

On Matt. 8.1-4
Mark 1.40-45
Luke 5.12-16

Jesus, our Master and Brother,
help us to realise and hold firm to the truth of your good will towards us,
and to know that you desire our healing as individuals and societies,
and fullness of life for us.
May we so trust your will for us
that we may receive your saving and cleansing love,
and live in love and harmony with you and our fellow human beings.
May we share your opposition to all that is evil,
all that eats away and destroys human life and community.
Give us your Spirit, so that we can be sharers of your life and love with others,
for your mercy's sake.
Amen.

On Matt. 8.1-4
Mark 1.40-45
Luke 5.12-16

Jesus Christ, our Saviour, Friend and Healer,
Revealer of God's character and will,
you showed to the leper God's will to heal, and cleansed him of his leprosy.
Remove from us all doubt of God's will to heal and deliver human beings
from all that rots life and destroys human community.
Bless, guide and empower all who seek the healing of persons and communities,
and enable us to trust you and co-operate with you in God's work of healing,
though the power of your Holy Spirit.
Amen.

On Matt. 8.1-4
Mark 1.40-45
Luke 5.12-16

Lord Jesus Christ, Prince of Peace and bond of human unity,
who sent the healed leper to the priests to certify his cure,
may we show a proper respect for the institutions of our society
set up to care for human well being,
to guard health,
or to ensure orderly and secure social relations.
May we be ready to challenge them
when they destroy human harmony and flourishing,
but may we not despise them, but co-operate with them when we can,
remembering that human beings cannot live in chaos,
and that you reveal a God of order and peace.
This we ask for your love's sake.
Amen.

On Matt. 8.5-13
Luke 7.1-10

Almighty God, our Ruler and Friend,
the centurion who came to Jesus could rely on his commands being carried out,
but we are often so slow and half hearted in obeying your will,
 or even downright unwilling and rebellious.
From his own obedience and that of his subordinates,
 the centurion could draw faith in your power and Christ's authority,
but we, your people, find it hard to trust you,
 and are often crippled by fears and doubts.
Forgive us, Lord, through Jesus Christ, your Son,
increase our faith and obedience by your Spirit,
 that we may become channels of your healing, as the centurion was.
So may we not wander from your kingdom's joy into the outer darkness,
but share in the rejoicing of all your people,
 in the eternal celebration of the completion of your rule,
 through the same Jesus Christ our Lord.
 Amen.

On Matt. 8.5-13
Luke 7.1-10

Jesus Christ, our Healer and Friend,
the centurion who wanted his servant cured
 trusted that your power could work at a distance,
 without your physical touch
 or material presence with the sick person under his roof.
We cannot touch or see you physically:
may we also trust in your power and will
 to heal and deliver us from all evil in life and death,
 and be able to proclaim with confidence
 that God the Father has given you all authority in heaven and earth.
We ask this for your mercy's sake.
 Amen.

On Matt. 8.5-13

Jesus Christ, Son of Man,
your love reaches out to all humankind.
In your earthly ministry, as a Jew to Jews,
 you could marvel at the faith of gentiles,
 like the centurion whose servant was sick.

We praise you that you have called us to membership of your people, the Church,
 but we pray that we may not be proud, presumptuous or contemptuous.

Make us realise that, even today,
 trust in the goodness and love which you revealed as God's nature
 may be found at times in those outside the Church.

So do not let us despise or judge anyone.
Rather remind us of your words that,
 as outsiders may share in the feast of your final kingdom,
 so the insiders may exclude themselves,
 and be thrown into the outer darkness of lovelessness and relationlessness
 which pride and rejection of your love can bring.

So give us a sober humility that relies on your goodness, not our own piety,
 and lives by the trust
 which overflows into grateful and generous love to you and others.

This we ask from God our Father, for your sake.

Amen.

On Matt. 8.5-13
Luke 7.1-10

God, our Parent and our Friend,
Help us to trust your love and care for us and our dear ones.
So may we all know your healing and your peace in our lives,
through Jesus Christ, our Saviour.
Amen.

