



A New Way of Living Community



Prayer One



■ HYMN

COME AS YOU ARE

Paul Gurr

Come as you are, that's how I want you.
Come as you are, feel quite at home.
Close to my heart, loved and forgiven,
come as you are, why stand alone.

No need to fear, love sets no limits.
No need to fear, love never ends.
Don't run away, shamed and disheartened.
Rest in my love, trust me again.

I came to call sinners, not just the virtuous,
I came to bring peace, not to condemn.
Each time you fail to live by my promise,
why do you think I'd love you the less.

Come as you are, that's how I love you.
Come as you are, trust me again.
Nothing can change the love that I bear you.
All will be well, come as you are.

- *Pause for a moment to be still and aware of
God's presence among us and in creation*

READING

The Chapter fully endorses *A Way Into The Future*. It is now our way of sharing in the God quest, of being committed to intimate community living, and of engaging mutually with people made poor and the whole earth community.

Drawn by Mystery, Destined for Life, Congregation Chapter 2014

As I look back at how I have changed over the years, in many ways I see things differently, hopefully have grown in some

maturity, but in a lot of other ways, I find the same struggles and failings that I have always had. I have come to the conclusion that I'm never going to be 'perfect', and efforts to spend time trying to be are really just my 'ego' wanting recognition. In challenging this 'dualistic thinking', that all is either good or bad, an integrated way of looking at things says that all is one and open to the Mystery. What seems much more important to me now is the degree of transparency that I have with my brothers about my living. It has been said that we are as 'sick as our secrets', and I think that that is true. I am healthy to the extent that I am open to sharing all parts of my life with nothing held back.

This requires creating environments where people can share safely, something we have not always been good at in the past. Yet, when it does happen, a whole new world of brotherhood opens up for a community, and the impact on others is profound. When people are able to share their vulnerability, particularly I've found in the area of sexuality, doors are opened which have been closed for years. Men realise that our common humanity brings us to a depth of brotherhood which we have avoided often through not coming to grips with past hurts, fear of vulnerability, living in isolation, or putting our own individual pursuits before community considerations. This kind of brotherhood is what I want to live into the future. I see it as central to any community that wants to call itself an 'Our Way into the Future' community. Goodwill is needed, and good skills too, so that training in sharing deeply will be important to develop the way of living we aspire to, and helping us to overcome the fears that would block us.

OWITF Publication, Peter Dowling

■ *Pause for a moment to reflect and share
on the Reading*

■ PSALM 133

How good and how pleasant it is,
when we live together in unity!

It is like precious oil upon the head,
running down upon the beard of Aaron,
running down the collar of his robes!

It is like the dew of Hermon
which falls on the mountains of Zion!
For there God gives us the blessing,
life for evermore.

■ SCRIPTURE

Jn 15:12-17

THIS IS MY COMMANDMENT, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.

PRAYER

We gather now, eyes wide open to wonder. As Moses turned aside to see the bush ablaze with eternal Presence, so in this sacred gathering do we turn aside to see the world charged with the grandeur and the glory of indescribable mystery.

PRAYING IN A NEW TIME

We turn aside to see the beauty of each other,
the goodness of this life, and the truth of
sacred wisdom that knows: Earth to be holy; all
creatures to be kin; the universe to be One; and
Spirit to be a flaring presence, for all who turn
aside to see.

AMEN.

If Darwin Prayed, Bruce Sanguin



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multi-
disciplinary

do not the
y to win
argument

nding
common
ground.

Everything is interconnected, and genuine care for our own lives and our relationships with nature is inseparable from fraternity, justice and faithfulness to others.

Laudato Si, par. 70



A New Way of Living Community



Prayer Two



■ HYMN

COME AND JOURNEY WITH ME

David Haas

Come to the song, come to the dance.
Bring all you are, and all you can be.
Come with your voice, come with your heart.
Come and journey with Me. Come and journey with Me.

Come let the sun fill up your eyes.
Take the time to look around,
and love, just love, and walk with each other.
Come and journey with Me. Come and journey with Me.

Come and see, come and be.
Be all you are and all you can be,
and leave all behind and calm your mind.
Come and journey with Me. Come and journey with Me.

- *Pause for a moment to be still and aware of God's presence among us and in creation*

■ READING

WITH CONFIDENCE WE GROW as a gospel community characterized by a love that struggles to cast out fear. In a deepening relationship with Christ we come to acknowledge the gifts of God in our brothers whom we affirm and support in fraternal love. We strengthen the bonds of our brotherhood by sharing our prayer and ministry, our joys, hopes and fears (*Constitution 31*).

