

★★★★★ “Grace for the days that  
feel too full.” — Early Reader Review

# SPIRIT IN THE MIDDLE

Pocket Prayers for  
Real Life

By Teresa Marie Picotte



TERESA MARIE PICOTTE

# Spirit in the Middle

*Pocket Prayers for Real Life*



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*First edition*

*For my husband who walks this path with me, my children who  
bring me infinite joy, and for everyone doing their best living in the  
middle of it all.*

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## Preface

These reflections are for those seeking encouragement, hope, and connection. It is for anyone who wants to find the Spirit not just in sacred spaces but in the middle of work, family, exhaustion, and love (with a little humor along the way).

I was raised Catholic, and I'm grateful for that foundation, the rhythm of prayer, the sense of service, and the importance of community. But as I grew older, the institution itself felt less like a fit for me. My husband and I are raising our children Catholic because we want them to have that same foundation. We want them to know comfort in faith, to see service as part of who they are, and to grow up knowing that community matters.

The Holy Spirit is described in Scripture as *Parakletos*, the encourager, the one who walks beside us. That image feels like the bridge: encouragement, presence, and connection. I was drawn to the Ignatian idea of finding God in all things, quiet reflection, and the call to mindfulness. That practice connects easily with what Buddhism teaches, that growth comes through awareness and compassion, through moving beyond the self toward something greater. I also feel connected to the earth and to Native traditions that speak of the Great Spirit, the Creator who lives in every part of nature.

These reflections are not meant to teach theology, defend doctrine, or define anyone's faith. It is not meant to follow the standards of any church or religion. I am not a theologian, a Buddhist scholar, or a strict Catholic voice. If that is what you are seeking, these prayers may not be for you, and that is completely fine.

This is for those who want encouragement, motivation, hope, and a sense of belonging in a busy and full life. These prayers are for those who find the Spirit in everyday life, between work and family, between caregiving and exhaustion, between laughter and loss. If you are walking through that middle place too, I hope you will find something here that reminds you that the Spirit is still with you, still showing up, right where you are.



# Introduction

## Finding Grace in the Chaos

Some days, I sit down to reflect and breathe, and I can't make it past the first sentence. My son needs a ride. My mother needs reminding. My daughter sends an "urgent" text message. The laundry buzzes. My father calls with the same question we answered yesterday.

And yet, somewhere between the noise and the to-do list, the Spirit still shows up. Not always in shining light or perfect peace, but in smaller ways: in my kids laughing on the way home from school, in strength that sneaks in when I'm tired, in a quiet moment that somehow feels borrowed from the wind in the trees.

These prayers are for those moments. For when faith feels thin, patience feels thinner, and gratitude means pushing through a tough day. You won't find lofty theology here. Just small reflections for full lives, written for the ones balancing raising children, helping aging parents, working hard, and trying (sometimes failing) to stay kind and mindful through it all. I am sharing them because maybe they will help you too.

Take what you need. Skip what doesn't fit today. Whisper them

out loud, or just let them rest on the page. May these words remind you that the Spirit still meets us, not after the chaos ends, but right in the middle of it.

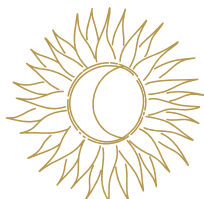
I

## Part One – When Life Is Full

# 1

## Morning Chaos

Spirit who meets me before the kids awake, before the tea  
steeps  
help me breathe between the alarms and sun rising,  
the lost shoes, the half-packed lunches,  
and the sound of my own name on repeat.  
Let grace find its way into this house  
before anyone remembers we're already late.  
If I can't be calm, at least let me be kind.  
If I can't be kind, at least let me be filled with gratitude,  
That you love us all, even in the routine, in the rush!



## 2

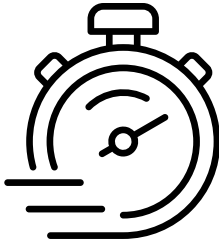
# When Everyone Needs Something

Today, Spirit, I'm outnumbered.  
Everyone wants a piece of my time, my voice, my patience.  
I am a one-person help desk with a slow connection.  
Remind me that love isn't measured by efficiency.  
Please let my listening show I care,  
my small gestures count as kindness and mercy,  
and my sighs count as surrender.  
Refill me so I can start again.



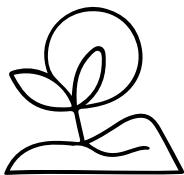
## When Everything is Urgent

Spirit, my day is a checklist with legs.  
Everything feels like it needed to happen yesterday.  
I've lost track of what's important and what's just loud.  
Please help me to slow me down without breaking.  
Help me remember that urgency isn't holiness.  
You move at the speed of peace.  
Teach me to follow and show me the way.



## The FiveMinute Pause

Holy Spirit,  
This pause is all I have right now.  
It is not a retreat or a revelation,  
just a moment in between.  
Meet me here in this small space of stillness.  
Please let my mind rest long enough to notice that I am  
breathing.  
Let my heart remember that peace does not always wait for  
perfect timing.  
Fill this pause with quiet strength  
so that when I move again,  
I will carry patience, calm, and kindness.  
Amen.



