

BOOK OF BLESSINGS FOR ST PEREGRINE LAZIOSI

LAUDEMUS VIROS GLoriosos

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COMMISSIO LITURGICA INTERNATIONALIS OSM
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ÁNGEL M. RUIZ GARNICA

PRIOR GENERALIS
ORDINIS SERVORUM MARIAE

Prot. 532/2009

Jesus Christ, Son of God, is the great blessing of God on our earth. He travelled through our land doing good and bringing healing to all (cf. Acts 10, 38). He had compassion on the crowds who were weary and exhausted (cf. Mt 9, 36). He called the Twelve to himself, instructed them, and gave them power to heal the sick, sending them out to announce the Kingdom of God (cf. Lk 9, 1-2). Jesus Christ is risen from the dead, and by his wounds we have been healed (cf. I Pet 2, 24). He continues his saving work through the Church, the People of the Baptised sent to proclaim the Gospel to all nations and to visibly manifest the Kingdom of God

Every baptised person, as disciple of Christ, is committed to live as a learner from the Divine Master, welcoming the Gospel and bearing witness to it in word and deed. In our own Order there have been numberless brothers and sisters who have followed Christ so closely with their holiness. They give us a splendid example of sanctity. They seem to be repeating to us the words of St. Paul, “Be imitators of myself, as I am imitating Christ” (I Cor 11, 1). And among those holy Servites is Saint Peregrine Laziosi, a pilgrim in name and in fact, the brother who walked the ways of the Gospel even when it was very arduous. At the hour of trial, he commended himself to the Great Healer, Jesus Christ crucified. And he received the Lord’s healing for his body just as he had earlier received that healing for his soul. Now there are many people who turn to the Saint of Healing, counting on his intercession so that they too may be converted and walk the way of pilgrims, and experience similar healing from Christ.

This Book of Blessings is a supplement to the liturgical texts of our Servite Order for the 4th of May, along with the booklet In Praise of Saint Peregrine Laziosi. In this book you can find blessings for young people, for sick people, for the so-called Oil of St. Peregrine. There are also 10 short formularies for cycles of prayer such as triduum, 7-day prayer, novenas, and so forth, seeking the gift of healing through the intercession of St. Peregrine.

I am happy now to promulgate this Book of Blessings for Saint Peregrine Laziosi. Various parts of our Order have requested it, and the General Council of the Friars has given its approval. I am directing the book’s inclusion in the series Laudemus viros gloriosos until our Order eventually publishes its complete Ritual of the Order.

I am confident that a judicious use of this Book of Blessings for St. Peregrine Laziosi by members of the wider Servite family and by members of the faithful who gather with devotion to this saint, will be of great benefit. Faith will be expressed, gathering as brothers and sisters will happen, and the mercy of God will be experienced by all, as people come closer to the spirit and message of our brother Peregrine.

*From our San Marcello Priory, Rome, 15 August 2009
Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.*

L. +S

Fra Ángel M. RUIZ GARNICA, O.S.M.,
Prior General

Fra Camille M. JACQUES, O.S.M.,
Secretary of the Order

Piero DANI
Peregrine, Disciple of Christ Crucified
Ink and watercolour, 2009

*“I am indeed the Mother of Him whom you adore crucified,
and he has sent me to show you the way of the beatitudes” (VPF 2).*

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

I. PRAYERS AND BLESSINGS

THROUGH THE INTERCESSIONS OF SAINT PEREGRINE LAZIOSI

1. Saint Peregrine Laziosi was healed of a gangrenous ulcer on his leg. It was considered unsaveable. The fame of this event in 1325 spread rapidly round the western Church. Christians and especially the sick began to invoke his name and seek his intercession for the relief of their suffering and even for a cure from sickness. The canonisation of St. Peregrine in 1726 increased people's devotion to him which spread to the universal Church.

2. Even with great developments in medicine there are still many diseases which are incurable. Some of them are claiming more and more victims. Because of this, the prayers to this saint are becoming more intense and more frequent, because this was a person who knew suffering and sickness in his life, and also knew the power of divine grace helping him. The Servite family – with its friars, sisters, secular and lay members – is committed across the world to offering a “ministry of compassion” in a spirit of service towards those who are sick and suffering. We make frequent reference to the Saint of Forlì, seeking his help in our prayers for those who are suffering. Servites often give the so-called “oil of Saint Peregrine” to people who are sick, making a connection with the ancient custom, still in use, of easing pain through oil massage. Some parts of the Order (shrines, priories, convents and families) conduct a “Perpetual Novena of Saint Peregrine Laziosi”. And St. Peregrine is also presented to young people as a help on their journey of maturity in life and in faith. He guides them from his own life-story to deal with temptation and violence.

3. Our Order of Servants of Mary, and the universal Church, continues to develop its respect and memory for Saint Peregrine. Therefore this present book is offering:

- a) a rite for *Blessing for Young People*. This is based on Peregrine the youth, whose growing up to maturity beyond political violence was so influenced by his encounter with Saint Philip Benizi and subsequent conversion.
- b) a rite of *Blessing for the Sick*. This is based on the miraculous healing of St. Peregrine which happened in 1725.
- c) a rite of *Blessing of the Oil of Saint Peregrine*. This rite is connected with the ancient and widespread use of oil for healing many conditions.
- d) a collection of ten *Series of Prayers*. These are for people seeking God's healing or support in sickness through the intercession of St. Peregrine, when sharing the “oil of St. Peregrine” or venerating his relic.

II. MEANING OF THE BLESSINGS

4. A blessing is a liturgical act or a “sacred sign”¹ through which the Church gives praise to God for God's gifts to humanity. They include listening to God's Word, and doing some sacred actions. These invocations are made through Christ in the unity of the Holy Spirit, asking special benefits for the faithful flowing from the Paschal Mystery.²

5. Because the ritual blessings are truly liturgical actions, it is fitting that they take place in a community setting,³ unless some pastoral reason dictates otherwise.

6. The “blessing of Saint Peregrine”, even in its most simple form, is always a celebration of the Christian faith. Therefore it must be:

– joyful *praise* of God, who pours gifts on the faithful and provides an image of divine goodness in the saints;

¹ Cf. 2nd VATICAN COUNCIL, Liturgy Constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, no. 60.

² Cf. *Ibidem* no. 61.

³ Cf. *Ibidem* no. 27; *Rituale Romanum* ex decreto sacrosancti œcumenici Concilli Vaticani II instauratum, auctoritate Ioannis Pauli II promulgatum. *De Benedictionibus*, Editio typica, Città del Vaticano 1984, no. 16.

- *listening* to the Word, which spells out the meaning of a particular rite, and evokes a cordial response of choice and commitment;
- *humble petition*, requesting the good gifts that God will provide;
- *projection of Church*, showing forth the Church in a community celebration, in the use of the “prayer of the Church”, and in the celebration of the communion of saints between the faithful and the saints;
- *humanitarian concern*, as the prayers focus on people’s physical and spiritual well-being;
- joyful *memorial* of a brother-saint whose Gospel way of life still shines as a light for the Church’s service to God, to Our Lady and to people.

7. However, should it be needed, there should be good catechesis of the faithful on the nature of the “blessing of Saint Peregrine”, since the blessing depends completely on faith and has nothing to do with any magical rituals.

III. MINISTERS

8. The various rites in this *Book of Blessings for Saint Peregrine Laziosi* are proper to the Servite Order, but they are not exclusive to only members the Servite Family. The “rites of blessing” can be done by ordained ministers (bishops, priests, deacons) and by non ordained ministers⁴ who have special dealings with the particular groups of faithful concerned, (for example, in the rite of *Blessings for Young People* the blessings may be done by parents, teachers, youth-group leaders; for the *Blessings for the Sick* this may be done by relatives, carers, doctors or nurses; for the *Blessing of the Oil of Saint Peregrine*, this can be done by a member of the Servite Family who has some special link with the place where this devotion is held).

9. When the rites of blessing are done in a community celebration, they should be in a church or chapel. If they are presided by an ordained minister, the minister should wear liturgical robes (alb and stole)⁵ or the religious habit, and use the minister’s proper form of words for a Church minister (in greetings and closing blessings).

IV. ADAPTATION

10. The rites contained in this *Book of Blessings for Saint Peregrine Laziosi* can be adapted to different circumstances, always respecting the basic principles and criteria for adaptations⁶ in the particular places concerned.

ABBREVIATIONS

- A.* = All
R. = Reader
P. = Presider
Resp. = Response
V. = Verse

⁴ In this particular Book of Blessings, the expression “non-ordained ministers” refers to all the baptised members of the Catholic Church – lay or religious, women or men – who have not received the Sacrament of Holy Order in any of its degrees (bishop, priest, deacon), and who, on the other hand, by reason of family, profession, church service or religious order membership, are in a position of responsibility and service for others who may need a particular blessing.

⁵ Cf. *De Benedictionibus*, nos. 35-38.

⁶ Cf. *Ibidem*, no. 39.

I

BLESSING FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Piero DANI

Peregrine, youth of Forlì, Ghibelline agitator

Ink and watercolour, 2009

The young man Peregrine begs forgiveness from Saint Philip Benizi and asks to be accepted in the Order of friar Servants of St. Mary (cf. *Chronicon*, p. 71).

INTRODUCTION

1. A *Blessing for Young People* through the intercession of Saint Peregrine is connected with events during the saint's youth which led him to human and spiritual maturity.

According to the *Chronicon*⁷ (1567) written by fra Michele Poccianti (1536-1576), Saint Peregrine was eighteen when he underwent a strong conversion experience in Forlì, his birthplace, during the interdict (26 March 1282 – 1 September 1283). The interdict was a canonical penalty which forbade the celebration of any sacred rites, aimed at bringing the rebellious people of Forlì back into obedience with the Pope. In 1283 Saint Philip Benizi was passing through Forlì. He called on the Ghibelline citizens to be reconciled and make peace with the Holy See. Some of them made mockery of the appeal by the saint. They beat him and threw him out of the city. One of the attackers, which tradition indicates was the 18 year-old youth Peregrine Laziosi, was deeply moved by the meekness shown by Saint Philip towards such offences. He asked for forgiveness, and was moved by divine grace to change his life, begging St. Philip to accept him into the Order of the friars Servants of St. Mary.

In the *Life of blessed Peregrine of Forlì*⁸ by the humanist Siennese author Nicolò Borghese (+1500), we read that Peregrine was an only son, and for this reason tenderly loved by his parents. Despising the vain things of earth, he decided at an early age to follow the way of virtue (VPF 1). Strengthened by this strong and holy desire, he went one day to the church of St. Mary of the Cross, and went before the image of the Virgin Mary, begging her to show him the way for his salvation. She replied to him: *I, too, my son, desire to guide your steps on the way of salvation. [...] Do not be afraid, my son: I am the mother of the crucified One you adore, and I have been sent my him to show you the path of the beatitudes (VPF 2).* The Blessed Virgin then spoke to him of those religious who are known as Servants of the holy Virgin Mary and added: *You are called Peregrine. Well, then, you shall be pilgrim in deed as well as in name. You must journey to Siena; on arrival, find those holy men who are set on prayer; ask them with much supplication, to let you be numbered in their family (VPF 2).* He set out, with an angel for company (VPF 3; cf. Tob 5: 1) and entered the Order of Servants of Mary.

2. These events gave rise to the custom of invoking the protection of Saint Peregrine, a converted agitator, for young people “on their pilgrim-journey”, as they look for their particular vocation in life, seeking the *way of salvation* (cf. Mt 19: 16; VPF 2). Likewise protection is asked for any impulsive or impetuous young people who, like Saint Peregrine, let themselves be caught up in gangs and violence.

I. TIME FOR BLESSING

3. There are various circumstances in which the faithful seek God's blessing on young people through the intercession of Saint Peregrine: the celebration of his feastday on 4 May (or 1 May in Forlì); youth-walks and pilgrimages to special places that honour Saint Peregrine; youth gatherings and college festivals; opening and closing of academic years; young people's birthdays or special family days.

4. Whenever possible, these blessings for young people should include the presence of parents, relatives, companions and friends.

II. MINISTER

5. The blessing can be given by an ordained minister, or a non-ordained minister, especially someone – man or woman – who has special responsibility for the education of young people.

⁷ Cf. M. POCCIANTI, *Chronicon rerum totius Sacri Ordinis Servorum Beatæ Mariæ Virginis..., ab anno 1233 usque ad 1566*, Firenze 1567, p. 71.

⁸ Cf. N. BORGHESE, *Vita beati Peregrini Foroliviensis ... [= VPF]*, in *Monumenta Ordinis Servorum sanctæ Mariæ*, IV, Bruxelles 1900-1901, pp. 58-62. Translation in *Sources for the History and Spirituality of the Servants of St. Mary*, I, from 1245 to 1348, Vicenza – Sotto il Monte 1998, pp. 377-384.

A blessing within the setting of the family should be given by parents blessing their own children.

III. RECIPIENTS OF BLESSING

6. Normally the blessing of Saint Peregrine is given to young people of minor age. But if they are older, then the rites may be adjusted accordingly.

IV. ADAPTATION

7. The basic content of the rite should be retained (Scripture reading and Prayer of blessing), while the detailed parts may be adapted to circumstances and setting.

8. A blessing for an individual young person should use the shorter rite (nos. 27-34).

V. PREPARATION

9. The young people should be involved in the preparation of the celebration.

10. It is fitting to have an image of Saint Peregrine Laziosi in the place where the blessing-rite will be conducted. There should also be:

- a container with holy water (cf. no. 17), if baptism is being remembered;
- flowers for a tribute to the Blessed Virgin (cf. no. 22);
- alb and stole (or religious habit) for the one who presides, if it is a priest.

RITE OF BLESSING

GREETING

11. The rite of blessing always begins, in the tradition of the Servants of Mary, with the *Ave Maria*:

Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among women
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus

A hymn in honour of Saint Peregrine, or similar suitable hymn, may now be sung (see pages ...-...)

12. All make the sign of the cross together, as the presider says:

P. In the name of the Father + and of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit.

A. Amen.

13. The presider addresses the young people and all present in the following or similar words:

P. May God our Father,
who guides our hearts
in the peace of Christ
and in the joy of the Holy Spirit
be with you all.

A. And also with you *or* And with your spirit.

INSTRUCTION

14. A reader or the presider helps the young people and all present to prepare for the blessing of Saint Peregrine with the following or similar words:

P. God sent his Son into our midst
to show us the way of life and salvation.
During his public life,
Jesus always welcome little one with great love,
and gave his special attention to the well-being of young people.

To the dead daughter of the synagogue official
he said, "My girl, I say to you, rise up!"
and she got up and began walking around.

To an ardent young observer of the Law
who asked what he must do to inherit eternal life,

Jesus said,
“If you wish to be perfect,
go, sell all you possess,
give it to the poor,
and you will inherit treasure in heaven;
then come! Follow me!”

Down through the ages,
generous young people have embraced the following of Christ,
meeting but overcoming many great difficulties
with the help of God’s grace.

In the 13th century,
Peregrine Laziosi achieved his following of Jesus after many struggles.
As a young man in Forlì,
he was involved in wild and misplaced aggression.
But he came across a saintly friar who was a peace-maker,
and this convinced him to change his life.

Through the inspiration of the mother of Jesus
he made his way to Siena to join the Friar Servants of Mary.

Now, in our celebration today
we shall ask God,
through the intercession of Saint Peregrine,
to bless you, his beloved young people,
and to support you on your journey
of human and spiritual development.
We shall ask good grace for your parents and educators
so that they will help you
to respond well to God’s call.

SCRIPTURE READING

13. A reader, preferably one of the young people, proclaims one of the following two readings, or some other suitable bible text (e.g. *Tob* 4: 5-7, 18-19; *Pr* 4: 1-7; *Mt* 18: 1-5, 10; *Mt* 19: 13-15; *I Peter* 5: 5-11, 14).

R. Let us listen to the Word of God from the First Letter of the Apostle St John
I Jn 2: 1, 9-10, 12-14, 15a, 17.

*I am writing to you young people for you to be strong
with the word of God dwelling within you*

I am writing this, my children, to stop you sinning;
but if anyone should sin,
we have our advocate with the Father,
Jesus Christ, who is just.

Anyone who claims to be in the light
but hates his brother
is still in the dark.
But anyone who loves his brother is living in the light
and need not be afraid of stumbling.

I am writing to you, my own children,
whose sins have already been forgiven through his name;
I am writing to you, fathers,
who have come to know the one
who has existed since the beginning;
I am writing to you, young men,
who have already overcome the Evil One.

You must not love this passing world
or anything that is in the world.

The world, with all it craves for,
is coming to an end;
but anyone who does the will of God
remains for ever.

Alternative reading:

L. Let us listen to the Word of God from the Second Letter of the Apostle Paul to Timothy.
II Tim 2: 22-25

*Do not give in to the impulses of youth,
but fasten your attention on holiness, faith, love and peace*

Instead of giving in to your impulses like a young man,
fasten your attention on holiness, faith, love and peace,
in union with all those who call on the Lord with pure minds.
Avoid these futile and silly speculations,
understanding that they only give rise to quarrels;
and a servant of the Lord is not to engage in quarrels,
but has to be kind to everyone,
a good teacher, and patient.
He has to be gentle when he corrects people
who dispute what he says,
never forgetting that God may give them a change of mind
so that they recognise the truth.

SHORT RESPONSORY

16. The reading is followed by this response (cf. *Ps 37 [36]: 4, 3*):

P. Find your delight in the LORD, * He grants your heart's desire.

A. Find your delight in the LORD, * He grants your heart's desire.

P. Trust in the LORD and do good.

A. He grants your heart's desire.

P. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

A. Find your delight in the LORD, * He grants your heart's desire.

MEDITATION ON THE WORD OF GOD

17. Now there is a silent time for meditation, or the presider may offer reflections on the Word of God. Connections can be made with the faith-journey of the young Peregrine Laziosi, who turned from violence with the light of grace and found the true meaning of his life. These reflections can be done in the form of dialogue, if this is appropriate.

