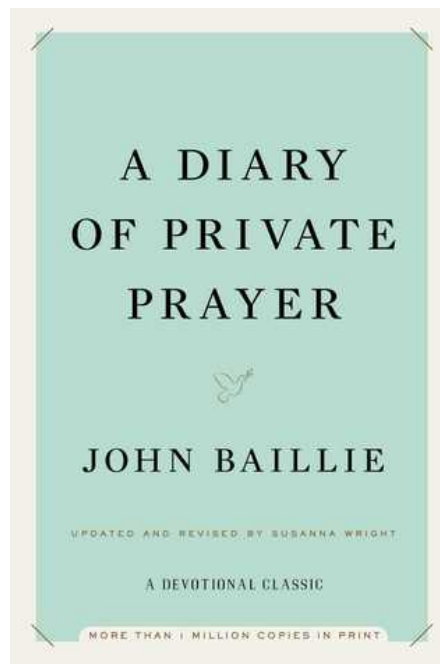




A Diary of Private Prayer

John Baillie , Suzanna Wright (Translation)

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Editor Susanna Wright offers this updated edition of a Christian devotional classic—invoking the daily prayers and timeless imagery of the original text through modern, accessible language.

In this wonderful collection, famed theologian Dr. John Baillie shares personal prayers for people who are seeking a better understanding of God and themselves. Organized by morning and evening—with special prayers for Sundays—*A Diary of Private Prayer* is written with eloquence, piety, and directness. Blending praise and meditative thoughts about God with a concern for the social and individual good, these daily invocations help and inspire us to search our inner selves and find the deep religious beliefs that lie within.

First published in 1936, *A Diary of Private Prayer* remains a seminal Christian devotional with more than a million copies in print. This modern edition—completely redesigned into a gift package—admirably preserves all the qualities of the original, ensuring that the wisdom of God and the wonder of Baillie's prayers remain accessible for many generations to come.

A Diary of Private Prayer Details

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Author : John Baillie , Suzanna Wright (Translation)

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From Reader Review A Diary of Private Prayer for online ebook

Rebecca Foster says

This is a revised reprint edition of a 1936 devotional classic. It's structured for 31 days plus Sundays, and divided into morning and evening. The prayers are a mixture of prose and verse, with liberal quotations from poets (Wordsworth, Tennyson, et al.) and the book of Psalms. Some also have fill-in-the-blank sections to allow for personalization. Susanna Wright's updates are evident in mentions of atoms and molecules, HIV/AIDS, and computers and the Internet.

Some favorite passages:

"when this morning prayer is finished, do not let me think that my worship is ended and spend the rest of the day forgetting you. Rather, from these quiet moments, let light and joy and power pour out and remain with me through every hour of this day."

"Give me the strength to confront any mountain of duty or bad habit. Where an action of mine can make this world a better place, where a word of mine can cheer a sad heart or strengthen a weak will, where a prayer of mine can serve Christ's kingdom, there let me act and speak and pray."

"O Lord, you indwell our shabby human life, lifting it now and then above the dominance of animal passion and greed, allowing it to shine with borrowed lights of love and joy and peace, and making it a mirror of the beauties of a world unseen."

"Do not let me refuse to show those closest to me the courtesy and kindness which I would show to strangers. Let charity begin at home today."

"Let all the knowledge I absorb refresh my mind in a way that makes me more eagerly seek whatever is pure and fair and true."

Neil Coulter says

As an admitted logophile, I have long been assisted in my prayers by reading beautifully written prayers. The Episcopal *Book of Common Prayer* is, of course, one favorite. But recently I found John Baillie's magnificent *A Diary of Private Prayer* (first published in 1936). I first learned of it from Richard J. Foster's edited collection, *Devotional Classics*. Soon after this first discovery, I ordered a copy for myself, and soon after reading it myself I ordered more copies to give away to friends.

Baillie provides a morning and evening prayer for each day of the month, with an extra morning and evening pair for Sundays. The prayers are written in a somewhat archaic style--"Thee" and "Thou" are the most obvious signs of this (and the easiest to mentally translate to modern equivalents), but other verbiage also shows this.

What I love about these eloquent prayers is that they are at once "classical" and also thoroughly relevant, inspiring, challenging. Baillie's personality shines through these prayers: he is a lover of books and music, appreciative of the pleasures of introversion combined with a desire to improve the world for everyone around him, and steeped in scripture, so that scripture references flow naturally all throughout the prayers.

Much in the prayers speak to my own personality and faith. Here is an excerpt from the prayer for the morning of Day 5:

O Thou who wast, and art, and art to come, I thank Thee that this Christian way whereon I walk is no untried or uncharted road, but a road beaten hard by the footsteps of saints, apostles, prophets, and martyrs. I thank Thee for the finger-posts and danger-signals with which it is marked at every turning and which may be known to me through the study of the Bible, and of all history, and of all the great literature of the world.

I love that affirmation of historical tradition and literature. Elsewhere (in Morning, Day 7) he prays "I praise Thee for music and books and good company and all pure pleasures."

