

KMAnderson Prayers from the Pews March 17, 2019
POSP. Theme, "The Sanctuary Between Us."
3 minutes.

I. Laundry Prayer

A woman stands in her sunny kitchen, sorting baskets of laundry.

A few blocks away, another woman has forsworn the sight of the sun,
To live in a basement
So she can raise her children. This means that she can no longer do her family's laundry
herself, as she'd like to.

Who among us would not willingly forego the light of the sun for a lifetime
If it meant keeping our dear ones safely with us?

"Goodbye to the sunshine
Goodbye to the dew
Goodbye to the flowers..."

Dear Lord Jesus

Accept thou this, the work of my hands

" The work of this thy servant

" This laundry

" These two tiny, pink socks I have managed not to lose in the wash.

Accept thou this laundry

Let it comfort and adorn thy holy feet

In gratitude from one who is privileged to walk freely beneath the life-giving sun
At least for now

In aid and in honor of a woman who has risked absolutely everything
To be able to hold her child in a safe place one more day.

Accept thou, O Lord, this washload

Which the woman would complete for herself and for her family, if she could
Except that she has banished herself belowground

Not to see the sun

Not to feel the breeze

Not to smell the rain-soaked sidewalk.

The woman in the basement waits. For now, her hands braid a small child's hair.

II. Abide with Me

Accept thou, O Lord, this pair of strangers
Who sit comfortably with each other, not necessarily talking,
Because they know that they are here for the same reason.

Accept thou, O Lord, this man who, for his shift
Merely wants to be left alone in the very last pew of the afternoon-darkening church for three
hours,
head leaned against the back wall, book open on his lap.

Accept thou, O Lord, the hands that open prayerbooks in Hebrew, Spanish, English, Greek

Accept thou, O Lord, this woman, wearing her favorite hat, who took two buses after work in
order to be here by 6.
She was thrilled when she got here early, carrying on her shoulders two straining-at-the-seams
reusable shopping bags,
plus a bedroll, across 3 towns

So she could sit in a small room
And sleep on a borrowed bed
Away from her own home, spouse, children, comforts

So that a woman she will never see, and whose true name she will never know
Can sleep near her children tonight.

Accept thou, O Lord, this silent routine of hands, of feet, of books, of sitting,
Accept the whisper of electrons, a constant prayer like the humming of bees,
as hundreds of strangers conspire, plan, worry online

For this woman and her family, one more day.

Accept thou, O Lord, the work of our hands
The work of our days and nights
The work of our breath
The work of our bodies, sitting.

On the other side of the wall, a family snuggles down for the night, having managed to stay
together for one more day.

III. Keep Watch...

The Lamp of the Presence
Is temporarily detached, in repair.
It will be fine. It will be back.

For now, during Eucharist, as Eucharist,
A woman is cooking for her family and the people upstairs smell, rather than see,

The Onions of the Presence
The Garlic of the Presence
The Carrots of the Presence
The Soup of the Presence

Holy Wisdom lives in the basement
Holy Wisdom is cooking for her children;
Maybe she is humming as she chops and stirs.

All's right with the world
Jesus has not left the building.

Monday, the child will only wiggle a little bit
While her mother helps her on with two tiny pink socks

The utter foolishness of Wisdom to risk everything for the love of a child in her sock feet.

Accept, O Lord, from this thy servant;

Two little feet, in two little socks, in two little shoes
Skip to preschool, for circle time, for snack time, for story time, for nap time.

Her mother will welcome her home with hot soup.
...Shield the joyous.