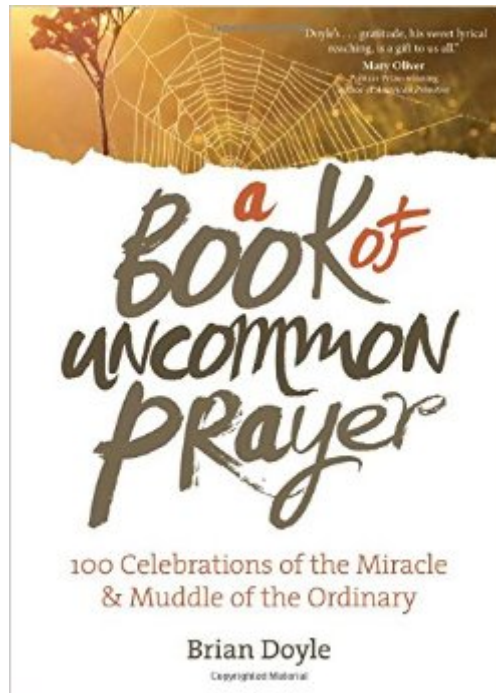


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# A Book Of Uncommon Prayer: 100 Celebrations Of The Miracle & Muddle Of The Ordinary



## Synopsis

Acclaimed, award-winning essayist and novelist Brian Doyle--whose writing, in the words of Mary Oliver, is "a gift to us all"--presents one hundred new prayers that evoke his deep Catholic belief in the mystery and miracle of the ordinary (and the whimsical) in human life. In Doyle's newest work, *A Book of Uncommon Prayer: 100 Celebrations of the Miracle & Muddle of the Ordinary*, which was named "A Best Spiritual Book of the Year" by *Spirituality & Practice*, his readers will find a series of prayers unlike any of the beautiful, formal, orthodox prayers of the Catholic tradition or the warm, extemporized prayers heard from pulpits and dinner tables. Doyle's often-dazzling, always-poignant prayers include eye-opening hymns to shoes and faith and family. In Doyle's words, "the world is crammed with miracles, so crammed and tumultuous that if we stop, see, savor, we are agog," and the pages of his newest book give voice and body to this credo. By focusing on experiences that may seem the most unprayerful (one prayer is titled "Prayer on Seeing Yet Another Egregious Parade of Muddy Paw Prints on the Floor"), he gives permission to discover the joys and treasures in what he often calls the muddle of everyday life.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

A celebration is exactly what this book is. What a delight to be introduced to Brian Doyle by means of these one hundred quintessentially quirky, but genuinely beautiful, short prayers. The joke in the book's title suggests that *A Book of Uncommon Prayer* is funny, and it often is, sometimes hilariously so. And yet these micro-meditations are truly prayers and many include expressions of pain and confusion, or supplication, or thanks which most people will identify with if they are awake

and paying attention to life at all. Doyle has a wonderful ability to show in his prayers that the miraculous and the mundane are intertwined and inseparable. He invites us to be in awe of everything that God has given us, and I mean everything. For instance, he has written "A Prayer in Thanks for Decent Shoes," "Prayer for Cashiers and Check-out Counter Folks," and "Prayer in Thanks for the Little Flying Dinosaurs We Call Dragonflies." These are some of the glorious gifts that Doyle wants us to see and celebrate in life. Doyle's love for God, family, church and the natural world are all captured in *A Book of Uncommon Prayer*, as are his more worldly concerns and fears. There is something in the book for everyone – whether it is to rejoice over a hot shower, give thanks for all birds, herons in particular, or to pray deeply for those who are facing death. I offer a grateful prayer for Brian Doyle and this amazing little book, that as small as it is, there are 100 celebratory, mini, jewel-like meditations contained within it. And so: amen.

Nice book for thoughtful prayer on everyday events that we may overlook. Nice gift for someone who doesn't feel comfortable with reciting repetitive prayers. We would all be more thoughtful of life if we considered these things or thought the way Mr. Doyle does.

The word in the synopsis that drew me to this book was whimsical. First, whimsical is a cool word. Second, whimsical prayers sound like they would be delightful. These prayers were a lot of fun to read. As I was reading I would share a few lines with my sister and she agreed with me. These prayers are fun, honest, much-needed prayers. The prayers address everything from hot showers to birds to suffering to salespeople. This book of prayers are not just one person's prayers. These are prayers that so many of us can make. Using our own words, we can really pray for everything, even the small things that are important even when they don't seem to be. Beyond just being a great collection of candid prayers, Doyle's prayers made me think of what I should be praying for in my life. For example, I should be offering thanksgiving that I can walk rather than complaining that I walk to school in sub zero temperatures. I really enjoyed this book. I received this book for free from the publisher via NetGalley in exchange for my honest review. This review first appeared at [CatholicAmanda.com](http://CatholicAmanda.com).

Standard prayer books are all well and good: it's handy to have the Angelus or the prayer to St. Joseph for a happy death near at hand. But there are circumstances that just aren't covered in standard prayer books, and that's where this book steps in. Doyle's prayers here include 'Desperate Prayer for Patience with Politicians with Excellent Suits and Shoes and Meticulous Hair and Gobs of

Television Makeup Who Have Utterly Forgotten That Their Jobs Are Finally About Feeding and Clothing and Protecting and Schooling Children', 'Prayer for the Elderly Woman on the Train Eating One Almond Every Five Minutes for Two Hours for a Grand Total of Forty Almonds and Believe Me I Counted, Fascinated', 'Quiet Prayer for Friends Whose Teenage Child Just Stormed Out of the House', and 'Grinning Prayer at the Gentle Arrogance & Foolishness of Saying that There Are Only Five Forms of Catholic Prayer'. Reverent, wry, compassionate, humble, funny, honest, touching, but above all, faith-filled.

Mr. Doyle, thank you for the prayer inside this book called "Prayer for Osama bin Laden yes Even Him the Stupid Murderous Slime." We prayed this prayer just this past Sunday (with proper citation) in worship. Yes, Osama bin Laden is dead, but we prayed this prayer to help us learn how to do what Jesus said according to Matthew 5:43-44: "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,..." We prayed your prayer and held in prayer the Dallas sniper and those who've been making threats against the police since last Thursday. We prayed for police officers who shoot and kill outside of the boundaries of acceptable law enforcement. We prayed for the enemy that is racism.

This little book is marvelous. It is witty, unconventional, a bit irreverent, whimsical and altogether a joy. The prayers that the author, Brian Doyle, has written in this book probably occur to all of us. It's just that we really should say them. We should, and often. Being prayerful, for me at least, means listening for the voice of the Lord. He can not be heard in the roar of the waves or the clap of thunder but He can be heard in whispers. This book whispers. So listen. I preach from time to time in my church and during one of my homilies I took this book out and read two of the prayers. Then I displayed the book and recommended it to all present. If you believe in prayer as I do please get yourself a copy of this wonderful book.

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