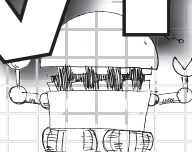


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PRAYERS, PAPERS, & PLAY



Devotions for Every College Student

Barbara Canale



Liguori

Liguori, Missouri

Imprimi Potest:

Harry Grile, CSsR, Provincial
Denver Province, The Redemptorists

Published by Liguori Publications
Liguori, Missouri 63057

To order, call 800-325-9521
www.liguori.org

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Canale, Barbara S.

Prayers, papers, and play : devotions for every college student / Barbara S. Canale. — 1st ed.
p. cm.

1. College students—Prayers and devotions. 2. Catholic Church—Prayers and devotions.

I. Title.

BX2373.S8C35 2013

242'.634—dc23

2012042162

p ISBN: 978-0-7648-2154-7

e ISBN: 978-0-7648-6809-2

Excerpts from English translation of the Catechism of the Catholic Church for the United States of America © 1994, United States Catholic Conference, Inc.—*Libreria Editrice Vaticana*; English translation of the Catechism of the Catholic Church: Modifications from the *Editio Typica* © 1997, United States Catholic Conference, Inc.—*Libreria Editrice Vaticana*.

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Compliant with *The Roman Missal*, third edition.

Liguori Publications, a nonprofit corporation,
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To learn more about The Redemptorists,
visit Redemptorists.com.

Printed in the United States of America
17 16 15 14 13 / 5 4 3 2 1
First Edition

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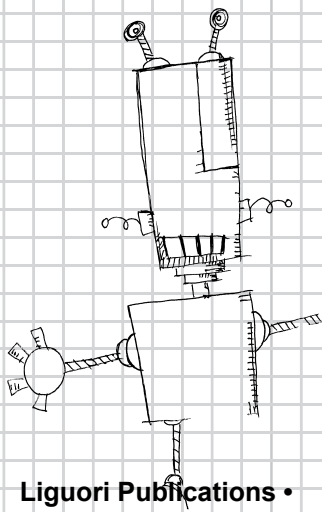
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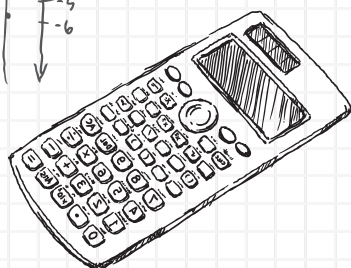
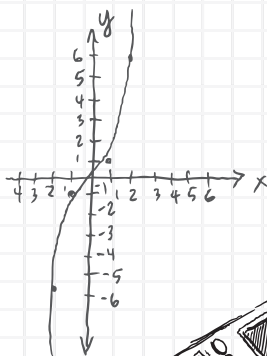
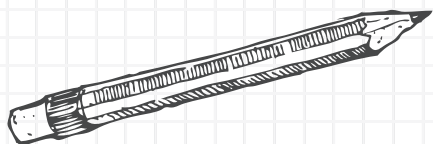
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Mid-August



New Beginnings



Sunday

“The LORD said to Abram: Go forth from your land, your relatives, and from your father’s house to a land that I will show you” (Genesis 12:1).

Have courage by walking with God. It can be unnerving to step outside of your comfort zone as you transition into campus life. Apprehensiveness melts away when you turn to God, who will fortify you. On the feast of the Assumption of Mary, recall the difficulties and trepidations she experienced with her transitions. God watched over her just as he will safeguard you. To develop stability with God, turn to prayer. How often will you include prayer in your daily routine? God is always with you, guiding and protecting you as you begin school. As you navigate your campus this week, remember that God is walking beside you.

Dear God,

Wrap your loving arms around me as I embark on a new life in college near the feast of Mary’s Assumption. Guide me on my journey and keep me safe, as you protected Mary. Allow me to absorb the experiences you have provided and teach me to embrace all that is good on this campus. I love you, Lord. Amen.



Monday

“A time to seek, and a time to lose” (Ecclesiastes 3:6).

Include God in your plans. God directed your path to your university because that is where he wants you to be. You are standing at the precipice of your collegiate journey where you will make myriad discoveries about yourself, your friends, professors, classes, and curriculum. Your time at college is precious; use it wisely. Ask God to help you to cultivate earnest study habits. This wonderful opportunity of new beginnings allows you to develop all of the positive traits and behaviors that God wants for you, to expand on them and grow. While graduation is your final destination, the worthwhile elements creating your college experience is the journey. How do you plan to make necessary changes in your life and cultivate your relationship with God at school?

Dear God,

Help me as I embark on this journey of discovering who I am and what I am made of. Make me strong and capable to withstand all that awaits me. Teach me to embrace all that is worthy and to avoid anything that could derail me. I adore you, Jesus, my Lord and Savior. Amen.

Tuesday

“Because of you my acquaintances shun me;
you make me loathsome to them” (Psalm 88:9).