REMEMBRANCE OF BAPTISM

18. If judged suitable, a remembrance of baptism can follow the time of reflection. The presider holds the holy water and says:

P. My dear young people,
this holy water is a reminder of your baptism
in which you became disciples of Jesus Christ,
our way, our truth and our life.
He is our Lord, who lives for ever and ever.

A. Amen.

Then the presider offers the holy water for everyone to bless themselves.

COMMUNITY PRAYER

19. A community prayer is now held. The formula given here is only a guide. The most suitable intercessions can be chosen to best suit the needs of those present and the circumstances of time and place. Different people should announce the intentions.

P. Let us lift up our prayers to God,
the creator of heaven and earth,
the One whom Jesus our Lord
has taught us to call our heavenly Father.

Resp. Father most holy,
protect your sons and daughters
in love and in peace.

R. Protect them from every danger. *Resp.*

R. Reveal to them the thoughts of your heart. *Resp.*

R. Enable them to find in you
the true meaning of life and true happiness. *Resp.*

R. Direct our steps in rightful ways. *Resp.*

R. Look with love on young people and guide
their search for the ways of salvation. *Resp.*

R. Watch lovingly on those
who have wandered far away from you. *Resp.*

R. For parents and educators we ask
your gift of comprehension and patience. *Resp.*

20. There follows the Lord's Prayer:

A. Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses
As we forgive those
who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation.
But deliver us from evil. Amen.

PRAYER OF BLESSING

21. Parents, or teachers if parents are not present, sign their children with the sign of the cross, and the Presider says the prayer of blessing:

P. Blessed are you, O Lord our God,
for you care always for your sons and daughters.

Look kindly now upon these young people [N. N.],
and pour upon them,
through the intercession of the blessed Virgin Mary
and Saint Peregrine Laziosi, her Servant,
the abundance of your blessings.
So may they grow, like your beloved Son Jesus Christ,
in age and wisdom,
in strength and in grace,

before your sight, O God,
and in the sight of all people.

Enlighten their minds, we pray,
so that they can distinguish your words of life
from the many conflicting sounds of this world.
Make them wise and strong in their choices,
and generous in seeking the common good,
as fine witnesses to your Kingdom.

Following the example of Saint Peregrine,
may they learn to seek and to offer the gift of forgiveness.
When they meet difficulties,
let them find constructive solutions,
always discovering
your love, your peace and your joy.
(This we ask) through Christ, our Lord.

A. Amen.

KISS OF PEACE

22. After the prayer and blessing, where appropriate the presider and those attending can share the greeting of peace with the young people.

REVERENCE FOR THE VIRGIN MARY

23. The document *The Life of Blessed Peregrine of Forlì* tells how Saint Peregrine Laziosi was looking for *the way of salvation*. He was inspired by the Virgin Mary to join the Order of her Servants as his way of life. And so it is fitting for the young people to invoke the protection of Our Lady to guide them in good ways. A suitable Reverence is made in Mary's honour. Flowers may be placed at her shrine, and *Salve Regina* – Hail, Holy Queen, or similar Marian anthems may be sung [see nos. ...-...].

CONCLUSION

24. The presider closes the rite, with:

P. May our Lord Jesus Christ, the Good Master,
keep you always in his love
with all those who wish you well in their hearts.

A. Amen.

25. If the presider is a priest or an ordained minister, he adds:

P. And may the blessing of God, the Lord of Life,
come down upon you and remain always with you,

the Father, + the Son and the Holy Spirit.
A. Amen.

26. The rite of blessing for young people concludes with a friendly reception or celebration.

SHORTER RITE

27. There may be circumstances or pastoral reasons for replacing the rite in nos. 11-26 with a shorter form, so long as the Word of God is given its due place.

ANGELIC SALUTATION

28. Following the timeless tradition of the Servants of Mary, this rite begins with the Angelical Salutation (The *Hail Mary*). The presider calls people to prayer saying:

P. Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with thee.

A. Blessed art thou among women
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

CALLING ON THE NAME OF THE LORD

29. Everyone makes the sign of the cross as the presider says:

P. In the name of the Father + and of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit.

A. Amen.

Then, if appropriate, the presider gives an introduction to explain briefly the meaning of the rite of blessing.

SCRIPTURE READING

30. The presider or else one of the young people reads one or other of the following scripture texts, or else something similar (e.g. *Tob* 4: 5-7, 18-19; *Prov* 4: 1-7; *Mt* 18: 1-5; *Mt* 19: 13-15; *I Pet* 5: 5-11, 14):

R. Let us listen to the Word of God from the First Letter of the Apostle, St. John

I Jn 2: 1, 9-10, 12-14, 15a, 17

*I am writing to you young people for you to be strong
with the word of God dwelling within you*

I am writing this, my children, to stop you sinning;
but if anyone should sin,
we have our advocate with the Father,
Jesus Christ, who is just.

Anyone who claims to be in the light
but hates his brother
is still in the dark.
But anyone who loves his brother is living in the light

and need not be afraid of stumbling.

I am writing to you, my own children,
whose sins have already been forgiven through his name;
I am writing to you, fathers,
who have come to know the one
who has existed since the beginning;
I am writing to you, young men,
who have already overcome the Evil One.

You must not love this passing world
or anything that is in the world.

The world, with all it craves for,
is coming to an end;
but anyone who does the will of God
remains for ever.

Alternative reading:

L. Let us listen to the Word of God from the Second Letter of the Apostle Paul to Timothy.

II Tim 2: 22-25

*Do not give in to the impulses of youth,
but fasten your attention on holiness, faith, love and peace*

Instead of giving in to your impulses like a young man,
fasten your attention on holiness, faith, love and peace,
in union with all those who call on the Lord with pure minds.
Avoid these futile and silly speculations,
understanding that they only give rise to quarrels;
and a servant of the Lord is not to engage in quarrels,
but has to be kind to everyone,
a good teacher, and patient.
He has to be gentle when he corrects
people who dispute what he says,
never forgetting that God may give them a change of mind
so that they recognise the truth.

MEDITATION ON THE WORD OF GOD

31. Now there is a silent time for meditation, or the presider may offer reflections on the Word of God. Connections can be made with the faith-journey of the young Peregrine Laziosi, who turned from violence with the light of grace and found the true meaning of his life. These reflections can be done in the form of dialogue, if this is appropriate.

PRAYER OF BLESSING

32. The presider says the following prayer of blessing:

For several young people

P. Blessed are you, O Lord our God,
for you care always for your sons and daughters.

Look kindly now upon these young people [N. N.],
and pour upon them,
through the intercession of the blessed Virgin Mary
and Saint Peregrine Laziosi, her Servant,
the abundance of your blessings.
So may they grow, like your beloved Son Jesus Christ,
in age and wisdom,
in strength and in grace,
before your sight, O God,
and in the sight of all people.

Enlighten their minds, we pray,
so that they can distinguish your words of life
from the many conflicting sounds of this world.
Make them wise and strong in their choices,
and generous in seeking the common good,
as fine witnesses to your Kingdom.

Following the example of Saint Peregrine,
may they learn to seek and to offer the gift of forgiveness.
When they meet difficulties,
let them find constructive solutions,
always discovering
your love, your peace and your joy.
(This we ask) through Christ, our Lord.

A. Amen.

Or alternatively:

For just one young person

P. Blessed are you, O Lord our God,
for you care always for your sons and daughters.

Look kindly now upon this young servant of yours, [N.]
and pour upon her/him,
through the intercession of the blessed Virgin Mary
and Saint Peregrine Laziosi, her Servant,
the abundance of your blessings.
So may she/he grow, like your beloved Son Jesus Christ,

in age and wisdom,
in strength and in grace,
before your sight, O God,
and in the sight of all people.

Enlighten her/his mind, we pray,
so that she/he can distinguish your words of life
from the many conflicting sounds of this world.
Make her/him wise and strong in her/his choices,
and generous in seeking the common good,
as a fine witness to your Kingdom.

Following the example of Saint Peregrine,
may she/he learn to seek and to offer the gift of forgiveness.
When she/he meets difficulties,
let her/him find constructive solutions,
always discovering
your love, your peace and your joy.
(This we ask) through Christ, our Lord.

A. Amen.

KISS OF PEACE

33. After the prayer and blessing, where appropriate the presider and those attending can share the greeting of peace with the young people.

CONCLUSION

34. The presider closes the rite, with:

P. May our Lord Jesus Christ, the Good Master,
keep you always in his love
with all those who wish you well in their hearts.

A. Amen.

35. If the presider is a priest or an ordained minister, he adds:

P. And may the blessing of God, the Lord of Life,
come down upon you and remain always with you,
the Father, + the Son and the Holy Spirit.

A. Amen.

II

BLESSING FOR THE SICK

Piero DANI

Peregrine miraculously cured

Ink and watercolour, 2009

“In his sleep Peregrine saw the crucified Jesus come down from the cross and free him from every wound on his leg” (*VPF 7*).

INTRODUCTION

1. The Order of Servants of Mary has been holding a *Blessing of the Sick* through the intercession of Saint Peregrine Laziosi for many centuries.⁹ This is a further sign of the kindly care offered by the Church to her ailing sisters and brothers, founded on the solicitous compassion of the Lord Jesus himself, and of his apostles, towards the sick. The blessing also demonstrates the confidence of Christian faithful people in the intercession of Saint Peregrine Laziosi. In his *Life of Blessed Peregrine of Forlì* the humanist writer from Siena, Nicolò Borghese (+1500) we read that Saint Peregrine was stricken with a gangrenous ulcer on his leg. In this condition he bore great suffering, trusting in the words of the Apostle, *virtue is perfected through infirmity* (VPF 5; cf. *II Cor* 12, 9-10). He was in his sixties. The night before he was to undergo amputation of his leg, he dragged himself into the chapter-room of the priory, to the image of the crucified Christ, where he begged Christ to heal him (cf. VPF 7). Overcome with pain, he was overcome with faint, and in a dream he saw the crucified Christ *come down from the cross and free him from every wound on his leg*. He woke up at once, and realised that his leg had been miraculously cured, and had become *as strong as if there had never been any sickness there*. News of this *spread widely and brought about the greatest devotion by everyone towards Peregrine, the friend of God* (VPF 8). On 1 May 1345 Saint Peregrine died, in his eighties. A great throng of people came to the priory to pay respect to his body in the friars' choir. Such were the numbers, that *it was impossible to close the city gates, with such crowds surging in*. *Nor was there a lack of miracles sent from heaven to confirm the sanctity of blessed Peregrine*. (VPF 9). The reports tell of how some sick people were healed of evil spirits (cf. VPF 11), others had their sight restored (cf. VPF 10), and others again were healed by the saint's intercession after serious accidents (cf. VPF 12). Peregrine the Healed One quickly became the advocate for people with all kinds of sicknesses.

TIME AND PLACE FOR BLESSINGS

2. Suitable times and places for celebrating the blessings of several sick people together include the feastday of Saint Peregrine (4 May, or 1 May in Forlì), a day near to that feastday, a pilgrimage day to a special shrine or holy-place of the saint, or a particular day chosen to honour him (some places for example, choose the 4th day of each month). The blessing can be enacted in a church or shrine where Saint Peregrine is particularly honoured (nos. 10-26).

3. A blessing of Saint Peregrine can be shared with an individual who is sick, if that person or their family requests in, either in church or at home (nos. 27-43).

4. In any case, it is always important to emphasise to those who are sick the primary importance of the sacrament of Anointing of the Sick, inviting them to receive the sacrament.

II. MINISTER

5. The blessing of the sick may be imparted by an ordained minister or by a non-ordained minister, especially someone closely linked to the sick by reason of family, care-service or friendship. A sick child should rightly receive this blessing from father and mother.

III. ADAPTATION

⁹ Already by 1721, five years before his canonisation (26 December 1726), a formula was published for blessing the sick: *In nomine meo super aegros manus imponent, et benè habebunt. Dominus Jesus Christus Crucifixus, Dei et B. Mariae Virginis Filius, mundi salus, et Dominus sit tibi clemens, et propitius, ac per merita, et intercessionem eiusdem B. M. V. Matris suae, b. patris Peregrini confessoris, et servi sui totiusque curia caelestis, liberet te ab omni plaga etiam gangaenosa, paralyti, apoplexia, paroxismo, contractione nervorum, detque tibi salutem metnis, et corporis; ad laudem, et gloriam sui santissimi nominis. Amen.* Cf. A.M. GARBI – P.M. BONFRIZZERI, *Annalium Sacri Ordinis Fratrum Servorum B. Mariae Virginis*, III, Lucca 1725, pp. 696-697.

6. As long as the basic features of the rite are retained (the reading of the Word of God and the words of blessing), the following texts can be suitably adapted to the situation of the sick and the place where the blessing is happening.

7. Blessing for an individual sick person in church or home can be conducted in a shorter form, if circumstances suggest this (nos. 44-52).

IV. PREPARATION

8. It is fitting to have an image of Saint Peregrine in the place of blessing.

9. The blessing place should also have:

- a crucifix, and possibly a relic or “the oil of Saint Peregrine Laziosi”;
- alb and stole (or religious habit) if it is a community celebration in church and presided by an ordained minister.

RITE OF BLESSING FOR THE SICK IN CHURCH

GREETING

10. Following the timeless tradition of the Servants of Mary, this rite begins with the Angelical Salutation (The *Hail Mary*).

Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among women
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

If appropriate, a hymn to Saint Peregrine may now be sung (see pp. ???-???) or else another suitable hymn.

11. All make the sign of the cross together, as the presider says:

P. In the name of the Father + and of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit.

A. Amen.

12. The presider addresses those with sickness and their companions, using the following or other suitable words:

P. May the Lord Jesus,
who came into our world doing good to all
and healing the sick,
be with you all.

A. And also with you *or* And with your spirit.

Or alternatively:

P. May God our Father
who directs our hearts
in the patience of Christ
and the consoling power of the Spirit
be with you all.

A. And also with you *or* And with your spirit.

INSTRUCTION

13. The one presiding helps the young people and all present to prepare for the blessing of Saint Peregrine with the following or similar words:

P. The Lord Jesus went among people doing good
and healing all kinds of weaknesses and infirmities.

He directed his disciples to show care for the sick,
to lay their hands upon them
and to bless them in his name.

Down through the ages there have been many disciples of Jesus
who have shown this care for the sick,
and many have witnessed amazing miracles of healing.

When Saint Peregrine Laziosi was granted the miraculous cure of his leg,
afflicted with a gangrenous ulcer,
people were filled with confidence
in the healing power of Jesus Christ crucified.
They would invoke the holy friar Saint Peregrine
for the Lord to bring them healing.

We too are very conscious of the prayerful presence
of Saint Peregrine
as we pray together.
We too bring ourselves into the presence of Jesus Christ,
the giver of health for body and soul.
Let our faith be strong, like the people
who came to Jesus in the Gospel.

SCRIPTURE READING

14. A reader proclaims one of the following two readings, or some other suitable bible text (e.g. *Ecclus* 18: 1-14; *II Cor* 1: 3-7; *Mt* 4: 23-25; *Mt* 25: 31-46; *Lk* 10: 30-37).

R. Let us listen to the Word of God from the Book of Ecclesiasticus 38: 9-14

My son, when you are ill, do not be depressed, but pray to the Lord

My son, when you are ill, do not be depressed,
but pray to the Lord and he will heal you.
Renounce your faults, keep your hands unsoiled,
and cleanse your heart from all sin.
Offer incense and a memorial of fine flour,
and make as rich an offering as you can afford.

Then let the doctor take over – the Lord created him too –
and do not let him leave you, for your need him.
Sometimes success is in their hands,
since they in turn will beseech the Lord
to grant them the grace to relieve
and to heal, that life may be saved.

Or alternatively:

Let us listen to the Word of God from the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans 8, 31b-39

Nothing can ever come between us and the love of God

Dear brothers and sisters,
With God on our side who can be against us?
Since God did not spare his own Son,
but gave him up to benefit us all,
we may be certain, after such a gift,
that he will not refuse anything he can give.

Could anyone accuse those that God has chosen?
When God acquits, could anyone condemn?
Could Christ Jesus?
No, he not only died for us – he rose from the dead,
and there at God's right hand he stands and pleads for us.

Nothing therefore can come between us and the love of Christ,
even if we are troubled or worried, or being persecuted,
or lacking food or clothes, or being threatened or even attacked.
As scripture promised: *For your sake we are being massacred daily,
and reckoned as sheep for the slaughter.*
These are the trials through which we triumph,
by the power of him who loved us.

For I am certain of this:
neither death nor life, no angel, no prince,
nothing that exists, nothing still to come,
not any power, or height or depth,
nor any created thing,
can ever come between us and the love of God
made visible in Christ Jesus our Lord.

SHORT RESPONSORY

15. The reading is followed by this response (cf. *Ecclus* 38: 9; *Rm* 8: 39):

P. Make your prayer to the Lord * and the Lord will heal you.

A. Make your prayer to the Lord * and the Lord will heal you.

P. Nothing can separate you from the love of God.

A. And the Lord will heal you.

P. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

A. Make your prayer to the Lord * and the Lord will heal you.

MEDITATION ON THE WORD OF GOD

16. Now there is a silent time for meditation, or the presider may offer reflections on the Word of God. Connections can be made with the faith-journey of Saint Peregrine Laziosi, who was miraculously cured of his affliction and became a prayer-patron for the sick. This intended to help those present to deepen their faith and trust in God's compassionate love. These reflections can be done in the form of dialogue, if this is appropriate.

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

17. The gathering moves to the Prayer of Intercession. If necessary this can be omitted or suitably adapted, leaving out some or including other intercessions. The shared response may be varied to whatever best suits those who are sick.

P. Dear brothers and sisters:
we turn in prayer to Jesus Christ crucified.
He is the Saviour of the world,
and he listened to the supplication of Saint Peregrine,
responding with the gift of healing.

Resp. Loving Lord, help us in our need.

Or

Resp. Through Saint Peregrine grant your health
to our friends who are sick.