The evening prayers are often challenging reflections on the day just ended. They are a turning away from the failures of the day, and a hoping that the next day will not see a repetition of the same; all of this is in the context of affirmation of God's love for us.

I'm thoroughly enjoying incorporating Baillie's prayers into my own daily prayers, and I recommend this book to anyone else who appreciates written prayers.

Michael W. says

A have used this little gem over the last 10 years. It is very user-friendly. It covers 31 days, both morning and evening. With each prayer there is a blank page for scribbling notes, prayer requests etc. Most of the time the prayers range from delightful, to beautiful, to rich. Only on rare occasions does the writer's liberalism seep through problematically (like the morning prayer on the fifth day, in which Ballie blows along with the winds of Evolution). I highly recommend it, but with a reminder to be discerning.

Mikejencostanzo says

In recent years, I've become very strict with myself regarding what books I will buy. Having worked at the public library for several years, I now instinctively *borrow* rather than *buy*.

But, there are certain books that I make exceptions for. My rule of thumb is to only purchase (or keep) a book if I can answer "Yes" to at least one of the following questions:

- * Do I love this book so much that I intend to read it multiple times?
- * Do I love this book so much that I intend to recommend/lend it to others?

A Diary of Private Prayer by John Baillie is one that joins my short list of books worth actually owning. It's a devotional book of the richest sort--one that may be used again and again without losing its savor.

This book sets itself apart from so many other devotional resources because of its God-ward focus & other-oriented focus. Several devotionals I have come across in the past (Streams in the Desert and Jesus Calling to name a couple) are certainly encouraging, gentle words that serve to boost your confidence & mood and put

a spring in your step for the day ahead. But after working through a morning or evening prayer by author John Baillie, the focus of these other popular inspirational devos seems almost more self-focused than God-focused.

It has been refreshing for me to be prompted by Baillie at the end of a long day to reflect on & confess those ways which I have *not* honored God that day. Or to begin a day remembering my own frailty and pleading for God's mercy on me in the day ahead. Or to pause in prayer to remember those obscure individuals for whom Baillie encourages us to pray (homeless, those encountering difficult decisions, missionaries, lonely, anxious, prisoners, oppressed, and more). What a beautiful exercise in turning my eyes from myself onto the needs of others.

I highly recommend Baillie's book of prayers as a robust devotional resource of the highest order.

--Jen

Kent says

My second time through this book. I'll just reprint what I said before:

The book contains 64 prayers, 31 days of morning and evening prayers and 2 prayers designated Sunday morning and Sunday evening.

The prayers are wonderfully diverse. They expand what I thank the Lord for and lead me into praying for things I don't normally pray about.

The format of the prayers vary, too. Sometimes Baillie will have you praying through Scripture verses, for instance.

Finally, the prayers are just really well-written.

Autumn Klepper says

This book is "an old way of praying that is still new to me" (to quote Andrew Peterson). It's a book of liturgical prayers, full of depth and meaning.

Dulce says

I absolutely love this book of prayer! What an awesome way to start my daily quiet time with God!

Meredith MacInnis says

February, 2018

I would love to re-read this little gem. I gave my copy away (twice, I believe) always thinking I could find

another in a used bookstore, but I haven't. Amazon, here I come? This little book is a big help in getting comfortable talking to your Maker. MJM

Earlier

This is one of the best books I have ever had the pleasure to run across and read. I know there are lots of people that feel that written prayers by others are not the be all and end all, but they are beautiful in their own right. Also, if you have the capacity to learn from example, this book is a springboard to understanding/glimpsing the broad array of approaching God, who hears our voices, inept as they may be, as we trust and turn to Him. In the original editions (I am not sure how many have been created) there is a blank page for every second page, leaving lots of room for your own notes. This writer loves this sort of detail, and recommends this book for like-minded others, who long to draw near to God in their daily walk. MM

Andrew Canavan says

This is a great book of daily prayers (morning and evening) from an early-mid 20th century theologian and leader in the Church of Scotland. Some of the prayers verge on the wishy-washiness of theological liberalism, but most are incredibly helpful and biblical guides to daily prayer.

antony brennan says

A Diary of private prayer

There are many books available that are trying to be like this one. There are any number of books of prayers, books of days, themed collections, praying the scriptures, prayers of the saints or other celebrated personages.

In most cases these books fall short. They tend to be superficial in content and in depth of spiritual understanding.

This book is different.

The author was born in Scotland in 1886. A leading theologian he studied divinity at Edinburgh University, as well as Jena and Marburg in Germany. He taught in Canada and the United States. He was a professor at Edinburgh University and a Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. He was well versed in his faith.

A diary of private prayer reflects the depths of his education and love of God. This is a book that Will help you plumb the depths of your relationship with the Lord and help you reflect on your understanding and practice of your spiritual path.

The author says these prayers and a jumping off point that you should use as a platform to further develop your own prayer life. Each prayer will help you mine the depths of your heart for the sparkling diamonds that you can over to the Lord and use to benefit everyone around you through intercession.

Your prayer life will never be the same again.

