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The *Imitation of Christ* was written in 1427 by Thomas a Kempis and has become the one religious book second only to the Bible in popularity.

It is the “how to” book par excellence of all times. This treasured book has brought peace to countless readers by showing “how to” follow the life of Christ—“how to” imitate Christ—a goal to which all are called.

This new prayerbook, *Favorite Prayers from the Imitation of Christ*, contains more than 100 prayers from that classic volume. The prayers are divided into prayers in accord with the liturgical seasons, prayers for each month of the year, and prayers for each day of the week.

All this is in strict accord with the desires of the Church as manifested in the words of Vatican II: “The spiritual life is not limited solely to participation in the Liturgy. Christians are indeed called to pray with their brothers and sisters, but they must also enter into their chamber to pray to the Father in secret. . . . Popular devotions of

the Christian people are to be highly commended, provided they accord with the laws and norms of the Church” (*Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, no. 12).

The prayers of the *Imitation* are deeply Biblical, completely God-centered, permeated by God’s love for us, and set forth in unforgettable language. They contain the great Christian themes and call us to increase our faith. Their spiritual power is evident in the undying popularity of the book in which they are found. They have been arranged in sense lines to bring out their meaning even more.

Every effort has been made to ensure that this book will be easy to use and attractive to the person praying. The text is printed in large pleasing typeface and in red and black. The inspiring colorful illustrations will help keep our minds on Jesus and through Him on the other Persons of the Blessed Trinity.

May all who use this prayerbook achieve a deeper and more vital spiritual life. May it lead them ever closer to the eternal union with the living God.

Grace and Love

Your grace, O Lord—
without which our own merits are worthless
and the gifts of nature without value—
truly comes to us from heaven,
Beauty, strength, riches,
talent, ability, eloquence—
none of these are of any value to me, Lord,
unless accompanied by Your grace.

While the gifts of nature
are common to all human beings,
whether good or bad,
Your grace and Your Love
given only to Your faithful ones,
and those who are so marked
are made worthy to attain
the Kingdom of Heaven.

Of such surpassing value is this grace
that no other gift,
whether it be prophecy,
the working of miracles,
or the highest and most sublime contempla-
tion,
is worth anything without it.

Not even faith or hope
or any other virtue
is acceptable to You
without charity and grace.

Bl. III, Ch. 55-4b

The Presence of Jesus

Be with me, Lord Jesus,
in every place and at all times.
Grant me the special grace
to forego all human comfort
for the love of You.

And should Your comfort be withdrawn,
may I find consolation
by submitting to Your Will
and whatever trials You may send me.
For You will not always rebuke us
nor will You keep Your wrath forever.

Bl. III, Ch. 16-3