R. Lord Jesus Christ,
giver of health to body and spirit,
you came to heal all our illness. *Resp.*

R. Lord Jesus Christ,
you are our brother,
who came to serve and not to be served. *Resp.*

R. Lord Jesus Christ,
you are the Son of Man
who came to free us from every evil. *Resp.*

R. Lord Jesus Christ,
you are the Light of the World
who gave sight to the blind. *Resp.*

R. Lord Jesus Christ,
Man of Sorrows wrapt in grief,
you took our afflictions on yourself. *Resp.*

R. Lord Jesus Christ,

you are the New Adam, who gave us
the New Eve, Mary as our Mother. *Resp.*

R. Lord Jesus Christ,
Redeemer of the Human Race:
you came from the cross to heal Saint Peregrine. *Resp.*

The Prayer of Intercession can be replaced with the sung *Litany of Saint Peregrine Laziosi* or the *Litany of the Holy Name of Jesus* given in the Appendices (pp. ??-??).

PRAYER OF BLESSING

18. The Prayer of Blessing has various possible forms, to be selected according to the circumstances of the celebration.

19. Prayer to God the Father:

P. O Lord, our God,
in your plan of salvation
you sent your Son into the world.
to bear the weight of our sorrows
and our infirmities.

Look kindly on these your sons and daughters,
and through the intercession of Saint Peregrine Laziosi,
send upon them the Spirit of consolation and peace:
grant them strength in the time of trial,
hope amid tribulation
and acceptance of your holy will.
So may they be held firm by you,
and be able to take up once more
their joyful and generous service
at home and in the Church.
(This we ask) through Christ, our Lord.

A. Amen.

Or alternatively

20. Prayer to the Crucified Christ:

P. Lord Jesus Christ, Redeemer of the world:
willingly accepting the Father's plan of life,
you accepted the condemnation of the cross
and bore a most bitter death
to give saving life to us all.

During your life on earth

as you shared our human condition,
you restored health to many who were sick:
you cured the leper,
and gave sight to the blind man who implored,
“Jesus, Son of David, have pity on me!”.

You know full well the condition
of these our brothers and sisters.
Stretch out your hand over them and bless them,
just as you reached out to Saint Peregrine,
whose intercession we seek this day.
So may the weakness and infirmity of the body
be granted health and strength.

Through the grace of healing,
enable them to share very specially
in your victory over evil and death,
so that with recovered health
they may be witnesses of your compassionate love
and a sign of your saving power.

Then, like Saint Peregrine,
may they live each day
in service of you and your Church.
We ask this of you, Lord Jesus,
who live and reign for ever and ever.

A. Amen.

ACT OF REVERENCE

21. If it is deemed suitable, after the prayer of blessing, the presider lays hands upon those who are sick (cf. *Mk* 16, 18) or signs them with the sign of the cross, using the “Oil of Saint Peregrine”. Alternatively, the presider can offer a crucifix or a relic of the Saint for the sick people to reverence. Other suitable acts of reverence can take the place of the signing with the cross, or the kissing of crucifix or relic.

CONCLUSION

22. If the presider is an ordained minister, he adds:

P. The Lord be with you.

A. And also with you *or* And with your spirit.

23. The presider brings the rite to a close, saying:

P. May the Lord Jesus Christ,
by whose wounds we have been healed,

be always at your side and protect you.

A. Amen.

P. May he gaze upon you with mercy
and give you comfort.

A. Amen.

P. May he stretch his hand over you
and give you healing.

A. Amen.

24. If the presider is an ordained minister he adds:

P. And may the blessing of God, the Lord of life,
the Father + the Son and the Holy Spirit
come down upon you and remain with you always.

A. Amen.

25. The presider ends the rite, saying:

P. May the Lord keep us in his peace.

A. Amen.

26. In accordance with the tradition of the Servite Order, if circumstances permit, the presider invites everyone to pay reverence to the Blessed Virgin Mary by singing *Sub tuum præsidium* (We fly to thy protection) or one of the Invocations of Mary's Servants or another Marian anthem (see pp. ???-???).

RITE OF BLESSING FOR A SICK PERSON

AT HOME

GREETING

27. The person presiding at the rite, on entering the home of the sick person, greets those present saying:

P. Brothers and sisters,
let us be united in celebrating this rite of blessing
for our brother/sister who is sick,
in the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

All Amen.

P. May peace be in this house
and with all who dwell here.

28. Then, in keeping with the usage of the Servants of Holy Mary, the one presiding continues with:

P. Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.

All Blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

INSTRUCTION

29. After the greeting, the one presiding helps those present to prepare themselves to celebrate the rite of blessing, with the following or similar words:

P. Our Lord Jesus Christ walked among his fellow human beings
doing good and healing people of every weakness and infirmity.
He directed his disciples to show care for the sick,
to lay hands upon them and bless them in His name.

So many disciples of Jesus, in caring for the sick,
have given witness with miraculous cures.

When Saint Peregrine Laziosi received miraculous healing
for his cancerous leg ulcer,
many people were filled with confidence
in the healing power of the crucified Christ,
and in the intercession of our saintly brother
who would pray for them to be made well.

Trusting in the intercession of Saint Peregrine,
let us turn to Jesus Christ, the healer of body and soul,
and give him our faith, as sick people did in the Gospels.

SCRIPTURE READING

Reader Let us listen to the Word of God from the Book of Ecclesiasticus 38: 9-14

My son, when you are ill, do not be depressed, but pray to the Lord

My son, when you are ill, do not be depressed,
but pray to the Lord and he will heal you.

Renounce your faults, keep your hands unsoiled,
and cleanse your heart from all sin.
Offer incense and a memorial of fine flour,
and make as rich an offering as you can afford.

Then let the doctor take over – the Lord created him too –
and do not let him leave you, for you need him.

Sometimes success is in their hands,
since they in turn will beseech the Lord
to grant them the grace to relieve and to heal,
that life may be saved.

Alternative reading:

Let us listen to the Word of God from the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans 8: 31b-39

Nothing can ever separate us from the love of God

Dear brothers and sisters,
With God on our side who can be against us?
Since God did not spare his own Son,
but gave him up to benefit us all,
we may be certain, after such a gift,
that he will not refuse anything he can give.

Could anyone accuse those that God has chosen?
When God acquits, could anyone condemn?
Could Christ Jesus?
No, he not only died for us – he rose from the dead,
and there at God's right hand he stands and pleads for us.

Nothing therefore can come between us and the love of Christ,
even if we are troubled or worried, or being persecuted,

or lacking food or clothes, or being threatened or even attacked.
As scripture promised: *For your sake we are being massacred daily,
and reckoned as sheep for the slaughter.*
These are the trials through which we triumph,
by the power of him who loved us.

For I am certain of this:
neither death nor life, no angel, no prince,
nothing that exists, nothing still to come,
not any power, or height or depth,
nor any created thing,
can ever come between us and the love of God
made visible in Christ Jesus our Lord.

SHORT RESPONSORY

31. After the reading, there is the following responsory (cf. *Ecclus* 38: 9; *Rm* 8: 39):

P. Pray to the Lord * And the Lord will heal you.

All. Pray to the Lord * And the Lord will heal you.

P. Nothing can ever separate you from the love of God,

All. And the Lord will heal you.

P. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

All. Pray to the Lord * And the Lord will heal you.

MEDITATION ON THE WORD OF GOD

32. Now there is a silent time for meditation, or the presider may offer reflections on the Word of God. Connections can be made with the faith-journey of Saint Peregrine Laziosi, who was miraculously cured of his affliction and became a prayer-patron for the sick. This is intended to help those present to deepen their faith and trust in God's compassionate love. These reflections can be done in the form of dialogue, if this is appropriate.

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

33. The gathering moves to the Prayer of Intercession. If necessary this can be omitted or suitably adapted, leaving out some or including other intercessions. The shared response may be varied to whatever best suits those who are sick.

P. Dear brothers and sisters:
we turn in prayer to Jesus Christ crucified.
He is the Saviour of the world,
and he listened to the supplication of Saint Peregrine,
responding with the gift of healing.

Resp. Loving Lord, help us in our need.

Or

Resp. Through Saint Peregrine grant your health
to our friends who are sick.

R. Lord Jesus Christ,
giver of health to body and spirit,
you came to heal all our illness. *Resp.*

R. Lord Jesus Christ,
you are our brother,
who came to serve and not to be served. *Resp.*

R. Lord Jesus Christ,
you are the Son of Man
who came to free us from every evil. *Resp.*

R. Lord Jesus Christ,
you are the Light of the World
who gave sight to the blind. *Resp.*

R. Lord Jesus Christ,
Man of Sorrows wrapt in grief,
you took our afflictions on yourself. *Resp.*

R. Lord Jesus Christ,
you are the New Adam, who gave us
the New Eve, Mary as our Mother. *Resp.*

R. Lord Jesus Christ,
Redeemer of the Human Race:
you came from the cross to heal Saint Peregrine. *Resp.*

PRAYER OF BLESSING

34. The Prayer of Blessing has various possible forms, to be selected according to the circumstances of the celebration.

35. Prayer to God the Father:

P. O Lord, our God,
in your plan of salvation
you sent your Son into the world,

to bear the weight of our sorrows
and our infirmities.

Look kindly on this your son/daughter,
and through the intercession of Saint Peregrine Laziosi,
send upon him/her the Spirit of consolation and peace:
grant him/her strength in the time of trial,
hope amid tribulation
and acceptance of your holy will.
So may he/she be held firm by you,
and be able to take up once more
his/her joyful and generous service
at home and in the Church.
(This we ask) through Christ, our Lord.

A. Amen.

Or alternatively

36. Prayer to the Crucified Christ for an adult who is sick:

P. Lord Jesus Christ, Redeemer of the world:
willingly accepting the Father's plan of life,
you accepted the condemnation of the cross
and bore a most bitter death
to give saving life to us all.

During your life on earth
as you shared our human condition,
you restored health to many who were sick:
you cured the leper,
and gave sight to the blind man who implored,
"Jesus, Son of David, have pity on me!".

You know full well the condition
of this our brother/sister.
Stretch out your hand over him/her and bless him/her,
just as you reached out to Saint Peregrine,
whose intercession we seek this day.
So may the weakness and infirmity of the body
be granted health and strength.

Through the grace of healing,
enable him/her to share very specially
in your victory over evil and death,
so that with recovered health
he/she may be a witness of your compassionate love

and a sign of your saving power.

Then, like Saint Peregrine,
may he/she live each day
in service of you and your Church.
We ask this of you, Lord Jesus,
who live and reign for ever and ever.

A. Amen.

37. Alternative Prayer of Blessing to Jesus Christ, for a sick child:

P. Lord Jesus Christ,
born of the Virgin Mary, you are our Brother.
You experienced childhood in the company of other children,
in a hidden life of family obedience.
You knew the weakness and fragility of every infant.

When you announced the Kingdom of Heaven,
you revealed how the Father has special love
for children, for little ones, and for the humble.
You healed the daughter woman from Greece,
and you called back the son of the Widow of Naim
from the sleep of death.

Look lovingly on this child who is sick,
as we pray to you with love,
trusting in the intercession of Saint Peregrine.

Send forth your Spirit of Life
for this child to regain strength and good health,
with renewed brightness in his/eyes,
and a fine smile on his/her lips,
able once more to be at play with friends.

May this child of yours, and all who love him/her,
come to give you thanks for your goodness,
and glorify your name for your mercy.
This we pray to you, Lord Jesus,
who live and reign for ever and ever.

All Amen.

ACT OF REVERENCE

38. If it is deemed suitable, after the prayer of blessing, the presider lays hands upon those who are sick (cf. *Mk* 16, 18) or signs them with the sign of the cross, using the “Oil of Saint Peregrine”. Alternatively, the presider can offer a

crucifix or a relic of the Saint for the sick people to reverence. Other suitable acts of reverence can take the place of the signing with the cross, or the kissing of crucifix or relic.

CONCLUSION

39. If the presider is an ordained minister, he adds:

P. The Lord be with you.

A. And also with you *or* And with your spirit.

40. The presider brings the rite to a close, saying:

P. May the Lord Jesus Christ,
by whose wounds we have been healed,
be always at your side and protect you.

A. Amen.

P. May he gaze upon you with mercy
and give you comfort.

A. Amen.

P. May he stretch his hand over you
and give you healing.

A. Amen.

41. If the presider is an ordained minister he adds:

P. And may the blessing of God, the Lord of life,
the Father + the Son and the Holy Spirit
come down upon you and remain with you always.

A. Amen.

42. The presider ends the rite, saying:

P. May the Lord keep us in his peace.

A. Amen.

43. If circumstances permit, the one presiding invites everyone to pay reverence to the Blessed Virgin Mary by singing a Marian anthem (see pp. ???-???)

SHORTER RITE

44. It may be necessary to replace the preceding blessings (nos. 10-26 and 27-43) with a shorter rite, as given below, so long as the Word of God is given its due place.

ANGELICAL SALUTATION

45. In keeping with the usage of the Servants of Holy Mary, the one presiding invites all present to honour the Virgin Mary with the angelic salutation:

P. Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.

All. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

CALLING ON THE NAME OF THE LORD

46. Everyone makes the sign of the cross, as the one presiding says:

P. In the name of the Father + and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

All. Amen.

The one presiding gives a simple introduction to emphasise the meaning of the rite of blessing.

SCRIPTURE READING

47. The one who presides, or a reader proclaims one of the following two readings, or some other suitable bible text (e.g. *Ecclus* 38: 1-14, *Mt* 4: 23-25; *Mt* 8: 16-17; *Mt* 11: 28-29; *Mt* 25, 31-46; *Lk* 10, 30-37).

Reader Let us listen to the Word of God from the Book of Ecclesiasticus 38: 9-14

My son, when you are ill, do not be depressed, but pray to the Lord

My son, when you are ill, do not be depressed,
but pray to the Lord and he will heal you.

Renounce your faults, keep your hands unsoiled,
and cleanse your heart from all sin.
Offer incense and a memorial of fine flour,
and make as rich an offering as you can afford.

Then let the doctor take over – the Lord created him too –
and do not let him leave you, for you need him.

Sometimes success is in their hands,
since they in turn will beseech the Lord
to grant them the grace to relieve and to heal,

that life may be saved.

Or

Reader: Let us listen to the Word of God from the Second Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians
1: 3-4

God comforts us in all our sorrows

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
a gentle Father and the God of all consolation,
who comforts us in all our sorrows,
so that we can offer others, in their sorrows,
the consolation that we have received from God ourselves.

48. There follows a pause of silent reflection.

PRAYER OF BLESSING

49. The one presiding invokes the following blessing, making any variations as may seem appropriate.

P. O Lord, our God,
in your plan of salvation
you sent your Son into the world.
to bear the weight of our sorrows
and our infirmities.

Look kindly on this your son/daughter,
and through the intercession of Saint Peregrine Laziosi,
send upon him/her the Spirit of consolation and peace:
grant him/her strength in the time of trial,
hope amid tribulation
and acceptance of your holy will.
So may he/she be held firm by you,
and be able to take up once more
his/her joyful and generous service
at home and in the Church.
(This we ask) through Christ, our Lord.

A. Amen.

ACT OF REVERENCE

50. If it is deemed suitable, after the prayer of blessing, the presider lays hands upon those who are sick (cf. *Mk* 16, 18) or signs them with the sign of the cross, using the "Oil of Saint Peregrine". Alternatively, the presider can offer a crucifix or a relic of the Saint for the sick people to reverence. Other suitable acts of reverence can take the place of the signing with the cross, or the kissing of crucifix or relic.

CONCLUSION

51. The one presiding completes the rite with the following or other suitable formula:

P. May the Lord Jesus watch over you,
give you his strength
and keep you free from all evil.

A. Amen.

52. If the presider is an ordained minister he adds:

P. And may the blessing of God, the Lord of life,
the Father + the Son and the Holy Spirit
come down upon you and remain with you always.

A. Amen.

III

BLESSING OF THE OIL OF SAINT PEREGRINE LAZIOSI

Piero DANI

Peregrine, Disciple of Christ the Good Samaritan

Ink and watercolour, 2009

“He approached him, bound his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them, and took care of him”
(*Lk* 10: 34).

INTRODUCTION

1. The *Blessing of the Oil* in favour of the sick goes back far in history connected with devotion to Saint Peregrine. Oil from the olive speaks of a strong tree in desert places (cf. *Ecclus* 24: 19), a green and elegant tree in arid land (cf. *Ps* 52 [51]: 10; *Jer* 11: 16; *Hos* 14: 7), a plant that is rich in symbolic meaning (peace, cf. *Gen* 8: 11; the passion of Jesus, cf. *Mt* 21: 1, 8ff, etc), a plant whose fruit is pressed until it produces sweet oil of pleasant perfume that is easily absorbed (cf. *Ps* 109 [108]: 18). As well as for preparing food (cf. *Ex* 29: 2), olive oil produces light for lamps (cf. *Ex* 27: 20); it is used for healing ointment (cf. *Ex* 30: 20-25) and soothing pain. It was used in the past to make bodies supple and strong for physical endurance and games. It was also used to treat wounds (cf. *2 Chron* 28: 15; *Is* 1: 6; *Lk* 10: 34). This is remembered particularly with the “Oil of Saint Peregrine”: the saint was gravely infirm and miraculously healed. Sick people call on his intercession seeking solace and healing for their ailments.

I. TIME AND FORM FOR BLESSING

2. The most suitable time for blessing the *Oil of Saint Peregrine* is during or near the triduum of preparation for his feast on 4 May (or 1 May in Forlì). Pilgrimages to shrines of Saint Peregrine are also good opportunities for this blessing. So too are Saint Peregrine monthly celebrations or during a ‘perpetual novena’ in his honour.

3. The ministry of the *Oil of Saint Peregrine* may be conducted by lay-persons. Clearly there can be nothing magical about the usage, which must always be based on faith, since any healing comes not from the oil but from the Lord who hears the prayer of a faithful supplicant. The one who presides should remind the faithful that the *Oil of Saint Peregrine* is not the same as the sacramental use of oil in rites of baptism, confirmation, sacrament of the sick and holy orders, sacramental oil that is blessed by the Bishop on Holy (Maundy) Thursday. Indeed, sick people should be frequently reminded and encouraged to receive the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick

4. Whenever the faithful may wish to make offerings when they receive the *Oil of Saint Peregrine*, as happens at particular shrines, every care must be taken to avoid any hint of commercialism.