This is also a great book for browsing. You can open it at any page and find something to lift our heart beyond the clouds.

Gail Welborn says

***If your prayer life is spiritually stale, "A Diary of Private Prayer" is a MUST READ!

If your prayer life seems spiritually stale and disconnected with prayers that seem to bounce off the ceiling instead of reaching the Throne room of God, John Bailee's devotional classic A Diary of Private Prayer teaches "prayer is the language of faith."

The prayer collection consists of sixty-four inspirational one-page prayers, thirty-one for morning and evening and two special prayers for Sunday morning and evening. Bailee intended the prayers for individual, "private use." Dr. Graham Tomlin, dean of St. Mellitus College, London writes these prayers "deepens, enrich and transform anyone who prays them seriously."

The first day begins, "Eternal Father of my soul let my first thought today be of you...my first impulse to worship you...my first word to be Your Name...my first action to kneel before you in prayer." Then concludes, "Cheer my heart with your peace through Jesus Christ my Lord, Amen."

Sandwiched in between are thoughts of praise and worship, admission of sin, forgiveness and requests for God's "light and joy and power to pour out and remain with me through every hour of this day."

Prayers are not only...Full Review: <http://www.examiner.com/list/a-diary-...>

Bill says

I found this to be a very useful devotional book. If you are looking for assistance in developing a more disciplined prayer life. Bailey does not lecture you about prayer; he teaches you to pray by praying with you.

Tim says

This is one of those books that I've known about for a long time (Richard Foster lists it as one of his favorite devotional books) but never picked up (until I found it on the 50% off rack at the Fuller bookstore). What a rich book - it's very simple, with a month's worth of one-page prayers for morning and evening. What first struck me as I read is this is a man who has spent a lifetime in the presence of God - talking with him, wrestling with him, loving and being loved by him. It has great depth, and the author has a real gift as a wordsmith.

It's only in recent years that I've come to appreciate the value of praying other people's prayers. I find (as CS Lewis once pointed out) that most of my own praying is very personal but also very narrow. I pray about what I think about, oblivious to things that maybe should be on my mind but aren't. Praying the prayers of

others broadens my prayer life, which eventually makes it that much more personal as well. This book is a real blessing, and I highly recommend it.

Linda says

This is a super, rich prayer book. It is written in old English with "Thees and Thous" but definitely worth the uphill effort. Great book to ponder over.

Neil Coulter says

John Baillie's *Diary of Private Prayer* has been my primary, favorite daily prayer book for years now. How I love the beauty, the complexity, the thoroughness of the prayers Baillie composed for publication in 1936. I rarely miss a morning prayer, and I wish I remembered more often to end the day with the evening prayer.

But it's an odd thing about the language of the *Diary* prayers. I remember first discovering Baillie in an edited collection by Richard Foster, *Devotional Classics*, which I believe presented a small selection of prayers in modernized language. Then when I purchased a paperback copy of the *Diary*, I was at first surprised that the actual book is written more in KJV language--which makes sense, since the majority of public and personal prayers in English followed the archaisms of the KJV, until changes from the 1960s onward, in which the language of prayer gradually took on contemporary, "language of the street" character (it's interesting to note, for example, how the public prayers of Billy Graham changed from KJV to contemporary English over the years of his ministry). When I was first praying through Baillie, I felt sometimes put off by the archaisms--as though a part of my mind was engaged more in simultaneous translation than in actual prayer. But over time, and with increased familiarity of those beautiful words, I came to love the language of the prayers in most cases, and at least tolerate it everywhere else.

So now I come to the newly published edition of the *Diary*, edited and updated by Susanna Wright. Wright has translated the original prayers into contemporary English, while maintaining a certain reverence and beauty in the words (she undertook this project with the full permission of Baillie's descendants). And what surprised me in my first read-throughs is that now I find the contemporary language somewhat off-putting! I've grown so familiar with Baillie's originals that it was a bit of a struggle to pray the updated versions without feeling like I was losing something. Of course the end of the story, as I assumed would be the case, is that now that I've spent a few months with Wright's updated edition, I like it just fine and would probably find the originals more difficult to get into. Such is the strangeness and flexibility of the human mind.

I believe a person who is curious about Christianity would do very well to get a copy (of any edition) of *A Diary of Private Prayer* and read through it. Baillie covers an astounding number of facets of what it means to be a faithful Christian, and of the character of God. Of course the Bible itself will always be the primary foundation of learning about God and the Christian life, but Baillie has given the world a gift in creating a modern psalter that reveals so much about the Christian journey.

My only wish for this new edition (which, thankfully is a nicely produced hardcover, rather than the small, cheap paperback I was using before) is that the publisher had used a side-by-side original-and-updated layout, making this the only edition of Baillie anyone would need to own. The original book left the facing pages blank, for the reader's own journaling and notes, and the current edition retains that layout. But I use this book every day and I journal in separate book, so the blank pages are not useful for me. How much better to have both versions of the prayers, so that whatever language register I prefer on any given day is

there waiting for me. However, that's a small complaint for one of my favorite and most highly recommended books.
