

## PRAYERS FOR MILITARY (AIR FORCE) CHAPLAINS

### *Classic Prayers*

I asked for strength that I might achieve;  
I was made weak that I might learn humbly to obey.  
    I asked for health that I might do greater things;  
    I was given infirmity 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 got nothing that I had asked for,  
    but everything that I had hoped for.  
Almost despite myself my unspoken prayers were answered;  
I am, among all men, most richly blessed.

May the Lord bless you with all good and keep you from all evil. May he give light to your heart with loving wisdom, and be gracious to you with eternal knowledge. May he lift up his loving countenance upon you for eternal peace. [Dead Sea Scroll]

May the Lord God be a shield about you, turning away every enemy, disease, violence, and sorrow. May the Lord God guard you and protect you so that you may enjoy life and peace both now and forever. May the Lord, a God of mercy and compassion, spread over us the shelter of his peace.

Cause us, our Father, to lie down in peace, and rise again to enjoy life. Spread over us the covering of your peace, guide us with your good counsel, and save us for the sake of your name. Be a shield about us, turning away every enemy, disease, violence, hunger, and sorrow. Shelter us in the shadow of your wings, for you are a God who guards and protects us, a ruler of mercy and compassion. Guard us when we go out and when we come in, to enjoy life and peace both now and forever, and spread over us the shelter of your peace. Blessed are you Lord, who spreads the shelter of peace over us, and over all the world. Amen.

May the road rise to meet you.  
    May the wind be always at your back.  
May the sun shine warm upon your face.  
    May the rains fall softly upon your fields  
    until we meet again.  
May God hold you in the hollow of his hand.  
[An Old Gaelic Blessing]

Oh! I have slipped the surly bonds of earth.  
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings.  
Sunward I've climbed and joined the tumbling mirth  
Of sun-split clouds and done a hundred things  
You've not dreamed of . . .  
Wheeled and soared and swung.  
High in the sunlit silence.  
Hov'ring there, I've chased the shouting wind along.  
And flung my eager craft through footless halls of air.  
Up, up, along delirious burning blue.  
I've topped the wind-swept heights with easy grace.  
Where never lark or even eagle flew.  
And while with silent, lifting mind I've trod  
The high untrespassed sanctity of space,  
Put out my hand, and touched the face of God.  
[“High Flight,” John Magee, Jr.]

Lord, you have called us to be guardians of a nation founded on your principles. Whatever our tasks as Security Police, we do them to serve you and our nation. We are proud to accept the responsibility of this high calling. We dedicate ourselves to our vocation, and ask for guidance and courage in aiding our people to live with dignity, in safety and peace. We know that true security comes from your presence, so we pray with the psalmist: You bless those who obey you, Lord; your love protects them like a shield. Use us, O Lord, as shields for your people, reflecting your security and peace. Amen. [Security Police Prayer]

### *Prayers For God's Help*

Lord, my heart is not large enough, my memory is not good enough, my will is not strong enough. Take my heart and enlarge it; take my memory and give it quicker recall; take my will and make it strong and make me conscious of you everpresent, ever near. Amen.

### *Prayers In Praise Of God*

God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and show us the light of your countenance, and be merciful unto us; that your way may be known upon earth; your saving health among all nations. Let the people praise you, O God; yea, let all the people praise you. O let the nations rejoice and be glad; for you shall judge righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Let the people praise you, O God; let all the people praise you. Then shall the earth bring forth her increase; and God, even our own God, shall give us his blessing. God shall bless us, and all the ends of the world shall fear him.  
[Psalm 67]

*Prayers For Accomplishments and Achievements*

Lord, consider this journey done, but yet another journey on the way. Life is full of new experiences—new people, new places, new troubles, new trials, new joys, new sorrows, new opportunities, new challenges. But Lord, life is also built on old foundations—places we've been, people so important to us, old troubles, old trials, old joys, old sorrows, opportunities squandered, but opportunities gained, challenges failed, but also victories won. Lord, mingle the new with the old, and do it just right as you know how! Lord, consider this journey done, but yet another journey on the way. And Lord, thanks again!

