*A Prayer for Our Earth
Pope Francis*
All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe
and in the smallest of your creatures.
You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.

Pour out upon us the power of your love,
that we may protect life and beauty.
Fill us with peace, that we may live
as brothers and sisters, harming no one.

O God of the poor,
help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth,
so precious in your eyes.

Bring healing to our lives,
that we may protect the world and not prey on it,
that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction.

Touch the hearts
of those who look only for gain
at the expense of the poor and the earth.

Teach us to discover the worth of each thing,
to be filled with awe and contemplation,
to recognize that we are profoundly united
with every creature
as we journey towards your infinite light.

We thank you for being with us each day.
Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle
for justice, love and peace.

Amen.

*Prayer for Conscience and Courage
Joan Chittister, OSB*

Loving God,
lead us beyond ourselves
to care and protect,
to nourish and shape,
to challenge and energize
both the life and the world
You have given us.

God of light and God of darkness,
God of conscience and God of courage
lead us through this time
of spiritual confusion and public uncertainty.

Lead us beyond fear, apathy and defensiveness
to new hope in You and to hearts full of faith.

Give us the conscience it takes
to comprehend what we’re facing,
to see what we’re looking at
and to say what we see
so that others, hearing us,
may also brave the pressure that comes
with being out of public step.

Give us the courage we need
to confront those things
that compromise our consciences
or threaten our integrity.

Give us, most of all,
the courage to follow those before us
who challenged wrong and changed it,
whatever the cost to themselves.

Amen.

*A Franciscan Blessing*

May God bless you with discomfort,
At easy answers, half-truths,
And superficial relationships
So that you may live
Deep within your heart.

May God bless you with anger
At injustice, oppression,
And exploitation of people,
So that you may work for
Justice, freedom and peace.

May God bless you with tears,
To shed for those who suffer pain,
Rejection, hunger and war,
So that you may reach out your hand
To comfort them and
To turn their pain to joy

And may God bless you
With enough foolishness
To believe that you can
Make a difference in the world,
So that you can do
What others claim cannot be done
To bring justice and kindness
To all our children and the poor.

Amen

*An Excerpt from Reaching Out* *by Henri Nouwen*

In our world full of strangers, estranged from their own past, culture and country, from their neighbors, friends and family, from their deepest self and their God, we witness a painful search for a hospitable place where life can be lived without fear and where community can be found. Although many, we might say even most, strangers in this world become easily the victim of a fearful hostility, it is possible for men and women and obligatory for Christians to offer an open and hospitable space where strangers can cast off their strangeness and become our fellow human beings. The movement from hostility to hospitality is hard and full of difficulties. Our society seems to be increasingly full of fearful, defensive, aggressive people, anxiously clinging to their property and inclined to look at their surrounding world with suspicion, always expecting an enemy to suddenly appear, intrude and do harm. But still – that is our vocation: to convert the 'hostis' into a 'hospes', the enemy into a guest, and to create the free and fearless space where brotherhood and sisterhood can be formed and fully experienced

*Shine the Light of Love
A Traditional Irish Blessing*

May the blessing of light be upon you,
Light on the outside,
Light on the inside.

With God's sunlight shining on you,
May your heart glow with warmth,
Like a turf fire
that welcomes friends and strangers alike.

May the light of the Lord shine from your eyes,
Like a candle in the window,
Welcoming the weary traveler.

May you ever have a kindly greeting for people
As you’re going along the roads.

And now may the Lord bless you,
And bless you kindly.

Amen.

*A Call to Hope – A Poem by Sr. Tracey Horan, Sisters of Providence*

I am called to HOPE…

To be present in the small steps of big change
To give holy anger and courage
space to move things

To see the new beautiful sparks of God
that are small but bright

To celebrate small miracles,
gather them in my arms,
offer their color and warmth
to those oppressed by the weariness
of a grey, cold reality

Something draws me
and others
to a New Monasticism

Its fruits are small and real
it steadies the pulse
shaken by chaos and crisis

It teaches me to lean into others
for strength and healing

We cannot do this alone,
We are not asked to do this alone.

WE are called to HOPE.

*The Merton Prayer
by Thomas Merton*

My Lord God,
I have no idea where I am going.
I do not see the road ahead of me.
I cannot know for certain where it will end.
nor do I really know myself,
and the fact that I think I am following your will
does not mean that I am actually doing so.
But I believe that the desire to please you
does in fact please you.
And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing.
I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire.
And I know that if I do this you will lead me by the right road,
though I may know nothing about it.
Therefore will I trust you always though
I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death.
I will not fear, for you are ever with me,
and you will never leave me to face my perils alone.
Amen.

*Archbishop Oscar Romero Prayer: A Step Along the Way
written by Fr. Ken Untener in memory of Archbishop Romero*

It helps, now and then, to step back and take a long view.
The kingdom is not only beyond our efforts, it is even beyond our vision.

We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction of the magnificent
enterprise that is God's work. Nothing we do is complete, which is a way of
saying that the Kingdom always lies beyond us.
No statement says all that could be said.
No prayer fully expresses our faith.
No confession brings perfection.
No pastoral visit brings wholeness.
No program accomplishes the Church's mission.
No set of goals and objectives includes everything.

This is what we are about.
We plant the seeds that one day will grow.
We water seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise.
We lay foundations that will need further development.
We provide yeast that produces far beyond our capabilities.

We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that.
This enables us to do something, and to do it very well.
It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way, an
opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest.
We may never see the end results, but that is the difference between the master
builder and the worker.

We are workers, not master builders; ministers, not messiahs.
We are prophets of a future not our own.

Amen.

*Prayer for the Big Morning
by Daniel Berrigan*

People my heart
with the living! their cries like
fists, their sight healing
my eyes foreclosing night.
Would be
that one and populous
heart of man;
O cries like fists
O sight set free!

*A Moment for Grace
A Prayer for Refugees from CRS*

God of our Wandering Ancestors,

Long have we known
That your heart is with the refugee:
That you were born into time
In a family of refugees
Fleeing violence in their homeland,
Who then gathered up their hungry child
And fled into alien country.

Their cry, your cry, resounds through the ages:
 “Will you let me in?”

Give us hearts that break open
When our brothers and sisters turn to us
With that same cry.
Then surely all these things will follow:
Ears will no longer turn deaf to their voices.
Eyes will see a moment for grace instead of a threat.
Tongues will not be silenced but will instead advocate.
And hands will reach out—
Working for peace in their homeland,
Working for justice in the lands where they seek safe haven.

Lord, protect all refugees in their travels.
May they find a friend in me
And so make me worthy
 Of the refuge I have found in you.

Amen.