On Matt. 8.14-15
Mark 1.29-31
Luke 4.38-39

Christ Jesus,
who healed the fever of Peter's mother in law,
calm, cool and heal, we pray, the fevers of our life,
not only the fevers of physical sickness,
but of impatience,
ill temper,
and greed for wealth, prestige or pleasure.
May your love bring us health in body and personality,
and empower us to help and care for each other,
and thus serve you through serving our fellows,
for your mercy's sake.
Amen.

On Matt. 8.16-17
Mark 1.32-34
Luke 4.40-41

Lord Jesus,
at Capernaum you healed,
 of many different illnesses,
 all who were brought to you.
Be our healer too,
and in all our different afflictions
 grant us your peace and renewing salvation,
 for your mercy's sake.
 Amen.

On Matt. 8.16-17
Mark 1.32-34
Luke 4.40-41

Christ Jesus, our Healer and Saviour,
we praise you for your cures of the sick,
 in your ministry in Palestine,
 and now, through your Church.
We praise you for your defeat and expulsion of the powers of evil,
 in your ministry as a wandering preacher,
 and now, by the power of your Holy Spirit.
And our praise is magnified as we realise the cost to you,
 that you took our weaknesses and bore our diseases.
You not only took them away,
 but you did it at enormous cost to yourself.
Bearing the burden of pain and evil,
 you became for us the wounded healer,
 the suffering servant of God.
So, as we remember those in the Church and beyond
 who struggle to overcome evil and suffering
 and to share your work of healing persons and societies,
 we pray for them in the suffering this struggle brings.
May God our Father comfort them with the love and strength of the Holy Spirit,
 and the renewing power of your resurrection,
 that transforms suffering into triumph
 with the joy and might of new life.
So may they bear in hope the pains of this world and its healing,
 and be at last effective in forwarding your reign of love and true humanity.
And, we pray,
 may your Spirit, the Spirit of God,
 encourage and enable us
 to share in the work of healing
 and bear its cost,
 for your love's sake.
 Amen.

On Matt. 8.18-20
Luke 9.57-58

God, our Healer and Guide,
your Son on earth had nowhere to lay his head.
He was a stranger in the world you made through him.
In a place of possessiveness and self assertion
 his generous, self giving following of your will made him a homeless wanderer.
Where compromise and cowardly co-operation with unjust powers and systems
 gave people a niche and some elements of human security,
 his bold reliance on you, and search for your rule above all
 left him with no bolthole and no human protectors.
Give us the courage to follow him in the way of faith and freedom,
 the pilgrim path to justice and true humanity,
 the road to your kingdom.
May we know your love to comfort us,
 Christ's wisdom to guide us,
 and the power of your Holy Spirit to comfort and strengthen us,
until we come, through Jesus, your Messiah, to our eternal home,
 the joy of eternal life with you.
Amen.

On Matt. 8.21-22
Luke 9.59-62

Jesus, God's Messiah,
enable us to put you and your Father's kingdom first in our lives.
Let us not use other things, relationships and duties,
 however good in themselves,
 as excuses to avoid your call to follow you.
Make us to know that your will is that we love and care for one another,
 especially those close to us,
but that we are not to be slaves to false obligations and mere social norms
 where our loved ones have no deep or true need of us,
 and where your truth and love call us to follow higher priorities.
This we ask for the sake of the same truth and love of your Kingdom.
Amen.

On Matt. 8.18-22
Luke 9.57-62

Jesus, our Leader,
Supply us with your Spirit to enable us to know your love and self giving for us,
 that we may give ourselves for you and the love of God.
Give us your strength and faithfulness to follow you, whatever the cost,
 and so come to our Father's kingdom.
Amen.

On Matt. 8.23-27
Mark 4.35-41
Luke 8.22-25

Lord Jesus,
when the storms of life threaten to overwhelm us,
help us to trust you and the power and love of God our Father.
Calm the storms of anger and destructive passions in our lives.
Still the gales of this world's influence
 with their wild and confused ideas,
 which, in their changes and instability,
 can sweep us from the ways of your wisdom into destructive courses.
When the waves of circumstance,
 of failure,
 of mockery,
 of various persecutions for your Word,
 threaten to sink our faith,
may we know you with us to bring us safely to the goal of our life's journey,
 the joy of completed salvation and eternal peace with you,
 in the harmony of your renewed creation.
Amen.