## The Day That Started Without Me

The day began before I was ready.  
The light came too early, the noise came too fast,  
and before I could gather myself,  
Life was already moving.  
Dear Spirit, please remind me that it is never too late  
To begin again with You.  
Let me step into this day gently,  
not with guilt for what I missed,  
but with gratitude for what remains.  
Help me to bring kindness to others today,  
and help me to find peace in the middle of catching up.  
Please meet me where I am,  
not where I meant to be.





## II

### Part Two – When Faith Feels Fuzzy

## 6

### The Foggy Path

Great Holy Spirit,  
I can't see what's ahead.  
Every direction looks uncertain.  
So I'll trust You're here, even when I can't feel it.  
Please guide my next step, not the whole map.  
When doubt thickens around me,  
remind me that faith is not knowing,  
but continuing anyway.  
Help me remember that faith is often  
just putting one foot forward in the fog.  
Be the quiet that steadies my next step,  
the calm that waits in the mist,  
and the promise that I will not walk alone.

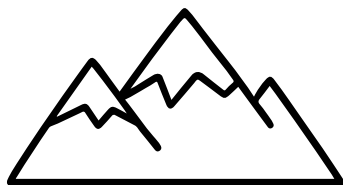


## Grace That Looks Like Survival

Spirit, please give me strength when life doesn't sparkle,  
the kind that gets me through when my confidence is thin,  
when the day feels rough.

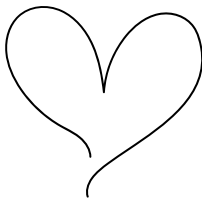
I am grateful for You holding me upright,  
when I am not sure how to stand,  
when I am tired, the traffic is heavy,  
and there only seems to be rain.

If today's grace comes in takeout containers, light homework,  
and an early bedtime, I'm so thankful.



## When I'm Too Tired to Pray

I don't have the words tonight, Spirit.  
Only this breath, my heart, this hope.  
Please hear my prayer,  
for my family, friends, the poor, the sick, and the lonely.  
Meet me in my unspoken petition,  
the kind whispered through exhaustion  
and love that never quite clocks out.



## When Gratitude Feels Hard

Gratitude feels easy when life's light.  
On the heavier days, it sounds more like,  
“Thanks, I guess, for the strength to try again.”  
Help me notice one small mercy,  
a warm mug, a text from a friend,  
a sliver of quiet that wasn't there before.  
Please let my gratitude  
open a door wide enough for grace to enter.



## When the World Feels Heavy

Spirit, it feels like too much today,  
the headlines, the heartache,  
the endless ache and pain of empathy.  
Please remind me that hope lives even in the darkness.  
Light will find a way.  
Please help me to let compassion be my courage,  
And peace, my quiet protest.



### III

## Part Three – When Love Is Work

# 11

## For the Ones Who Try My Patience

Spirit of calm (and comedy), you saw that conversation.  
Help me breathe before I say something quotable in a bad way.  
Let my silence count as wisdom,  
my humor as humility,  
and my distance as peacekeeping, not punishment.  
Remind me love is sometimes quiet—and sometimes needs a  
nap.

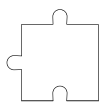




## When Sleep Evades You



Spirit in the night,  
the stars are awake, but my mind will not rest.  
Thoughts drift in circles, refusing to land.  
The more I try to quiet them, the louder they seem to hum.  
Maybe the moon is too bright,  
or maybe it is just one of those nights  
when peace feels a little out of reach.  
Still, here I am, awake, waiting, listening.  
Let the stillness of the earth remind me  
that not everything must be solved before morning.  
The trees do not hurry their growing,  
and the river does not rush to its end.  
Teach me to rest even when sleep will not come,  
to let my thoughts settle like dust in soft light.  
And if I cannot sleep,  
then let me at least find gratitude in this quiet—  
for the breath that still moves through me,  
for the stars that keep their patient watch,  
for the Spirit who stays close even now.

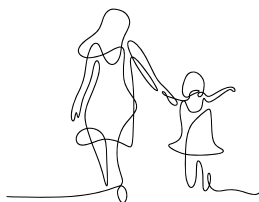


## Prayer for Family That's Complicated

Dear Spirit,  
You see the parts of my family  
that do not fit neatly together.  
The moments that hurt and the ones that heal.  
The words that should have stayed quiet  
and the love that sometimes hides under all that noise.  
You know the tug of being pulled in too many directions,  
toward parents who need care,  
children who need guidance,  
and relationships that still need tending.  
Some days it feels like I am trying to hold peace together  
with my own tired hands.  
Remind me that grace is not about perfection.  
It is about showing up anyway,  
with a steady heart, a deep breath,  
and a little humor for what refuses to make sense.  
Help me to see the small mercies  
in the middle of the mess,  
a laugh that slips through, a meal shared,  
a moment of quiet that softens the edges.

## Prayer for Caregivers

Spirit, for those who give and give,  
whose hearts are stretched thin  
between generations, obligations, and sleepless nights,  
pour rest into their bones,  
compassion into their weariness,  
and laughter into the long hours.  
Remind us that care is holy work,  
and even when it feels invisible,  
it shines in Your light.



