

Prayer for 2020 and 2021

by MELANNIE SVOBODA SND on DECEMBER 28, 2020

Let us give thanks to our Good God for all the blessings of this past year, 2020.

Wait a second. Blessings? for 2020? The year that will go down in history as the year of the raging COVID-19 pandemic? The year that saw over 80 million cases of the coronavirus worldwide—and over 1.76 million deaths—and still counting? And in the U.S. over 20 million cases and 333,000 deaths? 2020—the year of massive unemployment, potential wholesale evictions, basic food shortages? Blessings—for that year?

Yes, let us thank God for the blessings of 2020. To each blessing, please respond: **We thank you, God.**

+ for all those individuals who made life-long-loving commitments to one another this year—or who deepened the loving commitments they had already made... **We thank you God.**

+ for all the new babies born in 2020... **We thank you, God.**



+ for all hard-sought, worthwhile goals that were achieved, for discoveries that were made—especially those discoveries (like the COVID vaccine) that will benefit millions of people in need... **We thank you God.**

+ for families and friends who grew in their appreciation of each other... **We thank you, God.**

+ for all those individuals who looked out for family members, who checked on their neighbors, who helped total strangers... **We thank you, God.**

+ for those doctors, nurses, aids, EMT personnel, researchers who worked on the front lines of the pandemic with courage, expertise, and total devotion... **We thank you, God.**



+ for all those who, because of their work, helped to keep vital lifelines open: farmers, sanitation workers, truck drivers, aviation personnel, food distributors, postal workers, police forces, military personnel, teachers... and the list goes on... **We thank you, God.**

+ for those who, because of Covid-19, have grown in self-knowledge, patience, self-sacrifice, courage, and thoughtfulness of others... **We thank you, God.**

+ for the preservation of our U.S. democracy throughout an extremely challenging campaign and national election... and for all elected and appointed officials who worked with courage and commitment to promote the common good... **We thank you God.**

+ for those who grew in prayer, who now speak with God with greater honesty, earnestness, frequency, and hope... and who listen to God with greater attentiveness, openness, and trust... **We thank you, God.**

+ for the greater awareness and appreciation we have for our connectedness to our one global community, and for all the steps taken this past year to care for the health of the beautiful planet we all call home... **We thank you God.**



+ for the renewed appreciation of our need for human companionship, for in-person conversations, for touch... **We thank you, God.**

+ for those who, despite the very real pain and hardships of 2020, were still able to smile (albeit behind their masks)... and for those who made us laugh, thus applying humor's balm to our painful wounds... **We thank you, God.**

+ for individuals who were honest, who lived a basically moral life, who took new steps to align their priorities more closely with the Gospel... **We thank you, God.**

+ for all those who died during this past year—especially those who succumbed to COVID-19... We remind ourselves that our intense grieving of them only underscores the deep love and affection we have for them... **We thank you, God.**

+ for all the other blessings of 2020... many of which we are not yet aware... **We thank you, God.**



Prayer for 2021:

Loving Creator, we ask for your blessings on 2021. For we firmly believe that you have been with us in the Past, you are with us in the Present, and you will be with us in the Future. We face the future with wonder and excitement for the refreshing waters and green pastures that might lie ahead for us. At the same time we also face the future with fear and misgivings for the rough roads and dark valleys that we could encounter along the way. So we entrust 2021 into your loving hands, following the wise words of the writer Corrie ten Boom who said, "Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God." So, Beloved Known One, help us to step into the future, into the year 2021 with faith, love, and hope. Amen.



Did any of the words above touch your heart today? If so, you might want to sit with those words for a few moments.

Would you add anything to the prayer of Thanksgiving? Or to the prayer for 2021?

To all of you, I wish a very Happy and Blessed New Year!

PS: I ask your prayers for a morning retreat I will lead for the Faculty at Notre Dame Academy in Los Angeles on Monday, January 4. Our theme is “Education, Transformation, and Hope.” Please continue to pray for teachers everywhere who, despite the pandemic, are striving to educate our future generation with great love and devotion. Thank you!

Our song today is “The Prayer” written by David Foster with lyrics by Carole Bayer-Sager. This lovely song is from the animated film *Quest for Camelot*. It won the Golden Globe for best song in 1999. Famous versions include the solos by Celine Dion and Andrea Bocelli and the duets by Dion/Bocelli and Dion/Josh Groban. But the version I chose today is by the Father-Daughter team of Mat and Savanna Shaw of Kaysville, Utah. Savanna, 15, is the oldest of four. She and her dad posted this song in March 2020. The lyrics are not printed out, but some of my favorite lines are these: ***I pray you'll be our eyes and watch us where we go... and help us to be wise in times when we don't know... when we lose our way, guide us with your grace where we'll be safe...I pray we'll find your light and hold it in our heart when stars go out each night, remind us where you are... A world where pain and sorrow will be ended... and every heart that's broken will be mended... and we'll remember***

we are all God's children reaching out to touch you... reaching to the sky... We ask that life be kind, watch us from above... We hope each soul will find another soul to love... Guide us with your grace, give us faith so we'll be safe. As we celebrate a new year, let us remember that the place where we will always be safe is in God's loving arms... Thank you so much for reading my blog! I really appreciate each one of you!