Lord, we now turn to you with thanks and praise for all that we are and all that we hope to be. We thank you for the meaning and purpose of this occasion, for what it represents in terms of service rendered, missions accomplished, lives inspired, and freedom preserved. We thank you especially for friendships which are made and for good times that are not forgotten.

Lord, we give honor today to these our comrades, and we pray that you will honor them too with your continual watchful care and presence. Go with them as they will in due time depart from us. Give them new and exciting opportunities to serve and in their serving may they glorify you, O God, creator of all. Amen.

Lord, as we come together to give honor to whom honor is due, help us to remember your goodness to each of us—you have given us peace in our homeland, you have given us prosperity. Continue to care for us. Give our rulers and leaders wisdom and guidance in these challenging and changing times. Now make this occasion a time of joy and celebration. Let your blessing be upon our meal. Amen.

Lord, as we gather here this evening to honor and recognize those who have excelled in their performance of duty, help each of us remember that the call to vigilance comes daily—in all tasks—both great and small. May we too be challenged to serve well by their example of commitment and by their example of leadership. Thank you also, Lord, for family and friends who support each of us and for the sacrifices that they make. In a special way, we thank you for their presence here tonight. Now let your blessing be upon our gathering and the events of the evening, and may the meal we share be strength to our bodies and our bodies in service to you and to our nation for peace and freedom in our world. We pray in your name. Amen.

Lord, you are the source of our life, our strength, and our hope. You bring us together as community and you give to each of us opportunities to serve one another, our country, and you. We thank you for those who have served well, and we thank you for this time to honor them this evening. We also thank you for family and friends who help each of us and for the sacrifices they make. Now let your blessing be upon our gathering, and may the meal we share refresh our bodies just as your peace and love refreshes our souls. May your name be praised. Amen.

*Prayers For Holidays*

Lord, during this season of peace and goodwill, we pause to give thanks for the joy your bring into our lives through family and friends, those who are gathered here this evening. But we are mindful at this time of those who are serving away from home, and they cannot be with their families. We pray for their goodwill while they are away, and we pray that you will use them as instruments to help bring peace to peoples in other countries. Lord, as we reflect upon the past year, we confess that you have blessed us greatly. We pray that you will continue to help us prosper, and again in the spirit of the season, we pray for prosperity in our family relationships, in our work relationships, with friends and neighbors, with all human beings. Lord, may the message of this season—"peace on earth, goodwill among men"—ring forth into the new year with the beauty of the bells and chimes that sound out during this holiday season, and may we capture the splendor of your joy in our celebration this evening. Give us a sense of your presence as we feast upon the bounty from your hand. We pray in your name, Amen.

Lord, in the spirit of the season we pray for peace and goodwill among all peoples, and especially we pray for peace and goodwill in our own land. Give us prosperity, not necessarily of the material sort, but prosperity in our family relationships, in our work relationships, with friends and neighbors, with those whom we love and cherish, and even with those we dislike and those who dislike us, and give us peace even in our relationship with ourself. May the peace of the holiday season truly be a warm bond of generous giving and unity among us all.

*Prayers For Dedications*

Lord God, our Creator, you took great delight in calling forth this world out of nothing and making it a place of order, form, and beauty. In forming us after your own image, you have instilled within us a desire to build and be creative as well. Today, we are here to dedicate this new training center to the cause of peace. We thank you for its completion and pray that those who were so diligent in building it will know the gratitude of those who will work and train therein. Thank you for this symbol of freedom. May it serve always to remind us that our duty is to achieve excellence in readiness and that our call is to be found vigilant and faithful in our walk with you. Amen.

Our Lord is great, all-powerful,  
his wisdom beyond all telling . . .  
He veils the sky with clouds,  
and provides the earth with rain.  
He makes grass grow on the hills  
and plants for people to use . . .  
He gives strength to the bars of your gates (defenses),  
he blesses your children within you,  
He maintains the peace of your frontiers,  
and gives you your fill of finest wheat.

Lord, creator of all, giver and sustainer of life. You touch the earth with radiant beauty. Yet we understand our part in preserving the environment. So we thank you for this time of planting, and we pray that you will make this tree grow mighty and strong; and, Lord, make its strength a symbol of our strength in you. Amen.

