

A Prayer for Christmas

For Lonely Folks: By Henry van Dyke

Lord God of the solitary, look upon me in my loneliness. Since I may not keep this Christmas in the home, send it into my heart. Let not my sins cloud me in, but shine through them with forgiveness in the face of the child Jesus. Put me in loving remembrance of the lowly lodging in the stable of Bethlehem, the sorrows of the blessed Mary, the poverty and exile of the Prince of Peace. For His sake, give me a cheerful courage to endure my lot, and an inward joy to sweeten it.

Durge my heart from hard and bitter thoughts. Let no shadow of forgetting come between me and friends far away: bless them in their Christmas mirth: and hedge me in with faithfulness, that I may not grow unworthy to meet them again.

Give me good work to do that I may forget myself and find peace in doing it for Thee. Though I am poor, send me to carry some gift to those who are poorer, some cheer to those who are lonelier, since they have not known the friendship of Jesus. Grant me the chance to do a kindness to one of His little ones, and light Thou my Christmas candle at the gladness of an innocent and grateful heart.

Strange is the path where Thou leadest me, but let me not doubt Thy wisdom, nor lose Thy hand to-day. Make me sure that the Eternal Love is forever unveiled in Jesus, Thy dear Son, to save us from sin and solitude and death. Teach me that I am not alone, but many hearts, all round the world, join with me through the silence while I pray in His Name: "Our Father which art in Heaven."