

Prayer Corner 5

Anima Christi

By Regina Williams

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Matthew 11: 28-30

“Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

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A few years ago, after two family tragedies within two years, I felt far from God but knew I didn't want to stay there. I was led to spend seven days of silent retreat at the Jesuit Center for Spiritual Growth in Wernersville, PA, now closed. The only speaking time was with my

spiritual director (assigned by the Jesuit organizers) for an hour each day. The rest of each day I spent reading and praying or walking the paths of the beautiful grounds. I was not a Roman Catholic; there were several other such non-Catholics among the 20 or so retreatants.

I went on, after I got home, to do an eight-month journey with my spiritual director (who luckily for me lived not far away) using the wonderful, uplifting book The Ignatian Adventure by Kevin O'Brien, SJ. This is a modern language translation (interpretation) of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Jesuit order.

This is where I found the prayer, Anima Christi (the spirit of Christ), a modern translation of that of St. Ignatius. I prayed it every day of my spiritual journey (and have tried to do so since) and memorized it. It helps me to concentrate on Jesus when I pray or read the Bible or just need a spiritual break in my day. It brings Jesus to me, as the words say.

## **Anima Christi**

*Jesus, may all that is you flow into me.  
May your body and blood be my food and drink.  
May your suffering and death be my strength and life.  
May the shadow of your cross be the shelter I seek.  
O good Jesus, hear me.  
Let me not run from the love which you offer,  
But hold me safe from the forces of evil.  
On each of my sorrows shed your light and your love.  
And keep calling to me until that day comes,  
When with your saints, I may praise you forever.  
Amen*

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