



2. PRAYER-PRACTICE FOR DEVELOPING A COMPASSIONATE HEART

*"If you want others to be happy, practice compassion.
If you want to be happy, practice compassion." – Dalai Lama 2005*

Drawing on the *Loving-kindness (Metta Bhavana) Meditation* of Buddhism, the following is a means of daily growing in Compassion. It *'brings about positive attitudinal changes as it systematically develops the quality of 'loving-acceptance'. ... Of all Buddhist meditations, loving-kindness has the immediate benefit of sweetening and changing old habituated negative patterns of mind.'* (Louis Silk) Buddhist *Metta* practice allows us to wish ourselves well as we wish others well. The practice encompasses both self and other. At the heart of Jesus' teachings is the desire for the well-being of everyone, overcoming divisions and developing an open and inclusive heart. *Metta* can help us grow into the likeness of Christ, a means of growing "in Him."

Sit comfortably with your eyes closed. The meditation focuses on self, those who have been kind to us, those we feel neutral about and those we dislike.

Introduction

+ Come, Holy Spirit and fill my heart with your Divine Wisdom. Amen.

Next place a hand on your heart, formulate your desires into four phrases such as:

1. (Self) *May I be freed from anxiety, anger and hatred and be filled with your compassion."*

2. Next, direct the meditation towards someone you feel thankful for or someone who has helped you: *"May ... be freed from anxiety, anger and hatred and be filled with your compassion."*

3. Now visualize people you neither like nor dislike. *“May ... be freed from anxiety, anger and hatred and be filled with your compassion.”*

4. Then visualizing the people you don't like or who you are having a hard time with: *“May ... be freed from anxiety, anger and hatred and be filled with your compassion.”*

5. Finally, direct the meditation towards the whole of creation: *“May all living beings be freed from anxiety, anger and hatred and be filled with your compassion.”*

These things I ask in the name of Jesus' Compassionate Heart. Amen.

Alternative forms of the Metta

May I be filled with your compassion, O Lord. May your Mother's love enfold me.

May (*insert the name of your partner or close friend*) be filled with your compassion, O Lord. May your Mother's love enfold him/her.

May my friends be filled with your compassion, O Lord. May your Mother's love enfold them.

(Repeat this prayer inserting the name of those with whom you work, those you see on the train etc... and someone you dislike or hate)

These things I ask in the name of Jesus' Compassionate Heart. Amen.

Or:

May I be well. May I be happy. May I know the fullness of life.

May s/he (they) be well. May s/he (they) be happy. May s/he (they) know the fullness of life.