people in human affairs; to a hundred nameless communities to remove painful shackles of oppression and light joyous torches of liberty.

CONGREGATION: In the name of this journey toward freedom, let my people go.

LEADER: When war was encountered, the leader of this journey sang with the people: "Ain't gonna study war no more." When violence was met, he spurned it and said.- "Hate is too great a burden to bear."

CONGREGATION: In the name of the Promised Land, let my people go.

LEADER: So we are thankful that the Spirit of the Lord anointed a man who preached good news to the poor, who rejected segregation and embraced liberation, who prophesied the greatness of his people in struggle for the deliverance of all people.

CONGREGATION: In the name of the Spirit of the Lord, let by people go.

LEADER: We praise the Lord God for sending us a man of peace who resisted tyranny, a man of nonviolence who fought for liberty, a man of God who worked for people. Thank you, Lord, for Martin Luther King, Jr., who inspired us with his dream, who walked into our lives and our hearts with marches for justice, who demanded freedom with great courage in the face of great danger, and who has now passed on into your Promised Land. Thank you for his noble legacy to continue the journey to that land here on earth, in life for all people. Thank you, God. You have sent us one who now causes us to say:

ALL: In the name of Martin Luther King, Jr., let my people go.

Occasional Observances

Memorial Services/ Memorial Day

Scripture Resources:

*PS 23, 27, 42, 46, 90 JOHN 10:11-16
103:13-22, 106, 116, IS 61:1-3
121, 130, 139 LAMENTATION 3:22-26, 31-33
IS 25:6-9 REV 7:9-17
WISDOM 3:1-9 REV 21:2-7
1 COR 15:50-58 11 COR 4:16-5:9
JOHN 5:24-27 I JOHN 3:1-2
JOHN 11:21-27*

A Memorial Service

Opening

*In the midst of life we are in death;
from whom can we seek help?
From you alone, U Lord,
- who by our sins are justly angered.*

*Holy God, Holy and Mighty,
Holy and merciful Savior,
deliver us not into the bitterness of eternal death.*

*Lord, you know the secrets of our hearts;
shut not your ears to our prayers,
but spare us, O Lord.
Holy God, Holy and Mighty,
Holy and merciful Savior,
deliver us not into the bitterness of eternal death.*

*O worthy and eternal Judge,
do not let the pains of death
turn us away from you at our last hour.*

*Holy God, Holy and Mighty,
Holy and merciful Savior,
deliver us not into the bitterness of eternal death.*

Hymn - Armed Forces Hymnal 310, 135, 509

Occasional Observances

A Memorial Service (continued)

*Responsive Reading - Armed Forces Hymnal 643, 670, 679, 701, or
Psalm above ,'*

Scripture

Homily/Address

Special Music

Litany - Armed Forces Hymnal, page 643

Prayer - Armed Forces Hymnal, 759, 760

Benediction/ Dismissal

*Hymn - Armed Forces Hymnal 73, 198
See also Armed Forces Hymnal No. 625*

VI-6

Occasional Observances

Independence Day/ Patriotic Occasions

Scripture Resources:

PS 33, 107:1-32 REVELATION 21:1-7 PS 145 or 145:1-9

ECCLESIASTICUS 10:1-8, 12-18 DEUT. 10:17-21 JAMES 5:7-10

HEBREWS 11:8-16 MICAH 4:1-5 MATT 5:43-48

A Service for Independence Day

Opening/Call to Worship

"Happy is the nation whose God is the Lord!

Happy the people He has chosen to be his own!"

