

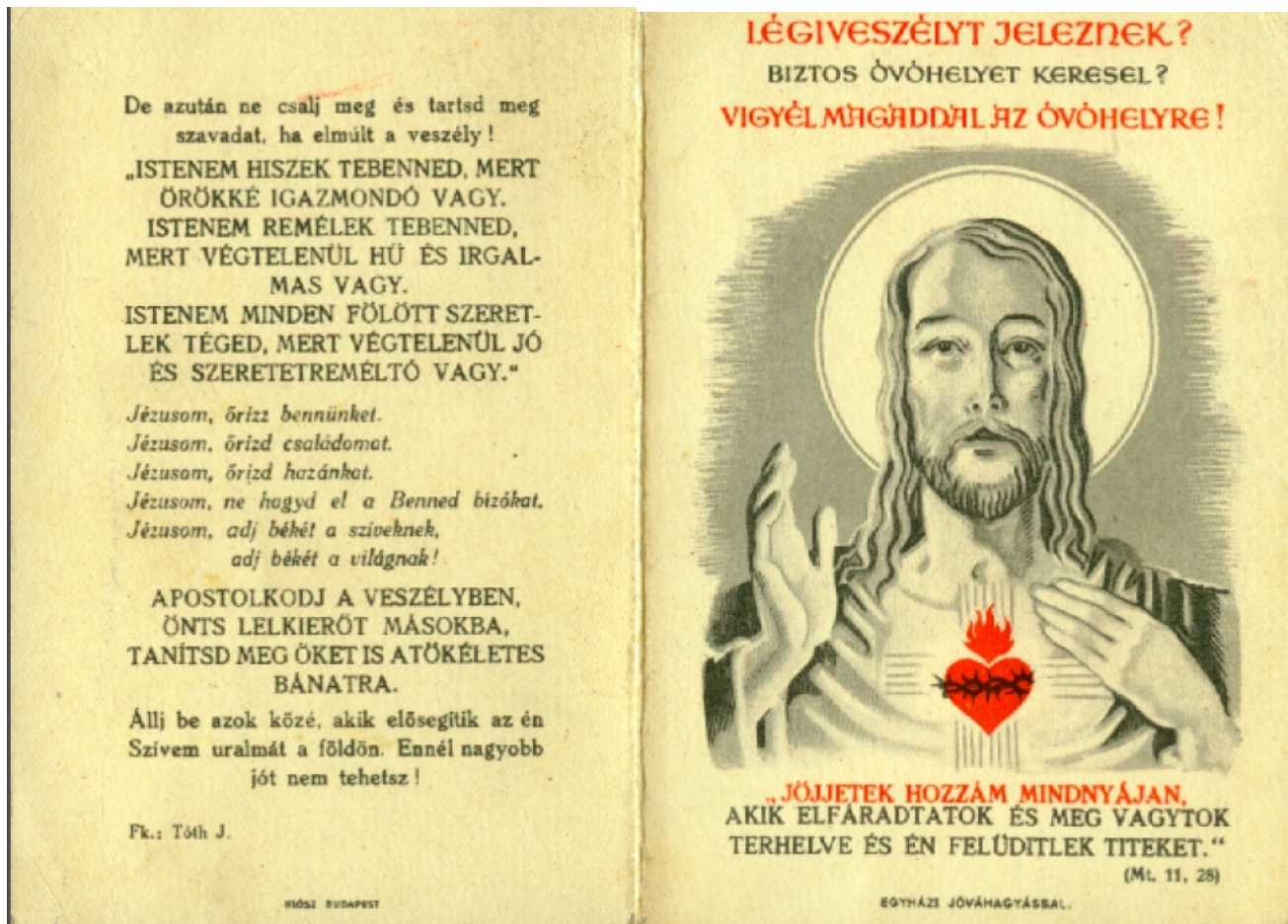
An Airman's Prayer

By Chaplain John Eastwood, 464th Bombardment Group

An Airman's Prayer

God guard and guide us as we fly,
Through the great spaces of the sky;
Be with us as we take to air,
In morning light and sunshine fair.
Eternal Father, strong to save,
Give us courage and make us brave;
Protect us whereso'er we go,
From shell and flak and fire and foe.
Most loved member of our crew,
Ride with us up in the blue.
Direct our bombs upon the foe,
But shelter those whom thou dost know:
Keep us together on our way,
Grant our work success today.
Deliver us from hate and sin,
and bring us safely down again.
O God protect us as we fly,
Through lonely ways across the sky.

An original, Hungarian "Prayer Card" - front and back panels. (English translation below.)



**But afterwards, do not betray me
and keep your promises when the danger is gone.**

"O MY GOD, I BELIEVE IN YOU,
BECAUSE YOU ARE THE ETERNAL TRUTH.
O MY GOD, I HOPE IN YOU,
BECAUSE YOU ARE INFINITELY FAITHFUL
AND MERCIFUL.
O MY GOD, I LOVE YOU ABOVE ALL THINGS,
BECAUSE YOU ARE INFINITELY GOOD
AND WORTHY OF ALL LOVE."