Make God your BFF. Your high school friends don’t respond to your texts often enough. Are they as busy as you? Through social media you find pictures of them with new friends. Remember that the bond of true friends survives the test of time. God has provided you with a chance to develop new friendships through ultimate Frisbee competitions, presentations, concerts, and social events to welcome students to campus. Attend them with an open mind. Maybe you want to be involved with athletics, student government, or community service. How will you cultivate new relationships on campus? How will you foster your friendship with God? What can you do each day to reinforce your love of the Lord?

Dear God,

Bless my friends from home and all of the new friendships that I make on campus. Surround me with people who will make my transition to college life meaningful and happy. Help me to develop authentic bonds with students who will enrich my college experience, and help me to grow and become all that you want me to be. I love you, Lord. Amen.

Wednesday

“The noble plan noble deeds, and in noble deeds they persist”
(Isaiah 32:8).

Put God in your plan. Devise plans to keep on track by setting goals. Prioritize lists of things you must do and things you want to do. Plan how to motivate yourself, through physical activities, school functions, prayer, or through other creative measures. Does your school host guest speakers whose talks you can attend? Would you like to participate in an honors program? How will you connect with God each day? How will you develop your spirituality on campus? Can you keep a list of ways to accomplish this while juggling your courses and social activities? You are pleasing God by making a plan to include him in your life at school. Though it requires concentration and effort to make a plan, it is worthwhile taking the first step toward achieving your goal, especially if God is at the top of that list.

Dear God,

Assist me in assessing my plans and goals. Guide me on my college journey. Thank you for putting wonderful ideas into my head and for placing supportive people in my path. With you, I can do anything. Amen.

Thursday

“From the ends of the earth I call; my heart grows faint.
Raise me up, set me on a rock, for you are my refuge,
a tower of strength against the foe” (Psalm 61:3–4).



Listen to God's advice. It is understandable to have feelings of homesickness. Ask God to give you the courage to leave the confines that are isolating. Also, ask God to help you make new friends and to give you the courage to take the first step forward. It will be the first of many that you will have to make on campus and throughout the rest of your life. What strategy will you use to listen to God's voice today? Turn off your phone and walk to class with God in your heart. Tell him the fears you harbor and listen for his reply. You might rejoice in the message he is trying to convey. Listen, and God will tell you what to do.

Dear God,

Remove my apprehensions and fill me with courage, for I so desire to be a successful student. Bring the right people into my life to help me to grow on this campus. Bless my actions and keep me in your good graces today and always. Amen.

Friday/Saturday

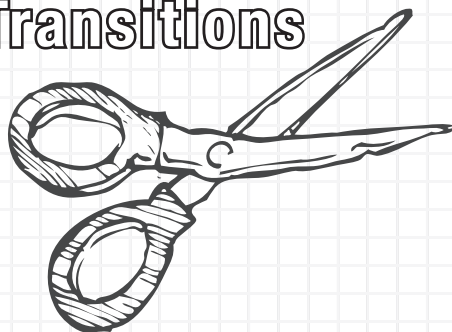
“What is desired of a person is fidelity” (Proverbs 19:22).

Kindness pleases God. People are fallible but basically good. Loyalty is a character trait you hope your friends possess. God gives you the opportunity to be loyal to him and to others each day, so return it abundantly and faithfully, but do so with kindness. Any gesture, regardless of the size, if it is done with kindness, it is done with love. Perhaps smile at someone you normally would not notice or join a student eating alone in the cafeteria. What other act of kindness could you do today? You might encounter classmates who don't share the same morals or values that you have. Can you offer a prayer for them instead of a harsh word? You cannot begin to know what fears or pains they harbor. God wants everyone to be treated kindly. How can you be more kind to your classmates?

Dear God,

Help me to treat everyone I meet with kindness, even though some may not deserve it. Help me to have compassion to ill-tempered people, for they need my care the most. Let me lead by my example of gentleness and consideration. Amen.

Transitions



Sunday

“Be strong and steadfast! Do not fear nor be dismayed, for the LORD, your God, is with you wherever you go” (Joshua 1:9).

You are never alone. You may feel lonely because your family has returned home. Perhaps you are living in a small space and the solitude might be intimidating or frightening. But God is with you. Let God’s presence settle over you and comfort you. How will you reach out to God? There will be times when you will be called upon to do something outside of your comfort zone. Maybe it is taking your first college exam, making your first presentation, or trying out for a sport. What are your concerns and how will you overcome them? Face your fears, remembering that God is beside you and the Holy Spirit dwells within you. The Lord God Almighty will not let you be harmed.

Dear God,

Remove the anxieties that surround and engulf me. Give me the determination that I need to step away from my isolation and be a successful college student. Help me, Lord, to have the courage to meet new people and establish an endearing connection with them and with you. Amen.