### *Prayers For NCO Appointments*

Eternal God, we pause to give you thanks and to recognize a very important occasion in the lives of these men and women. As they receive this charge to new challenges and new responsibilities, may we all be reminded of the heritage which has been given to us—a heritage of liberty and freedom, of honor and virtue, and may each of us continue to uphold those traditions of excellence which are ours. For these soon-to-be NCOs and their families and friends, make this moment a time to be remembered. Amen.

Lord, as we come together to give honor to whom honor is due, we thank you for those changes in life that challenge and call us to greater responsibility (for in such a calling comes growth in character). As we witness the formal transformation of these men and women to their new status/rank as NCOs, help us all to be reminded of our commitment and calling to each other and to our country. As in all things we ask from you wisdom, guidance, and strength. Amen.

Lord, today is but another day for each one of us. But today is a very special day for each of these young women and men standing here before us. Today they came here as airmen, and today they will leave this place as new NCOs. So we lift each of them up to you in prayer. Help each one to enjoy the privileges and benefits of their new status. Help each one also to uphold the responsibilities and obligations of this position. As in all things, we ask from you wisdom and guidance. Help us all to be faithful in our commitment to one another and to our country. Amen.

### *Prayers For School Graduations*

Lord, you have created us in your image; you have instilled within each of us creativity and the desire to explore the mysteries of your universe. We thank you for this desire to grow in our understanding and knowledge. Help us to never be satisfied but to continue to seek, to explore, to understand, to know. We thank you for the educational institutions in our land/country through which our citizens can reach higher plateaus of learning and can benefit and enrich our society. We thank you for the \_\_\_\_\_ and for its directors and leaders here at \_\_\_\_\_. Give to them continued success in all that they do or strive to do. Most of all, we thank you for these graduates, for their families, and for their friends—for all who encouraged them and supported them in their educational accomplishments. Help each of them to continue to explore the mysteries and wonders of your universe, and give them the courage to use with wisdom the knowledge they have gained. Now with your presence, O Lord, make this a joyous celebration for all. Amen.

In times of doubts and questionings, when our belief is perplexed by new learning, new teaching, new thought, when our faith is strained by creeds, by doctrines, by mysteries beyond our understanding, give us faithfulness in our learning and the courage to believe in you. Give us the boldness to examine and the faith to trust all truth. Grant us the patience and the insight to master difficulties. Grant us the stability to hold fast certain traditions yet with enlightened minds which acknowledge all fresh truth made known to us. O Lord, help us grasp new knowledge readily and combine it loyally and honestly with the old. Guard us from a stubborn rejection of new revelations, but likewise guard us from any hasty assurance that we are wiser than our fathers. Give us balance, O Lord, we pray.

We thank you, O Lord, for these graduates and for their accomplishments. Help them continue to explore the mysteries and wonders of your universe, and grant them courage to put to use with wisdom the understanding they have gained.

O Lord God, we thank you that your Spirit is ever urging the spirits of men to higher achievements of wisdom and skill, love and goodness. We praise you for the developing universe, by obeying whose laws men can circle the earth and reach toward the stars. Grant your wisdom and protection to those who would go still further, and help them to know that they can never overtake you nor pass out of your care. Amen.

O Lord God, we thank you that your Spirit is always urging our spirits to higher achievements of wisdom and skill, love and goodness. We thank you for our educational institutions where this progression in learning, knowledge, and wisdom can take place. Thank you for our instructors and teachers, both past and present. And thank you for those students and for the achievement they are here to celebrate this evening. Help us all to be reminded that we are but learners and students of your marvelous and majestic universe. Bless this assembly with your presence. Make it a joyous celebration for all. Amen.

*Prayers For Peace*

Almighty God, in whose hands lies the destiny of men and nations, let not the hopes of men perish, nor the sacrifices of men be in vain.

O holy and life-giving Spirit, enable us by thy grace to root out from common life the bitterness of ancient wrongs and the thirst to avenge the betrayals of long ago. Save us from the tyranny of history and set us free in a new obedience to serve each other in the present hour.