*Jesus, protect us.
Jesus, protect my family.
Jesus, protect our country.
Jesus, do not abandon those who trust in you.
Jesus, give peace to our hearts,
give peace to the world!*

**BE AN APOSTLE IN TIME OF PERIL,
GIVE STRENGTH TO OTHERS,
TEACH THEM TO SAY THE
PERFECT CONTRITION.**

**Join those who promote my heart's
reign to prevail on Earth.
There is no greater good you can do!**

**HAS AN AIR-RAID WARNING
BEEN ISSUED?
ARE YOU LOOKING FOR A SAFE BOMB-SHELTER?
TAKE ME WITH YOU
TO THE SHELTER!**

*"COME UNTO ME,
ALL YE THAT LABOR AND ARE HEAVY LADEN,
AND I WILL GIVE YOU REST."
(Mat 11:28)*

The Hungarian "Prayer Card" inside panels. (English translation below.)



Megszólt a sziréna.

Mindenhol Isten kezében vagy!

Ne zúgolódj! Bizzál bennem, mert az Istent szerelőknek minden javára válik!

TUDOD-E HÁNYAN VANNAK, AKIK CSAK A SZIRÉNAZŰGÁS MELLETT ÉRTIK MEG, HOGY NEM MINDEN EZ A FÖLDI ÉLET, HANEM **AZ ÉLET VÉGSŐ CÉLJA ÉN VAGYOK?**

A világháború borzalmait nem én akartam, hanem az emberi önzés, amely semmibe vette parancsaimat.

Sokaknak kellett ez a világégés, mert ha nem inog meg lábuk alatt az arasznyi földi lét talaja, nem gondolnak a halál utáni életre...

HOL TALÁLSZ MOST ERŐT,

amikor az emberi erő gyenge?

EGYEDŰL CSAK NÁLAM!

„Jézusom, Irgalom!” (Ha szívbeli bánattal mondd, teljes bűcsüt nyersz.)

Ajánld fel ezt a szenvedést is ENGESZTELESŰL, HOGY ÉSZRE TÉRJEN AZ EMBERISÉG ÉS MEGTALÁLJON ENGEM, A BÉKE EGYEDŰLI-FORRÁSÁT.

Gondolkozzál csak...

Nem biztos, hogy éppen téged és tiedet fog érni a bomba. Viszont bárhol legyél is, ha én elszólítlak, el kell jönnöd, akár háborúban, akár békében.

De én csak javadat akarom. Hiszen azért jöttem a földre... Miért nem mered reám bízni a sorsodat?

El ne felejtsd: **LEGBIZTOSABB ÓVÓHELY A TISZTA LELKIISMERET!**

Bűn terheli lelkedet? Indítsd fel a tökéletes bánatot:

„Ó ISTENEM, TELJES SZIVEMBŐL BÁNOM MINDEN BŰNÖMET, MERT AZOKKAL TÉGED, VÉGTELENŰL JÓ ÉS SZERETETREMÉLTÓ ISTENEMET MEGBÁNTOTTALAK. ERŐSEN FOGADOM, HOGY A BŰNT ELHAGYOM ÉS AMINT ALKALMAM LESZ, MEGGYÓNOK. JÉZUSOM, IRGALMAZZ! JÉZUS SZÍVE, BIZOM BENNED!”

The siren has been sounded.

You are in God's hands everywhere!

Do not lament! Trust in me, since all good things come to people who love God!

DO YOU KNOW HOW MANY PEOPLE REALIZE ONLY BY THE WAILING SOUND OF SIRENS, THAT LIFE ON EARTH IS NOT ALL THERE IS, **BUT THAT I AM THE ULTIMATE PURPOSE OF LIFE?**

The horrors of the world war were not desired by me, it was caused by human selfishness that ignored my commandments.

Many people needed this cataclysm, because without the narrow ground of earthly existence shaking beneath their feet, they would not think of the afterlife...

WHERE WILL YOU FIND STRENGTH, now that human strength is weak? ONLY BY MY SIDE!

"Jesus, have mercy on me!" [If you say this with true sorrow in your heart, you will receive plenary indulgence.]

Offer this suffering as
RECONCILIATION, TO BRING PEOPLE TO THEIR SENSES, AND HELP TO FIND ME AS THE SOLE SOURCE OF PEACE.

Just think...

It is not sure that you or your beloved will be hit by the bomb. However, wherever you are when I summon you, you must come to me either in war or in peace.

I only want the best for you. That is why I came to the earth... Why don't you have the courage to entrust your fate to me?

Remember: **THE SAFEST SHELTER IS A CLEAR CONSCIENCE!**

Is sin weighing on your soul? Say the Act of perfect contrition:

"O MY GOD, I AM HEARTILY SORRY FOR ALL MY SINS, BECAUSE THEY HAVE OFFENDED YOU, MY GOD, WHO ARE ALL GOOD AND DESERVING OF ALL MY LOVE. I FIRMLY RESOLVE TO SIN NO MORE, AND TO GO TO CONFESSION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. JESUS HAVE MERCY ON ME! SACRED HEART OF JESUS, I TRUST YOU."