II. MINISTER

5. The blessing may be given by ordained and non-ordained ministers, especially members of the Servite Family who are especially sensitive to the meaning of devotion to Saint Peregrine.

III. ADAPTATIONS

6. The basic constituents of the rite shall always be upheld, namely the reading of the Word of God, and the prayer of blessing. Suitable variations may be made in keeping with circumstances.

IV. PREPARATION

7. In preparing the rite, helpful signs and symbols should be used, like a crucifix or cross, a picture or a relic of Saint Peregrine, and the oil to be blessed.

8. The oil to be blessed at the intercession of Saint Peregrine must be natural oil. Local usage may indicate the addition of traditional spices or fragrances like nard, bergamot, orange-blossom, verbena.

RITE OF BLESSING

GREETING

9. The rite of blessing always begins, in the tradition of the Servants of Mary, with the *Ave Maria*:

Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among women
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus

A hymn in honour of Saint Peregrine, or similar suitable hymn, may now be sung (see pages ...-...)

10. All make the sign of the cross together, as the presider says:

P. In the name of the Father + and of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit.

All Amen.

P. Through the wounds of Our Lord we have been healed.
He is the bearer of health for body and soul:
May the Lord be present in our midst.

All Blessed be God for ever!

INSTRUCTION

11. The one presiding prepares the participants with the following or similar words:

P. Dear friends: our gathering for prayer and blessing
recalls the faith of Saint Peregrine.
He turned to the crucified Christ
and found strength, courage and hope,
and likewise relief and refreshment
amid the sufferings of sickness.

The “oil of Saint Peregrine”,
when welcomed with faith,
will lead us to the same virtues that were seen in our Saint
particularly when he was in the distress of suffering:
he prayed with trust; he lived with patience and humility;
he showed forgiveness to others,
and shone with hope and gratefulness.

SCRIPTURE READING

12. A reader announces one of the following texts, or another appropriate passage (e.g. *Ex* 27: 20-21; *Deut* 7: 11-13a; *Mt* 25: 1-3; *Mk* 6: 13).

Reader: Let us listen to the Word of God from the Book of Ecclesiasticus
38: 2, 4, 6-9, 14

The Lord has brought medicines into existence from the earth

Healing itself comes from the Most High, like a gift from a king.
The Lord has brought medicines into existence from the earth,
and the sensible man will not despise them.
He has also given men learning, so that they may glory in his mighty works.
He uses them to heal and to relieve pain,
the chemist makes up a mixture from them.
Thus there is no end to his activities,
and through him health extends across the world.
My son, when you are aill, do not be depressed,
But pray to the Lord and he will heal you.
The doctors in turn will beseech the Lord
to grant them the grace to relieve and to heal,
that life may be saved.

Or alternatively:

Reader: Let us listen to the Word of God from the Book of Ecclesiasticus
39: 16. 21. 26-27. 31. 33

All the works of the Lord are good

How wonderful they are, all the works of the Lord!
All that he orders is promptly carried out.
You must not say, 'What is thy? Why is that?'
All things have been created for their proper function.
The prime needs of mankind for living
are water and fire, iron and salt, wheat-flour, milk and honey,
the juice of the grape, oil and clothing.
All these things are good for people who are good,
just as they turn into bad for sinners.
All these exult in obeying his orders,
they are ready on earth when he requires,
And when the time comes they will not disobey his order.
All the works of the Lord are good,
and he will supply every want in due time.

MEDITATION ON THE WORD OF GOD

13. After the reading there is a silent time for meditation, or the presider may offer reflections on the Word of God, connecting with the figure of Saint Peregrine.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

14. After the meditation, the follow psalm verses are sung or recited responsorially:

Psalm 119 [118]: 107. 109. 105

R. Your word is a lamp for my feet.

I am deeply afflicted, O LORD;
by your word, give me life. *R.*

My life is in my hands at all times;
I do not forget your law. *R.*

Your word is a lamp for my feet,
and a light for my path. *R.*

If it seems appropriate, the recitation of the psalm may be replaced with the sung *Litany of Saint Peregrine Laziosi* or the *Litany of the Holy Name of Jesus* as given in the Appendix (pp. ???-???)

PRAYER OF BLESSING

15. The one presiding calls everyone to prayer:

P. Let us pray.

All gather in silent prayer. Then the one who presides, with hands uplifted if a priest or deacon, otherwise with hands joined, says the following prayer of blessing:

O God most High,
You have created all the healing elements of nature,
for wise people to use and never despise.
In your goodness, and with gifts of creation,
you always come forth to meet
those who are suffering and in sickness,
burdened or oppressed.

Your Son while on earth
spoke the words of life,
and used the gifts of nature
to restore sight to the man who was blind.

By the intercession of Saint Peregrine,
who bore the burden of his sickness with great courage,
come and bless this oil.

Grant to those who use it

good strength for the body
and serenity for the spirit,
on their journey of life and faith.
(This we ask) Through Christ, our Lord.

All Amen.

DISTRIBUTION OF THE OIL

16. The bottles containing the blessed oil are distributed to those who request it.

REVERENCE IN HONOUR OF SAINT PEREGRINE

17. After the distribution of the oil, a lamp – preferably an oil lamp – is placed before the image of Saint Peregrine as a sign of our faith in Jesus Christ. It represents our hope which shone in the Saint's dark night of pain. Accompanying this action, the one who presides speaks the following or similar words:

P. In the dark of night, sorely tried by affliction,
Peregrine takes himself to the Crucifix of Our Lord
where he receives divine strength and healing.

We entrust ourselves to the Lord,
by whose wounds we have been saved and healed,
and we light this lamp
as a sign of our faith and our hope
and our confident trust
in the intercession of Saint Peregrine.

18. One of those present approaches the image of Saint Peregrine and lights the lamp there.

CONCLUSION

19. If the one presiding is a lay-person, he or she calls down the blessing of God on everyone, making the sign of the cross with them and saying:

P. May the Lord who is rich in mercy
grant us comfort in the hour of trial
and guide us always on the path of his ways.

All. Amen.

20. If the one who presides is a priest or deacon, he holds his hands over the faithful and says:

P. May the Lord who is rich in mercy
grant us comfort in the hour of trial
and guide us always on the path of his ways.

All. Amen.

Then the blessing is given as follows:

P. And through the intercession of Saint Peregrine,
may the blessing of Almighty God
come down upon you all,
and remain with you always:
the Father + the Son,
and the Holy Spirit.
All. Amen.

21. In accordance with the tradition of the Servite Order, if circumstances permit, the presider invites everyone to pay reverence to the Blessed Virgin Mary by singing *Sub tuum præsidium* (We fly to thy protection) or one of the Invocations of Mary's Servants or another Marian anthem (see pp. ???-??).

CONSIGNING AND USING THE “OIL OF SAINT PEREGRINE”

Consigning

22. When people have received the small bottles of the “Oil of Saint Peregrine”, to take to their sick family or friends, they should remind those who receive it of where the oil came from, the devotion to Saint Peregrine and the blessing that was given.

Saint Peregrine was a young man of fiery passions who took part in the strident political episodes of his local city. By the grace of God he was converted to an austere and devout life, eventually joining the Order of the Friar Servants of Holy Mary. In old age he was stricken with a gangrenous ulcer on his leg which necessitated amputation. The night before the surgery, he struggled to the image of the Crucifix seeking help for his sufferings. In a kind of trance, he experience a vision of Jesus, who stretched his arm from the cross to touch and heal the ailing limb. After his death, the holy Friar Peregrine was invoked by man who were suffering or sick, seeking the gift of God’s help, of patience in affliction and in numerous cases the gift of miraculous healing.

The olive oil has been used since time immemorial to strengthen bodies and cure wounds. Now this oil has been blessed in the name of Saint Peregrine to be applied to ailing bodies in a spirit of faith in Our Lord and invocation of Saint Peregrine. It is intended to give strength to body and spirit, and a growth in the virtues of faith and patience.

Prayer to Christ Jesus Crucified

O blessed Redeemer of the Human Race,
you bowed down under the weight of the Cross;
and you were lifted up in bitter death on that Cross
to cancel the debt of our sins.

While you walked among us on the earth,
you gave healing to many
who were troubled with so many ailments:
you cleansed the leper;
you gave luminous sight to the one born blind, who called,
“Jesus, Son of David, have pity on me!”.

Look now, my Lord and God,
on me your servant in my suffering,
and free me from the evil that afflicts me.

You know all my needs, O Lord,
and you see my distress.
Hear me now, as I call on you with faith.
Show my your mercy, I pray,
both now and for ever.

Amen.

This prayer may be printed on a holy picture of Saint Peregrine and given with the “Oil of Saint Peregrine” to those who request it.

IV

**OUTLINES FOR TRIDUUM
OR NOVENA OF PRAYER
TO SAINT PEREGRINE LAZIOSI**

*I have come that they may have life
and have it to the full
Jn 10: 10*

Piero DANI

Peregrine prays to the Blessed Virgin

Ink and watercolour, 2009

“Peregrine devoutly prays before the image of the Virgin Mary,
begging her to deign to show him the way for his salvation” (*VPF* 1. 2).

INTRODUCTION

1. This section offers ten outline schemes for triduum or novena of Saint Peregrine Laziosi, specially arranged for small gatherings. With suitable adjustment, they can be used for personal prayer as well.

2. The schemes connect with episodes and important aspects in the life of Saint Peregrine:

- I. *Peregrine, young man of Forlì, Ghibelline of fury;*
- II. *Peregrine, converted from rebellion;*
- III. *Peregrine, journeying towards the Kingdom;*
- IV. *Peregrine, friar Servant of Holy Mary;*
- V. *Peregrine, friar of austerity and penitence;*
- VI. *Peregrine, friar of charity;*
- VII. *Peregrine, a new Job;*
- VIII. *Peregrine, disciple of Christ crucified;*
- IX. *Peregrine, miraculously healed;*
- X. *Peregrine, brother of intercession.*

3. In those places that celebrated a triduum or novena in honour of Saint Peregrine, three or nine of the schemes can be chosen for those days.

Where a perpetual novena is held, care should be taken not to diminish Sunday liturgy in any way. This is why, in some place, the prayer-gathering for Saint Peregrine is held on a weekday for nine consecutive weeks.

4. The place of prayer should be suitably arranged to enhance the participation of those who attend, using a crucifix, or a picture of the saint, a relic or the “Oil of Saint Peregrine” in a prominent place.

PEREGRINE, YOUNG MAN OF FORLÌ, Ghibelline of Fury

Christ Jesus came to announce peace
to you who were far off and to those who were close.

Eph 2: 17

Saint Peregrine was born in Forlì, a small town in the Romagna region of Italy, around the year 1265. He belonged to the Laziosi family (cf. *VPF* 1, 9). It was in a period of great strife in that town, between upholders of the papacy (guelphs) and those who supported the emperor (ghibellines). There were endless feuds going on. The Laziosi family was alligned with the ghibelline cause. In 1282 Forlì was the central base for ghibellines in the Romagna region. The Forlì people's refused submission to the authority of Pope Martin IV, so he placed the city under interdict (26 March 1282 until 1 September 1283). This meant the closure of all churches and the suspension of celebration of sacraments. In the History of Blessed Philip Benizi, published in 1604 by the famous Servite diarist fra Arcangelo Giani (†1623), Peregrine is seen as part of a riotous gang. At one point during the interdict the gang assaulted Saint Philip Benizi (†1285) and threw him out of town. He had come to urge the citizens of Forlì to make peace and be reconciled with the Pope.

INTRODUCTION

1. The rite of blessing always begins, in the tradition of the Servants of Mary, with the *Ave Maria*, the angelic salutation of the Virgin Mary:

Leader Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with thee.

All Blessed art thou among women
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus

All make the sign of the cross as the leader says:

Leader In the name of the Father +
and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All Amen.

INSTRUCTION

2. The leader announces the theme of the prayer gathering with the following or similar words:

Leader We know that impatience, anger and bitterness
lurking in people's inner selves
have a negative influence on their health
and do not lead to pacific relations with other people.

Saint Peregrine Laziosi, young man of Forlì,
the only son of his aristocratic parents,

was a wrathful ghibelline.
He allowed himself to be part
of a fiery gang committed to violence,
something he deeply regretted in later life.

As we gather here together in this time of prayer,
we unite in special union with sick people
and with young people who may feel lost or unstable.
We pray to God
and ask, through the intercession of Saint Peregrine,
that God will make us patient, tolerant and welcoming.
We will ask to be opened up to working for justice,
reconciliation and understanding among people everywhere.

SCRIPTURE READING

3. A reader announces one of the following texts, or another appropriate passage (e.g. *Prov* 16: 1-6; 17: 32; *Mt* 5: 38-48; *2 Cor* 13: 11):

Reader From the Book of the Prophet Isaiah 57: 18-19

I have seen the way he went, but I will heal him, and console him

‘I have seen the way he went.
But I will heal him and console him,
I will comfort him to the full,
both him and his afflicted fellows,
bring praise to their lips.
Peace, peace to far and near,
I will indeed heal him’ says the Lord.

Or alternatively:

Reader From the Second Letter of Saint Paul to Timothy 2: 22-25

*Instead of giving in to your impulses like a young man,
fasten your attention on holiness, faith, love and peace*

Instead of giving in to your impulses like a young man,
fasten your attention on holiness, faith, love and peace,
in union with all those who call on the Lord with pure minds.

Avoid these futile and silly speculations,
understanding that they only give rise to quarrels;
and a servant of the Lord is not to engage in quarrels,
but has to be kind to everyone, a good teacher, and patient.
He has to be gentle when he corrects people who dispute what he says,
never forgetting that God may give them a change of mind

so that they recognise the truth.

SHORT RESPONSORY

4. After the reading, there is the following responsory (cf. *Mt* 5: 9; *Is* 2: 4):

Leader Blessed are those who work for peace *
For they shall be called the first-born of God.

All Blessed are those who work for peace *
for they shall be called the first-born of God.

Leader They shall beat their swords into sickles,
their spears to pruning hooks

All for they shall be called the first-born of God.

Leader Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit.

All Blessed are those who work for peace *
for they shall be called the first-born of God.

MEDITATION ON THE WORD OF GOD

5. Now there is a silent time for meditation, or the leader may offer reflections on the Word of God. Connections can be made with the faith-journey of the young Peregrine Laziosi, who turned from violence with the light of grace and found the true meaning of his life. These reflections can be done in the form of dialogue, if this is appropriate.

INTERCESSION

6. After the meditation on the Word of God those present make their intercession to the Heavenly Father with the following prayer. If circumstances permit, the prayer could be preceded by singing the Litanies of Saint Peregrine Laziosi or the Litanies of the Holy Name of Jesus, as given in the Appendix (pp. ???-??).

All O God, the Father of mercy:
you sent your Son into the world
to reconcile all things in himself.
Pour a new spirit upon us, we pray,
so that all violence may vanish away
for harmony and peace to reign among your people.
Through the intercession of Saint Peregrine,
once violent in his youth,
but converted by your grace and truly penitent,
show your merciful care
for those who harbour hatred and bitterness in their hearts.
Lead them to repentance;
may they lay aside all arrogant pride
and be nourished with feelings

of benevolence and peace.

Lead us all, with Saint Peregrine,
to fix our gaze on your crucified Son.
He is the one who heals body and soul.
He will come to our aid,
healing our wounds
and making us patient and open to your will,
Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns for ever and ever.
Amen.

Alternative prayer addressed to Saint Peregrine:

All O Peregrine, brother and friend,
humble servant of the Queen of Mercy,
blessed saint in the God's holy Church,
we beg you to join your voice
to our prayers of supplication.

You followed the peaceful and gentle Christ;
you overcame your natural anger
with penitence and prayer
and the Gospel spirit of gentleness.

Pray to the Lord, we beg you,
to keep far from us
all the venom of vengeance
and the furies of anger,
and all devastating blind rage.

Intercede for us, O holy Saint Peregrine,
that we may imitate the meekness of Christ,
and be kind in our thoughts,
peace-makers in our words.
May our vision of others be serene.
May our gestures be friendly,
drawing people towards mercy and pardon.
May our intentions be only for peace
and our memories healed of hurt,
attentive and grateful
for every goodness received.

Unite our prayer, O holy Saint Peregrine,
with your prayer to God,
for you dwell in God's "Promised Land",
the promised of Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
to whom be all honour and glory

for ever and ever.

Amen.

ACT OF DEVOTION

7. If the location and conditions around the prayer-gathering are suitable, an Act of Devotion can now be celebrated, as, for example, making the sign of the cross on each one's forehead with the "Oil of Saint Peregrine", or paying respect to a relic of the Saint or some similar gesture (cf. *Mk* 16: 18). An appropriate hymn may be sung (see Appendix nos. 29-32).

CONCLUSION

8. The leader says:

Leader May the Lord,
who is slow to anger and rich in love
increase in our hearts the gifts of
faith, hope and love.

All Amen.

Leader May the Lord pour out a new spirit upon us all.

All Amen.

Leader So may the Lord bless us,
and keep us from all evil,
and lead us to life everlasting
in the heavenly kingdom.

All Amen.

9. The prayer-gathering ends with everyone paying reverence to the Blessed Virgin Mary by singing a Marian song, e.g. *Sub tuum praesidium* (We fly to thy protection) or another Marian anthem or a Hymn of Saint Peregrine (see pp. ???-??).

