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December 2018

## A Prayer

Walter Maloney

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### Recommended Citation

Maloney, Walter, "A Prayer" (2018). *Clippings*. 254.  
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# A Prayer

Father Walter Maloney of Saint John's Church in Oxford delivered this invocation at the memorial services for the late John F. Kennedy Monday morning:

ALMIGHTY AND ETERNAL GOD we ask your Fatherly Blessing upon this crowd gathered here this morning. We have come here this morning to beseech your mercy in behalf of your servant John F. Kennedy. Our fervent prayer is that you will give lasting peace to his immortal soul.

His life was a life of dedication to his fellowman, his devotion to duty an example to us all. His adherence to principles an unqualified of man.

Thou has taken him unto thyself and while the grief is heavy upon our people we ask thee to give us the faith to see thy good and gracious purpose even in the adversities of life. It is appointed unto man to die. We expect death yet so few are ever really prepared to die. Even after death the just shall be remembered. The judgements of the world, be they good or evil, will not harm the dead. His memory will endure and God and his people will not forget him.

WE ESPECIALLY ASK that you lift the heavy burden of sorrow from the hearts of his family. Give them of your strength that they may exemplify in their lives that same courage which so marked the life of thy servant John. May they look meekly up through their tears to you the God of Consolation and receive from your bounty the Grace to endure the heavy cross of sorrow which has come into their life.

But most of all heavenly Father we ask thy forgiveness. The heavy burden of guilt is upon us all and while we lament the untimely death of our president we beg thee to give us the courage to recognize our guilt and draw from this atrocious crime upon the person of our president, his family and our nation a revaluation of the christian principles which should dominate our lives.

We have lost true sight of the purpose of life itself. We have allowed the seeds of hatred to be planted in the hearts of our people so that an infestering sore has obsessed our nation and its people. Drive out of our hearts we beseech thee this spirit of rebellion against thy divine precepts. Instill in our hearts the supernatural seeds of that love which exemplified the life of thy divine son.

WE CANNOT SERVE both God and Mammon. A house so divided against itself shall soon fall. Hatred and violence and discouragement are the tools of the devil by which he draws men away from thee the true source of life itself.

Grant us then that through the death of the chosen leader of our nation that we may become more aware of our responsibilities in these matters and give to us the grace that we may through our actions restore a sense of balance to our troubled world.

Grant us the courage that we may stand firm with thee and conquer the world not through emotional outbursts of hatred and violence but rather through the persuasive methods of love.