Miklós Radnóti (1909-1944)

Hungarian poet and translator, who is considered one of the most important 20th-century poets of his country. Radnóti was killed at the age of thirty-five during World War II on a forced march toward Germany. After the war Radnóti's last poems, written in a notebook during the march, were discovered in his trench coat pocket at the mass grave in which he was buried.

Born in Budapest into a Jewish family, his mother, Ilona Grosz, died while giving birth to him and his twin brother, who was stillborn. When he was 12, Radnóti lost his father, Jakab Glatter, (who had remarried by then) who died of a brain thrombosis. Miklós was not told about his mother's and twin brother's death until the age of ten. The themes of death, guilt and sacrifice would later become frequent subjects of his prose and poetry.

He was brought up by relatives who provided him a good education. In 1927 he graduated from a commercial school. In 1928 he started to work as an accountant in his Uncles' business. At the age of 21, Radnóti published his first collection of poems, *Pogány köszöntő* (1930), (Pagan Salute), which reflected influences from French expressionism and attacked social injustices. His next book, *Újmódi pásztorok éneke* (1931), (Song of Modern Shepherds) was confiscated by the public prosecutor on grounds of indecency and he drew a light jail sentence. In 1931 he also spent two months in Paris, where he visited 'Exposition coloniale' and decided to translate African poems and folk tales into Hungarian.

In 1930 Radnóti started to study Hungarian and French literature at the University of Szeged. His dissertation in 1934 dealt with the artistic development of the Hungarian poet and novelist Margit Kaffka (1880-1918). During this period he associated with a group of young intellectuals involved in the populist movement "Szegedi Fiatalok". After graduating he tried to find work as a teacher of literature, without much success. To support himself he worked as a translator, free-lance writer, and a private tutor. His rich uncle, Mihály Babits (1883-1941), poet and critic who edited *Nyugat*, welcomed Radnóti's contributions to the influential literary review. His penname Radnóti derived from his father's birthplace, Radnót.

In 1935 Radnóti married Fanni (Fifi) Gyarmati, whom he had met already in 1926, and settled with her in Budapest. Several of Radnóti's love poems were inspired by his wife, and also by Judit Beck with whom he had a short affair. "You were what is real, return to dream in essence, /and I, fallen back into the wall of adolescence, /jealously question you: whether you love me." He wrote in 'Levél a hitveshez' (Letter to my Wife). In 1936 he won the Baumgartner Prize for his work *Járkálj csak halálraitélt!* (Walk on, Condemned).

During World War II, Radnóti published *Orpheus nyomában* (1942), which contained his translations of poetry, new and old. He had translated Virgil's 'Eclogue IX in 1938, and composed his own 'Eclogue I' in the same year. Radnóti used many classical poetic forms, which offered a firm cultural ground, ideals of eternal beauty, against the irrationalism, barbarism, and anti-Semitism of his own time. Several of his poems have also religious overtones, such as 'Ének a halálról' and "Töredék".

Years before, Radnóti converted to Roman Catholicism. At the university he had studied with the Catholic poet and priest Sándor Sik (1889-1963). In 1944, he was sent to a labor camp near Bor in Yugoslavia. Evacuated and forced to march on foot through Hungary, eventually unable to walk further, was shot to death with 21 other internees by Hungarian guards in November near the village of Abda. His posthumous collection, *Tajtékos ég* (Sky With Clouds) (1946) contains odes to his wife, letters, and poetic fragments.

(See: www.kirjasto.sci.fi/radnoti.html for more info.)

How Others See

By Miklós Radnóti

How others see this region, I cannot understand: to me, this little country is menaced motherland with flames around, the world of my childhood swaying far, and I am grown from this land as tender branches are from trees. And may my body sink into this soil in the end.

When plants reach out towards me, I greet them as a friend and know their names and flowers.

I am at home here, knowing the people on the road and why and where they are going- and how I know the meaning when by a summer lane the sunset paints the walls with a liquid flame of pain!

The pilot can't help seeing a war map from the sky, can't tell below the home of *Vörösmarty Mihály*;

what can he identify there? grim barracks and factories, but I see steeples, oxen, farms, grasshoppers and bees; his lens spies out the vital production plants, the fields, but I can see the worker,

afraid below, who shields his labour, a singing orchard, a vineyard and a wood,

among the graves a granny mourning her widowhood,

and what may seem a plant or rail line that must be wrecked is just a signal house with the keeper standing erect and waving his red flag, lots of children around the guard,

a shepherd dog might roll in the dust in a factory yard,

and there's the park with the footprints of past loves and the flavor of childhood kisses-

the honey, the cranberry I still savor;

and on my way to school, by the curbside to postpone a spot-test one certain morning,

I stepped upon a stone: look! there's the stone whose magic the pilot cannot see,

no instrument would merge it in his topography.

True, guilty are we all here, our people as the rest, we know our faults, we know how and when we have transgressed, but there are blameless lives here of toil and poetry and passion, and infants also, with growing capacity for compassion - they will protect its glow while in gloomy shelters

till once more our land is marked by the finger of peace:

then they will respond to our muffled words with new voices fresh and bright.

Spread your great wings above us, protective cloud of night.

January 17, 1944

www.bajabela.sulinet.hu