

We hope you enjoy these sample pages. For ordering information, visit Liguori.org.



AGNES CUNNINGHAM, SSCM



Imprimi Potest: Thomas D. Picton, C.Ss.R.
Provincial, Denver Province
The Redemptorists

Published by Liguori Publications
Liguori, Missouri 63057
To order, call 800-325-9521
www.liguori.org

Copyright © 2010 by Agnes Cunningham

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or any other—except for brief quotations in printed reviews, without the prior permission of the publisher.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Cunningham, Agnes, 1923-

Traveling graces : a little book of plane prayers / Agnes Cunningham. — 1st ed.
p. cm.

ISBN 978-0-7648-1959-9

1. Travelers—Prayers and devotions. 2. Air travel—Prayers and devotions. I. Title.
BV283.T7C86 2010
242'.88—dc22

2010018013

Scripture citations are taken from the *New Revised Standard Version of the Bible*, copyright 1989 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

“All things come home at eventide” quotation is from **HOMING** by TERESA DEL-RIEGO and ARTHUR L. SALMON, © 1927 CHAPPELL MUSIC LTD. (PRS). All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission of ALFRED PUBLISHING CO., INC.

Liguori Publications, a nonprofit corporation, is an apostolate of the Redemptorists. To learn more about the Redemptorists, visit *Redemptorists.com*.

Printed in the United States of America
14 13 12 11 10 5 4 3 2 1
First edition

DEDICATION

The Airport Chaplain • 11

INTRODUCTION

Check-in • 13

PART I: WINGS

Take-off • 18

First Flight • 20

In the Cockpit • 22

Flight Attendants • 24

Companions in Flight • 26

Flight Commuter • 28

Morning Shuttle • 30

Carry-on Luggage • 32



PART II: SOARING

- Cruising • 36
- Meal Service • 38
- Turbulence • 40
- Jet Stream • 42
- Cloud World • 44
- “Glory” • 46
- Illusion • 48
- Solitude in the Sky • 50
- West into the Sunset • 52
- Stretch Jet • 54
- Capacity Flight • 56
- International Journey • 58
- One in Christ • 60
- Vacation Bound • 62

PART III: EARTHBOUND

Stand-by • 66

Cancelled! • 68

Waiting Room • 70

Close Call • 72

The Montreal Airport: July 14, 1987 • 74

Prepare for Landing • 76

Grounded • 78

TAKE-OFF

Lord,
Any moment now it will happen.
The plane will pick up speed,
 all motors racing,
 and we shall skim the surface of the runway
 to that zero point,
 where one great surge of energy
 will lift us up from solid earth,
 on still more solid air,
 to set us on our way.

Support us, strong and holy Lord,
 by your power and might.
Lift us on the everlasting wings
 of your loving providence.
Sustain us as we fly.
Hold us in your quiet, calming hands.
Enfold us in your gentle care.
Amen.

The next day John again was standing with two of his disciples, and as he watched Jesus walk by, he exclaimed, "Look, here is the Lamb of God!" The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. When Jesus turned and saw them following, he said to them, "What are you looking for?" They said to him, "Rabbi" (which translated means Teacher), "where are you staying?" He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him that day. It was about four o'clock in the afternoon.

JOHN 1:35-39

FIRST FLIGHT

Lord,
It scarcely seems possible
that in this day of space shuttles
and orbiting astronauts,
I am flying for the very first time.

But, there you have it—
as if I had to tell you!

Yes, I am jittery, excited,
apprehensive,
very much a pioneer of sorts,
among all these others
who look as if they do this every other day.

Thank you, surprising Lord,
for this new experience.
I want to be relaxed enough to live
the fullness of this moment,
exhilarated enough to make every
bit of it my own.

Be with me, Lord of the skyways, with your blessing,
as you have been present
to every other first time
in my life!

Amen.

Then Jesus called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal. They departed and went through the villages, bringing the good news and curing diseases everywhere.

LUKE 9:1-2, 6

IN THE COCKPIT

Lord,

I caught a glimpse
of the captain and the crew
of this ship,
as I passed the cockpit.

They looked competent enough,
appropriately serious,
but not glum,
reassuringly at ease, and
seemingly in control.

Lord of the airways
that envelop this world
and the great expanses of space,
steady the hands,
clear the minds,
sharpen the eyes
of those who guide our journey.

Ease their hearts of personal care,
protect the friends and family
they have left behind.

Keep them alert and far from
boredom as they sit, masterfully,
before that instrument panel
in the cockpit.

Amen.



*Therefore I prayed, and understanding was given me;
I called on God, and the spirit of wisdom came to me....
I loved her more than health and beauty,
and I chose to have her rather than light,
because her radiance never ceases....
For both we and our words are in his hand,
as are all understanding and skill in crafts....
The cycles of the year and the constellations of the stars...,
for wisdom, the fashioner of all things, taught me.*

WISDOM 7:7, 10, 16, 19, 22

FLIGHT ATTENDANTS

Lord,

These young men and women,
who welcome us aboard,
always intrigue me.

In a sense, they are all
of the same mold,
graduates of the same flight attendant school.

Yet, each one stands uniquely alone.

Below the certified surface,
the differences lie,
ready to break through,
given the least encouragement.

Each one carries a story and a dream
in a very human heart.

Lord,

you came to us as a servant,
in graciousness and compassion;
you taught us to aspire
to noble, lofty ideals.

Be with these men and women now, Lord,
as they answer our demands
and meet our needs.

Teach them to lift
their hearts and minds
in praise to you,
as they walk and minister
above the earth.

Amen.



*Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit;
and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord;
and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same
God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is
given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common
good....All these are activated by one and the same
Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the
Spirit chooses.*

1 COR. 12:4-7, 11

COMPANIONS IN FLIGHT

Lord,

we've been in the air long enough
for me to have had time
to look around
at all the others in this plane.

I wonder where they've been
and what their destination is.

Are there any who have
never known you?
any who have walked away
from your friendship?
any you would call to a life
of closer association with you
and greater service of the poor and needy?

Reader of hearts and minds,
Lord of the secret places of our lives,
be close to my companions
on this flight.

Open their ears to the
sound of your voice;
their eyes,
to the beauty of your face;

their minds,
to the truth that you are;
their hearts,
to your gentle, insistent love.

Touch them, Lord, and quicken them to
a new and blessed life.

Amen.



*How very good and pleasant it is
when kindred live together in unity!
It is like the precious oil on the head,
running down upon the beard,
on the beard of Aaron,
running down over the collar of his robes.
It is like the dew of Hermon,
which falls on the mountains of Zion.
For there the LORD ordained his blessing,
life forevermore.*

PSALM 133