

Private Bedtime Prayers

Master, Lover of mankind, is this bed to be my coffin, or wilt Thou enlighten my wretched soul with another day? Behold, the coffin lieth before me; behold, death confronteth me. I fear, O Lord, Thy judgement and the endless torments, yet I cease not to do evil. My Lord God, I continually anger Thee, and Thy most pure Mother, and all the Heavenly Hosts, and my holy guardian angel. I know, O Lord, that I am unworthy of Thy love for mankind, but am worthy of every condemnation and torment. But, O Lord, whether I will it or not, save me. For to save a righteous man is no great thing, and to have mercy on the pure is nothing wonderful, for they are worthy of Thy mercy. But on me, a sinner, show the wonder of Thy mercy; in this reveal Thy love for mankind, lest my wickedness prevail over Thine ineffable goodness and merciful kindness; and order my life as Thou wilt.

And when about to lie down in bed, say: Enlighten mine eyes, O Christ God, lest at any time I sleep unto death, lest at any time mine enemy say: I have prevailed against him.

Glory... Be my soul's helper, O God, for I pass through the midst of many snares; deliver me out of them, and save me, O Good One, for Thou art the Lover of mankind.

Both now... The most glorious Mother of God, more holy than the holy angels, let us hymn unceasingly with our hearts and mouths, confessing her to be the Theotokos, for truly she gavest birth to God incarnate for us, and prayeth unceasingly for our souls.

Then kiss thy Cross, and make the sign of the Cross [with the Cross] from the head to the foot of the bed, and likewise from side to side, while saying the Prayer to the Precious Cross:

Let God arise and let His enemies be scattered, and let them that hate Him flee from before His face. As smoke vanisheth, so let them vanish; as wax melteth before the fire, so let the demons perish from the presence of them that love God and who sign themselves with the sign of the Cross and say in gladness: Rejoice, most precious and life-giving Cross of the Lord, for Thou drivest away the demons by the power of our Lord Jesus Christ Who was crucified on thee; Who went down to Hades and trampled on the power of the devil, and gave us thee, His precious Cross, for the driving away of every adversary. O most precious and life-giving Cross of the Lord, help me together with the holy Lady Virgin Theotokos, and with all the saints, unto the ages. Amen.

Before lying down upon thy bed, go through all these in thy thoughts and memory.

Firstly thus: Give thanks to Almighty God for having given thee during the past day, by His grace, to live and abide in health.

Secondly: Lay before thyself thy words, and make examination of thy conscience, a thorough and detailed review of all the hours of the day, beginning from the time when thou didst arise from thy bed, and call to mind: where thou wentest, what thou didst; with whom, and on what, thou didst converse; and all thy deeds, words and thoughts from morning until evening recite to thyself, with all fear examining and remembering.

Thirdly: If thou hast done any good in this day, not of thee has this happened, but of the same God Who giveth all good things to us that fear Him, to Whom be praise and thanksgiving; and pray that He confirm thee in this good, and enable thee to accomplish other good things.

Fourthly: But if thou hast done anything evil, of thyself and from thine own weakness, or from evil habits and arbitrariness which result in speech, repent and pray to the Lover of mankind, that He will to grant thee forgiveness, and with a firm intention promise never to do this evil again.

Fifthly: With tears implore thy gracious Creator to grant that the present night be quiet, undisturbed, pure and sinless; to grant that the coming day may be devoted entirely to the glorification of His holy Name.

Finally: If thou findest a soft pillow, forsake it, and put a stone in its place for Christ's sake; if thou sleepest in winter, bear it with patience, saying: some did not sleep at all.

Then make the sign of the Cross, and with prayer go to sleep, thinking of the day of judgment, and of how thou shalt have to stand before God.