II

PEREGRINE, CONVERTED FROM REBELLION

“Be converted and believe in the Gospel”

Mk 1: 15b

The Accounts Book of fra Lottarino of Florence (†1305) records that Saint Philip Benizi (†1285) was present in Forlì, visiting the local priory during “time of excommunication”, meaning the period when the city was under canonical penalty of interdict (26 March 1282 – 1 September 1283). This penalty forbade any celebration of the divine services. The later records in the Chronicon of fra Michele Poccianti (1536-1576), a reliable historian of the Order, describe how Saint Philip was urging the citizens of Forlì to return to due obedience to the Pope. The people’s response was to mock the injunctions of Saint Philip, raining blows on him and casting him out of the city. One of the perpetrators, which tradition says was Saint Peregrine Laziosi, was struck by the gentleness with which Saint Philip accepted the insults. He went and asked his forgiveness. And the grace of God led him to change his life and ask Saint Philip if he could take on the habit of the sorrow of the Virgin and join the Order of the Friar Servants of Holy Mary.

INTRODUCTION

1. The rite of blessing always begins, in the tradition of the Servants of Mary, with the *Ave Maria*, the angelic salutation of the Virgin Mary:

Leader Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with thee.

All Blessed art thou among women
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus

All make the sign of the cross as the leader says:

Leader In the name of the Father +
and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All Amen.

INSTRUCTION

2. The leader announces the theme of the prayer gathering with the following or similar words:

Leader As we journey towards the perfection of love,
we are prone to falling
because of our human weakness.
We rise up from those falls,
seeking and receiving forgiveness.

“There will be more joy in heaven
over one sinner who repents,

than over the ninety-nine righteous ones
who have no need of conversion”, says the Lord.

And it is certain that the heavens were in great joy
for the conversion of Saint Peregrine Laziosi.
Here was a fiery and angry young man in the ghibelline camp,
who turned into the mild and humble servant of the Lord,
turning his passion to the Word of God.

As we gather here together in this time of prayer,
we are in special union with people who are suffering
and also with people who are far distant from the ways of the Lord,
let us call on God together.
We will ask, through the intercession of Saint Peregrine,
that everyone’s vision may be illuminated by God,
for all to clearly see
the unveiled face of Jesus the Son,
in a renewed commitment of conversion.

SCRIPTURE READING

3. A reader announces one of the following texts, or another appropriate passage (e.g. *Mt 5: 21-24*):

Reader A Reading from the Prophet Ezekiel 18: 30-32

Repent and live!

House of Israel, in future I mean to judge each of you
by what he does – it is the Lord who speaks.
Repent, renounce all your sins,
avoid all occasions of sin!
Shake off all the sins you have committed against me,
and make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit!
Why are you so anxious to die, House of Israel?
I take no pleasure in the death of anyone –
it is the Lord who speaks.
Repent and live!

Or alternatively:

Reader A Reading from the Second Letter of the Apostle Paul to the Corinthians 5: 17-20

Be reconciled to God

For everyone who is in Christ,
there is a new creation;
the old creation has gone,
and now the new one is here.

It is all God's work.
It was God who reconciled us to himself through Christ
and have us the work of handing on this reconciliation.
In other words, God in Christ was reconciling the world to himself,
not holding men's faults against them,
and he has entrusted to us the news that they are reconciled.
So we are ambassadors for Christ;
it is as though God were appealing through us,
and the appeal that we make in Christ name is:
Be reconciled to God.

SHORT RESPONSORY

4. After the reading, there is the following resposory (cf. *Ez* 36: 26-27):

Leader Renew our hearts, we pray * and we shall be your people.

All Renew our hearts, we pray * and we shall be your people.

Leader Put a new spirit within us, O Lord

All and we shall be your people.

Leader Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit.

All Renew our hearts, we pray * and we shall be your people.

MEDITATION ON THE WORD OF GOD

5. Now there is a silent time for meditation, or the leader may offer reflections on the Word of God. Connections can be made with the faith-journey of the young Peregrine Laziosi, who turned from violence with the light of grace and found the true meaning of his life. These reflections can be done in the form of dialogue, if this is appropriate.

INTERCESSION

6. After the meditation on the Word of God those present make their intercession to the Heavenly Father with the following prayer. If circumstances permit, the prayer could be preceded by singing the Litanies of Saint Peregrine Laziosi or the Litanies of the Holy Name of Jesus, as given in the Appendix (pp. ???-???).

All O God of mercy,
in your endless love,
you sent your Son to proclaim the Good News
and to call us all to conversion.
By the gift of your grace,
you turned your servant Peregrine
from rebellion and violence to meekness of spirit,
from pride to humility
and from furious anger to being a maker of peace.

Cast your merciful gaze
on those who walk in crooked ways
that lead them far from you;
by intercession of Saint Peregrine
turn them and lead them back to you.
Give them a heart that is new,
with passion for your word in the Gospel,
and ears that attend to the voice of your Spirit.
For ourselves, too, grant a new determination
to be faithful to you Law,
ready to uphold your Truth without any vanity,
ready to strive for justice with courage in our hearts.
So may we be ready always to serve
and protect the rights of our brothers and sisters.
(This we ask) through Christ, our Lord.
Amen.

Alternative prayer addressed to Saint Peregrine:

All O Peregrine, brother and friend,
faithful servant of the glorious Virgin Mary,
blessed saint in the God's holy Church,
we beg you to join your voice
to our prayers of supplication.
From being a youth of rebellion,
you received the grace of conversion:
from being violent you became meek in your spirit,
from pride you were turned to humility,
changing your stance to the Man of God,
and bowing to seek his forgiveness.

Call on the Lord for us all, we implore,
to give us conversion that is heartfelt and deep.
So may we live in genuine peace,
with our hearts of stone turned to hearts of flesh.
May we be reconciled to God
and our brothers and sisters,
and the whole of creation too,
with our actions now founded on the way of the Gospel
ever directed to the Kingdom of God.

Obtain for us, Saint Peregrine our friend,
the courage to know how to ask for forgiveness
and to give it to others with a generous heart.
May we be ready to uphold God's Truth without violence,
ready to protect the rights of our brothers and sisters,

Pray for us to strive for justice
with courage in our hearts.

Unite your voice, Saint Peregrine our patron,
to our own humble prayer.
For you were made new by the Lord,
and now live in the house of
The Father, The Son and the Spirit,
where the angels rejoice for even one sinner
converted and brought back to the Lord,
rejoicing in heaven for ever and ever.

Amen.

ACT OF DEVOTION

7. If the location and conditions around the prayer-gathering are suitable, an Act of Devotion can now be celebrated, as, for example, making the sign of the cross on each one's forehead with the "Oil of Saint Peregrine", or paying respect to a relic of the Saint or some similar gesture (cf. *Mk* 16: 18). An appropriate hymn may be sung (see Appendix nos. 29-32).

CONCLUSION

8. The leader says:

Leader May the Lord draw us all to himself,
with his great and merciful love,
and guide our feet to walk in his ways.

All Amen.

Leader May the Spirit of God inflame our hearts
and renew them in love for the Word that is Life.

All Amen.

Leader So may the Lord bless us,
and keep us from all evil,
and lead us to life everlasting
in the heavenly kingdom.

All Amen.

9. The prayer-gathering ends with everyone paying reverence to the Blessed Virgin Mary by singing a Marian song, e.g. *Sub tuum praesidium* (We fly to thy protection) or another Marian anthem or a Hymn of Saint Peregrine (see pp. ???-???)

III

PEREGRINE, JOURNEYING TOWARDS THE KINGDOM

*Blessed the people whose strength is in you,
whose heart is set on pilgrim ways.
Ps 84 (83): 6*

The Life of Blessed Peregrine of Forlì written by the Sienese humanist Nicolò Borghese (†1500), rather than speaking of an encounter between Peregrine and Saint Philip Benizi (†1285) or the saint's conversion, simply states that Peregrine quickly determined to follow the ways of virtue (*VPF* 1). Strengthened in this holy and firm resolve, he went one day to the church of Saint Mary of the Cross and begged the blessed Virgin to show him the way for his salvation. Our Lady replied: It is my wish, too, my son, to direct your steps on the way of salvation. [...] Do not be afraid, my son: I am truly the mother of Him whom you adore crucified; He has sent me to indicate the way of the beatitudes to you (*VPF* 2). She spoke to him of those religious called "the Servants of the Holy Virgin Mary" and added, You are called Peregrine; well then, you shall be pilgrim in both name and reality. Indeed, you are now required to journey towards Siena; once there, you will find those holy men intent on prayer. Beg them insistently to enroll you in their family (*VPF* 2). He set out with an angel for company (*VPF* 3; cf. *Tob* 5:1) – meaning accompanied by God to Siena and entered the Order of the Servants of Mary, where he followed the ways of the Lord with all his strength (*VPF* 8).

INTRODUCTION

1. The rite of blessing always begins, in the tradition of the Servants of Mary, with the *Ave Maria*, the angelic salutation of the Virgin Mary:

Leader Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with thee.

All Blessed art thou among women
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus

All make the sign of the cross as the leader says:

Leader In the name of the Father +
and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All Amen.

INSTRUCTION

2. The leader announces the theme of the prayer gathering with the following or similar words:

Leader "Those who sow in tears with rejoice when they reap"¹⁰
We run into difficulties and sufferings
on our journey of faith,

¹⁰ *Ps* 126 [125]: 5.

which disturb and shake us.
But dawn will follow the darkness of night.

Saint Peregrine, too, on a number of occasions,
knew a sense of confusion and loss,
followed eventually by serenity and joy
as God's grace guided his steps.

He was nervous and hesitant,
looking for the way forward,
when the Virgin Mary inspired him to go to Siena,
to her Servants.
"You are called Peregrine (the Pilgrim)," she said,
"so indeed you shall be pilgrim in name and in reality".

In adult life much later,
when his leg was afflicted with cancer,
he knew a day would come when
he could walk no longer;
amputation was prescribed.
But he was healed
by the miraculous intervention of Christ the Saviour
and enabled to continue his journey of faith.

Now, dear friends, as we gather here together
in this time of prayer,
we are in special union with all who are going through
times of confusion or distress,
wondering what life holds for the future.
We call on God,
who is the meaning of our existence,
to shine divine light on our steps,
through intercession of the Virgin Mary and Saint Peregrine.
May God show us all the way of salvation
marked out for us.

SCRIPTURE READING

3. A reader announces one of the following texts, or another appropriate passage (e.g. *Lk* 2: 41-45; *Jn* 1: 35-42):

Reader A Reading from the Prophet Isaiah 55: 6-9

Seek the Lord while he is still to be found

Seek the Lord while he is still to be found,
call to him while he is still near.
Let the wicked man abandon his way,
the evil man his thoughts.
Let him turn back to the Lord who will take pity on him,

to our God who is rich in forgiving;
for my thoughts are not your thoughts,
my ways not your ways – it is the Lord who speaks.
Yes, the heavens are as high above the earth
as my ways are above your ways,
my thoughts above your thoughts.

Or alternatively:

Reader A Reading from the Second Letter of Saint Paul to Timothy 3: 10-11a; 14-17

You know, though, what I have taught,
how I have lived, what I have aimed at;
you know my faith, my patience and my love;
my constancy and the persecutions
and hardships that came to me.

You must keep to what you have been taught
and know to be true;
remember who your teachers were,
and how, ever since you were a child,
you have know the holy scriptures -
from these you can learn the wisdom that leads to salvation
through faith in Christ Jesus.
All scripture is inspired by God
and can be profitably used for teaching,
for refuting error, for guiding people's lives
and teaching them to be holy.
This is how the man who is dedicated to God becomes
fully equipped and ready for any good work.

SHORT RESPONSORY

4. After the reading, there is the following responsory (cf. *Ps* 25 [24]: 4-5):

Leader LORD, make me know your ways. *
Teach me your paths.

All LORD, make me know your ways *
Teach me your paths.

Leader Guide me in your truth, and teach me;
All Teach me your paths.

Leader Glory be to the Father, and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit

All LORD, make me know your ways *
Teach me your paths.

MEDITATION ON THE WORD OF GOD

5. Now there is a silent time for meditation, or the leader may offer reflections on the Word of God. Connections can be made with the faith-journey of the young Peregrine Laziosi, who was the pilgrim in name and in reality, as he sought and found the true meaning of his life. These reflections can be done in the form of dialogue, if this is appropriate.

INTERCESSION

6. After the meditation on the Word of God those present make their intercession to the Heavenly Father with the following prayer. If circumstances permit, the prayer could be preceded by singing the Litanies of Saint Peregrine Laziosi or the Litanies of the Holy Name of Jesus, as given in the Appendix (pp. ???-???).

All O God the Father of all holiness,
you are the font of wisdom,
and you nurture plans of life and peace
for every one of your creatures.
You sent your Son into the world
to show your sons and daughters
the way to life and salvation.
You formed Peregrine
to be a good and faithful servant,
ever a disciple of Christ our Saviour,
even in times of doubt and anguish.

Look with kindness, we pray,
on all who are distressed in body or spirit,
who have lost their way on their journey of life.
Through the intercession of Saint Peregrine,
send your gift of well-being to them all.

Pour into their hearts your Spirit of truth,
to enlighten their minds
and teach them all that you wish them to know.
Comfort them with strength
and show them the way forward for their lives,
that they may come at last to you
in your Kingdom of life.
(We ask this) Through Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

ACT OF DEVOTION

7. If the location and conditions around the prayer-gathering are suitable, an Act of Devotion can now be celebrated, as, for example, making the sign of the cross on each one's forehead with the "Oil of Saint Peregrine", or paying respect to a relic of the Saint or some similar gesture (cf. *Mk* 16: 18). An appropriate hymn may be sung (see Appendix nos. 29-32).

CONCLUSION

8. The leader says:

Leader May the Lord,
whose thoughts are high above our own thoughts,
show us the way that leads to salvation.

All Amen.

Leader May God's Spirit enlighten our steps
and bring us to safe havens.

All Amen.

Leader So may the Lord bless us,
and keep us from all evil,
and lead us to life everlasting
in the heavenly kingdom.

All Amen.

9. The prayer-gathering ends with everyone paying reverence to the Blessed Virgin Mary by singing a Marian song, e.g. *Sub tuum praesidium* (We fly to thy protection) or another Marian anthem or a Hymn of Saint Peregrine (see pp. ???-???)

IV

PEREGRINE, FRIAR SERVANT OF HOLY MARY

*If anyone wishes to serve me, they should follow me,
for where I am, there will be my servant too.*

Jn 12: 26

Saint Peregrine's personal journey of faith was particularly influenced by his encounter with Saint Philip Benizi (†1285) in Forlì in 1283. Later Saint Peregrine Laziosi, by inspiration from the Mother of the Lord (cf. *VPF* 2), went and knocked on the door of the Servite Priory in Siena, asking to enter and be part of the Order of Friar Servants of Holy Mary. The friars willingly received Peregrine and clothed him in the holy and black habit of the Virgin Mary (*VPF* 3). He made his promise to God and the Virgin Mary of obedience, of living without personal possessions, and of chastity (*Constitutiones Antiquæ*, c. 16). As soon as he became a friar, a splendid light shone around his head, as if to witness how faithfully he would uphold chastity, obedience and poverty in keeping with his commitment (*VPF* 3). He led a life that was humble, austere and penitential. The Life of Blessed Peregrine of Forlì presents an amazing description of his new way of life: he afflicted his body with vigils and fasts; he never lay down at night, and he spent almost all the time on his feet, reading hymns and psalms; he meditated the law of God incessantly (cf. *VPF* 4).

INTRODUCTION

1. The rite of blessing always begins, in the tradition of the Servants of Mary, with the *Ave Maria*, the angelic salutation of the Virgin Mary:

Leader Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with thee.

All Blessed art thou among women
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus

All make the sign of the cross as the leader says:

Leader In the name of the Father +
and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All Amen.

INSTRUCTION

2. The leader announces the theme of the prayer gathering with the following or similar words:

Leader Dear friends: the evangelical counsels,
which are observed in radical form in the religious life,
serve as a counter-sign to the desire
to be first in everything, to live in indulgent joy
and to take possession of many things.
These values overwhelm the human heart
yet leaving it ever unsatisfied.

With passion for the Gospel instead,
and inspired by Our Lady, the Virgin Mary,
Saint Peregrine freed himself for all useless attachments,
turning his heart instead to what is essential in life.
He made the radical choice in his following Christ
in obedience to the Father,
in chastity for the Kingdom of Heaven,
and in sharing all things in religious poverty.
This was his commitment in entering the Order
of the Friar Servants of Mary.

As we here together in this time of prayer,
we are in special union with those
who are sick in body or in spirit.
And we turn to God, with the intercession
of the Virgin Mary and Saint Peregrine,
and ask for guidance for times of joy and times of sorrow,
that we may discover in the holy Gospel
the true meaning of our lives.

SCRIPTURE READING

3. A reader announces one of the following texts, or another appropriate passage (e.g. *Mt* 9: 9-13; *Lk* 9: 23-24):

Reader From the Letter of Saint Paul to the Philippians 3: 1, 6-9

I have accepted the loss of everything, if only I can have Christ

Dear brothers and sisters:

it is no trouble to me to repeat what I have already written to you,
and as far as you are concerned,
it will make for safety.

Because of Christ, I have come to consider
all these advantages that I had as disadvantages.
Not only that, but I believe nothing can happen
that will outweigh the supreme advantage
of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.

For him I have accepted the loss of everything,
and I look on everything as so much rubbish
if only I can have Christ, and be given a place in him.
I am no longer trying for perfection by my own efforts,
the perfection that comes from the Law,
but I want only the perfection
that comes through faith in Christ,
and is from God and based on faith.

Or alternatively:

Reader From the Second Letter of Saint Peter 1: 5, 8, 10

You have been called and chosen; work all the harder to justify it

You must do your utmost, adding goodness to the faith that you have, and understanding to your goodness. If you have a generous supply of these, they will not leave you ineffectual or unproductive: they will bring you to a real knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Brothers, you have been called and chosen: work all the harder to justify it.

SHORT RESPONSORY

4. After the reading, there is the following resposory (cf. *Jn* 6: 68; *Lk* 18: 28):

Leader Lord, to whom would we go? *
You alone have the words of eternal life.

All Lord, to whom would we go? *
You alone have the words of eternal life.

Leader We have left everything and followed you

All You alone have the words of eternal life.

