

Prayer for the Feast of St. Ursula

October 21, 2023

Call to Prayer

We gather to celebrate the feast of St. Ursula, to honor her memory because St. Angela chose to place the Company she founded in 1535 under St. Ursula's special patronage. Today it is mainly through legend and through sacred art that we know something of this Christian woman, virgin and martyr, and of the spirit she engendered.

Prayer Response

Loving God, we give thanks for St. Ursula and her group of courageous, faithful Christian women. We are companions on life's journey, following Christ together, and leading others to him. Help us to be faithful, courageous, and loving. Trusting your love for us, may we be open as St. Ursula was and give you a place in our lives. Amen.

Song Response

Companions on the Journey

(Carey Landry)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fm7K9siabag>



*We are companions on the journey,
breaking bread and sharing life;
and in the love we bear is the hope we share
for we believe in the love of our God,
we believe in the love of our God.*

No longer strangers to each other;
no longer strangers in God's house;
we are fed and we are nourished
by the strength of those who care,
by the strength of those who care.

We have been gifted with each other,
and we are called by the Word of the Lord:
to act with justice, to love tenderly,
and to walk humbly with our God,
to walk humbly with our God.

Reflection

From *Angela Merici's Journey of the Heart* by Mary-Cabrini Durkin*

"...Ursula and her companions model a new truth, forge a new way, within the Church. Ursula was a natural leader, who evoked faith and encouraged her companions to greatness. She stood among them, not above them. Her authority flowed from her holiness and zeal. Ursula had shared her spirit with her companions. Following her example, they too had committed themselves to Christ...There was once a group of brave Christian women. There was once a woman whom we call Ursula. May she forever be the heavenly friend and model of all who will bear the name Ursuline: companions on life's journey, following Christ together, and leading others to him; faithful, courageous, and loving!"

For Pondering and Sharing

How are we called to live Ursula's spirit in our lives today?

Intercessions

We who travel this violence-torn world pray for a strong boat and a courageous crew...

All: St. Ursula, companion us with *strength*.

We who strain to find our way without map or compass pray for clarity and vision...

All: St. Ursula, companion us with *single-minded dedication*.

We who agonize over the abuse and suffering of women and children pray for a healing voice and touch...

All: St. Ursula, companion us with *compassion*.

We who face the storms and arrows of power and destruction in our society and our church pray for prophetic voices and wisdom...

All: St. Ursula, companion us with *courage*.

We who long for and labor for God's Reign to take root in our world pray that forgiveness and peace will reign...

All: St. Ursula companion us with *inclusivity*.

We pause now to speak aloud any persons or intentions for which we wish to pray...

Response to each intercession will be:

All: St. Ursula, companion us.

Concluding Prayer

Loving God, you gave St. Ursula and her companions the courage to witness to the Gospel of Jesus even to the point of giving their lives for it. We ask you to let our lives be centered in you. May we, too, be strong in faith and courageous in leadership. By being faithful to your love, may we live in you, receive life from you, and always be true to your inspiration and call. Amen.