PS 33:12

Hymn - Armed Forces Hymnal 198, 200

Posting of Colors

National Anthem

Prayer for our Country

*Responsive Reading - Armed Forces Hymnal 702, or one of the
Psalms listed above*

Scripture

VI-7

Occasional Observances

A Service For independence Day (continued)

Response - Armed Forces Hymnal 530, 543, err

*" O ruler of the universe, Lord God,
great deeds are they that you have done,
surpassing human understanding.
Your wars are ways of righteousness and truth,
O King of all the ages.*

*Who can fail to do homage, Lord
and sing the praises of your Name?
for you only are the Holy One.
All nations will draw near and fall down before you
because your just and holy works have been revealed,"*
REV 15::3-4

Address

Special Music/ Hymn – Armed Forces Hymnal 190, 200

Prayer

Retire Colors - Song: Armed Forces Hymnal 193 /194

Benediction

Hymn- Armed Forces Hymnal 198, 193, 194

Postlude

See also Armed Forces Hymnal No. 6?6

VI-8

Occasional Observances

Labor Day

Scripture Resources:

PS 107: 1-9, 90:1-2, 16-17

1 COR 3:10-14

ECCLESIASTICUS 38:27-32

MATT 6:19-24

A Service for Labor Day

Opening/ Call to Worship

*"He concentrates on completing the task,
and stays up late to give it a perfect finish."
Ecclesiasticus 38:28*

Responsive Reading - Armed Forces Hymnal 669 or Psalm above

Hymn - Armed Forces Hymnal 172, 475

Prayer - Armed Forces Hymnal 797

Scripture Reading

Hymn - Armed Forces Hymnal 200

Homily/Address

Special Music

Prayer/ Benediction - Armed Forces Hymnal 826, 831

Hymn - Armed Forces Hymnal 187

See also Armed Forces Hymnal No. 626

Occasional Observances

Thanksgiving

Scripture Resources:

PS 65 or 65:9-14

DEUT 8:1-3, 6-10

JAMES 1:17-18, 21-27

MATT 6:25-33

Prayer

Almighty and gracious Father, we give you thanks for the fruits of the earth in their season, and for the labors of those who harvest them. Make us, we pray, faithful stewards of your great bounty, for the provision of our necessities and the relief of all who are in need, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

A Service for Thanksgiving

Opening sentence - "Give thanks to the Lord, and call upon his Name; make known his deeds among the peoples." Ps 105:1

Hymn - Armed Forces Hymnal 74, 50, 52

Responsive Reading - Armed Forces Hymnal 661, 702, or Psalm listed above

Scripture

Homily

Hymn - Armed Forces Hymnal 75, 82, 52, 344

Special Music

Offering

Prayer & Benediction - Armed Forces Hymnal 814, 815

Hymn - Armed Forces Hymnal 46, 50

VI-10

Occasional Observances

Peace

Scripture Resources:

PS 85:7-13

JOHN 16:23-33

COLOSSIANS 3:12-15

EPHESIANS 2:13-15

MICAH 4:1 5 MATT 5:43-48

Prayer:

Almighty God, kindle, we pray, in every heart the true love of peace, and guide with your wisdom those who take counsel for the nations of the earth, that in tranquility your dominion may increase until the earth is filled with the knowledge of your love. Amen.

A Service for Peace

Opening/Call to Worship

*"Mercy and truth have met together;
righteousness and peace have kissed each other."*

Psalm 85:10

*Song - "Let There Be Peace On Earth" or Armed Forces Hymnal
400*

Prayer - Armed Forces Hymnal 793, 799, or above

Responsive Reading - Armed Forces Hymnal 667 or Psalm above

Scripture

Hymn - Armed Forces Hymnal 175, 176

Homily

Special Music

Prayer and Benediction

Hymn - Armed Forces Hymnal 403, 420

See also Armed Forces Hymnal 615

VI-11

Occasional Observances

Prayer Breakfast

Introduction

Colors

National Anthem/Pledge of Allegiance

Invocation/ Blessing of meal

Meal

Introduction of guests

Scripture reading

Special music

Address Prayer/Silent reflection

Benediction

Hymn/ Song

O GOD our Father,

You have commanded the light to shine out of darkness and awakened us again to praise your goodness and to ask your favor. Accept now the sacrifice of our worship and thanksgiving. Make us to be children of the light and of the day, heirs of your everlasting inheritance. Remember, O GOD, all our brothers who stand in need of your favor on land or sea, in air or space. May our lives ever praise your wonderful and holy name. Amen.