Leader Glory be to the Father, and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit

All Lord, to whom would we go? *
You alone have the words of eternal life.

MEDITATION ON THE WORD OF GOD

5. Now there is a silent time for meditation, or the leader may offer reflections on the Word of God. Connections can be made with the faith-journey of the young Peregrine Laziosi, who turned from violence with the light of grace and found the true meaning of his life. These reflections can be done in the form of dialogue, if this is appropriate.

INTERCESSION

6. After the meditation on the Word of God those present make their intercession to the Heavenly Father with the following prayer. If circumstances permit, the prayer could be preceded by singing the Litanies of Saint Peregrine Laziosi or the Litanies of the Holy Name of Jesus, as given in the Appendix (pp. ???-???).

All O God the Father of mercy:
in your provident kindness
the Virgin Mary inspired Saint Peregrine
to set himself free of his passions
and to follow the way of your Son
in the Order of her Servants.

Look kindly on those who wander aimless in their lives
yet anxiously seek the way they should follow.

Through the intercession of Saint Peregrine,
your gentle and humble servant,
guide these wanderers and support them.
Urge them to be attentive to your voice,
ready to follow your will decisively and generously.
Put within them the desire to know and love
whatever is truly pleasing to you.

Inspire in them good zeal for sharing with others.
So may they learn from the Virgin Mary of the Visitation
to live in fraternal communion,
with their eyes fixed on you, their Supreme Good,
with enthusiastic service for their neighbour
and special care for the needs of the least of your children.
(This we ask) Through Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

Alternative prayer addressed to Saint Peregrine:

All Saint Peregrine, our brother and our friend,
true son of the Seven Holy Founders:
we ask you to join your voice to our humble prayer.
With a zealous heart you welcomed
the call of the Virgin Mary to be her servant:
pray to God for us to have the grace
to live our vocation with joy and gratitude.

Our vocation is to follow Christ,
joyful in religious poverty,
generous in our obedience,
and consecrated in commitment to love.

Our vocation is to serve Holy Mary, Our Lady,
with pure and reverent praise,
fulfilling the Will of the Father as she did,
standing with her at the cross of Christ
and of everyone of his brothers and sisters
crucified in affliction, oppression and neglect.

Our vocation is to nurture a spirit of silence,
where the Word of God may mature and bear fruit;
we are called to love our community life,
the place where God gives us

fraternity, celebration and pardon.

Saint Peregrine our brother,
obtain for us many new young brothers and sisters,
to be companions along the road of life,
pilgrims like you towards the Mystery of God,
servants of Mary, Our Lady and Queen.

Join your voice to our humble prayer,
Saint Peregrine our brother,
you who were the man of prayer and penitence,
living in the service of the Virgin Mary,
and sharing now in the glory
of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
for ever and ever.

Amen.

ACT OF DEVOTION

7. If the location and conditions around the prayer-gathering are suitable, an Act of Devotion can now be celebrated, as, for example, making the sign of the cross on each one's forehead with the "Oil of Saint Peregrine", or paying respect to a relic of the Saint or some similar gesture (cf. *Mk* 16: 18). An appropriate hymn may be sung (see Appendix nos. 29-32).

CONCLUSION

8. The leader says:

Leader May the Lord Jesus Christ,
who called us to follow him more closely
in the new way of his holy Gospel,
sustain us on our journey and pilgrimage.

All Amen.

Leader May he pour out upon us
the Spirit and Comforter
who will teach us everything that is his.

All Amen.

Leader So may the Lord bless us,
and keep us from all evil,
and lead us to life everlasting
in the heavenly kingdom.

All Amen.

9. The prayer-gathering ends with everyone paying reverence to the Blessed Virgin Mary by singing a Marian song, e.g. *Sub tuum præsidium* (We fly to thy protection) or another Marian anthem or a Hymn of Saint Peregrine (see pp. ???-??).

PEREGRINE, FRIAR OF AUSTERITY AND PENITENCE

*Those who are in Christ have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.
Since the Spirit is our life, let us be directed by the Spirit.
Gal 5: 24-25*

Nicolò Borghese, noted Siense humanist of the 15th century, wrote a number of Lives of saints and blessed of the Order of the Servants of Holy Mary. In his *Life of blessed Peregrine of Forli (VPF)* he tells how the young citizen of Forli despised worldly vanities, having quickly decided to follow the way of virtue. By keeping faithfully to the right path in life, he would consider death itself as a reward (cf. *Phil* 1: 21); he frequently spoke quite openly how this mortal life was just shadow and mire (*VPF* 1). After he entered the Order of Servants, Borghese tells us, Peregrine showed himself a faithful follow of Christ. Like Jesus at thirty years of age (cf. *Lk* 3:23; *Gen* 41: 46), who on reaching full human maturity left the hidden life of Nazareth, so too Peregrine, at thirty years of age, having reached a sufficient level of spiritual growth to be an example of holy life for everyone (*VPF* 4), left the withdrawn life of Siena to return to Forli, his own native city (*VPF* 4), and the Servite priory there. He put the law of the Lord into practice with fidelity (*VPF* 4). Again like Jesus, who at the start of his public life fasted in the desert and resisted the temptations of the devil (cf. *Lk* 4: 1-13), Peregrine began the life of a friar with asceticism, overcoming the passions with the most severe practices of penitence: he afflicted his body in an extraordinary way with vigils, fasts and punishment of the flesh; even further, which seems barely credible, for thirty years he was never perceived to sit down; he always ate his food standing; he prayed on his knees; when on occasions he was overcome by tiredness or sleep, he would for a short time rest against a rock or lean on a bench when he was in the choir. At night he would not lie down, but spent almost all the night reading hymns and psalms. He meditated unceasingly on the law of God (*VPF* 4).

INTRODUCTION

1. The rite of blessing always begins, in the tradition of the Servants of Mary, with the *Ave Maria*, the angelic salutation of the Virgin Mary:

Leader Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with thee.

All Blessed art thou among women
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus

All make the sign of the cross as the leader says:

Leader In the name of the Father +
and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All Amen.

INSTRUCTION

2. The leader announces the theme of the prayer gathering with the following or similar words:

Leader The teaching of Our Lord tells us

that penitence is a necessary means
for spiritual growth and conversion.
It takes us from “the former human condition”
to becoming “a new creation” in Christ,
completely healed of anything wrong.

Saint Peregrine Laziosi the penitent
is described to us in the ancient literature
as a model of evangelical behaviour,
shown in his austerity, his asceticism, his vigilance,
and his ardent desire to imitate Christ
with clear awareness of his own weakness.

As we gather here together in this time of prayer,
we are in special union with the sick
and with those who are walking the way of conversion.
We turn to God, through Saint Peregrine’s intercession,
and ask for the courage to choose helpful ways
of correcting our bad habits,
for us to be freed from anything that separates us
from our choice of Jesus Christ.

SCRIPTURE READING

3. A reader announces one of the following texts, or another appropriate passage (e.g. *Is* 58: 9b-10; *Mt* 3: 2-8; *Mt* 6: 1-6, 16-18):

Reader From the Prophet Joel 2: 12-13

*Come back to me with all your heart,
fasting, weeping, mourning.*

But now, now – it is the Lord who speaks –
come back to me with all your heart,
fasting, weeping, mourning.
Let your hearts be broken, not your garments torn,
turn to the Lord your God again,
for he is all tenderness and compassion,
slow to anger, rich in graciousness,
and ready to relent.

Or alternatively:

Reader From the Letter of Saint Paul to the Ephesians 4: 17-18, 20-24

Put on the new self

In particular, I want to urge you in the name of the Lord,

not to go on living the aimless kind of life that pagans live.
Intellectually they are in the dark,
and they are estranged from the life of God without knowledge
because they have shut their hearts to it.

Now that is hardly the way you have learned from Christ,
unless you failed to hear him properly
when you were taught what the truth is in Jesus.
You must give us your old way of life;
you must put aside your old self,
which gets corrupted by following illusory desires.
Your mind must be renewed by a spiritual revolution
so that you can put on the new self
that has been created in God's way,
in the goodness and holiness of the truth.

SHORT RESPONSORY

4. After the reading, there is the following responsory (cf. *Mk* 1: 15; *Zech* 1: 4):

Leader Be converted and believe in the Gospel *
The Kingdom of God is very close.

All Be converted and believe in the Gospel *
The Kingdom of God is very close.

Leader Turn back from perverse ways and evil deeds.

All The Kingdom of God is very close.

Leader Glory be to the Father, and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit.

All Be converted and believe in the Gospel *
The Kingdom of God is very close.

MEDITATION ON THE WORD OF GOD

5. Now there is a silent time for meditation, or the leader may offer reflections on the Word of God. Connections can be made with the faith-journey of the young Peregrine Laziosi, who turned from violence with the light of grace and found the true meaning of his life. These reflections can be done in the form of dialogue, if this is appropriate.

INTERCESSION

6. After the meditation on the Word of God those present make their intercession to the Heavenly Father with the following prayer. If circumstances permit, the prayer could be preceded by singing the Litanies of Saint Peregrine Laziosi or the Litanies of the Holy Name of Jesus, as given in the Appendix (pp. ???-???).

All O God ever faithful and merciful:

you made us to belong to you
and our heart is restless until it rests in you.

You sent your Son to be with us
to show us the way we must go.

Look with kindness on us
and on everyone distressed in body or soul,
especially those drawn astray by disorderly passion,
as we pray with confidence for your healing touch.

Through the intercession of Saint Peregrine,
your holy friar of austerity and penitence,
grant us your healing, we pray.
Pour upon us the light of your consoling Spirit
and increase within us your gift of faith.

Grant us the courage
to choose the narrow path that leads to you,
and let us spend our lives in love,
at service of your heavenly Kingdom.
(This we ask) Through Christ, our Lord.

All Amen.

ACT OF DEVOTION

7. If the location and conditions around the prayer-gathering are suitable, an Act of Devotion can now be celebrated, as, for example, making the sign of the cross on each one's forehead with the "Oil of Saint Peregrine", or paying respect to a relic of the Saint or some similar gesture (cf. *Mk* 16: 18). An appropriate hymn may be sung (see Appendix nos. ???-???).

CONCLUSION

8. The leader says:

Leader May the Lord of all mercy
look kindly upon us
and guide our steps on our journey to him

All Amen.

Leader May the Spirit endow all our plans
with wisdom and firmness of heart.

All Amen.

Leader May the Lord bless us,

and keep us from all evil,
and lead us to life everlasting
in the heavenly kingdom.

All Amen.

9. The prayer-gathering ends with everyone paying reverence to the Blessed Virgin Mary by singing a Marian song, e.g. *Sub tuum præsidium* (We fly to thy protection) or another Marian anthem or a Hymn of Saint Peregrine (see pp. ??-??).

VI

PEREGRINE, FRIAR OF CHARITY

*You shall love the Lord our God with all your heart,
with all your soul, with all your strength
and with all your mind
and you shall love your neighbour as yourself
Lk 10: 27*

Nicolò Borghese, noted Sieneese humanist of the 15th century, wrote a number of Lives of saints and blessed of the Order of the Servants of Holy Mary. In his *Life of blessed Peregrine of Forlì (VPF)*, he stresses how the Saint of Forlì turned his life around when he entered the Order of the Servant of Holy Mary and became a faithful disciple of Christ with a commitment to total observance of the law of love: He longed to imitate with all his strength the examples given by Christ. Each day in his soul he examined his every action, weeping for any offences and failings that he may have committed. He confessed these each day to the priest, making his confession with tears. This holy man declared himself guilty of many things, being moved by a burning desire to fulfill the divine law to perfection (*VPF* 4). It is good to recall here that Saint Peregrine in his 60s was healed in the priory Chapter Room (cf. *VPF* 7), a place where the friars met together in the name of Christ and examined their lives with special reference to the commandment of love; they would then propose suitable remedies to divest themselves of the “former human condition”, setting themselves to live the Gospel together more perfectly.

INTRODUCTION

1. The rite of blessing always begins, in the tradition of the Servants of Mary, with the *Ave Maria*, the angelic salutation of the Virgin Mary:

Leader Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with thee.

All Blessed art thou among women
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus

All make the sign of the cross as the leader says:

Leader In the name of the Father +
and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All Amen.

INSTRUCTION

2. The leader announces the theme of the prayer gathering with the following or similar words:

Leader Cold heartedness, indifference to others, non-acceptance,
lack of respect for our neighbour,
as well as rudeness and aggression:
these easily poison the human heart

stealing away our serenity and peace.

After his encounter with Saint Philip,
Saint Peregrine understood quite urgently
the need to live in love
and to make radical changes in attitude and behaviour.
The lesson of Jesus clear to him, where the Lord said,
“From this will all know that you are my disciples,
that you love one another”.

As we gather here together in this time of prayer,
we are in special union with all who suffer
in body or soul.
And we accept our need to love and be loved.
With this in mind, we pray to God with confidence,
for God is the source of all love.
We ask God to heal our hearts
of everything contrary to the law of love.
May God teach us to show divine love
in word and deed,
and direct us always toward the perfection of love.

SCRIPTURE READING

3. A reader announces one of the following texts, or another appropriate passage (e.g. *Jn* 13: 34-35; *Jn* 15: 9-14):

Reader From the Letter of Saint Paul to the Colossians 3: 9b-10, 12-15

Over all these robes put on love

You have stripped off your old behaviour with your old self,
and you have put on a new self
which will progress towards true knowledge
the more it is renewed in the image of its creator.
You are God’s chosen race, his saints;
he loves you and you should be clothed
in sincere compassion, in kindness and humility,
gentleness and patience.
Bear with one another;
forgive each other as soon as a quarrel begins.
The Lord has forgiven you;
now you must do the same.
Over all these clothes,
to keep them together and complete them,
put on love.
And may the peace of Christ reign in your hearts,
because it is for this that you were called together

as parts of one body. Always be thankful.

Or alternatively:

Reader From the First Letter of Saint John 4: 7, 19-21

Anyone who loves God must also love his brother

My dear people, let us love one another
since love comes from God
and everyone who loves
is begotten by God and knows God.

We are to love, then,
because he loved us first.
Anyone who says, 'I love God',
and hates his brother, is a liar,
since a man who does not love
the brother that he can see
cannot love God, whom he has never seen.
So this is the commandment that he has given us,
that anyone who loves God must also love his brother.

SHORT RESPONSORY

4. After the reading, there is the following responsory (cf. *Gal* 5: 25, 22):

Leader Since the Spirit is our life, *
let us be directed by the Spirit.

All Since the Spirit is our life, *
let us be directed by the Spirit.

Leader The fruits of the Spirit are love and joy,
peace and gentleness

All let us be directed by the Spirit.

Leader Glory be to the Father, and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit.

All Since the Spirit is our life, *
let us be directed by the Spirit.

MEDITATION ON THE WORD OF GOD

5. Now there is a silent time for meditation, or the leader may offer reflections on the Word of God. Connections can be made with the faith-journey of the young Peregrine Laziosi, who turned from violence with the light of grace and found the true meaning of his life. These reflections can be done in the form of dialogue, if this is appropriate.

INTERCESSION

6. After the meditation on the Word of God those present make their intercession to the Heavenly Father with the following prayer. If circumstances permit, the prayer could be preceded by singing the Litanies of Saint Peregrine Laziosi or the Litanies of the Holy Name of Jesus, as given in the Appendix (pp. ???-??).

All O Lord, our God,
you are greater than our hearts
and you know all things.
You sent your Son into our midst
to gather together your scattered sons and daughters
and to reconcile everyone with you and one another.

Look kindly upon us, thirsting for love in our lives,
and on our brothers and sisters
who feel unloved or else are unable to love.
Look also on those in distress or sickness,
who beg your saving help grace with faith in their hearts.

Through the intercession of Saint Peregrine,
grant them your healing grace.
Give us all a heart that is new:
with gratitude to you, may we learn
to forget about ourselves and care instead for others.
May we do everything in keeping with your will,
loving you in our brothers and sisters with sincerity of heart.
May we grow in comprehension of others,
seeking always true union between people.
May we taste the joyful fruit of perfect love.
(This we ask) Through Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

Alternative prayer addressed to Saint Peregrine:

All O Saint Peregrine, dear brother and friend,
disciple of Christ, the Prince of peace,
holy saint in the Church of God:
please join your voice to our suppliant prayer.
In your journey of life
you knew the evil of hatred
and the dreadful results of discord:
you saw cities ravaged by hateful factions,
families torn apart by vendetta,
lives cut short by violence.

Through your intercession, Saint Peregrine,
may the Lord grant us

to harbour feelings of friendship,
and to nourish projects of reconciliation.
May he make us heralds of the Gospel of mercy,
promoters of justice and agents of peace.

Beg the Lord for us, we pray,
for peace and concord for us and for all;
peace in our hearts,
where the seed of the Word
may produce fruits of pardon and gentleness;
peace in our families,
for them to live in bonds of true love;
peace among the nations,
for the vile noise of arms
to be changed into music of hope.
With every strife of division overcome,
may nations engender respect for all life,
good love for solidarity
and commitment to progress for all.

Join your voice, Saint Peregrine,
to our suppliant prayer,
as you live in the heavenly home
of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
to whom be all praise for ever and ever.

Amen.

ACT OF DEVOTION

7. If the location and conditions around the prayer-gathering are suitable, an Act of Devotion can now be celebrated, as, for example, making the sign of the cross on each one's forehead with the "Oil of Saint Peregrine", or paying respect to a relic of the Saint or some similar gesture (cf. *Mk* 16: 18). An appropriate hymn may be sung (see Appendix nos. ???-???).

CONCLUSION

8. The leader says:

Leader May the Lord who is slow to anger and rich in love
renew in our hearts
the gifts of faith, hope and love.

All Amen.

Leader May God pour into our hearts
a new spirit of genuine love.

All Amen.

Leader So may the Lord bless us,
and keep us from all evil,
and lead us to life everlasting
in the heavenly kingdom.

All Amen.