Accepting the redemption wrought for us, we believe that all our sins of yesterday are covered by thy mercy. Grant us therefore grace and courage to give in order to receive the forgiveness which alone can heal today's wounds. Draw us, O Lord, towards loving kindness and guide us into the way of peace.

Lord, we pray for the power to be gentle, the strength to be forgiving, the patience to be understanding, and the endurance to accept the consequences of holding to what we believe to be right.

May we put our trust in the power of good to overcome evil and the power of love to overcome hatred. We pray for the vision to see and the faith to believe in a world emancipated from violence, a new world where fear shall no longer lead men to commit injustice, nor selfishness make them bring suffering to others.

Help us to devote our whole life and thought and energy to the task of making peace, praying always for the inspiration and the power to fulfil the destiny for which we and all men were created. Amen.

May the memory of past wars strengthen our efforts for peace; may the memory of those who died inspire our service to the living; may the memory of past destruction move us to build for the future, O God of peace, O Father of souls, O Builder of the kingdom of love. Amen.

*Prayers For Service Organizations*

Lord, we thank you for the Red Cross organization and the assistance it gives to those in need. We thank you for each volunteer, for the willful sharing of time and resources, for the concern and giving that makes our world less painful and more humane. (In a special way we honor those who have served long with diligence.)

Help us, Lord, to understand that your care for us as your creatures is the true source (the fountainhead) of all caring. Help us keep our lives open to this constant care so that we can help and encourage those in need.

Now grant your blessing on this time of sharing together. Amen.

*Prayers For Workers*

O Lord, tonight we ask that you remember all the workers in the world,  
those who toil with their hands  
and those who toil with their minds,  
workers in cities and workers in the fields,  
men and women who go forth to labor,  
employers and employees,  
those who command and those who obey,  
those whose work is dangerous, and  
those whose work is monotonous or dull,  
those who can find no work to do,  
those whose work is serving the poor,  
or healing the sick,  
or proclaiming good news,  
for all these we pray.

We thank you, O Lord, for the tasks you have given to each of us, and for the works and accomplishments that find their conclusion in this assembly tonight. Grant to us your peace, and empower us (body, mind, and soul) in our common work toward world peace. This is our prayer. Amen.

Grant us grace, our Father, to do our work this day as workmen who need not be ashamed. Give us the spirit of diligence and honest enquiry in our quest for the truth, the spirit of charity in all our dealings with our fellows, and the spirit of joy, courage, and a quiet mind in facing all tasks and responsibilities. [Reinhold Neibuhr]

*Prayers For The Nation*

Almighty God, you have given us this good land for our heritage and our home, so keep us humble and remind us of your favor. Bless our land with prosperous industry, academic excellence, and strong, energetic men and women. Protect us from violence, discord, and confusion; from pride and arrogance, from every evil thing. Defend our liberties and mold us into one people—many ancestries, various races, but one people. Lord, to those bearing authority, give the spirit of wisdom, so that justice and peace may rule. In times of prosperity, fill our hearts with thankfulness; in days of trouble, do not permit our trust in you to fail. These things we sincerely pray. Amen.

O God and father of us all, we gather in sincere gratitude for all those who at their country's call have met the rude shock of battle and have surrendered their lives and their liberties amid the ruthless brutalities of war.

Forbid that their sufferings should be in vain. We beseech you that, through their devotion to duty and suffering, the horrors of war may pass from earth and that your kingdom of right and honor, of peace and brotherhood, may be established among men.

Comfort, O Lord, all who mourn for those near and dear to them. Support them by your love. Give them faith to look beyond the trials of the present . . .

We praise you, Lord, because you are great and powerful. To you belong glory, victory, and honor. You are the ruler over everything. Riches and honor come from you, and you have the power and strength to make anyone great and strong.

Now, our God, we thank you. We thank you for our country—for its citizens, for its heritage, noble and honorable. We thank you for our armed forces—proud to serve and proud to defend the peace. We thank you for these graduates—increase their effectiveness in serving; may they conquer new challenges with excellent results.

Now, O Lord, on this eve of a presidential election, we commend our nation and its leaders to your care. Watch over us in your providence so that we may dwell secure and live in peace. Give to all a spirit of commitment to valor, to true values, to justice, to what is right.