VI-12

Occasional Observances I

A Litany in Memory of Dr. Martin Luther King,

CH: O Lord. Have mercy upon us.

ALL: O God, Have mercy upon us.

CH: O Lord. Have mercy upon us.

*CH: From hypocrisy used to save face and create the illusion of
commitment to racial justice and equality*

ALL: Save us, Lord.

*CH: From the death of our souls and the deadening of our hearts
to the cries of the poor and the disenfranchised*

ALL: Save us, Lord.

*CH: From misplaced priorities; seeking personal security and,
advantage without accepting or understanding the
consequences of our actions in the lives of others.*

ALL: Help us, Lord.

*CH: For a curious spirit that seeks out and secures an environment
in which we respect the rights, differences, and potential of
other human beings.*

ALL: Help us, Lord.

*CH: We acknowledge that words hurt, insensitivity to the realities
of racial injustice crushes the human spirit and that our
unwillingness to accept true commitment to change embitters
us all.*

Occasional Observances

ALL: Help us, Lord.

CH: That each of us might understand that the wrong we find in another is essentially a reflection of that which we fear or desire in ourselves; that we learn to trust one another and thus find hope.

ALL: Help us, Lord.

CH: That my brothers and sisters would not hold me accountable for another's wrong and would accept my individuality and the right to be myself.

ALL: Help us, Lord.

CH: That we may simply grow tired of finding fault and seeking evidence to justify our distorted views of each other's actions.

ALL: Help us, Lord.

CH: For this ship, and all aboard her; that we may learn to deal with racial tensions with honesty and fairness; that we may come to appreciate that our own way of life can encourage comraderie and change.

ALL: Help us, Lord.

CH: That our prayers may be more than empty soundings; but rather evidence of our conviction to actively seek peace and equality among the races.

ALL: Praise be to our God!!

CH: Praise be to our God!

VI-14

Burial At Sea

SOME SUPPLEMENTARY THOUGHTS ON BURIAL AT SEA

The manual Navy Military Funerals (NA VPERS 15555A), published in October 1980, needs some additional practical words with special reference to burials at sea.

A. Shipboard Committals

1. In choosing the day for a committal at sea, remember rough water is "softer" than a calm sea. If a casket is to be committed to the deep, it is helpful to recall that the less freeboard and the rougher the water, the better chance there will be for the casket to enter the water intact and sink immediately.

2. In the committal of ashes (cremains), it is recommended that the container(s) be opened before hand in the privacy of the chaplain's office. There is great variety in the way cremains are encased; sometimes cardboard containers are used, sometimes metal canisters. Urns are fastened in a variety of ways. Make certain you have the necessary tools to open the container.

3. There is variation in kind and amount of ashes. The cremains of a large man weigh up to 9 lbs. and are made up of bone chips. The ashes of a newborn infant are no more than a teaspoon of fine powder in a small plastic bag.

4. During the committal the ship should remain underway with scattering done in such a way that ashes blow away from the ship. It may be that the chaplain should kneel near the rail (be sure to have someone with a steadying hand on your shoulder) while scattering the ashes. Also, be sure to check the wind direction.

B. Committals from Aircraft

1. Scattering ashes from an aircraft over water is much the same as that from a ship. Again the container(s) should have been opened before-hand.

2. Seek the advice of the aircraft crew chief. When using a helicopter it is recommended that a small pinch of ashes be scattered first to determine their direction. They should go out away from the aircraft. Remember, ashes could foul the engine in the air.