## IV

### Part Four – Small Moments of Grace

## Gratitude in the Grocery Aisle

Spirit, thank You for fluorescent lights,  
melting ice cream, and the miracle of ripe avocados.

Between the carts and coupons,  
remind me that abundance isn't just in the feast,  
it's in the choosing, the gathering,  
the everyday grace of feeding people I love.  
Even when I forget the list. Again.





## Finding Humor in the Holy

Holy Spirit,  
Thank you for reminding me  
that sacred does not always mean serious.  
Some days, reverence looks like laughter  
at the kitchen table,  
or a smile that slips out when everything feels too heavy.  
Teach me to see Your presence in the ridiculous  
and the real, in the burnt toast that still gets buttered,  
in the traffic light that refuses to change,  
in the child who asks deep questions  
just as I am losing my patience.  
Help me remember that holiness is not ruined by laughter,  
that joy is a kind of prayer too,  
and that sometimes the best way to worship  
is to exhale and let myself be grateful  
and laugh at the mystery of it all.  
Meet me in the humor and the humanness.  
Let me find You in both the tears and the giggles.  
And when all else fails,  
let me laugh at myself kindly.

## Seeing Beauty Where I Am

Dear Spirit,  
Some days, beauty hides behind laundry piles,  
half-cold coffee, and a to-do list that feels alive.  
I tell myself I'll slow down and notice it all  
when things finally calm.  
but that day never seems to come.  
So help me see it here, in the middle.  
In the small victories that no one claps for,  
in the laughter that sneaks in during chaos,  
in the familiar sound of the house settling at night.  
Remind me that beauty isn't waiting somewhere else,  
perfect and polished, it's right here,  
mixed with crumbs, clutter, and grace.  
Let me look around this ordinary moment  
and remember that You are already here,  
smiling at the mess, calling it enough.



V

Part Five – Returning to Calm



## Letting the Day Go

Spirit of rest, the day is finished,  
even if the dishes aren't.  
Take what was good and let it grow.  
Take what was heavy and let it rest.  
Wrap what's left in mercy,  
and teach me to start over gently tomorrow.



## Prayer for the Spirit Who Listens

Spirit, thank You for hearing the half-formed prayers,  
the ones spoken between car doors and text messages,  
the ones that sound more like sighs.

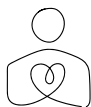
You never needed perfect words.

Just an honest heart.

So here I am again,  
still talking, still listening,  
still in the middle,  
and somehow, still held.



## 20

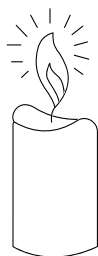


### Prayer for Rest That Heals

Holy Spirit,  
I am tired in more ways than  
than sleep alone can fix.  
The kind of tired that seeps into  
the bones and blurs the edges of joy.  
Meet me here in this soft undoing.  
Let my body unclench.  
Let my mind stop rehearsing  
what still needs doing.  
Let my heart remember it is safe to rest.  
Help me release what is too heavy to carry tonight,  
the worries that whisper  
even in dreams, the guilt for not being enough,  
the ache that lingers from trying too hard.  
Teach me to rest as You intended,  
not as escape, but as renewal.  
Let each breath be a quiet mending. Let the night  
restore what the day has worn down.  
And when morning comes, let me rise not with  
perfection, but with peace.  
Amen

## Closing Reflection – Spirit, It's Me Again

Some days, the prayer is whispered.  
Some days, it's lived.  
Most days, it's both.  
The Spirit never needed us to be still to be present,  
only to notice.  
So take these words with you.  
Read them at red lights, over laundry, before bed,  
in the small pauses that make life bearable and beautiful.  
The sacred isn't somewhere else.  
It's right here, in the middle of your very real, very full life.





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## Conclusion

Thank you for spending this time in the middle with me. These reflections are only a glimpse into my own journey, one filled with faith, family, questions, and quiet moments of grace. If even one page met you where you are, reminded you that you are not alone, or gave you a reason to breathe a little deeper, then this book has done what I hoped it would.

My prayer is that you continue to look for the Spirit wherever life meets you, in the noise, the laughter, the pauses, and the unexpected places that still carry light. We are all seekers in our own ways, and it is good to walk together.

If you found something here that speaks to you, I hope you will stay connected. Follow *Spiritual-ish* on Facebook and Instagram, and subscribe to the newsletter at [spiritualishlife.com](http://spiritualishlife.com). A growing online community is on the way, a place for shared reflections, encouragement, and conversation.

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Until then, may peace meet you where you are. May gratitude find you, even in the middle. And may the Spirit go with you, always. Go forth in love, in calm, and in hope.



## About the Author

Teresa Marie Picotte writes about her journey to find the Spirit—the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God, and grace. In her midlife search for the divine, she writes about her challenges finding calm, connection, and meaning in the middle of real life, where faith and chaos often share the same to-do list. She blends interfaith spirituality, gratitude, and gentle humor, drawing on her experience as both a parent and caregiver for aging parents. She believes prayer doesn't need perfect words, just a willing heart and maybe a good cup of coffee.

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