



Reflection Guide by Delaney Hart

A BOOK OF EVERYDAY BLESSINGS

100 Prayers for
Dancing Monks,
Artists, and Pilgrims

CHRISTINE
VALTERS PAINTNER

Online abness for Abbey of the Arts

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HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Welcome to this set of reflection questions to support your unfolding spiritual journey. These questions can be used for daily prayer and meditation or while on a retreat.

The questions correspond with the different sections of the book:

For the Introduction, read through this section of the book, then you can spend time with the various questions below in one session (if you have an hour or two, or maybe on a retreat) or over several days, taking one question per day (and spending five to ten minutes for each) and reflecting in a journal.

Then there are questions that correspond with each section of blessings: Blessings for Quiet Moments, Blessings for Daily Living, and so on. For each section, two or more blessings are grouped together in the question heading. Read those particular blessings slowly, letting them meet you where you are. Then allow some time to engage with the reflection questions. Always feel free to skip any that don't resonate with you or adapt and create a new question.

The final section is the Conclusion, with questions you can reflect with after engaging with each of the three suggested practices.

You don't need to do these in any particular order; feel free to jump around and find the blessings you are especially needing in this season of your life.

May this time of reflection open you to the depth and power of blessing!

INTRODUCTION: BLESSING THE DAY

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Where in your life do you feel a sense of scarcity? What blessings can you offer to help enlarge your vision to see the abundance?

What are the mundane activities that you struggle with? What might they be inviting you to remember, witness, and honor?

What in your life feels shrouded in neglect or habit? What blessings can you offer to help shake off the veil between reality and your perception?

When thinking of blessings as thresholds and portals, in what ways do you feel invited to more intentionally engage with and explore these doorways to the Divine?

Consider the times you have sought to connect your faith to a current situation. What bridges of connection did you discover? What are ways you can both foster your existing practices that connect your faith to your lived experience and also kindle this practice of offering blessings?

BLESSINGS FOR QUIET MOMENTS

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

For Silence and Solitude; For Rest on the Sabbath

What are the inner or outer noises, cultural messages, or pressures that crowd out God's invitation for a holy pause? How can you reclaim and resanctify the generous gifts of silence, pauses, and rest?

For the Gift of Rest; For Being Present in Each Moment

When are you easily held in the present moment and awake to the world's beauty? Where do you often find your inner or outer gaze drifting, and how can you shift your attention and perspective to feel God with you even in that experience of wandering?

For Discernment; For Peace

How does our collective call to be a presence of peace and bearer of grace illuminate your discernment process in times of mystery and unknowing?

BLESSINGS FOR DAILY LIVING

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

For a Companion Animal; For a Spark of Joy on a Bad Day; For Grace in the Ordinary; Upon Awakening; For Release into Sleep

Where do you feel God's presence embodied in others and in nature? What are daily routines that you can transform into rituals, expanding your awareness of God's presence through gratitude and wonder?

Before Acts of Service; For Creative Joy; For Trust in Abundance; For Patience; For Friendship and Community; For Staying Rooted in the Holy

Where are you being called deeper into community, and where is the connection, grace, and miracle of community present where you haven't noticed before?

For Holy Foolishness; For Deeper Gratitude; For Shelter and Safety; For Creativity; For Holy Boundaries

What practices of gratitude could you engage with, letting these nurture your creativity and courage in order to participate in God's vision of love? What holy no's might strengthen and free you to plant seeds of change?

For Sustenance in Doubt and Uncertainty; For a New Beginning After Disappointment; For Calm in Chaos

What certainties and old expectations are you being called to release to create space for new possibilities? When you feel disappointed, helpless, and uncertain in the face of loss, chaos, and the unknown, ask both yourself and those who know you well, "What are my unique gifts?" Begin to creatively imagine and observe how these gifts are needed in the world.

BLESSINGS FOR DAILY LIVING

Meal Blessing; Home Blessing; To Love More Deeply; For Glimpses of Heaven Here and Now; When the Calendar Is Full; For Using Technology Well

What nourishes your spiritual roots, and what are the distractions that weaken them? Where do you feel called to grow your branches to canopy yourself and your community in heaven's vision of love?

BLESSINGS FOR HEALTH, HEALING, AND WHOLENESS

For Health in Times of Illness; When Starting a New Medication; For Those with Dementia

In both times of health and times of illness, practice feeling God's divine life radiating through you and God's love holding you. What imagery, words, or colors emerge? What are ways you can incorporate these symbols into your daily life?

For My Inner Child; For Light in Our Shadows; For New Life; To Embrace Queerness

When have your wonder and your curiosity been stifled? What are ways you can nurture your humility and courage in order to both embrace curiosity and welcome your whole self?

BLESSINGS FOR HEALTH, HEALING, AND WHOLENESS

For a Journey Through Dark Times; To Embrace the Belovedness of Being; For Forgiveness

Pay attention to what grounds you in your belovedness and what unmoors you; what illuminates and what clouds your vision; what rejuvenates your body and spirit and what drains you; what frees you and what binds you. Where is God's grace and love revealed in these reflections?

For Support in Depression; For Caregivers; For Rest in Burnout

What areas of your life (work, home, community, personal) do you feel the need to be held, nourished, and revived by the Source of Love? What is the spark that has diminished, and where do you see God's love rekindling your flame of purpose?