Now let us depart from this place with your peace that passes all understanding. Amen.

O Lord, we invoke the presence of your Spirit upon this gathering; we pray for your gracious anointing upon us. On this occasion, we thank you for these who have come here this evening—these veterans, former prisoners of war, their spouses, friends, and families. These who heeded their country's call, these who suffered the rude shock of battle—they endured threat of death, miserable pain, torture, and unjust punishment. They are here with us, O Lord, as a living testimony to their courage, their perseverance, their faith. They have been a blessing to us; so help us now to be a blessing to them. Help us honor them for their labors and for their sacrifice for all of us. And Lord, we pray that you will raise up more like these, not only in times of trouble, but even now in times of peace. O Lord, hear our prayer. Amen.

O Lord, we invoke the presence of your Spirit upon this assembly; we pray for your gracious anointing upon us.

On this occasion, we thank you for the men and women who have sacrificed greatly, yea even their very lives, so that we might live in peace and be free. We thank you for these who have come here today—veterans, former prisoners of war, their spouses, friends, and families. They have been a blessing to us; help us now to be a blessing to them.

O Lord, we have come together to especially turn our thoughts to our imprisoned and missing comrades. We beg of you to bring good news to those who are afflicted, and sooth their broken hearts; bring about the proclamation of liberty to those who are captive, and release to those who are in prison; comfort all who mourn, and hasten the day of vengeance of our God. O Lord, hear our prayer. Amen.

“The American's Creed.” I believe in the United States of American as a government of the people, by the people, for the people; whose just powers are derived from the consent of the governed; a democracy in a republic; a sovereign nation of many sovereign states; a perfect union, one and inseparable; established upon those principles of freedom, equality, justice, and humanity for which American patriots sacrificed their lives and fortunes.

I therefore believe it is my duty to my country to love it; to support its Constitution; to obey its laws; to respect its flag; and to defend it against all enemies.

God the all-powerful, may we remember  
Comrades in battle and comrades in peace;  
Comrades who died or were captured and are missing,  
Comrades still serving that warfare may cease.  
God the redeeming one, grant to the prisoner  
Freedom from bondage; from chains, true release.  
Hostages, free, from the darkening night of terror;  
Grant to us Lord, in our time, your peace.  
God the all-merciful, comfort our families  
Anguished by absence of spouse, parent, friend.  
You know the heartaches, the loneliness, frustration;  
Guide till their sadness of heart finds an end.  
God all-victorious, author of justice,  
Restrain our penchant for conflict and sword.  
Help us seek ends that eliminate all evil;  
O grant your peace in our time, O Lord. Amen.  
[Fannalou Guggisberg]

### *Prayers For Special Ceremonies*

Lord, as we continue to experience the constant change of missions in our Air Force, we ask that you grant to each of us the strength, the commitment, and the desire to accomplish the tasks that are set before us. We ask now that on this occasion of the activation of the 653<sup>rd</sup> USAF Contingency Hospital that you guide with wisdom those who plan its mission and grant them success in achieving the goal of a facility ready to nurture and to heal in a time of crisis. Above all, O Lord, work thru the leaders of the nations and thru each of us to bring about peace in our world—a lasting peace that will nullify the need for any and for all contingencies of war. But until that time, O Lord, help us remain ready—and to this end, may your blessing be upon this Contingency Hospital and all these workers. Amen.

Lord, even though the cold of winter continues to chill our bodies, we pray that your constant care for each of us will warm our hearts. We pray for your protection and guidance for our families and children, for our commanders and leaders here at this place, and in a special way for our leaders in high office who are making very important decisions for our military and their families. Give all the wisdom to make the very best choices, and help each of us to know and believe that your presence is always near. Amen.

Lord, as we gather here early this morning to honor and recognize those who have excelled in their performance of duty, help each of us remember that the call to vigilance comes daily—in all tasks—both great and small. May we too be challenged to serve well by their example of commitment by their selfless leadership. Thank you also, O Lord, for family and friends who support these leaders in their commitment, and we ask that the joy of this gathering simply be a reflection of the greater joy that comes as a result of striving for and experiencing what we wish for all of your creation—peace, freedom, and justice. Let your blessing be on all of us. Amen.