This is a call to a very adult way of living, a gospel way that calls for fraternal love, relationship with Jesus, affirmation, support and sharing. This is not easy as community living at any level of depth is difficult. It is no coincidence that this call is being reiterated now in Our Way into the Future. If we cannot form community among ourselves, what do we have to bring to the future? If we cannot learn the gospel call to community, how can we teach

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it? And as the Constitution wisely states, it is often not ill will that is the obstacle to community but fear. That is why the Scripture tells us only love will work to drive out this fear and form community (1 John 4:18).

Is gospel community too much to ask? The answer has to be 'no' and the proof of that is in each community that is striving to grow and to follow the call of the Gospel. We have many of these communities in the Congregation. The key word is 'striving'. These are communities which realize that community is not a goal to be arrived at but a road to follow together, a road of relationship, a path from which we will sometimes fall but which we continue walking because we feel the need and desire to grow in this way. Put more simply, these are communities that brothers are happy to be in and to work with because this is what being Christian Brother is meant to be.

OWITF, Michael Colasuonno

■ *Pause for a moment to reflect and share
on the Reading*

■ PSALM 139

O God, you have searched me and you know me,
you know when I sit and when I stand;
you discern my thoughts from afar.
You mark when I walk or lie down,
with all my ways you are acquainted.

Before a word is on my tongue,
behold, O God, you know the whole of it.
Behind and before you besiege me,
you lay your hand upon me.
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me:
too high, beyond my reach.

O where can I go from your spirit,
or where can I flee from your presence?
If I climb to heaven, you are there!
If I lie in the grave, you are there!

If I take the wings of the morning
and dwell in the depths of the sea,
even there your hand shall lead me,
your hand shall hold me fast.

If I say: "Let darkness cover me,
and the light around me be night,"
even darkness is not dark to you,
and the night is as bright as the day;
for darkness is as light to you.

■ SCRIPTURE

Jn 1:1-5

IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

PRAYER

O Immanent One, Word made flesh, ever present
as Sacred Wisdom in all creation.

We open to you with humble hearts, and minds
incapable of containing the mystery – yet with
hearts that can hold the wonder, spilling out

PRAYING IN A NEW TIME


everywhere, in every moment, for those with eyes to see, and ears to hear.

Lift the veil which keeps radiance at bay, that we might see in each other's faces your immanent glory, and that we might glimpse the miracle and magic of this holy happening which is our life.

Yes, liberate us, before another minute goes by. We are imprisoned by preoccupations in the windowless cell of fret and frenzy; end our solitary confinement so that we might come rejoicing into the radiant communion of life.
AMEN.

If Darwin Prayed, Bruce Sanguin





We cannot
presume to heal
our relationship
with nature
and the
environment
without healing
all fundamental
human
relationships...
Our
relationship
with the
environment
can never be
isolated from
our relationship
with others and
with God.

Laudato Si, par. 119



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Prayer Three



■ HYMN

WE ARE CALLED

David Haas

Come! Live in the light!
Shine with the joy and the love of the Lord!
We are called to be light for the Kingdom,
to live in the freedom of the city of God!

We are called to act with justice.
We are called to love tenderly.
We are called to serve one another,
to walk humbly with God.

Come! Open your heart!
Show your mercy to all those in fear!
We are called to be hope for the hopeless,
so all hatred and blindness will be no more!

Sing! Sing a new song!
Sing of that great day when all will be one!
God will reign and we'll walk with each other
as sisters and brothers united in love!

- *Pause for a moment to be still and aware of
God's presence among us and in creation*

■ READING

AT THE HEART OF THE VOCATION of being brothers is the invitation to contemplative consciousness where brothers enter into the mystery we call God. The daily practice of contemplative prayer lays the foundation for a contemplative stance towards life, and an ever-deepening awareness of the inter-connectedness of the whole of creation. Communal contemplative prayer contributes to the creation of a community consciousness that transcends the boundaries of community and interconnects with the wider conscious-

ness of humanity.

Ever deepening consciousness evolves with daily personal commitment to personal study and prayer. Ever thirsting for a deeper connection with the source of all life, brothers devote regular time to deepen their understanding of the God of Jesus Christ and the God of all peoples.

Brotherhood and contemplation go hand in hand and, as the brother grows in an ever-deepening desire for a soul connection and a global consciousness in Christ, he finds his life transformed through his search for the pearl of great price.

