Lauderdale Park, December 12, 1829

My Dearest Love,

Whenever I have questions about the children's respect for prayer to God at the least morning & evening, they constantly plead, 'Mother, we have no prayer, and we can't tell what to say.' To remedy this, I submit these few petitions to your approval, you can add to, or omit, as you think fit. I conceive the greatest help we can possibly desire for our children is that the fear of God may be constantly before their eyes, deterring them from evil, and the love of God be shed abroad in their hearts, prompting them to obey his commands.

First, I wish to remind them, that they take care to be sincere in their attempts to pray, because prayer does not consist in the words we make use of, but in the sincere desire of our heart that the petitions we offer to God may be granted, and, they will always be heard and answered, so far as they are asked agreeable to the divine will.

Most mighty & ever blessed God, I beseech thee to have mercy upon me, & to help me, by bestowing upon me all those things which thou knowest to be needful for me; defend me, most gracious God, by thy mighty power, and help me by the assistance of thy Holy Spirit, to do whatsoever thou hast commanded me, and carefully to shun all known sin such as pride, vanity, idleness, self-indulgence, impatience, fruitfulness, and discontent; preserve me also from stubbornness and selfishness from all lying and profaneness, turn my heart from the love of sin, to love thee & my Maker. Moreover, redress in that thou mayest finally become my darling; grant me grace to love thy Holy Word, and may it be the all times and under all circumstances, the rule of my life, and conduct; may gratitude for all thy mercies be continually springing in.
up in my heart, I would seek thee for health & strength, for food and raiment, for kind parents and friends, and for delivering me from the many evils which my sins have so justly deserved; pardon, Lord, all the rash and angry words which I may have spoken, and all the sinful thoughts which I have not been careful to rectify, but especially for giving my forgetfulness off base, O my God, and my want of gratitude and love to Jesus Christ, who hast given himself a ransom for my sins, and is even now pleading for me at the right hand of God; may it please thee to grant unto me that godly sorrow for my sins, that shall bring forth in me fruit, root for repentance, and enable me to lay hold on the hope that is set before me in thy holy Word even the Lord Jesus Christ: incline me thankfully to receive instruction, may I learn from the example of my gracious Lord & Master to be humble, patient, meek, kind, and meek; grant me grace to conquer and subdue all those evil tempers which have so often overcome me; feeling myself a great sinner by nature, and by practice too. There improve thy pardon and forgive me through my most merciful Lord and Saviour, since I know that my life is so short and uncertain, help me constantly to remember my latter end, and grant me grace so to live that I may my year to die, being conscious that I am interested in the blood of Christ, and being created anew in Christ Jesus, have passed from a death in from a do sin, to a life in righteousness, I may be enabled to look for ward to a blessed immortality, and at length may be received in those ever lasting habitations which thou hast prepared for them that love thee. — I beseech thee also to bless with me, my dear friends, and all acquaintances, bless the poor, the sick, and those who are in any way afflicted either in mind, body, or estate; bless the land in which I live, but especially all the faithful followers of Jesus Christ. — Bless all thy
ministering servants, grant unto them the counsel of thy Holy Spirit that they may be faithful to the word delivered to their charge, and may be fruitful in every good work. Hasten that happy period, when all shall know thee from the least even to the greatest. These present humble offer in the name of Jesus Christ, through whom alone I can hope for pardon and for heaven.

My dear, I have written this only for your inspection; if you disapprove pray do send it back to me. I desire to be grateful to my God that I do not feel worse than when you were here, and I think not quite so impatient, and I am quite sure if I knew any thing at all of my own heart, it is most sincere desire to be patient and resigned to any affliction, privation or dispersion of the duties however trying or painful—well knowing that we have not an High Priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. Though my iniquities testify against me, and my backslidings are many, yet I acknowledge unto the Lord my manifested sins and transgressions, and would still hope in his mercy especially when I read in the 38th Psalm, this poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. Continue to trust in the Lord, for none ever trusted in him and were confounded. Believe me to remain your sincerely affectionate wife.

Ann Mathews