

# **Images of God, Christ and Holy Spirit: Resources for Prayer**

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## **Introduction**

Over the years I have collected images of God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit used in Christian liturgical prayers and the writings of ancient and medieval Christians writers. In addition, I have also collected more contemporary images, often editing and adapting those of other authors, as well as simply borrowing from modern published works.

In hopes of providing a resource both for meditation and for the writing of prayers, I offer this collection of images here.

(The contemporary images have been collected over a number of years and have been drawn from or inspired by a great variety of publications. I regret that I no longer know their original sources.)

## Contemporary Images of God

### A. As used in the following constructions:

Blessed are you, O God, ....  
and  
O God, ...

#### *Images Related to Creation*

Architect of Creation  
Center of All Life  
Divine Bakerwoman  
Divine Potter  
Fruitful Garden  
Heart of the Universe  
Lover of Creation

Mother of All Creation  
Quilter of the Galaxies  
Strength of the Earth  
Weaver of the Universe  
Weaver of the Web of Life  
Well-spring of Life  
Womb of the Cosmos

#### *Images Related to Wisdom*

Abiding Wisdom  
Birth-giver of Wisdom  
Crown of Wisdom  
Empowering Wisdom  
Fullness of Wisdom  
Fountain of Wisdom  
Guiding Star

Midwife of Wisdom  
Mother of Wisdom  
Ocean of Wisdom  
Singer and Song  
Thoughtful Guide  
Wisdom of the Cosmos

#### *Images Related to Women and the Feminine*

Affirming Voice  
Anointing One  
Birth-giver of the New Creation  
Bold Friend  
Caring Sister  
Comforting Friend  
Comforting Mother  
Compassionate One  
Cup of Salvation  
Discerning Heart

Faithful Companion  
Friend of Widows and Orphans  
Host and Leader  
Loyal Companion  
Midwife of Your Beloved  
Mother Eagle  
Our Joy and Laughter  
Protecting Sister  
Provider of All Good Things  
Vigilant Lover

Divine Midwife  
Embracing Mother  
Empowering Love  
Empowering Song

Vigilant Mother  
Vision That Never Fades  
Weaver of Dreams  
Wiper-Away of Tears

**B. As used in the following construction:**

O God, you are source of ...

***Images Related to Creation***

All Creation  
Diversity  
Energy  
Life  
Light  
Rest  
Unity

***Images Related to Wisdom***

Blessing  
Discernment  
Peace  
Promise  
Prayer  
Teaching  
Wisdom

***Images Related to Women and the Feminine***

Affirmation  
Celebration  
Challenge  
Comfort  
Courage  
Friendship  
Healing

Hope  
Joy  
Love  
Mercy  
Possibility  
Strength  
Trust

**C. As used in the following construction:**

Like a ...

Divine bakerwoman  
Divine dancing partner  
Divine midwife  
Divine provider  
Divine schoolteacher  
Divine seamstress  
Divine weaver

Midwife  
Mother  
Mother eagle  
Mother hen  
Nanny / nursemaid  
Older sister  
Woman in labor

## **Contemporary Images of Jesus Christ**

**A. As used in the following constructions:**

We give thanks for Jesus your ...

We pray with your ...

Christ, ...

You gave us Jesus as your ....

### ***Images Related to Creation***

Bread of Life  
Breath of Life  
Creating Word  
Dream of Wholeness  
Firstborn of Creation  
Hope of Creation  
Hope of the Universe  
Light of the Galaxies  
Lover of Creation  
Midwife of Creation  
Morning Star

New Life  
New Wine  
Pathway of the Stars  
Praise of Creation  
Rhythm of the Universe  
Source of Living Water  
Spark of Light  
Spring of Salvation  
Sustainer of the Cosmos

### ***Images Related to Wisdom***

Banquet-giving Wisdom  
Bread of Wisdom  
Call of Wisdom  
Dance of Wisdom

Prophetic Voice  
Radiant and Unfading Wisdom  
Source of Wisdom  
Teacher of Wisdom

Eye of Wisdom  
Gentle Word  
Hope of Wisdom  
Living Word  
Lover of Truth  
Prophetic Word

Tree of Wisdom  
Word of Challenge  
Word of Life  
Word of Love  
Word of Promise  
Word of Wisdom

