



GFS Prayer Devotion

Line 1 of Prayer:

O LORD, OUR HEAVENLY FATHER, WE BESEECH THEE TO BLESS US AND ALL WHO BELONG TO THE GIRLS' FRIENDLY SOCIETY.

Definitions: BESEECH To address an earnest or urgent request; to implore.
BLESS To confer well-being: to invoke divine favor; to endow with talent.

Consider:

1. **We pray together**, individuals gathered in a shared fellowship.
Matthew 18:20 "For when two or three have met together in my name, I am there among them." We pray to God, our father, as God's children -- members of one family in Christ.
2. **We ask God to help us grow** in love, spirit, commitment, strength and courage; to grant us the qualities, and the skills to use them, we need to be contributing members of GFS, our parish and our community.
3. **We pray with and for all members of GFS** -- in our own branch, in other diocesan branches across the country, and in the many different countries and cultures represented by World GFS.

Line 2 of Prayer:

STRENGTHEN AND PROTECT US BY THY FATHERLY LOVE AND VOUCHSAFE TO US THE GUIDANCE OF THY HOLY SPIRIT.

Definitions: STRENGTHEN To make strong, in character, will, morality, intelligence, physically.
PROTECT Keep from harm, attack, injury (not only physical.)
VOUCHSAFE Condescend to grant or bestow; promise; give.
GUIDANCE Showing the way; directing a course.

Consider:

1. **Through God's love we are able to grow strong** in spirit, love and commitment --in change and in renewal. We are protected as the Holy Spirit leads us to forgive, ourselves and others, that in grace and understanding we might find courage and peace in the presence of the Holy Spirit within us.
2. **God sends us into the world in the power of the Holy Spirit.** The Holy Spirit directs us from within and we show forth its influence. So it is in the service of Holy Baptism that we ask to be sustained in the Holy Spirit; that we may have an inquiring and discerning heart, courage and will to persevere, a spirit to know and love God, and the gift of joy and wonder in all of God's works

Line 3 of Prayer:

**HELP US ALL TO BEAR ONE ANOTHER’S BURDENS AND TO LIVE,
NOT FOR OURSELVES BUT FOR OTHERS, AS MEMBERS OF ONE
FAMILY IN CHRIST.**

Definitions:	BEAR	To hold up, support; to move while supporting; to carry in the mind.
	BURDEN	Something that is carried; something difficult to bear, physically, emotionally, a responsibility or duty.
	LIVE	To be alive; to support oneself.

Consider:

1. See notes on GFS Motto.
2. One part of the GFS Purpose is to **serve God and extend his kingdom.** *Matthew 25:40* “I tell you this; anything you did for one of my brothers here, however humble, you did for me.” In this phrase we are not giving up ourselves as individuals, but giving up to God. As vessels of God’s love and will, we pray that we may best use our individual qualities to live interdependently with others.
3. “As members of one family in Christ” we are challenged to **serve God through love and service to others.** Think about what makes a good family member, as an individual and as a part of the whole, the love and mutual support needed.

Line 4 of Prayer:

**CLEANSE US FROM OUR SINS; MAKE US HOLY BY THE
INDEWELLING OF THY HOLY SPIRIT.**

Definitions:	CLEANSE	Purify, free from guilt.
	SIN	Transgression of religious or moral law, especially when deliberate; an offense, fault or error.
	HOLY	Spiritually perfect or pure; belonging to or coming from God.
	INDEWELLING	Dwelling within; remaining; residence within.

Consider:

1. We confess our sins as individuals and as a community. In asking forgiveness and mercy, we acknowledge and take responsibility for our sins. We need to remember that “sin” not only includes stealing, lying, envy, etc.; when we are indifferent, thoughtless or irresponsible we are also at fault. We know in our hearts when we have disappointed ourselves in things we have done or not done as we know we should have. Through Jesus Christ we are forgiven our sins and strengthened in our goodness (BCP, p.360). The challenge is renewed within us to follow the Law of Christ.

