## Contents

Preface—Prayer for the Idiot Author That He Doesn't Totally Punt in the Pages That Followxvii
Prayer for the Kindergarten Boy Who Asked Me, How Do You Manage to Get So Many Words on a Single Page of Your Book, Mister?1
Prayer for Cashiers and Checkout-Counter Folks3
Prayer in Thanks for Decent Shoes5
Prayer for Robert Louis Stevenson on His Birthday, November 137
Prayer in Celebration of the Greatest Invention Ever, the Wicked Hot Shower9
Prayer in Celebration of Brief Things, for Example, Church Services11
Desperate Prayer for Patience with Politicians with Excellent Suits and Shoes and Meticulous Hair and Gobs of Television Makeup Who Have Utterly Forgotten That Their Jobs Are Finally About Feeding and Clothing and Protecting and Schooling Children 13
Prayer for the Little Brown Birds Nesting in the Lavender Bushes by the Walnut Tree

Furious Prayer for the Church I Love and Have Always Loved but Which Drives Me Insane with Its Fussy Fidgety Prim Tin-Eared Thirst for Control and Rules and Power and Money Rather Than the One Simple	
Thing the Founder Insisted On	. 17
Muttered Prayer in Thanks for the Under-Genius of Christmas	. 19
Prayer of Thanks for All Birds, Herons in Particular	. 21
Prayer for Hospital Chaplains	. 23
Prayer for My Brother	. 24
Prayer of Thanks for Old Girlfriends, or Boyfriends, as the Case May Be	. 25
Prayer of Spitting Inchoate Rage That You Allow Such Things & People to Inflict Such Horrendous Pain & Agony, Especially on Little Kids, How Could You Let That <i>Happen</i> ?	. 27
Prayer in Thanks for (Small) Pains	. 29
Prayer of Bemused Thanks for Scrunchies & Those Othe Weird Lovely Things Women Wear in Their Hair	
Prayer on Seeing Yet Another Egregious Parade of Muddy Paw Prints on the Floor	. 33
Prayer in Reluctant but Abashed Hesitant Appreciation of Death	. 35
Prayer of Thanks for Stephen John Nash, of What Is Today Called British Columbia	. 37

Prayer for the Men & Women Who Huddle Inside Vast Rain Slickers All Day Holding Up STOP Signs at Construction Sites & Never Appear to Shriek in Despair & Exhaustion
Prayer for Osama bin Laden Yes Even Him the Stupid Murderous Slime
Prayer for All the Dads of the Girls I Dated Before Winning the Girl Lottery <i>Big Time</i>
Prayer of Thanks for Hoes & Scythes & Spatulas & Toothbrushes & Binoculars & the Myriad Other Tools & Instruments That Fit Our Hands So Gracefully & Allow Us to Work with a Semblance of Deftitude45
Prayer to the Madonna47
Prayer for the Girl Scouts of America49
Prayer on Good Friday51
Prayer for Opossums, You Poor Ugly Disdained Perfect Creatures53
Prayer for Women Named Ethel and Men Named Elmer, for We Will Not See Their Likes Again55
Prayer for the Reader Who Photocopies This Prayer and Shares It with Friends and Sisters57
Prayer in Gratitude for the Right Song Arriving at the Right Time, for Example Samuel Barber's <i>Adagio for Strings</i> or Bruce Springsteen's "The Rising," or Chet Baker's "She Was Too Good to Me"

