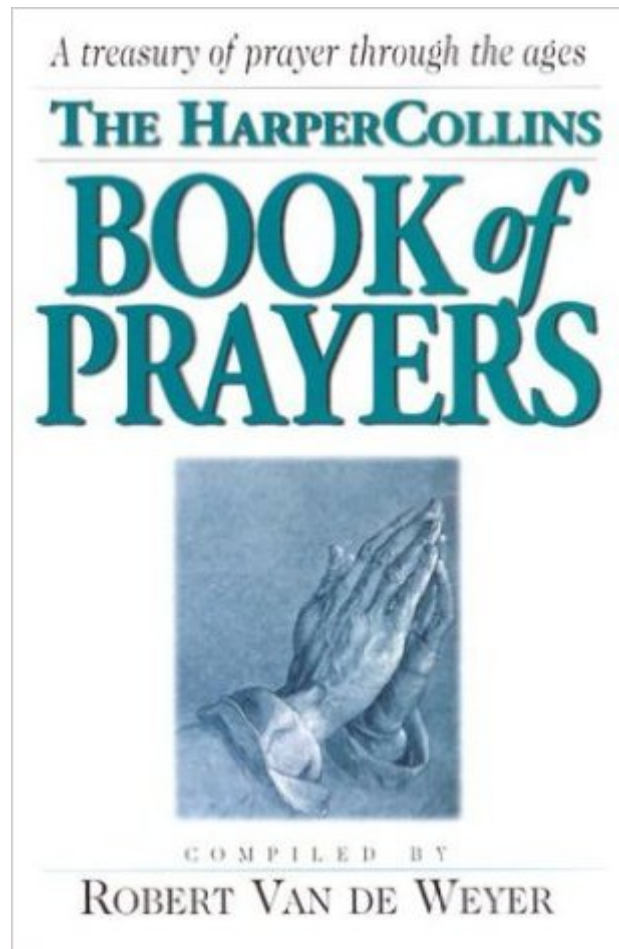


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HarperCollins Book Of Prayers: A Treasury Of Prayers Through The Ages



Synopsis

Van De Weyer first gathered these prayers for his personal prayer times, and the selections reflect his concern for the devotional life. The compendium includes the prayers of church leaders (Clement of Rome, Clement of Alexandria, several Anglican leaders), mystics (John of the Cross, Theresa of Avila), theologians (Bede, Augustine), authors (John Donne), liturgies (Book of Common Prayer) and people of action (Dag Hammerskjold). The names in this review are a mere sample; there are several hundred sources in the book. His sources are primarily Catholic, but he does not neglect the Protestant and Orthodox traditions. He also includes a few prayers from non-Christian traditions, such as Judaism, Islam, and Aztec and African monotheistic traditions. The prayers include some of the most famous in Christian literature (Augustine's line about the heart not finding rest until it finds God is in here) and are intensely personal. Van De Weyer did a good job of selecting prayers for all occasions: feeling weak, feeling in need of forgiveness, expressing gratitude, desiring justice, contemplating the meaning of life--they're all there. Van De Weyer includes a helpful one or two sentence biography of each source. This is important if you want to feel a connectedness to the people who have lived the spiritual quest before you, as I do. This is not an academic book, and it is not designed for those who believe that spirituality cannot be discovered from within (rather than from outside of) the Christian tradition. It may also run against the grain of the American self-help religion. But if you want to drink from the wells of the Christian spiritual tradition, you will satisfy your thirst over and over again as you meditate upon the passages in this book.

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Customer Reviews

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This book's Introduction makes clear the compiler's intent. "This book is not so much an anthology of prayers, as a collection of people praying." (p. 9) Those quite disparate people, some familiar but many obscure, are mostly from Christian traditions across cultures and across the centuries. Each person's selections are preceded by a very brief biographical sketch. The compiler has "included some prayers written for public use, especially when they seem to express a deep human feeling. But the main emphasis is on devotional prayer. ... This book is primarily a collection of bed-chamber prayers." (pp. 9-10) The compiler suggests opening the collection at random (so do I), but notes its usefulness for prayer groups or even public worship. At times, abridgement has taken place; this is judicious but not individually acknowledged when it occurs. A topical index arranges material as follows: Through the Day; Through the Year; Personal and Corporate Devotion; God's Care; The Human Condition; The Person of Jesus. While a personal favorite of yours may well be missing, chances are good that you'll discover one (or maybe far more than one) new personal favorites to bookmark and to which you'll often come back.

This book of prayers has a prayer for just about anything a person is looking for. Great condition and price!

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