### *Related to Women and the Feminine*

Anointed One  
Caring Healer  
Challenge and Comfort  
Comforter  
Compassionate Guest  
Crucified and Risen  
Crucified One  
Dance of Hope  
Dearest Friend  
Dream of Peace  
Empowering Love  
Enriching Hope  
Exemplar of Friendship  
Exemplar of Wholeness  
Eye of Mercy  
Filled with the Spirit  
Full of Life  
Friend of Women  
Gift of Faith  
Giver of Courage

Giver of Peace  
Healer  
Holy Gardener  
Hope of Resurrection  
Incarnate Love  
Liberator  
Life-giving Call  
Life-giving Promise  
Life-Giver  
Living Water  
Promise of Life  
Promise of Redemption  
Protector of the Young  
Respectful Healer  
Risen One  
Song of Life  
Source of Affirmation  
Sun of Justice  
Teacher and Learner  
Voice of Affirmation

## **Contemporary Images of the Holy Spirit**

### **A: As used in the construction:**

...called by the Spirit, your ....

### *Images Related to Creation*

Beating Heart  
Dance of Distant Stars  
Divine Fire

Empowering Wind  
Shining Light  
Song of the Universe  
Star of the Dawn

***Images Related to Holy Wisdom***

Essence of Inspiration  
Guiding Star  
Music of the Spheres  
Peace of the Soul  
Sevenfold Gift  
Truth of God  
Voice of the Wine

***Related to Women and the Feminine***

Abundance of Grace  
Breath of Life  
Burning Love  
Divine Strength  
Eternal Flame  
Flowing Love  
Giver of Gifts

Guardian of the Poor  
Love and Lover  
Oil of Blessing  
Sacred Presence  
Song of the Dawn  
Sure Guide  
Vibrant Life

**B. As used in the construction:**  
...for your spirit, Gift of ....

***Images Related to Creation***

Inspiration  
Justice  
Liberation  
Mercy  
Promise  
Salvation  
Truth

***Images Related to Holy Wisdom***

Courage

Fire

Glory

Goodness

Prophecy

Song

Vision

***Images Related to Women and the Feminine***

Beauty

Boldness

Compassion

Faith

Generosity

Grace

Holy and Joy

New Life

Love

Peace

Power

Solidarity

Wholeness

Witness

**Images of God in the 1970 Roman Sacramentary / Missal**

God is all-powerful (or almighty), creator, eternal (or ever-living), ever-present, holy merciful, unchanging and unseen.

God is our guide, light, protector, redeemer, saviour, shepherd, source of blessings, and source of light.

God is a God of comfort, compassion, consolation, freedom, goodness, holiness, life, light, love, peace, providence, truth, and wisdom.

God is the Father in heaven, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Father of the lowly, Father of all, God of all gifts, God of our fathers, and God of the living and the dead.

See J. Frank Henderson, "God in Our Liturgical Prayer," *Canadian Catholic Review* 1 (1983) 273-277; "The Names and Images of God," *Liturgy* 4 (Spring 1985) (Washington DC) 53-57; "Speaking to the Holy One," *National Bulletin on Liturgy*, vol. 27 no. 137 (Summer 1994) 84-87.

## Images of Jesus Christ in Ancient and Early Medieval Sources

See J.-P. Migne,: “Index nominum omnium quibus SS. Patres Christum designarunt in scriptis,” in *Patrologiae cursus completus: series latina*, vol. 219, col. 475-484.

Abel slain	
Abraham wandering	Calf
Accumulation of testimony	Camel
Adorable	Catholic priest
Advocate	Cause of blindness
All-embracing	Cause of illumination
All-powerful	Celestial Adam
All-surrounding	Child from the breast
Angel	City
Anointed	Clothing of deity
Apostle of our confession	Cloud
Arm of God	Cluster of grapes
Armour of God	Co-eternal with the Father
Arrow	Column of smoke
Atonement	Comforter
Author of the faith	Completer of the faith
Author of life	Consuming fire
Authentic high priest	Cornerstone
Axe at the root	Correct way for travelers
	Covenant
Balance	Cultivator
Bar	Curse
Bed	
Beginning	David
Beginning of all virtues	Day
Betrothed	Death of death
Bird	Defender
Blinding those with sight	Deviator
Bolt	Dew
Book	Dinner companion
Branch	Dispenser of eternal salvation
Brazen serpent	Doctor
Bread of Angels	Dove
Bridegroom	Death of death
Brilliant	
Bull	Eagle