A New Way of Being Brother, David Gibson

■ *Pause for a moment to reflect and share
on the Reading*

■ PSALM 148

Praise God from the heavens,
Praise God in the heights!
Praise God, all you angels,
Praise God, you heavenly hosts!

Praise God, sun and moon,
Praise God, shining stars.
Praise God, highest heavens,
and the waters above the heavens!

Let them praise the name of God,
who commanded and they were created.
God established them forever;
fixed their bounds which will not pass away.

Praise God, all you on earth,
sea monsters and all deeps,
fire and hail, snow and frost,
stormy winds that obey God's word!

Mountains and all hills,
fruit trees and all cedars!
Beasts, wild and tame,
reptiles and birds on the wing!

All earth's rulers and peoples,
leaders and those of renown!
Young men and women,
the old together with children!

■ SCRIPTURE

Rev 21:3-4

AND I HEARD A LOUD VOICE from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

PRAYER

We open now to the mystery of Life, the Holy Oneness, the web of life that holds all beings in intimate embrace, making it possible to distinguish but never disconnect any part from the whole, or whole from the parts, making us kin in the kin-dom of life.

PRAYING IN A NEW TIME

We open now to the mystery of Life, knowing this adventure to be a journey back to the ever present source, discovered in our own depths, and a forward journey toward a new heaven and a new Earth, which is being born through us, and know above all and below all that this is not a path to God, but a path in God.

We celebrate this great adventure.

AMEN.

If Darwin Prayed , Bruce Sanguin



A vertical photograph of a calm lake, likely Windermere, with a large, dark rock in the foreground. The water reflects the sky and the surrounding landscape. In the background, there are rolling hills and mountains under a cloudy sky. Bare tree branches are visible on the left side of the frame.

The Spirit
of God has
filled the
universe with
possibilities
and therefore,
from the very
heart of things,
something new
can always
emerge.

Laudato Si, par. 80



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Prayer Four



■ HYMN

WE ARE CONNECTED

Chris Skinner

We are connected, like branches to the tree.
We all walk the planet, let's walk with dignity.
No matter our colour, no matter our creed
all of us are gifted and all of us we need.

We are connected, one great family.
Let's light the fire together
and let it shine for all to see.
Shine - everybody standing in the light.
Shine - everybody warmed by the fire.
Shine - no one left in the dark or in the cold.
Shine - come together to embrace and to hold.
Shine - forgive and heal the hurts that divide.
Shine - standing with, along, beside.
Shine - we are connected, connected.

Breath and life connected,
Earth sea and sky connected,
Hands and hearts connected,
Believe it, believe it.

- *Pause for a moment to be still and aware of
God's presence among us and in creation*

■ READING

WE ARE LEARNING FROM THE UNIVERSE that we are made for relationship. As brothers we are attempting to grow in authentic community living, beyond superficiality, growing in 'a love that struggles to cast out fear' (*Constitution 31*). As we experience this deeper level of connection, we deepen the sense of relatedness with all of life and we have a better sense of what it means to call ourselves 'brother'. We nurture the soil of brothering that allows

us to collaborate deeply in imagining shared future possibilities.

We are experiencing diminishment as a Congregation, obliged to surrender power and control in many places. Perhaps the experiences of profound humiliation and disturbance are proving to be an opportunity for us to grow beyond personal and collective ego.

We are shifting from head to heart. A deeper source of knowing deepens our capacity to open and see with our hearts, helped along the way by experiences like “The Heart of Being Brother” (2002 Chapter) and “God in the Now”. There is more evidence of communities able to speak and listen from the heart. We are growing in humanity, valuing the relational and incarnational dimensions of our lives. The call to “grow in love and care for one another” (*Constitution 10*) is slowly becoming a reality among us.

Creating networks of communities around the world, we strive to be open and accepting, respectful and mutual as we become, together, midwives of the new that is being born through the ‘God present in the people and events of our lives’ (*Constitution 22*). We seek to be a leaven in society and church, building up local communities through educating young people and empowering local leaders.

Appreciating the universe as an emerging, living phenomenon, we are more and more aware of the interconnectedness of planetary life systems and the damage being caused by the current dominant models of development. Out of this awareness, there is an urgency in our efforts to educate others in living in harmony with nature and with one another as well as in our advocacy for new social structures.

OWITF Publication, John Casey

■ *Pause for a moment to reflect and share
on the Reading*

■ PSALM 95

O come, let us sing to our God;
let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!
We come into your presence with thanksgiving,
rejoicing with songs of praise!