Burial at Sea

3. *The water should be visible from the aircraft, and if containers are to be discarded; they should sink immediately or be "biodegradable".*

C. General Observations

1. *if the family" has requested that the urn or container be returned following the committal, it is recommended that all traces of 'the ashes be removed.*

2. *Careful preparation is the key to providing a dignified and fitting burial/committal at sea. The solemn ceremony offers a great teaching opportunity on the way we deal with death --our own and that of others.*

3. *Among the things that are "nice to do", try to arrange for a picture of the committal. Include this with your letter along with a copy of the ship's chart showing the location and a copy of the quartermaster's log.*

D. Suggested Services

1. *The following represent an updating and revision of the suggested services in Navy Military Funerals (NA VPFRS 15555A).*

Burial At Sea

Service for Burial of a Person of the Protestant Faith

1. During the burial service, if for a person of a protestant faith, the - commanding officer or other person appointed by him/her shall stand near the remains and face in such a way that he/she will be heard by all present and may read all or part of the following.-

2. The Scripture:

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will we not fear, though the earth do change, and though the mountains be shaken into the heart of the seas. For God is our God forever and ever. He will be our guide even unto death. (Psalm 46)

The Scripture lesson: (John 12:23-26)

If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave Him up for us all, will he not also give us all things with him? It is God who justifies; who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? No, in all things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

3. The Prayers:

O God, whose days are without end, and whose mercies cannot be numbered, make us deeply sensible of the shortness and uncertainty of human life; and let your Holy Spirit lead us in holiness and righteousness all our days that, when we have served you in our generation, we may be gathered unto our fathers, having the testimony of a good conscience; in the communion of the is Christian Church; in the confidence of a certain faith; in the comfort of a reasonable, religious and holy hope; in favor with you our God, and in perfect charity with the world; all of which we ask through Jesus Christ, our Lord, Amen.

Burial At Sea

O God, we pray that the memory of our comrade, (name) (fallen in battle) may be ever sacred in our hearts; that the sacrifice which he/she has offered for our country's cause may be acceptable in your sight; and that an entrance into your eternal peace may, by your pardoning grace, be open to him/her, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

4. The Committal.-

Unto almighty God we commend the soul of our brother/sister departed, and we commit his/her body (ashes) to the deep (for burial at sea... tilt the board and release the remains into the sea), in the sure and certain hope of the resurrection unto eternal life, through our Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

5. The Benediction:

The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you, the Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you and give you peace. Amen.

Burial At Sea

Service for Burial of a Person of the Catholic Faith

During the burial service, if for a person of Catholic faith, the commanding officer or such person as appointed by him/her shall stand near the remains and face in such away that he/she will be heard by all present and may read all or part of the following:

1. Prayer

Lord God, through your mercy, those who have lived in faith find eternal peace.

Forgive the sins of our brother)sister whose body we bury here.

Welcome him/her into your presence, and with your saints let him/her rejoice in your joy forever.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

ALL: Amen.

Our brother)sister has gone to hill her rest in the peace of Christ. With faith and hope in eternal life, let us commend him) her to the loving mercy of our Father. Assist him/her with our prayers.

He/she became God's son/daughter through baptism and was often fed at the table of our Lord. May the Lord now welcome him) her to the table of God's children in heaven, and with all the saints, may he/she inherit the promise of eternal life.

Let us also pray to the Lord for ourselves. May we who mourn be reunited one day with our brother)sister. Together may we meet Christ Jesus who is our life, when he shall appear in His glory.

2. Scripture (John 12:23-26) Jesus said.-

"The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. I solemnly assure you, unless the grain of wheat falls to the earth and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat. But, if it dies, it produces much fruit. The man who loves his life loses it, while the man who hates his life in this world preserves it to life eternal.

If anyone would serve me, let him follow me; where I am, there will my servant be.

If anyone serves me, him the Father will honor."

3. Responsorial Psalm (Psalm 93)

ANT.- Of earth you formed me, with flesh you covered me;

Burial At Sea

Lord, My Redeemer, raise me up again at the last day. The Lord is king, in splendor robed; robed is the Lord and girt about with strength; and he has made the world firm, not to be moved.