51 53
3
4
5
66
7
69
<b>7</b> 1
′3
'5
7
9
80

Prayer for the Silent Man Holding a White Cross in Front of the Building Where We All Know Abortions Are Taking Place	81
Prayer for the Immense Woman Who Runs Very Slowly Along the Street Every Morning No Matter What the Weather	83
Prayer for Boys and Girls of Other Sexual Orientation Than Mine	85
Prayer for Barry Holstun Lopez, of Finn Rock, Oregon	86
Prayer for the Dads Enduring the Epic Winter Rains Along the Muddy Sidelines at Pee Wee Soccer Games	87
Prayer for Proofreaders	89
Prayer for All the Guys Who Rebounded Shots for Me Over Twenty Years of Basketball	91
Prayer for Good Surfing Conditions This Weekend	93
Prayer for My High School History Teacher Mister Shaper	95
Prayer for My Man Daniel Age Three Who Will Die from Cancer in About Two Weeks	97
Prayer for the Elderly Woman on the Train Eating One Almond Every Five Minutes for Two Hours for a Grand Total of Forty Almonds and Believe Me I Counted, Fascinated	99
Prayer for All Saints and All Souls Day	101

Prayer of Gratitude & Awe for the Lanky Silent Genius Informational Technology Guy Who Just Fixed My Computer by Glaring at It & Waving His Hand	. 103
Prayer of Gratitude for Weekday Noon Masses	. 105
Prayer of Reluctant Grumpy Disgruntled Moist Thanks for Steady Winter Rain	. 107
Prayer for the Teenage Girl Singing with All Her Might as She Stands Alone at the Bus Stop	. 109
Prayer of Gratitude for the Chicago White Sox	. 111
Prayer of Gratitude for the Doctor Who Saved My Son	. 113
Prayer of Awed Thanks for Nurses	. 115
Prayer for the Commonwealth of Australia	. 117
Prayer to Assuage the Loneliness of Priests & Nuns & Brothers	. 119
Prayer for the Soul of the Late James Naismith, of Ontario, Canada	. 121
Prayer for My Boys, the Priests & Brothers of the Congregation of Holy Cross in the United States	. 123
Snarling Prayer for the Reckless Jerk Who Just Swerved Insanely Among Three Lanes of Traffic at Incredible Speed <i>While Texting</i> , Causing Us Other Drivers Heart Palpitations	. 125
Prayer of Gratitude That There Are Newts in This World	. 127

Prayer of Thanks for the Man or Woman or Child Who Invented Socks	
Prayer for My College Roommates	
Prayer of Thanks for Iowa	
Prayer for Sisters Generally Also Known as Nuns (of All Religions)	
Quiet Prayer for Friends Whose Teenage Child Just Stormed Out of the House	
Prayers for the Soul of the Late Karol Józef Wojtyła of Poland	
Prayer for the Incredibly Loud Recycling Truck That Comes at Dawn Every Thursday Morning137	
Prayer for Cats	
Absolutely Serious Prayer in Celebration of Port-A-Potties	
Prayer on Father's Day	
Prayer for the Brave Small Girl Who Had the Courage to Ask Me <i>What Is Wrong with Your Nose, Mister?</i> 142	
Prayer of Intercession for Jorge Mario Bergoglio143	
Prayer for the Publishers of Catholic Books145	
Prayer for Protestants of Every Tradition147	
Prayer on Easter Morning	

Prayer for Catherine Astrid Salome Freeman of Queensland, Australia	. 149
Prayer for Sacristans & Altar Societies & Deacons & Church Janitors & Carpenters	. 150
Prayer of Gratitude for Small Things Done Very Well Tha You Only Notice When You Sit Still & Pay Attention	
Prayer of Awed Admiration for the Islands of Hawai'i	. 153
Prayer for My Lovely Bride of Twenty-Seven Years	. 155
Prayer for a Friend Finishing the Writing of a Difficult & Amazing Book in a Last Rush of Tiny Edits & Harried Rewrites & Epiphanies	. 157
Prayer Before Boarding a Flight	. 159
Prayer to Saint Anthony of Padua	. 161
Prayer for a Daughter Who Is Very Ill	. 162
Grinning Prayer at the Gentle Arrogance & Foolishness of Saying That There Are Only Five Forms of	1.0
Catholic Prayer	
Prayer for People Whose Dads Left Them as Kids	. 165
Prayer of Thanks for Bass Players in Bands	. 166
Prayer for Women Who Endured Abortions	. 167
Prayer for Editors	. 168
Last Prayer	. 169