On Matt. 8.23-27
Mark 4.35-41
Luke 8.22-25

Have mercy on us, Lord Jesus, when the storms and crises of life terrify us,
 and we feel you are not with us, or do not care,
 as your disciples were afraid
 when you were asleep in the boat during the storm on Lake Galilee.
Enable us to trust your power and love,
 that we may hear your word to our hearts and lives,
 "Peace, be calm,"
 and know that you have muzzled all the forces of evil,
 so that they cannot finally harm us.
Thus may we know you, in awe and trust, as our Saviour and Sovereign,
 and come safely with you to the goal of our life's voyage,
 the safe haven of the completed kingdom of God our Father.
Amen.

On Matt. 8.28-34
Mark 5.1-20
Luke 8.26-39

Still, Lord Jesus, the chaotic, self destructive and violent impulses in our lives.
 Cast out the forces that bring isolation, lostness and death.
Unify our divided and confused hearts and minds in a sound mind and heart,
 under the governance of your Holy and Life-Giving Spirit,
 who sets us free to become our true selves,
 in true relationships with others,
 in the love and glory of God the Father.
Amen.

On Matt. 8.28-34
Mark 5.1-20
Luke 8.26-39

God of deliverance,
we praise you that Jesus drove out evil forces from their victims.
May he set us free from all evil,
that we may find a right mind,
and be able to relate in love and truth with you and others,
for Jesus' sake.
Amen.

On Matt. 8.28-34
Mark 5.1-20
Luke 8.26-39

Jesus Christ,
you tamed the fierceness of evil powers,
and broke their grip on people.
Break the dominion of violence and destruction in our world,
that people may live in peace.
We ask for your love's sake.
Amen.

On Matt. 8.28-34
Mark 5.1-20
Luke 8.26-39

God our Father,
when people saw your liberating power in Jesus,
they were often afraid and wished him to go away.
Give us the courage and faith to accept your freeing work
in our own lives, in other people, and in our societies,
and to welcome the Spirit of Jesus fully into our hearts, minds and wills,
for your love's sake.
Amen.

On Matt. 8.28-34
Mark 4.35-5.20
Luke 8.26-39

Jesus, Almighty Saviour,
sometimes the healing and deliverance God gives through you can be frightening,
because they are overwhelming,
because they upset our normal routine,
or because they seem threatening and dangerous.

We want to be freed from evil,
but we often fear freedom,
and we fear the demands of love.

Give us the courage
not to send you away,
but to trust and welcome you and the liberating power of your Spirit,
and to receive you as ruler, guide and helper into every part of our lives,
for your love's sake.
Amen.

On Matt. 8.28-34
Mark 5.1-20
Luke 8.26-39

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God Most High,
drive out from the world, we pray, the forces of evil,
of destruction and self destruction, of chaos and violence.

R./ Grant deliverance, O Lord.

We pray for those in the grip of possession by evil powers and forces,
in symptoms of mental illness,
those who have lost their real selves,
and are locked into behaviour that attacks others and hurts themselves.

R./ Grant deliverance, O Lord.

We pray for those who, although not to be diagnosed as mentally ill,
yet by cruelty to their family, or by addictions, or in other ways,
are in the grip of destructive and self destructive behaviour.

R./ Grant deliverance, O Lord.

We pray for societies divided against themselves or each other,
where there is violence and killing,
in civil war, ethnic cleansing, oppression and terrorism.

R./ Grant deliverance, O Lord.

Give return to sanity, self control, life in community and constructive behaviour to
other people and to themselves, O Prince of Peace.

R./ Grant deliverance, O Lord. Amen.

On Matt. 8.34
Mark 5.15-17
Luke 8.34-37

Lord Jesus,
forgive us when, like the Gadarene villagers,
 we are more afraid of your healing power
 than we are of the destructiveness and suffering of our damaged societies.
Forgive us when we are so alarmed by the side effects
 which may arise when the love of God acts to free people,
 that we reject your liberating power.
Deliver us from timid fear of the problems of your change and upheaval
 that may threaten our selfish interests
 on the way to producing a saner, more caring community.
Help us not to push you away from our lives.
Enable us to accept and co-operate with your healing and liberating love
 in our own lives and societies.
We ask this for your mercy's sake.
 Amen.