9. The prayer-gathering ends with everyone paying reverence to the Blessed Virgin Mary by singing a Marian song, e.g. *Sub tuum præsidium* (We fly to thy protection) or another Marian anthem or a Hymn of Saint Peregrine (see pp. ???-??).

VII

PEREGRINE, A NEW JOB

*He bore our sufferings,
and took upon himself our sorrows
Is 53: 4; cf. Mt 8: 17*

In his Life of the blessed Peregrine of Forlì, the Sienese humanist Nicolò Borghese (†1500) tells how Saint Peregrine, at about 60 years of age, was stricken with a most vile disease: his leg swelled up and infected. [...] As well as its wounds and extraordinary swelling, his leg also took on that terrible disease called cancer, from which an unbearable stench came forth to those who were helping him. [...] People called him a new Job, so much did he appear wasted and sorrowful. Nevertheless, even though reduced by such great and offensive suffering, he did not complain or lament his condition; instead he bore that disease and suffering with unflinching spirit, confident in the words of the Apostle who said: “virtue is perfected in infirmity” (cf. *2 Cor* 12, 9a) (*VPF* 5). The condition was gangrenous ulcer and was considered incurable. The doctor Paul Salazio prescribed that the only solution was immediate amputation of the leg (cf. *VPF* 6).

INTRODUCTION

1. The rite of blessing always begins, in the tradition of the Servants of Mary, with the *Ave Maria*, the angelic salutation of the Virgin Mary:

Leader Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with thee.

All Blessed art thou among women
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus

All make the sign of the cross as the leader says:

Leader In the name of the Father +
and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All Amen.

INSTRUCTION

2. The leader announces the theme of the prayer gathering with the following or similar words:

Leader We always hold on to dreams of endless love,
a long life and enduring happiness.
When sickness strikes, or some other disaster,
our steps are slowed down or else come to a complete halt,
and we become aware of our fragility.

This can force us to look with different eyes
on our life and the world in which we live.
In the Bible story, there is Job,
a rich man with many possessions.
Suddenly he loses everything, goods and family.
But he persists in affirming his trust in God.

Saint Peregrine Laziosi, who is a “new Job”,
was stricken with disease in his leg
that was so bad and serious
as to require immediate amputation.
He made a new and vigorous declaration of faith
in Jesus Christ, our Saviour.

As we here together in this time of prayer
we are in special union with brothers and sisters in sickness
and people sorely tested by the sorrows of life.
We turn in prayer to God,
through the intercession of Saint Peregrine,
and ask for healing and relief for suffering,
for serenity and above all
for the strength to deepen
our faith in Him.

SCRIPTURE READING

3. A reader announces one of the following texts, or another appropriate passage.

Reader From the Book of Job 1: 20-21

Naked I came from my mother's womb, naked I shall return

[Upon losing everything, goods and family,
Job, the faithful servant of God]
rose and tore his garments and shaved his head.
The falling to the ground he worshipped and said,
‘Naked I came from my mother's womb,
naked I shall return.
The Lord gave, the Lord has taken back.
Blessed be the name of the Lord!’

Or alternatively:

Reader From the Book of Ecclesiasticus 38: 9-14

My son, when you are ill, do not be depressed, but pray to the Lord

My son, when you are ill, do not be depressed,

but pray to the Lord and he will heal you.
Renounce your faults, keep your hands unsoiled,
and cleanse your heart from all sin.
Offer incense and a memorial of fine flour,
and make as rich an offering as you can afford.

Then let the doctor take over – the Lord created him too –
and do not let him leave you, for your need him.
Sometimes success is in their hands,
since they in turn will beseech the Lord
to grant them the grace to relieve
and to heal, that life may be saved.

SHORT RESPONSORY

4. After the reading, there is the following responsory (cf. 2 Cor 12: 9b, 10):

Leader I boast of my weaknesses *
Since the strength of Christ is living in me.

All I boast of my weaknesses *
Since the strength of Christ is living in me.

Leader I rejoice in my weaknesses, in what I suffer for Christ
All Since the strength of Christ is living in me.

Leader Glory be to the Father, and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit.

All I boast of my weaknesses *
Since the strength of Christ is living in me.

MEDITATION ON THE WORD OF GOD

5. Now there is a silent time for meditation, or the leader may offer reflections on the Word of God. Connections can be made with the faith-journey of the young Peregrine Laziosi, who turned from violence with the light of grace and found the true meaning of his life. These reflections can be done in the form of dialogue, if this is appropriate.

INTERCESSION

6. After the meditation on the Word of God those present make their intercession to the Heavenly Father with the following prayer. If circumstances permit, the prayer could be preceded by singing the Litanies of Saint Peregrine Laziosi or the Litanies of the Holy Name of Jesus, as given in the Appendix (pp. ???-???)

All O God, our heavenly Father,
source of all good and hope for the sick:
you sent your Son into the world
to take upon himself our sufferings

and to give life to the full to everyone.

Look kindly, we pray,
on those who are sorely tried
in body and in spirit,
and put their trust in your saving help.
Through the intercession of Saint Peregrine,
who showed patience and strength in his infirmity,
send your healing grace to them.

For us all we beg an increase of faith,
that you will teach us the wisdom of the cross.

Help us to face the trials of life
with courageous hearts,
that we may never lose confidence in you.
Help us to carry every burden of suffering,
following the example of Saint Peregrine.
We are present by the cross of your crucified Son:
here may we receive comforting strength,
with peace and serenity from Him,
who lives and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
for ever and ever.

Amen.

ACT OF DEVOTION

7. If the location and conditions around the prayer-gathering are suitable, an Act of Devotion can now be celebrated, as, for example, making the sign of the cross on each one's forehead with the "Oil of Saint Peregrine", or paying respect to a relic of the Saint or some similar gesture (cf. *Mk* 16: 18). An appropriate hymn may be sung (see Appendix nos. ???-???).

CONCLUSION

8. The leader says:

Leader May the Lord who carried our afflictions
protect us in sickness and in health.

All Amen.

Leader May God's consoling Spirit
bring us brightness and comfort.

All Amen.

Leader May the Lord bless us,
and keep us from all evil,
and lead us to life everlasting
in the heavenly kingdom.

All Amen.

9. The prayer-gathering ends with everyone paying reverence to the Blessed Virgin Mary by singing a Marian song, e.g. *Sub tuum præsidium* (We fly to thy protection) or another Marian anthem or a Hymn of Saint Peregrine (see pp. ???-??).

VIII

PEREGRINE, DISCIPLE OF CHRIST CRUCIFIED

*I have been crucified with Christ,
I live no longer, but Christ lives in me
Gal 2: 19-20*

John's Gospel recounts how the mother of Jesus and the beloved disciple stood near the cross of Christ (cf. *Jn* 19: 25). Saint Peregrine would surely have reflected on the presence of the mother and the beloved disciple with the crucified Christ, as he remained in prayer at the church of Saint Mary of the Cross (*VPF* 2). He too would have been present with the Mother of Sorrows close to Christ. One day, as he prayed in that church to the Virgin Mary to show him the way for his salvation, he heard the Virgin speak to him: "I, too, my son, desire to guide your steps on the way of salvation. [...] I am the mother of the crucified One you adore, and I have been sent my him to show you the path of the beatitudes" (*VPF* 2). Then the Mother of Sorrows urged Peregrine to take himself to the priory of her Servants in Siena and to seek entrance to the Order. Later in life, when he was in his 60s, Peregrine was afflicted with a terrible disease to the leg, requiring amputation (cf. *VPF* 6). On the night before the surgery he went in prayer to Jesus Christ, his Saviour (*VPF* 7). He dragged himself to the Chapter Room, and prayed before the fresco attributed to Juliano of Rimini (†1346) which bears the Calvary scene. Peregrine remained in trustful prayer to the crucified Christ (cf. *VPF* 7).

INTRODUCTION

1. The rite of blessing always begins, in the tradition of the Servants of Mary, with the *Ave Maria*, the angelic salutation of the Virgin Mary:

Leader Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with thee.

All Blessed art thou among women
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus

All make the sign of the cross as the leader says:

Leader In the name of the Father +
and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All Amen.

INSTRUCTION

2. The leader announces the theme of the prayer gathering with the following or similar words:

Leader "It is when I am weak that I am strong",¹¹ wrote the apostle Paul.

¹¹ 2 *Cor* 12: 10.

If someone knows they are unable to overcoming a terrible test by their own strength – such as serious illness, a dreadful ordeal, an experience of great sorrow – then they are urged to turn to the Lord with naked faith. The Lord can transform the cross from an instrument of torture and death to a sign of great new life.

Saint Peregrine Laziosi was stricken with a gangrenous ulcer on his leg. His doctor could see no other solution but amputation. Peregrine turned with abandoned trust to the crucified Christ, convinced that He alone could help him, as the true medic of bodies and souls.

As we gather here together in this time of prayer,
we are in special union with our brothers and sisters
who are sick or in any distress.
We will ask the Lord of the humble and poor,
through the intercession of Saint Peregrine,
to uphold our faith in strength,
to teach us the wisdom of the cross,
and to support us along the narrow path
that leads to light and peace.

SCRIPTURE READING

3. A reader announces one of the following texts, or another appropriate passage:

Reader From the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans 8: 31b-39

Nothing can ever come between us and the love of God

Dear brothers and sisters,
With God on our side who can be against us?
Since God did not spare his own Son,
but gave him up to benefit us all,
we may be certain, after such a gift,
that he will not refuse anything he can give.

Could anyone accuse those that God has chosen?
When God acquits, could anyone condemn?
Could Christ Jesus?
No, he not only died for us – he rose from the dead,
and there at God's right hand he stands and pleads for us.

Nothing therefore can come between us and the love of Christ,
even if we are troubled or worried, or being persecuted,
or lacking food or clothes, or being threatened or even attacked.
As scripture promised: For your sake we are being massacred daily,
and reckoned as sheep for the slaughter.
These are the trials through which we triumph,
by the power of him who loved us.

For I am certain of this:
neither death nor life, no angel, no prince,
nothing that exists, nothing still to come,
not any power, or height or depth,
nor any created thing,
can ever come between us and the love of God
made visible in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Or alternatively:

Reader From the First Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians 1: 18, 21-25

Those of us who are on the way to salvation see
the wisdom of the cross as God's power to save.

The language of the cross may be illogical
to those who are not on the way to salvation,
but those of us who are on the way
see it as God's power to save.

If it was God's wisdom
that human wisdom should not know God,
it was because God wanted to save those
who have faith through the foolishness
of the message that we preach.
And so, while the Jews demand miracles
and the Greeks look for wisdom,
here are we preaching a crucified Christ:
to the Jews and obstacle that they cannot get over,
to the pagans madness,
but to those who have been called,
whether are Jews or Greeks,
a Christ who is the power and the wisdom of God.
For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom,
and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

SHORT RESPONSORY

4. After the reading, there is the following resposory (cf. *Gal* 6: 14):

Leader Our only boast * is the cross of Christ.

All Our only boast is the cross of Christ.

Leader Our life and our salvation

All is the cross of Christ.

Leader Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit

All Our only boast is the cross of Christ.

MEDITATION ON THE WORD OF GOD

5. Now there is a silent time for meditation, or the leader may offer reflections on the Word of God. Connections can be made with the faith-journey of the young Peregrine Laziosi, who turned from violence with the light of grace and found the true meaning of his life. These reflections can be done in the form of dialogue, if this is appropriate.

INTERCESSION

6. After the meditation on the Word of God those present make their intercession to the Heavenly Father with the following prayer. If circumstances permit, the prayer could be preceded by singing the Litanies of Saint Peregrine Laziosi or the Litanies of the Holy Name of Jesus, as given in the Appendix (pp. ???-???).

A. O God our Father of compassion,
you are the refuge of the weak.
Through your son Jesus Christ
you have shown us the wisdom of the cross.
And you appointed Saint Peregrine
to undergo suffering as a fount of grace.

Look with kindness, we pray,
on all who are sick or afflicted by the crosses of life.
For ‘they make up in their own flesh
what is lacking in the sufferings of Christ’.

Your servant Saint Peregrine
gave himself into your hands in his pain.
Through his intercession, we pray,
send healing upon those we remember.

Increase the faith of us all,
and soften our hearts to help us to say
the words of your Son,
“Father, not my will but yours be done”.
Help us to listen to the Blessed Mother,
as Mary tells the Servants to “do whatever he tells you”.

Let us be in the place of the beloved disciple,
taking as mother the Mother of Sorrows.

Let us quench our longing at the streams
that flow from the pierced side of our crucified Saviour.
Let us bear witness with joy and with peace
to every mercy sought and every mercy found,
in Him, your Son, who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

Amen.

Alternative prayer addressed to Saint Peregrine:

A. Jesus, our Saviour and our hope:
in your body you bear
the sorrow of all the world.
To you I now come
with my body that ails
and my spirit in pain.
Before you I fall,
as before me Saint Peregrine
came with the limb of his woe.

With him and like him I pray:
‘Jesus, Son of David,
who healed the leper
and gave sight to the blind man,
have pity on me’.

You know my needs, O Lord,
and you see my distress.
So with faith in your love I now pray:
“Lord, if you will, you can heal me!”

Stretch out your hand
as you did for Saint Peregrine,
for my sick and poor flesh
to have healing and strength.

O Jesus, true healer of bodies and souls,
send me the grace of healing
and let me come to share
your triumph over evil and death.

With health regained,
may I call out the praise
of your merciful love
shown in your power to save.

Then with Saint Peregrine
let me so live
in the service of you and the Church.

To you, Jesus Lord,
who died and are risen,
be glory and honour, for ever and ever.

Amen.

ACT OF DEVOTION

7. If the location and conditions around the prayer-gathering are suitable, an Act of Devotion can now be celebrated, as, for example, making the sign of the cross on each one's forehead with the "Oil of Saint Peregrine", or paying respect to a relic of the Saint or some similar gesture (cf. *Mk* 16: 18). An appropriate hymn may be sung (see Appendix nos. ???-???).

CONCLUSION

8. The leader says:

Leader May the Lord draw us to himself
with the power of his infinite love
and grant us consolation and comforting strength.

All Amen.

Leader May he bring us to new life
in the water and blood
that stream from his side on the cross.

All Amen.

Leader May the Lord bless us,
and keep us from all evil,
and lead us to life everlasting
in the heavenly kingdom.

All Amen.

9. The prayer-gathering ends with everyone paying reverence to the Blessed Virgin Mary by singing a Marian song, e.g. *Sub tuum praesidium* (We fly to thy protection) or another Marian anthem or a Hymn of Saint Peregrine (see pp. ???-???).

IX

PEREGRINE, MIRACULOUSLY HEALED

Jesus said to the paralytic: “Take up your bed and walk”.
And immediately he was healed: he took up his bed and began to walk
Jn 5: 8-9

As recorded in his Life of the Blessed Peregrine of Forlì (*VPF*) by the Siense humanist Nicolò Borghese (†1500), Saint Peregrine in his 60s was stricken with a gangrenous ulcer on his leg which required amputation. The night before the surgery, he dragged himself to the Chapter Room, where there is a fresco of the Crucifixion. He remained there in trustful prayer to the crucified Christ (cf. *VPF* 7). Overcome by pain, he dozed in a trance and as in a dream saw the crucified Jesus come down from the cross, and liberate him from every ailment of his leg. At once he woke up, and realised that his leg was healed and as strong as if it had never had anything wrong. After giving thanks to the most merciful God for such an extraordinary gift, he returned to his cell (*VPF* 7). The following morning, the doctor Paolo Salazio came to conduct the amputation. But he saw that the leg was completely cured. He turned to his assistants and exclaimed: What a great miracle! (*VPF* 8).

INTRODUCTION

1. The rite of blessing always begins, in the tradition of the Servants of Mary, with the *Ave Maria*, the angelic salutation of the Virgin Mary:

Leader Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with thee.

All Blessed art thou among women
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus

All make the sign of the cross as the leader says:

Leader In the name of the Father +
and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All Amen.

INSTRUCTION

2. The leader announces the theme of the prayer gathering with the following or similar words:

Leader “The glory of God is the man who lives”.¹²
This is what Jesus revealed to us, as he healed the sick, forgave sinners,
and went about doing good everywhere
and proclaiming the Good News of salvation.

¹² Famous phrase (...*the glory of God is the man who lives, and the life of man is the vision of God...*) from Saint Irenæus of Lyons (†c. 200AD) in *Adv. Hæreses*. IV, 20, 7 in *PG* 7/1. Col. 1038B).

That Good News is heard in every age.
And it reached Saint Peregrine, filling him with home.
When in later life he was stricken with an incurable disease
he begged healing from the crucified Christ.
The miracle was granted and he gave thanks to God.

As we gather here together in the time of prayer
we are in special union
with our brothers and sisters who are sick.
Through the intercession of Saint Peregrine,
who received miraculous healing,
we will ask God to send
longed-for healing of the body
and essential healing for the spirit,
together with the courage
to carry our crosses
with patience and trust.

SCRIPTURE READING

3. A reader announces one of the following texts, or another appropriate passage (e.g. *Mt* 9: 18-22; *Mk* 10: 46-52):

Reader From the Book of the Prophet Isaiah 53: 2b-5

Through his wounds we are healed

Without beauty, without majesty (we saw him),
no looks to attract our eyes;
a thing despised and rejected by men,
a man of sorrows and familiar with suffering,
a man to make people screen their faces;
he was despised and we took no account of him.

And yet ours were the sufferings he bore,
ours the sorrows he carried.
But we, we thought of him as someone punished,
struck by God, and brought low.
On him lies a punishment that brings us peace,
and through his wounds we are healed.

Or alternatively:

Reader From the Acts of the Apostles 3: 12, 16, 19-20a

It is the name of Jesus that has restored this man to health

When Peter saw the people he addressed them:

‘Why are you so surprised at this?
Why are you staring at us
as though we had made this man walk
by our own power or holiness?
It is the name of Jesus, which,
through our faith in it,
has brought back the strength of this man
whom you see here and who is well know to you.
It is faith in that name
that has restored this man to health, as you can all see.
Now you must repent and turn to God,
so that your sins may be wiped out,
and so that the Lord may send the time of comfort.