For you, O God, are our God,
a great Ruler over all other gods.
In your hands are the depths of the earth;
the heights of the mountains as well.
The sea is yours, for you made it;
and your hands formed the dry land.

We bow down before you and worship,
kneeling before you, our Maker!
For you are our God,
and we are your people,
the flock that you shepherd.

Today let us hearken to your voice:
“Harden not your hearts, as at Meribah,
as on the day at Massah in the desert,
when your ancestors tested me,
and put me to the test,
though they had seen my works.”

■ SCRIPTURE

Mt 18: 20

For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.

PRAYER

Let us walk together in this field of love that is the everywhere presence of the Christ. Let us gather ourselves in, and discover who we are when we are not afraid – when the universe is known as “Friend.”


Yes, and let us discover who we may become when just two or three of us share a common mind and a common heart, willing to be made over and anew by the one around whom the whole cosmos spins and throws off starfields – sparks of future possibility that now shine out from us, and as us.

We are witnesses to this kind of love, this kind of power. We burn with hope.

AMEN.

If Darwin Prayed, Bruce Sanguin





We urgently need a
humanism capable
of bringing
together the
different fields
of knowledge,
including
economics, in
the service of a
more integral and
integrating vision.

Laudato Si, par. 140



A New Way of Living Community



Prayer Five



■ HYMN

STANDING ON THE SHOULDERS

Joyce Johnson Rouse

I am standing on the shoulders
of the ones who came before me.
I am stronger for their courage,
I am wiser for their words.
I am lifted by their longing
for a fair and brighter future,
I am grateful for their vision,
for their toiling on this Earth.

We are standing on the shoulders
of the ones who came before us.
They are saints and they are humans,
they are angels, they are friends.
We can see beyond the struggles
and the troubles and the challenge.
When we know that by our efforts
things will be better in the end.

They lift me higher than I could ever fly.
Carrying my burdens away.
I imagine our world if they hadn't tried.
We wouldn't be here celebrating today.
(We wouldn't be so very blessed today.)

I am standing on the shoulders
of the ones who came before me.
I am honored by their passion for our liberty.
I will stand a little taller
I will work a little longer.
And my shoulders will be there to hold
the ones who follow me.

■ *Pause for a moment to be still and aware of
God's presence among us and in creation*

■ READING

“To build joyful communities characterised by intimacy, gentleness, compassion and love” (Nairobi Chapter 2014).

At the heart of community is the quality of presence. Presence grows as brothers begin to discover an ever-deepening consciousness of their own truth. By coming home to themselves brothers are able to connect with the very essence of their being, and therefore are able to grow in the awareness of the other.

Presence is an attentive connection with the other. When brothers begin to grow in intimacy they come to discover a deep richness in their fellow brothers, and learn how to enter into the sacred space of community where God becomes manifest as two or three gather.

At the heart of community is a commitment to make the community the main locus for a brother's life and work. Brothers live together, work together, celebrate together, making the life of the community their priority over personal relationships or personal ambition.

A New Way of Being Brother, David Gibson

■ *Pause for a moment to reflect and share on the Reading*

■ PSALM 23

O God, you are my shepherd;
I shall not want.
You make me to lie in green pastures.
You lead me to restful waters,
to restore my soul.

You guide me in paths of righteousness
for the sake of your name.
Even though I walk through the

valley of the shadow of death,
I fear no evil; for you are with me;
your crook and your staff give me comfort.

You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my foes;
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 dwell in your holy house
forever and ever.

■ SCRIPTURE

Jn 14: 18-21

I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them.

PRAYER

O Holy One, by your grace we enter now the sacred realm, a place of deep connection with you, with each other, with the planet, and with all creation.

By your grace, the walls that isolate fall; fear dissolves into trust; arrogance is gentled by


PRAYING IN A NEW TIME

compassion; our need to prove ourselves is tempered by self-acceptance.

Now, we rest in love that helps us to see our lives as part of a great unity, a coherence of grace. We join with all creation in proclaiming your glory, and the glory of being alive.
AMEN.

If Darwin Prayed , Bruce Sanguin



A photograph of three white wind turbines standing in a field of yellow wildflowers under a clear blue sky. The turbines are positioned diagonally from the bottom left towards the top right. The field is in the foreground, and there are green hills in the background. The sky is a deep blue with a few wispy clouds near the horizon.

Human ecology
also implies
another profound
reality: the
relationship
between human
life and the
moral law, which
is inscribed in
our nature and
is necessary for
the creation of a
more dignified
environment.

Laudato Si, par. 155