

# The City Church, New York

The Prayer of Thanksgiving and Intercession – Sunday January 28, 2007

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F. W. Faber was born in West Yorkshire on this day in 1814. He wrote many hymns, including "There's a Wideness in God's mercy like the wideness of the sea. There's a kindness in God's justice that is more than liberty." Let us pray.

Our Father:

We've learned that it was only by Your unmerited favor in Christ Jesus that we were brought into life out of nothing at all. And we've learned it's only by Your unmerited favor in him that we're brought back into life out of the abyss of sin and death into which we plunged. So help us, our dear Father, to be grateful and faithful in our living Your gifts of life. May all that we say and do be the praise that's appropriate for the kindness You've shown -- kindness far too wide and far too deep for us to ever really comprehend.

But we have learned, in Christ Jesus, that it is Your will that the mercy You bestow on us, in him, be mirrored in the mercy we show to one another. And so we pray earnestly that, while it is yet day and we may yet be able to do mercy, we be granted, by Your mercy, a greater mindfulness and a better mastering of mercy in all our interactions in this world. How else, Father, are we to live out the love with which You love us?

And we have learned, in Christ Jesus, that it is Your will that the kindness of Your justice kindle a corresponding kindness in all our own dealings with one another. So we pray earnestly that, while it is yet day and we may yet be able to do justice, we be granted, by Your kind justice, a more passionate purpose to pursue a kinder and more just way in this world. How else, Father, are we to live out the love with which You love us?

We pray for all whom we've treated with less mercy and less kindness than You've shown us. We pray for those to whom we've been unjust. Heal them from the hurt we've inflicted. Bless them in spite of our carelessness. And we pray also for ourselves, for we, too, have been treated with less mercy and less kindness than is Your will. Heal us from the hurt we've experienced. Bless us that we might grow through the suffering.

Now bless us in this service of worship together. Give us ears to hear and wills to obey, as we once more add the words we were taught to pray, saying:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day, our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.