SHORT RESPONSORY

4. After the reading, there is the following responsory (cf. *1 Pet 2: 24; Is 53: 5b*):

Leader On the wood of the cross *
Christ bore all our sins.

All On the wood of the cross *
Christ bore all our sins.

Leader So that by his wounds we may be healed

All Christ bore all our sins.

Leader Glory be to the Father, and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit

All On the wood of the cross *
Christ bore all our sins.

MEDITATION ON THE WORD OF GOD

5. Now there is a silent time for meditation, or the leader may offer reflections on the Word of God. Connections can be made with the faith-journey of the young Peregrine Laziosi, who turned from violence with the light of grace and found the true meaning of his life. These reflections can be done in the form of dialogue, if this is appropriate.

INTERCESSION

6. After the meditation on the Word of God those present make their intercession to the Heavenly Father with the following prayer. If circumstances permit, the prayer could be preceded by singing the Litanies of Saint Peregrine Laziosi or the Litanies of the Holy Name of Jesus, as given in the Appendix (pp. ???-???).

All O God our Father,
ever merciful and kind,
you sent your Son on earth

as healer of bodies and soul
to rescue humanity
stricken by sin and by death.
For your will is that we should have life to the full.

Look kindly, we pray,
upon all who are suffering or sick,
for they place all their trust in your help.

By the prayers of Saint Peregrine,
grant them your healing,
as once you sent healing on him.

Grant that your Son, Jesus Christ saving Lord
stretch forth his hand from the cross
to bless in our day
his servants in pain,
as they turn to him, wounded and weak.

Endow them, we pray,
with serenity and peace,
that they may thank you
and honour your Name,
through your Son Jesus Christ,
who has died and is risen,
living and reigning for ever and ever.

Amen.

ACT OF DEVOTION

7. If the location and conditions around the prayer-gathering are suitable, an Act of Devotion can now be celebrated, as, for example, making the sign of the cross on each one's forehead with the "Oil of Saint Peregrine", or paying respect to a relic of the Saint or some similar gesture (cf. *Mk* 16: 18). An appropriate hymn may be sung (see Appendix nos. 29-32).

CONCLUSION

8. The leader says:

Leader May the Lord God, our Saviour
give us patience and strength
and his light of consolation in our sorrows.

All Amen.

Leader May the Lord heal our wounds

and grant us to live in serenity and peace.
All Amen.

Leader May the Lord bless us,
and keep us from all evil,
and lead us to life everlasting
in the heavenly kingdom.

All Amen.

9. The prayer-gathering ends with everyone paying reverence to the Blessed Virgin Mary by singing a Marian song, e.g. *Sub tuum præsidium* (We fly to thy protection) or another Marian anthem or a Hymn of Saint Peregrine (see pp. ???-??).

PEREGRINE, BROTHER OF INTERCESSION

*They surrounded me; anguish and sorrow I found.
I called on the name of the LORD: "Deliver my soul, O LORD!"
Ps 116 [114-115]: 3-4*

In his *Life of the Blessed Peregrine of Forlì (VPF)* the Sienese humanist Nicolò Borghese (†1500) describes how Saint Peregrine bore his sickness and suffering with confidence in the words of the Apostle, 'virtue is perfected in infirmity' (VPF 5; cf. 2 Cor. 12:9-10). In his sickness he had the comfort and supportive care of many people, both brothers and laypeople. The news of the miraculous cure of his leg was spread widely abroad causing great veneration on the part of everyone towards Peregrine, the friend of God (VPF 8). On the 1 May 1345, in his 80s, Peregrine died. The flocking of people to venerate his body was so great that that night it was not possible to close the city gates, there were so many people crowding through. Nor did the holiness of blessed Peregrine lack the heavenly confirmation in many miracles (VPF 9). The records tell of people with evil spirits being set free (cf. VPF 11), blind people restored to sight (cf. VPF 10), and people being healed after serious falls (cf. VPF 12), all as a result of invoking Saint Peregrine. Peregrine, himself cured by a miracle, thus became the suppliant for the cure of many sick people.

INTRODUCTION

1. The rite of blessing always begins, in the tradition of the Servants of Mary, with the *Ave Maria*, the angelic salutation of the Virgin Mary:

Leader Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with thee.

All Blessed art thou among women
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus

All make the sign of the cross as the leader says:

Leader In the name of the Father +
and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All Amen.

INSTRUCTION

2. The leader announces the theme of the prayer gathering with the following or similar words:

Leader "No man is an island"¹³

¹³ Famous saying of John Donne (1572-1631) in *Devotions Upon Emergent Occasions and several steps in my Sicknes, Meditation XVII 1624*: "All mankind is of one author, and is one volume; when one man dies, one chapter is not torn out of the book, but translated into a better language; and every chapter must be so translated... As therefore the bless that rings to a sermon, calls not upon the preacher only, but upon the congregation to come: so this bells calls us all: but how much more me, who am brought so near the door by this sickness... *No man is an island*, entire

All afflictions receive a blessing
when people show togetherness in joy or in sorrow.
Mutual hospitality, love that is shared,
communion in prayer and the touch of compassion.
These are all blessings.

When Saint Peregrine was sick,
the townspeople rallied round.
When he was miraculously cured,
they all flocked to the priory.
Later they came to honour his remains after he died.
He was well known and greatly loved.

This affection and spiritual closeness endures to this day,
over six centuries later.
Many are those who pray for blessings
and even miracles at his intercession.

As we gather together in this time of prayer,
we are in special union with people who are suffering
in body or soul.

We make confident prayer to the God and Lord of all life
to send comforting strength and relief
through the intercession of Saint Peregrine, our brother.

SCRIPTURE READING

3. A reader announces one of the following texts, or another appropriate passage:

Reader From The Acts of the Apostles 9: 32-35

Aeneas, Jesus Christ cures you!

Peter visited on place after another and eventually
came to the saints living down in Lydda.
There he found a man called Aeneas,
a paralytic who had been bedridden for eight years.
Peter said to him, 'Aeneas, Jesus Christ cures you:
get up and fold up your sleeping mat'.
Aeneas got up immediately;
everybody who lived in Lydda and Sharon saw him,
and they were all converted to the Lord.

of itself... any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind; and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee".

Or alternatively:

Reader From The Acts of the Apostles 9: 17-19

I have been sent to you by the Lord

Then Ananias went.
He entered the house and at once
laid his hands on Saul and said,
‘Brother Saul, I have been sent by the Lord Jesus
who appeared to you on your way here
so that you may recover your sight
and be filled with the Holy Spirit’.
Immediately it was as though
scales fell away from Saul’s eyes
and he could see again.
So he was baptised there and then,
and after taking some food he regained his strength.

SHORT RESPONSORY

4. After the reading, there is the following resposory (cf. *Ps* 116 [114-115]: 4, 7).

Leader I called on the name of the LORD: *
“Deliver my soul, O LORD!”
All I called on the name of the LORD: *
“Deliver my soul, O LORD!”

Leader Return, O my soul, to your rest.
All “Deliver my soul, O LORD!”

Leader Glory be to the Father, and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit
All I called on the name of the LORD: *
“Deliver my soul, O LORD!”

MEDITATION ON THE WORD OF GOD

5. Now there is a silent time for meditation, or the leader may offer reflections on the Word of God. Connections can be made with the faith-journey of the young Peregrine Laziosi, who turned from violence with the light of grace and found the true meaning of his life. These reflections can be done in the form of dialogue, if this is appropriate.

INTERCESSION

6. After the meditation on the Word of God those present make their intercession to the Heavenly Father with the following prayer. If circumstances permit, the prayer could be preceded by singing the Litanies of Saint Peregrine Laziosi or the Litanies of the Holy Name of Jesus, as given in the Appendix (pp. ???-???).

All O God and Father most holy,
you watch over every living creature:
you so loved the human race
that you sent your only-begotten Son
into the world,
so that all who believe in him
shall not die,
but shall have life to the full.

You called our brother Saint Peregrine
to put his faith in Jesus Christ
crucified and risen to life,
and to welcome from him
good health and the light of consolation.

Have mercy upon us, we pray,
and on all who are burdened or sick,
who now count on your great saving help.
By the prayer of Saint Peregrine
send us your healing,
as once you sent healing on him.
Be our true doctor and remedy sure.

And help us to face
all the troubles of life.
With courage from you
may our faith never fail.
(This we ask) Through Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

Alternative prayer addressed to Saint Peregrine:

All Dear patron Saint Peregrine welcome us now
as we call on you confidently to kindly intercede
for our brother/sister N. who is gravely ill.

In your own distress you went to the cross
and to Christ hanging there
and you stayed there in confident prayer:
now as you dwell in the blest light of God
we ask you to intercede
with the Risen Lord Jesus
to stretch out his hand over N.,
to give healing from the ailment that troubles him/her.

O faithful Servant of Mary the Virgin,
pray to the Lord of Glory
for N. to be freed
from all suffering and woe
by his power and life-giving love.

O sleepless friar of suppliant prayer,
call on the Master of Life, we pray,
to scatter the dark shades of sickness
and let our brother/sister N.
rejoice in the daylight of wellness restored,
to give thanks to our Saviour and Lord.

Join now your voice
to our plea, dear Saint Peregrine.
Pray for our friend who is sick,
as did Martha and Mary
for Lazarus, their brother.
So may N. our friend and brother/sister
come to know with what power
you care for the sick and the poor.
To God who is Father, Son and blest Spirit,
whose holiness shone forth in you, Saint Peregrine,
be honour and glory for ever and ever .

Amen.

ACT OF DEVOTION

7. If the location and conditions around the prayer-gathering are suitable, an Act of Devotion can now be celebrated, as, for example, making the sign of the cross on each one's forehead with the "Oil of Saint Peregrine", or paying respect to a relic of the Saint or some similar gesture (cf. *Mk* 16: 18). An appropriate hymn may be sung (see Appendix nos. 29-32).

CONCLUSION

8. The leader says:

Leader May the Lord who came
to give life to the full
give us strength in the hour of trial.

All Amen.

Leader May the Lord who gives healing
for body and soul,
breathe life upon us renewing our strength.

All Amen.

Leader May the Lord bless us,
and keep us from all evil,
and lead us to life everlasting
in the heavenly kingdom.

All Amen.

9. The prayer-gathering ends with everyone paying reverence to the Blessed Virgin Mary by singing a Marian song, e.g. *Sub tuum præsidium* (We fly to thy protection) or another Marian anthem or a Hymn of Saint Peregrine (see pp. ??-??).

Piero DANI
Pilgrim in name and reality
Ink and watercolour, 2009

“You are called Peregrine [pilgrim]; indeed, you shall be pilgrim in name and in reality. Peregrine immediately set up on his journey, and accompanied by an angel came to Siena” (*VPF* 2. 3).

APPENDIX OF MUSIC AND HYMNS

1. **Angelic Salutation**

V. Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.

R. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus

2. **Ave Maria** [ex 19]

Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum. Benedicta tu in mulieribus,
et benedictus fructus ventris tui Jesus. Sancta Maria, mater Dei,
ora pronobis peccatoribus, nunc et in hora mortis nostræ. Amen.

3. **Regina cæli** [ex 20]

Regina cæli lætare, Alleluia:

Quia quæcumque meruisti portare, alleluia:

resurrexit, sicut dixit, alleluia:

ora pro nobis Deum, alleluia.

4. **Sub Tuum Præsidium** [ex 22]

Sub tuum præsidium confugimus, sancta Dei Genetrix:

nostras deprecationes ne despicias in necessitatibus:

sed a periculis cunctis libera nos semper

Virgo gloriosa et benedicta.

5. **Salve Mater misericordiæ** [ex 25]

R. Salve Mater misericordiæ, Mater Dei et Mater veniæ,

Mater spei et Mater gratiæ, Mater plena sanctæ laetitæ,

O Maria!

v.1 Salve decus humani generis,
Salve Virgo dignior ceteris,
Quæ virgines omnes transgrederis
Et altius sedes in superis. O Maria! *R.*

v.2 Esto, Mater, nostrum solatium:
Nostrum esto, Tu, Virgo, gaudium
Et nos tandem post hoc exilium,
Lætos junge choris cælestium, O Maria! *R.*

6. **Salve Regina** [ex 26]

Salve Regina, Mater misericordiæ,

Vita, dulcedo, et spes nostra, salve.

Ad te clamamus, exules, filii Hevæ.

Ad te suspiramus, gementes et flentes

in hac lacrimarum valle.

Eja ergo, advocata nostra,

illos tuos misericordes oculos ad nos converte.

Et Jesum, benedictum fructum ventris tui,
nobis post hoc exsilium ostende.
O clemens, O pia, O dulcis Virgo Maria.

7. Hymn of Saint Peregrine (1)

Melody 11.11.11.6. Text: Paul M. Addison, O.S.M.

1. Come, let us praise the holy Lord and Father
Who, in the ways of Peregrine our brother,
Honours our Order, blesses all his people.
Praise to our Lord and God!

2. Once he would walk in worldly ways so wanton;
Now his reform is virtue and devotion.
Grace takes him forth to find the path eternal.
Praise to our Lord and God!

3. Close he keeps firm to the Cross of Christ above him,
Sharing the Virgin's sorrow ever-loving;
Heart, mind and person one with Christ becoming.
Praise to our Lord and God!

4. Rest he foregoes to fight his failing weakness;
Suff'ring he knows, in penitence and meekness.
Cord, fast and labour form the flesh for freedom.
Praise to our Lord and God!

5. Listen, good Saint, and hear our supplication.
Give God our plaintive song of invocation.
So may we stay in joyful dedication.
Praise to our Lord and God!

6. Glory to God, the Father, the Almighty,
Through Jesus Christ his only Son eternal;
Praise to the Spirit, voice of our devotion.
Praise to our Lord and God!

8. Hymn of Saint Peregrine (2)

Melody: *Come, Holy Ghost*. Text: Paul M. Addison, O.S.M.

1. The Sun of Justice rises now
And power does afford
To bear affliction, learning how
To suffer with the Lord.

2. The Lord comes forth from dark and pain,
His broken, healing hand
He lays upon the member lame,
Made whole at his command.

3. See how the Servant tends the poor
And aids them in their need.
He offers break and drink made more
By prayers: his holy deed.

4. Lord Jesus, hear the prayer we raise,
Repentant in your name,
And ask the Father, Lord of Days,
to pardon all our blame.

5. All glory to the Father be
With his co-equal Son,
The same to thee, great Paraclete,
While endless ages run.

LITANY OF SAINT PEREGRINE

Lord, have mercy
Christ, have mercy
Lord, have mercy

Lord, have mercy
Christ, have mercy
Lord, have mercy

Christ, hear us

Christ, graciously hear us

God, the Father in Haven,
Jesus, Son and Redeemer of the world,
Holy Spirit, the Paraclete,
Holy Trinity, One God

have mercy on us
have mercy on us
have mercy on us
have mercy on us

Holy Mary, Mother of God
Our Lady, Humble Servant and guide of pilgrims
Virgin and Lady of Sorrows
Mary, Queen of your Servants

pray for us
pray for us
pray for us
pray for us

Saint Joseph, Saint John the Baptist,
Saint Peter and Saint Paul
Saint Augustine, Seven Founders and
Saint Philip Benizi and Saint Juliana
Blessed Joachim and Francis of Siena,
Blessed Bonaventure and All Servite Saints

pray for us
pray for us
pray for us

Saint Peregrine, child of Forlì, Youth of fire, youth of repentance, Youth in search of the Kingdom of God	pray for us
Peregrine growing in virtue, moving to God's salvation, pilgrim towards lasting joys	pray for us
Converted to meekness, man of repentance, growing in wisdom from God	pray for us
Peregrine, gentle friar, obedient and poor, merciful, austere and chaste man of God	pray for us
Servant of God, Servant of Mary, Servant of brothers in faith	pray for us
Beloved disciple, close to the cross of the Lord, strengthened in weakness by Christ	pray for us
Peregrine, new Job, sorely tried and trustful, healed by the power of God	pray for us
Model of penitence, saintly example, new son of the Virgin by the Cross	pray for us
Brother and friend, interceding for us, helper for the incurably sick	pray for us

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world	Spare us, O Lord
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world	Hear us, O Lord
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world	Have mercy on us.

LITANY OF THE HOLY NAME OF JESUS

Lord, have mercy	Lord, have mercy
Christ, have mercy	Christ, have mercy
Lord, have mercy	Lord, have mercy
Christ, hear us	Christ, graciously hear us
God, the Father in Heaven,	have mercy on us
Jesus, Son and Redeemer of the world,	have mercy on us
Holy Spirit, the Paraclete,	have mercy on us
Holy Trinity, One God	have mercy on us
1. Jesus, the splendour of the Father	
Jesus, Sun of Justice	
Jesus, the Way, the Truth and the Life	
Jesus, Wisdom from all eternity	Jesus, have mercy on us
2. Jesus, Son of David	
Jesus, Son of the Virgin Mary	
Jesus, Son of Man	
Jesus, Son of the Living God	Jesus, have mercy on us

3. Jesus, meek and humble of heart

Jesus, Lord of compassion

Jesus, strong and forebearing

Jesus, obedient even to death

Jesus, have mercy on us

4. Jesus, Good Shepherd

Jesus, victim offered on the cross

Jesus, redeemer of the human race

Jesus, Saviour of the world

Jesus, have mercy on us

5. Jesus, by whose wounds we are healed

Jesus, healer of body and spirit

Jesus, sight for the blind and cleansing the lepers

Jesus, healing the paralysed and raising the dead

Jesus, have mercy on us

6. Jesus, King of patriarchs and prophets

Jesus, Master of apostles and evangelists

Jesus, strength of martyrs, courage of believers

Jesus, crown of glory for all your saints

Jesus. have mercy on us

Jesus, our teacher

Jesus, our defender

Jesus, our Lord and our God

enlighten us all

give help to us all

Jesus Lord, graciously hear us

Note: All Bible texts are taken from: The New American Bible <http://www.vatican.va/archives/>