

Prayers of the Medieval Church

Week 3

Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179 AD)

A Prayer of Awareness

God is the foundation for everything
This God undertakes, God gives.
Such that nothing that is necessary for life is lacking.
Now humankind needs a body that at all times honors and praises God.
This body is supported in every way through the earth.
Thus the earth glorifies the power of God. Amen.

Antiphon for the Angels

Spirited light! on the edge
of the Presence your yearning
burns in the secret darkness,
O angels, insatiably
into God's gaze.
Perversity
could not touch your beauty;
you are essential joy.
But your lost companion,
angel of the crooked
wings – he sought the summit,
shot down the depths of God
and plummeted past Adam –
that a mud – bound spirit might soar.

Song to the creator

You, all-accomplishing Word of the Father
are the light of primordial
daybreak over the spheres.
You, the foreknowing mind of divinity,
foresaw all your works
as you willed them,
your prescience hidden
in the heart of your power,
your power like a wheel around the world,
whose circling never began
and never slides to an end.

Ave Generosa

I behold you,
noble, glorious and whole woman,
the pupil of purity.
You are the sacred matrix
in which God takes great pleasure.
The essences of Heaven flooded into you,
and the Great Word of God dressed itself in flesh.
You appeared as a shining white lily,
as God looked upon you before all of Creation.

O lovely and tender one,
how greatly has God delighted in you.
For He has placed His passionate embrace within you,
so that His Son might nurse at your breast.

Your womb held joy,
with all the celestial symphony sounding through you,
Virgin, who bore the Son of God,
when your purity became luminous in God.

Your flesh held joy,
like grass upon which dew falls,
pouring its life-green into it,
and so it is true in you also,
O Mother of all delight.

Now let all Ecclesia shine in joy
and sound in symphony
praising the most tender woman,
Mary, the bequeather/seed-source of God.
Amen

Hildegard on her own Writings

“But although I heard and saw these things, because of doubt and low opinion of myself and because of diverse sayings of men, I refused for a long time a call to write, not out of stubbornness but out of humility, until weighed down by a scourge of god, I fell onto a bed of sickness.”

God's Word is in all creation

No creature has meaning
without the Word of God.
God's Word is in all creation, visible and invisible.
The Word is living, being,
spirit, all verdant
all creativity.
This Word flashes out in
every creature.
This is how the spirit is in
the flesh – the Word is indivisible from God.

O Eternal Lord

O eternal Lord,
it is pleasing to you
to burn in that same fire of love,
like that from which our bodies are born,
and from which you begot your Son
in the first dawn before all of Creation.
So consider this need which falls upon us,
and relieve us of it for the sake of your Son,
and lead us in joyous prosperity. Amen.

Julian of Norwich (c. 1342-c. 1416)

A prayer of Julian of Norwich

In you, Father all-mighty, we have our preservation and our bliss.
In you, Christ, we have our restoring and our saving.
You are our mother, brother, and Saviour. In you, our Lord the Holy Spirit, is marvellous and plenteous
grace.
You are our clothing; for love you wrap us and embrace us.
You are our maker, our lover, our keeper.
Teach us to believe that by your grace all shall be well, and all shall be well,
and all manner of things shall be well. Amen

The Revelations of Divine Love chapter 42: Concerning Prayer

Our Lord God willeth that we have true understanding, and specially in three things that belong to our
prayer. The first is: by whom and how that our prayer springeth. By whom, He sheweth when He saith: I
am [the] Ground; and how, by His Goodness: for He saith first: It is my will. The second is: in what
manner and how we should use our prayer; and that is that our will be turned unto the will of our Lord,
enjoying: and so meaneth He when He saith: I make thee to will it. The third is that we should know the

fruit and the end of our prayers: that is, that we be oned and like to our Lord in all things; and to this intent and for this end was all this lovely lesson shewed. And He will help us, and we shall make it so as He saith Himself;—Blessed may He be!

For this is our Lord's will, that our prayer and our trust be both alike large. For if we trust not as much as we pray, we do not full worship to our Lord in our prayer, and also we tarry and pain our self. The cause is, as I believe, that we know not truly that our Lord is [the] Ground on whom our prayer springeth; and also that we know not that it is given us by the grace of His love. For if we knew this, it would make us to trust to have, of our Lord's gift, all that we desire. For I am sure that no man asketh mercy and grace with true meaning, but if mercy and grace be first given to him.

Catherine of Siena (1347-1380)

My Nature Is Fire

In your nature, eternal Godhead,
I shall come to know my nature.
And what is my nature, boundless love?
It is fire,
because you are nothing but a fire of love.
And you have given humankind
a share in this nature,
for by the fire of love you created us.
And so with all other people
and every created thing;
you made them out of love.
O ungrateful people!
What nature has your God given you?
His very own nature!
Are you not ashamed to cut yourself off from such a noble thing
through the guilt of deadly sin?
O eternal Trinity, my sweet love!
You, light, give us light.
You, wisdom, give us wisdom.
You, supreme strength, strengthen us.
Today, eternal God,
let our cloud be dissipated
so that we may perfectly know and follow your Truth in truth,
with a free and simple heart.
God, come to our assistance!
Lord, make haste to help us!
Amen.