ANT. Of earth you formed me, with flesh you covered me.

Lord, My Redeemer, raise me up again at the last day. Your throne stands firm from of old, from everlasting you are, O Lord.

ANT. Of earth you formed me, with flesh you covered me.

Lord, My Redeemer, raise me up again at the last day. The floods lift up, O Lord, the floods lift up their voice; the floods lift up their tumult. More powerful than the roar of many waters, more powerful than the breakers of the sea... powerful on high is the Lord

ANT. Of earth you formed me, with flesh you covered me;

Lord, My Redeemer, raise me up again at the last day. Your decrees are worthy of trust indeed: holiness befits your house, O Lord, for length of days.

ANT. Of earth you formed me, with flesh you covered me; Lord, my Redeemer, raise me up again at the last day.

4. Song of Farewell

V. Saints of God, come to his(her) aid! Come to meet him(her), angels of the Lord!

R. Receive his(her) soul and present him(her) to God the Most High.

V. May Christ who called you, take you to himself may angels lead you to Abraham's side.

R. Receive his(her) soul and present him(her) to God the most high.

Burial At Sea

V. Give him(her) eternal rest, O Lord, and may your light shine on him(her) for ever.

R. Receive his(her) soul and present him(her) to God the most High.

5. The Committal

Father, into your hands we commend our brother (sister). We are confident that with all who have died in Christ he(she) will be raised to life on the last day and live with Christ forever.

We commend our brother(sister) to you, Lord (for burial at sea... tilt board and release remains into the sea). Now that he(she) has passed from this life, may he(she) live on in your presence. In your mercy and love, forgive whatever sins he(she) may have committed through human weakness. We ask this through Christ our Lord. All. Amen.

6. Benediction

V. Give him(her) eternal rest, O Lord.

R. And may your light shine on him(her) forever.

VII-7

Burial At Sea

Service for Burial of a Person of the Jewish Faith

1. During the burial for a person of the Jewish faith, the commanding officer, or such person as appointed by him/her, shall stand near the remains and face in such a way that he/she will be heard by all present and may read all or part of the following:

2. Scripture:

Adonai natan:

Lord, Thou has given. Thou did give unto us our dear For all that was good and endearing in his/her life, we offer the deepest thanks of our hearts.

Adonai lakah:

Lord, Thou has taken, Thou has called him/her unto Thyself. We pray Thee, O God, for the courage to make our broken hearts an altar before which we acknowledge Thy sovereignty and love, as we say,

Y'he shem Adonai mevorah:

May Thy name be blessed now and forevermore. Amen.

O Lord, what is man that Thou dost regard him, or the son of man that Thou dost think of him? Man is like a breath, his days are like a passing shadow. Thou dost sweep men away; they are like a dream, like grass which is renewed in the morning, - in the morning it flourishes and is renewed; in the evening it fades and withers. The years of our life are threescore and ten, or even by reason of strength fourscore; yet their pride is but toil and trouble; they are soon gone, and we fly away. So teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom. Mark the blameless man, and behold the upright, for there is posterity for the man of peace. Surely God will ransom my soul from the grave; for He receives me indeed. The Lord redeems the souls of His servants; none of those who take refuge in Him will be condemned. The dust returns to the earth as it was, but the spirit returns to God who gave it.

Burial At Sea

(Passages from Psalms)

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He has me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside the still waters. He guides me on paths of righteousness, He revives my soul for the sake of His glory. Though I walk in the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no harm, for You are with me. Your staff and Your rod do comfort me. You set a table in sight of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil,- my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall abide in the house of the Lord forever.
(Psalm 23)

Take unto thyself our comrade who has given his/her love to this great country. May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable to You, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.

3. Memorial Prayer

Ail Malai Rahamem

O God, exalted and full of compassion, grant perfect peace in Your sheltering Presence, among the holy and pure, to the soul of who _____ has gone to his/her eternal home. Master of mercy, we beseech You remember all the worthy and righteous deeds that he/she performed in the land of the living. May his/her soul be bound up in the bond of life. The Lord is his/her portion. May he/she rest in peace. Let us say: Amen.

