

A Prayer for Graduates

God, what a great and joyous night this is. It's graduation, marker of success in college, the commencement of a new era in life. Let's get out of here!

God, what a lousy and sad night this is. It's graduation, and we'll never pass this way again; it feels like something is dying inside. Why do we have to leave?

What do we do now? And what are you going to do? We're on this boundary between now and not yet, and we need help to sort out the feelings, the what if's and the why not's, the grief and the giddiness.

Lead us then into the mystery of this time and help us embrace it; teach us the power of this thin place where heaven and earth meet and in the passing of the old something new is being created. Make this night a thermocline of grace and amazement, where surface gives way to depth, and we know what you might do in and among us.

Go with us, God, when we leave this place. Go with us: goad us into tomorrow, guide us when we're lost, grab us with your strong hand when we're about to fall off the precipice of wrong choice, and grant us your peace so we may go confidently on this footsore and sacred journey of our lives.

Glory to you in heaven and on earth.

Amen.

Traditional Irish Blessing

I wish you not a path devoid of clouds,
nor a life on a bed of roses,
not that you might never need regret,
nor that you shall never feel pain.
No, that is not my wish for you.
My wish for you is that you might be brave
in times of trial
when others lay crosses upon your
shoulders.
When mountains must be climbed
and chasms are to be crossed;
when hope scarce can shine through.
That every gift God gave you might grow
along with you.
And let you give the gift of joy to all who
care for you.
That you may always have a friend who is
worth that name.
Who you can trust, and who helps you in
times of sadness.
Who will defy the storms of daily life at
your side.
One more wish I have for you:
That in every hour of joy and pain you may
feel God close to you.
This is my wish for you and for all who care
for you.
This is my hope for you, now and forever.

— Traditional Irish blessing

