

Holy God, Creator of heaven and earth,
Have mercy on us.
Holy and Mighty, Redeemer of the world,
Have mercy on us.
Holy Immortal One, Sanctifier of the faithful,
Have mercy on us.
Holy, blessed and glorious Trinity, One God,
Have mercy on us.

I

O God, we thank you that you have made the ancient story of redemption and hope new and alive in us today. *O God, we thank you.*

As your Son healed the sick and welcomed the outcast, so you have healed and welcomed each of us. *O God, we thank you.*

As Jesus grieved with Mary and Martha, you have consoled us in our losses. *O God, we thank you.*

As the Risen Christ met the two on the road to Emmaus, you have taught us and inspired us. *O God, we thank you.*

As you appeared to Saul and turned him from a persecutor into a bold witness, you have changed our hearts. *O God, we thank you.*

II

We confess to you, O God, that we forget to commend the Good News that is in us. *We confess to you, Lord.*

For allowing daily details to turn service into drudgery, *We confess to you, Lord.*

For our silence when people cry out for help, and our resentment towards those whom you send to us, *We confess to you, Lord.*

For directing our energies into concerns which satisfy the heart, but distract us from you, *We confess to you, Lord.*

For the goals we set that serve our egos, and our anger at you when we do not meet them, *We confess to you, Lord.*

For forgetting the wonder and awe that we knew when you first called us, *We confess to you, Lord.*

III

Forgive us, O Christ, for the many little ways we hide from your love. *Forgive us, O Christ.*

Remind us that you meet us in this moment and no other. *Remind us, O Christ.*

Touch our hearts that we may know your nearness. *Touch us, O Christ.*

Heal us so we may know that by your wounds we are healed. *Heal us, O Christ.*

Accompany us as we go into the world. *Accompany us, O Christ.*

IV

As you sent your disciples to every nation, promising to be with them always, send us into our communities with renewed vision and energy. *Send us out, O Lord.*

Open our eyes and hearts to the people around us. *Send us out, O Lord.*

Teach us the tools and skills we need to serve in your name. *Send us out, O Lord.*

Give us the will to collaborate in creative ways. *Send us out, O Lord.*

Open our hearts to invite everyone into your saving embrace. *Send us out, O Lord.*

Make us good stewards of our work and give us the grace to let go of the outcome. *Send us out, O Lord.*

Bless us with empathy that embraces and does not consume *Send us out, O Lord.*

Foster in us faith that is certain and remains open to questions *Send us out, O Lord.*

Free us to use our resources flexibly and honestly *Send us out, O Lord.*

Make us grateful for the many gifts of all your people *Send us out, O Lord.*

Urge us to be the Gospel to people we would otherwise forget *Send us out, O Lord.*

Give us passion to work for justice and peace *Send us out, O Lord.*

V

You have called us to be your voice in the world. *We bless you, O God.*

You have sent us into the world to baptize and teach. *We bless you, O God.*

You are with us always even to the end of the age. *We bless you, O God*

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Celebrant: Let us pray.

Holy God, your Son called us to wrap the whole world in your saving embrace. By your Holy Spirit, give us compassion, purpose and energy to invite into your Church those who do not yet know the transforming power of your love. We ask this through Him who has brought us from darkness to light, your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

The Rev. Andrew T. Gerns
Trinity Episcopal Church, Easton, PA
September 7, 2005