For Healing a Divided Family; For Becoming Wise and Well

What are family traumas you long to be healed, and what are the family blessings that have been passed down? What wounded patterns can you disrupt with love now, and what blessings do you want to leave for future generations?

PILGRIMAGE BLESSINGS

For Saying Yes to the Journey; For Traveling Lightly

What inner or outer pilgrimage are you called to say yes to? What do you carry that keeps your heart blocked from fully opening to wonder, gratitude, and delight?

For Guidance on Our Way; For Beginning Again

When has your desire for a clear path forward actually clouded the divine guidance of an inner knowing? In times of grasping for control or straying, what deters you from the invitation to begin again?

For Stepping into the Unknown; For Coming Home

When have you experienced the cyclical nature of coming undone and being refashioned into a new whole, and what supports and strengthens you for that journey to wisdom and discovery?



BLESSINGS FOR OUR CONNECTION TO THE HOLY WILD

For Kinship with Creation; For the Earth, Our Sanctuary; For Our Journey Through the Seasons

To remember your own wildness and dismantle false barriers, practice naming the ways you feel connection to creation. What wisdom is modeled and revealed to you in creation?

To Hear Our Calling Through Creation; For Learning from the Wisdom of Nature

Observing everything in creation living into its purpose, what about your own purpose is clarified?

A Lament for Creation; For Savoring the Wild Sacrament of Creation

In the practice of beholding and being present to the sacrament of creation, where in that witnessing do you experience rivers of grief? Glittering moments of joy?

A Song of Praise; To Be Blessed by the Gifts of the Elements

What blessings do you receive from fauna, flora, and the elements, and what blessing do you offer creation in return? When are you freed and empowered to join the cosmic song of praise and blessing?

BLESSINGS FOR THE SEASONS

During Advent; To Embrace Holy Darkness; To Follow Mary as God-Bearer; On Winter Solstice; On Christmas; For the New Year; On Epiphany

What are the ways you've said yes to birthing the holy, and what guides you toward your unique expression of embodying love? Where are the dark and unknown places in your life, and how might you release into rest, honor the threshold of that space, and gather hope for hidden possibilities to emerge in time?

On Imbolc and the Feast of St. Brigid; On Ash Wednesday; For a Lenten Journey

Around you and within you, where do you see sparks of holy possibility and the shimmering radiance of God's presence? What weighs you down and distracts you from seeing the presence of God in both spiritually lush and spiritually barren times?

On the Spring Equinox; On the Feast of the Annunciation; During Holy Week; On Easter

When have you experienced the disorientation and grief of dying dreams? Where do you find courage to face that unknown, and what breathes life into your dried-up spirit?

On Beltane and the Start of Summer; On Pentecost; On the Summer Solstice; On Lughnasa and the Start of the Harvest Season; On the Feast of Transfiguration

Honoring your inheritance of God's light, how does the call to offer an eruption of creativity, to commit to the common purpose of love, and to be a bearer of radiance manifest uniquely in your life?

BLESSINGS FOR THE SEASONS

**On the Feast of the Guardian Angels; On the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi;
On the Feast of All Saints; On the Feast of All Souls; For Someone Celebrating
a Birthday; On the Anniversary of a Death**

Who are the angels, saints, and ancestors who support you to live in alignment with your own sacred purpose? Whom do you walk alongside on a mutual journey to each become more one's self? Of those who have walked with you and have now passed beyond the veil, what are the ways their love and presence still surround you?

THRESHOLD BLESSINGS

For a Circle of Companions; For the Crossing of a Threshold; For Bountiful Hospitality

Where do you sense God's nearness in your friendships? In your larger community? In the stranger? How can you nurture a heart that welcomes and honors all you encounter?

**For Inspiration to Begin Again; For Comfort When Facing the Unknown;
When It Feels as if the World Is Ending; For Hope in Grief**

When do you experience being held by God's grace and compassion? How in turn can you commit to being a vessel of that divine compassion and grace?

THRESHOLD BLESSINGS

For Wisdom to Become an Elder; For Courage to Befriend Death

What are the thoughts, patterns, and ways of being that distract and exhaust you? When you begin to release those, in what ways do you see yourself growing more fully and deeply into whom you were created to be?

To Stay Anchored in the Sacred; For Patience in Waiting

What spiritual practices help you make a pilgrimage from your head to your heart? When you are resting in your heart space, what longings are revealed?

Before Going on Retreat; To Keep Hope Alive; For a Wedding or Commitment Ceremony

Who (a soul friend, partner, animal companion, element of nature) do you lean on in times of darkness? How do you cultivate an openness to holy surprise in both difficult and joyous times?



CONCLUSION: THREE PRACTICES

Practice the “Soaking Prayer”

What words, images, or colors shimmered for you in the “Soaking Prayer”? How could you take a reminder of this practice with you throughout your day?

Practice Being a Blessing to the World

What invitations and what restrictions do you experience when you consider how to be a blessing to the world? What voices of “not enough” emerge, and what happens when you put those voices in conversation with Mary, God-bearer?

Practice Writing Your Own Blessings

What is your embodied feeling when you write your own blessing? What was challenging and what was empowering about this practice?
