

*The prayer of a 17<sup>th</sup> Century Martha or Mary?*

Lord thou knowest better than I know myself that I am getting older and will someday be old. Keep me from the fatal habit of thinking I must say something on every subject and on every occasion. Release me from craving to straighten out everybody's affairs. Make me thoughtful but not moody; helpful but not bossy. With my vast store of wisdom it seems a pity not to use it all, but thou knowest Lord, I want a few friends at the end...Keep me reasonably sweet; I do not want to be a saint – some of them are so hard to live with – but a sour old person is the crowning work of the devil. Give me the ability to see good things in unexpected places and talents in unexpected people. And give me, O Lord, the grace to tell them so.

*Or a prayer from the New Zealand Prayer book  
Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia*

Holy and eternal God,  
give us such trust in your sure purpose,  
that we measure our lives  
not by what we have done or failed to do  
but by our faithfulness to you