

Barney

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Divine protection achievable through simple prayer



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This being a hazardous time for families, it might be a good idea to offer some suggestions for prayers for protection. Whether your concern is for a 16-year-old who is driving for the first time or for an adult confronting surgery, few of us have been given specific ideas for invoking God's protective shield. I'll offer some possibilities.

Guardian angels are trendy these days. There are even television shows about angels. And, in fact, it is a good idea to pray for the support of God's angels. As it says in Psalm 91:11, "For God commands the angels to guard you in all your ways." If we have in mind a loved one who is traveling, we can utilize the prayer of Tobias for his son, "May God in heaven protect you on the way and bring you back to me safe and sound; and may his angel accompany you for safety, my son." Tobit 5:17.

My father calls his guardian angel "O'Malley," and O'Malley is doing a great job, under considerable pressure, in my opinion.

Jesus Himself taught his followers to rely on the protective power of His holy name. "Holy Father, protect them in Your name which You have given me." John 17:11. We are advised in Proverbs 18:10 that: "The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the just man runs to it and is safe." Finally, St. Paul instructs us that: "Whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." Romans

10:13. So, we may with confidence ask for protection in the holy name of Jesus.

We can also call upon the role of God as a shield. God is a "shield to all who take refuge in Him." Psalm 18:31. He tells Jeremiah that He will be for Jerusalem "an encircling wall of fire." This theme is echoed in Chapter 4 of Isaiah, when God promises the Jews that He will protect them with "a smoking cloud by day and a light of flaming fire by night."

I have saved the most powerful prayer for the last. The most effective way we can solicit God's protection is to call upon the power of the Precious Blood of Jesus. Even before the time of

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Jesus, the Jews were protected from harm when they took the blood of the lamb and sprinkled it on their houses.

With the death and resurrection of Jesus, the "blood of the lamb" became the ultimate power. As it says in Revelation 7:14: "These are the ones who have survived the time of great distress; they have washed their robes and made them white in

the blood of the lamb." It is through the power of the blood of Jesus that the devil is destroyed. Hebrews 2:14.

A friend of mind suggested that I invoke the power of the blood of Jesus with the following form of prayer: "I plead the power of the precious blood of Jesus over [name of one in need]." We can ask that the precious blood of Jesus protect ourselves and others from all harm, especially from the evil one.

I began using the prayer recommended by my friend for each of my children. I said this prayer daily.

One night, several months ago, my wife had a dream which she knew was a sign that one of our children was in danger. She followed up on the dream, and we found out that the warning was entirely accurate. The power of the blood of Jesus is very strong.

There is a way of calling upon the blood of Jesus that I think is the highest possible level of intercession. At this level, the one praying takes upon himself, as a burden, the need which is the subject of the prayer. In other words, by way of example, we pray that we ourselves will be confronted with a danger which might have otherwise been presented to a loved one. If we are praying for healing, we express to God our willingness to bear the wound for which healing is requested.

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A closing prayer for all readers of this column is taken from Hebrews 13: "May the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great shepherd of the sheep by the blood of the eternal covenant, Jesus our Lord, furnish you with all that is good, that you may do his will." Ask for God's protection, and He will provide it.