Eastern way	End
End of the Law	Hand of God
End of our work	Head of angels
End of every end	Head of Christians
End of both Testaments	Head of the body of the church
Endowed with power	Head of the church
Emmanuel	Head of everything
Eternal bread	Head of the faithful
Eternal priest	Head of the family
Eternal life	Head of humanity
Eternal priest	Head of nations
Example	Head of the saints
Expectation	Heir
Farmer	High priest
The Father's judge	House of God
Firmament	Humble path
Flower	
Flower of the field	Illumination of the blind
Flower of Mary	Immaculate
Font	Immaculate lamb of God
Fortitude	Image of God
Foundation of all building stones	Inspector of hearts
Foundation of the apostles and prophets	Isaac-to-be sacrificed
Foundation of the church	
Foundation of foundations	Jesse
Foundation of the heavenly Jerusalem	Jonah
Foundation of our temple	Joseph sold
Framer of heaven and earth	Judge
Framer of the new testament	Justice
Fruit of the vine	
Fruit of the womb	King
Gem	King of glory
Giant	King of heaven
Good Path	King of justice
Governor	King of the church
Grace of God	King of nations
Grain	King of the new age
Grape	
Great mountain	Lamp
Green Tree	Levite
Guide of the human race	Life of the elect
	Life of the faithful

Life-restoring  
Light of the world  
Lion  
Lion cub  
Little mountain  
Lord  
Lute  
  
Mark  
Master  
Mediator of God and humanity  
Melchizedek  
Mercy  
Mirror of the Father  
Mount in the height of mountains  
Mountain  
Mountain of God  
Mountain which pleased the Father  
Mixing bowl (divinity and humanity)  
Mustard  
Mystery  
  
Nazarene  
Neighbor  
New Adam  
New sacrifice  
New song  
New sun  
Night  
Noah mocked  
  
Offerer of a service  
Oil  
Only-begotten  
Orphan  
Our aid  
Our example  
Our knowledge  
Our neighbor  
Our preacher  
Our profit  
Our redemption  
Our reward

Light  
Our salvation  
Our title  
Our wisdom  
Overseer  
  
Paraclete  
Paschal lamb  
Passageway  
Path  
Peace  
Peace-making  
Pearl  
Perfect way  
Physician  
Pleasing  
Priest  
Prince  
Prince of angels  
Prince of Judah  
Proclaimer  
Prophet  
Promised land  
Proof or pledge of our resurrection  
Proof of his life given for us  
Pure  
  
Rain  
Razor  
Recompense  
Redeemer  
Reed pen  
Reformer of life  
Refuge of sinners  
Resurrection  
Rich mountain  
Right hand of God  
Right hand of the Most High  
Road  
Rock  
Root  
Ruler of all the earth

Sacrifice  
Salvation of nations  
Samaritan  
Samson  
Sanctification  
Sandal  
Scale  
Scandal to unbelievers  
Scarab  
Scribe  
Seal  
Second Adam  
Secret  
Seed  
Seer of the Father  
Sentinel  
Serpent  
Servant of God  
Service  
Sheep  
Shepherd  
Shepherd king  
Ship  
Shoe  
Sign  
Solid rock  
Solitary sparrow  
Solomon  
Son of God  
Son of Abraham and David  
Son of the handmaid  
Son of Man  
Source  
Source of waters  
Source of blessing  
Source of all good  
Source of mercy  
Source of all virtues  
Spiritual rock  
Splendor of the glory of the Father  
Spring  
Sprout  
Star

Salvation of God  
Stream  
Strength  
Strength of our head  
Strength of God  
Stone  
Stone nourishing the world  
Stone of support  
Stringed instrument  
Stumbling block  
Sublime fruit of the earth  
Substantial form of the Father  
Suitable  
Sun  
Sun of justice  
Support of the church  
Sure way  
  
Teacher  
Teacher of peace  
Teacher of eternal salvation  
Torrent  
Tower  
Treasure  
Treasury  
Treasure of all good  
Tree  
Tree of Life  
True sun  
  
Unction  
  
Valiant in war  
Vine branch  
  
Warrior  
Watchman  
Way  
Way of truth  
Wedding garment  
Well  
Will of God  
Wine

Wisdom  
Wisdom of the Father  
Witness

Yeast