

# Instead of resolutions, try these prayers

Last week as I reflected on how every day can be Christmas, I shared the line from a Christmas carol that I have turned into a prayer that I say each day: “Cast out my sin, Lord, enter in. Be born in me today.”

Each year, around the New Year, I share prayers that have special meaning in my life. I have found that offering prayers for suggested use is better than offering New Year’s resolutions!

Studies that have been done on New Year’s resolutions indicate that 90 percent of all resolutions are broken within 72 hours! Resolutions rely on self. Prayer relies on God. I think God is a better choice. Combining will power with our Higher Power is the secret of making resolutions work.

So what are some of my favorite prayers? One prayer that I repeat often throughout the day and night is, “Lord, let me feel the warmth of your healing love move through my mind, my body and my spirit.”

I’ve shared in past columns about the strokes in my eyes in 2002 and the blood clot in my leg in 2007. I try to live a reasonably healthy lifestyle. I exercise. I take Omega-3’s and other supplements. But there seems to be something in me, or at least beyond me, that still sabotages me.

As I’ve said before, life boils down to two sentences: Do what you can. Let God do what you can’t! So, I pray over and over, “Lord, let me feel the warmth of your healing love move through my mind, my body and my spirit.”

A second short prayer that came to me is a prayer I like to use before I meditate, go to bed, when I wake up during the night, or when I feel a moment of anxiety or stress. It goes very simply: “I am surrounded by the light of universal love and divine protection.” It’s a shorter form of a slightly longer prayer which goes: “The light of God surrounds me. The love of God enfolds me. The power of God protects me. The presence of God watches over me. Wherever I am, God is. And all is well!”

I have shared that prayer with people going through chemotherapy and other medical procedures, and it brings great peace.

A longer prayer, actually a hymn, that I say daily goes as follows: "Breathe on me, breath of God, fill me with life anew, that I may love the things you love and do what you would do."

"Breathe on me, breath of God, until my heart is pure, until with you I have one will to live and to endure.

Breathe on me, breath of God, my soul with grace refine, until this earthly part of me glows with your love divine.

Breathe on me, breath of God, so I shall never die, but live with you the perfect life in your eternity."

At the moment of creation, God breathed his spirit into men and women. In the new creation that is life in Christ, we ask God daily to breathe that Holy Spirit into us.

Finally, the last prayer that I say daily when I meditate is suggested by Father John Main. He suggests that we use the Greek word *maranatha* as a mantra while we meditate. Basically, *maranatha* is the last word of the Bible – the last word of the Book of Revelation. It is a plea for Christ to come again. We could simply translate it: "Come, Lord Jesus!"

I just repeat the word over and over again as a way of quieting my mind. The only purpose is to sit quietly, and keep repeating the word for 10 to 15 minutes, allowing the one word to replace the many thoughts that are always moving through our minds. Basically it fulfills the Scripture passage from the psalms: "Be still and know that I am God." And when I use it at night, I almost always fall asleep. Falling asleep in the Lord is a good thing.