

Travels, Observations, and Prayers

Poems

by

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Chapter 2

**BENEDICTIONS AND PRAYERS**

For Joe Gatski

(upon learning of his death, 9/5/09)

I heard today  
that another poet  
has gone away

a bright burning light  
words of earth and fire  
snuffed out too soon

the smoke lingers on.

Who Am I? (2/11/09)

(This is a poem that came from a night of reading Rumi and Hafiz.)

Don't ever think, my son,  
even for a minute,  
that those you pass on the street,  
the aged,  
the ill,  
the broken down and beat,  
are  
not  
YOU.

## An Addict's Prayer

(I've worked with a lot of addicts who have been incarcerated. This prayer is dedicated to them.)

Heavenly Father,  
Of all the blessings you could grant,  
I ask but two of thee.  
When my time on earth is done,  
Let me die sober,  
and let me die free.

## Benediction

(These thoughts came to me during the confusion and fright after 9/11.)

Sometimes--

In the midst of troubled days  
we must actively seek out  
those simple treasures that remind us  
of our humanity--

    In times of pain,  
let us seek healing

    In times of fear,  
let us seek hope

    In times of hate,  
let us seek love

    In times of war,  
let us seek peace.

For only in the striving,  
shall we find  
what we are truly looking for.

## UnSerenity Prayer

(written at home--7/9/04. If this was an actual prayer, it would be one of the most answered prayers around.)

God,  
Grant me the anxiety  
to worry about the things I cannot change  
to disregard the things I can  
and the inability to tell the difference.  
Amen.

## Thanksgiving Prayer

(The poor and downtrodden have always held a special place in my heart. This is for them. Published in the 12/8/13 ezine at [art4thehomeless.org](http://art4thehomeless.org))

I sit and bow my head in prayer  
before my Thanksgiving feast  
and reflect gently upon those  
who are less fortunate than I

On this day of gratitude  
I find that I have so much  
so many blessings in my life,  
food, family, friends and more

I hope and pray that those outside  
in the cold tonight,  
can find for themselves  
the blessings that I have here.

The feast is certainly wonderful.  
There's turkey and stuffing,  
gravy and rolls and pie  
more than I could possibly eat.

But it only reminds me of  
what really fills me up inside  
and brings to me a smile  
when my skies are dark and grey

The faces around my table,  
I know them all, and love them dearly  
with their light and life and love  
what would I ever do without them?

There sits Charlie,  
gruff, rugged and strong  
A pillar of strength I can cling to  
when times get hard.

Over there is Mikey,  
razor sharp wit and always ready  
with a joke, a smile, and  
his easy, good natured laugh.

And there is Susan,  
caring, comforting, and warm

She knows me best of all, and  
greet me every evening with a hug.

Where would I be without them?  
God only knows....

My silent prayer is interrupted  
by the scruffy mission worker  
telling me to eat  
before my dinner gets cold.



## What Is Ours

(Written during the troubling times after 9/11.)

We don't have the ability  
to change the past  
or to predict the future.

We don't have much say at all  
over life,  
or death.

It's hard for us to even say for sure  
who is our friend  
and who is not.

Love fades, and plans turn to dust  
and all we've done is eaten away  
by the winds and sands of time.

We seem so fragile  
in this dark uncertain world.

But for all we don't have  
this we can claim for our very own,

Hope,  
Faith,  
and Love.

And these cannot be taken away from us  
by any thing,  
or any one.