O Lord, as we gather today in festive celebration of our country's birthday of independence, we celebrate not for our country alone, but we celebrate for the whole world. Lord, we thank you for our freedoms, and we ask that you help each of us fully understand the cost and the meaning of these freedoms. Help us be vigilant in our pursuit of freedom so that the whole world may come to know and celebrate what we believe to be God-given rights—life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Now let your blessing be upon our celebration here today; we pray in your name. Amen.

Lord, we offer thanks for this time of celebration for these graduates—this time of recognition for the academic goal they have attained. Lord, their joy is full, and we honor each of them for their diligence and hard work. They have our respect and the respect of many who have helped them, especially family and friends. Lord, renew within each of us the desire to grow, to learn, to excel (as these graduates). And may the full potential of their education and training find realization through useful service to our community, to the Air Force, and to our world. Give them happiness, peace, and the will to meet the challenges now before them. Bless this occasion and its significance. Amen.

Benediction. May the Lord keep you from all harm and bless you with every good gift. May he set new opportunities before you and fill each of you with deep inner joy as you complete new and greater tasks. May he set before you the way of wisdom—to discern what is right and good all the days of your life. May he send you forth from this place to now enrich and enlighten others—and to continue your quest for understanding. Amen.

Dear God and heavenly Father: We bow our heads in gratitude to you on this day of national Thanksgiving. We are reminded of our heritage of freedom, and our noble country with its fruitful valleys, majestic mountains and vast plains. Help us ever remember our dependence upon you as the source of all our blessings. We give thanks for our nation and our leaders. And we are grateful for our homes and dear ones, for life and health, and for the assurance of your watchful care. May we serve you faithfully always. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Let us give thanks to God our Father for all his gifts so freely bestowed upon us. For the beauty and wonder of your creation, in earth and sky and sea, we thank you, Lord. For all that is gracious in the lives of men and women, revealing the image of Christ, we thank you, Lord. For our daily food and drink, our homes and families, and our friends, we thank you, Lord. For minds to think, and hearts to love, and hands to serve, we thank you, Lord. For health and strength to work, and leisure to rest and play, we thank you, Lord. For the brave and courageous, who are patient in suffering and faithful in adversity, we thank you, Lord. For all valiant seekers after truth, liberty, and justice, we thank you, Lord. For the communion of saints, in all times and places, we thank you, Lord. Above all, we give you thanks for the great mercies and promises given to us in Christ Jesus our Lord: to him be praise and glory, with you, O Father, and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.

Lord God, creator of all, giver of life, we praise you for the beauty of your world—and marvel that from one source you have made all nations, all races, and all peoples. And you have taught us—there is no distinction—we are all equal before you. We thank you for this message of equality and for this celebration today in honor of Women’s Equality Week. Help each of us to continue to promote good relations and full equality for all peoples. Now let your blessing be upon our meal, we ask in your name. Amen.

Benediction. May the Lord God be a shield about you, turning away every enemy, disease, violence, and sorrow. May the Lord God guard you and protect you so that you may enjoy life and peace both now and forever. May the Lord, a God of mercy and compassion, spread over us the shelter of his peace.

Our Father in heaven, we thank you for your glorious gift of marriage. We pray for these two who have entered into this holy relationship. Help them fulfill these vows which they have spoken in the presence of all. May the bond of love knit them together in a lasting, sincere relationship, one strong enough to overcome the problems and trials that they will face. Help them optimistically look for a brighter tomorrow when trouble comes, and may their love for one another increase day by day and become more endearing. Give them happiness and health as your will permits. And Father, help them never to forget you. Amen.

Lord God, given of life, creator of all things, on the occasion of this sporting season, we lift up to your care and protection all the players from both teams, their managers and staffs, the referees, and all the fans. Help the players play with all their might, but not to sacrifice their integrity/dignity. Help the managers lead their teams with vigor and enthusiasm, but also with patience and understanding. Give the umpires sound judgment in all their decisions, and help us as fans to show good sportsmanship. And Lord, may the challenges, the obstacles, the victories, and the defeats of this sporting season teach all of us lessons about the great game that each of us are players in life itself. Amen.