4. Committal:

Out of the depths have I called Thee, O Lord. Lord, hearken unto my voice; let Thine ear be attentive to the voice of my supplications. I wait for the Lord, my soul does wait, and in His word do I hope. My soul waits for the Lord, more than watchmen for the morning, yea, more than watchmen for the morning. God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

My spirit I commit to God, my body, too, and all I prize; Both when I sleep and when I wake, He is with me, I shall not fear.

Burial At Sea

Into thy hands, O Lord, we commend the soul of Thy servant departed, now called unto eternal rest. (For burial at sea- "and we commit his/her body to the deep" tilt the board and release the body into the sea).

S. Benediction:

O Lord, help us to understand that grief and love go hand in hand, that the sorrow of loss is but the measure of a love that is stronger than death. Even though we cry in the bereavement of our hearts, may we be as children who know that their father is near and who cling unafraid to the trusted hand. In this spirit, O Thou Who art the Master of our destiny, do we commit all that is precious to us into Thy keeping, as we repeat the words hallowed by generations:

Mourner's Kaddish

*Yit-gadal v yit-kadash sh'mey raba, AP
B'alma di v'ra hirutey, v yam-lih mal-hutey
B'ha-yey-hon uv-yomey-hon uv-ha-yey d'hol beyt yisrael
Ba-agala u-vizman kariv, v'imru Amen.*

Y'hey sh'mey raba m'varah l'alam ul-almey alma-ya.

*Yit-barah v yish-tabah v yit pa-ar v yit-romam v yit-na-sey
V yit-hadar v yit-aleh v yit-halal sh'mey dkud-sha,
B'rih hu, l'eyla min kol bir-hata v'shi-rata
Tush-b'hata v'ne-hemata da-amiran b'alma, Vimru Amen.*

*Y'hey sh'lama raba min sh'ma-ya
V'ha yim aleynu Val kol yisrael, v'imru Amen.*

*Oseh shalom bi-m'romav hu ya-aseh shalom
Aleynu Val kol yisrael, v'imru Amen.*

*Magnified and sanctified be God's great name in the world which
He has created according to His will. May He establish His
kingdom soon, in our lifetime. Let us say: Amen.*

Burial At Sea

May His great name be praised to all eternity. Hallowed and honored, extolled and exalted, adored and acclaimed be the name of the Holy One, though He is above all the praises, hymns, and songs of adoration which men can utter. Let us say: Amen.

May God grant abundant peace and life to us and to all Israel. Let us say: Amen.

May He who ordained harmony in the universe grant peace to us and to all Israel. Let us say: Amen.

May He who comforts Israel, grant solace in your bereavement.

Inclusive Language

Notes on Inclusive Language

"Standby for Evening Prayer . . . "With these or similar words, the chaplain has an opportunity to exercise a unique privilege: to pray on behalf of an entire ship.

The chaplain's words are meant to express the gratitude and petition of the Captain on his bridge chair as well as the isolated seaman on watch in aftersteering.

During an Evening Prayer, Change of Command or other civic ceremony, a chaplain has an unparalleled challenge and a captive audience. If the words the chaplain chooses are inclusive, every member of ship's company will be able to say, "Amen."

The prayers included in this binder are provided as models. They are examples of attempts to carefully craft words, strike a responsive chord and solicit a unanimous affirmation.

VIII-I

Inclusive Language

NOTES ON INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

A. In Worship

Preaching: The chaplain in both prophetic and teaching roles has a responsibility to assist the congregation in developing as an inclusive community. Using inclusive terms and choosing illustrations and anecdotes which reflect the worth and contribution to our heritage of all persons will help to provide the necessary vision and leadership.

Using the Bible: Some versions of the Bible have not dealt with problems of male-oriented language. It may be helpful to make a few brief comments or print a statement recognizing the limitations of the passage with respect to gender-based language. This action, taken with care, can help listeners or readers to include each other and themselves in the message.

Prayer and praying. Suggestions in the preceding sections apply also to the formulation of individual free prayers and to the creation or adaption of prayers for group use. Traditional prayers provide a link with those who have worshipped over the years but they may require some adjustments to accommodate the needs of persons who might feel themselves excluded by the language a prayer offers.

Carefully selected published prayers, carefully worded written prayers, and sensitively phrased extemporaneous prayers can give individual worshippers a sense of being a part of the community of faith.

Selecting Hymns: Many traditional hymns contain language and imagery that are out of date. Yet, the hymns are understandably dear to the hearts of persons who have grown up singing them and who have many emotional associations related to them. To deal with the problem, there are several choices: discard those hymns, change the implied sexism (as well as the imperialism and racial prejudice) of some hymns by re-wording, or using them less frequently and provide opportunities to learn contemporary hymns of good quality. In fairness to a wide variety of tastes, discarding hymns is perhaps not a real choice. Freedom to change the words depends on copyright restrictions and upon the availability of substitute words that fit the metre and the feeling of the hymn. Where appropriate, educational materials might assist chaplains and teachers with suggestions for optional word changes in the hymns or songs provided for worship.

Inclusive Language

B. Handling References To Worship Participants And Others

When using official liturgies or when preparing an informal worship service, it is relatively easy to use language which includes everyone both in referring to the worshippers themselves and to other people.

Showing consideration in this way follows the example found in I Corinthians 10:33; "For my part I always try to meet everyone halfway, regarding not my own good but the good of the many. So that they may be saved." (NEB)

Writing rubrics: Some suggestions for writing rubrics (directions for actions of leaders and participants) may be appropriate. Use noun forms when referring to the leader-minister, leader. Avoid the use of pronouns-the minister says; the leader says; the minister kneels; the leader may add these words. To refer to the participants, use a collective noun-the congregation; the worshippers; all the officer select; friends; or use brother(s) and sister(s). If nouns are neuter, do not refer back to them with gender-related pronouns. Continue to use collective nouns throughout.

Addressing groups or individuals: When addressing an assemblage, expressions such as brothers and sisters, Christians, people of God, or friends, create a inclusive feeling.

When addressing or referring to individuals, brother(s) and sister(s), friend(s), or given names with or without surnames, promote an inclusive atmosphere.

Combinations like Jim and Jane Clark or LT and Mrs. Brown convey a greater feeling or equality than Jim and Mrs. Brown, CDR John Brown and his wife, or Mrs. Brown and her husband.

Similarly, the phrase husband and wife places two people on an equal footing in a way that man and wife does not.

The following suggestions provide examples of words and phrases which when used appropriately can promote an inclusive feeling in worship materials. Materials devised for specific occasions lend themselves to these inclusive useages. But even when using published liturgical materials, consider substituting some of the suggested words and phrases for less inclusive, male-oriented language.

Inclusive Language

<i>Traditional Expressions</i>	<i>Inclusive Expressions</i>
<i>Brotherhood, fraternity</i>	<i>Community, companionship, comradeship, family, kinship, friendship, partnership, unity</i>
<i>Fellowship</i>	<i>Communion</i>
<i>Forefathers</i>	<i>Ancestors, forerunners, forebears</i>
<i>Man, mankind</i>	<i>All of us, everyone, folk, heirs, human race, humans, human beings, humankind, humanity, individual people, persons, sisters and brothers</i>
<i>Personal male pronouns used generically</i>	<i>He or she; use indefinite pronoun such as "who" when it applies; "they" if grammatical</i>
<i>Sons of God</i>	<i>Children of God</i>
<i>The common man</i>	<i>The average person, the ordinary citizen</i>
<i>The family of man</i>	<i>The human family, human race</i>