

GIVE ME WINGS TO GET TO THE POINT

A Favourite Prayer
of Cardinal Franz König

17th Century
Nun's Prayer

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Cardinal Franz König

Lord, Thou knowest better
than I know myself
that I am growing older
and will some day 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,
that I want a few friends
at the end.

Keep my mind free
from the recital
of endless details;
give me wings
to get to the point.



Seal my lips
on my aches and pains.
They are increasing,
and love of rehearsing them
is becoming sweeter
as the years go by.

I dare not ask
for grace enough
to enjoy the tales
of others' pains,
but help me to endure
them with patience.

I dare not ask
for improved memory,
but for a growing humility
and a lessing cocksureness
when my memory
seems to clash with the
memories of others.

Teach me
the glorious lesson
that occasionally
I may be mistaken.



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 one of the crowning
works 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.



Amen.

Cardinal Franz König

* 3 August 1905 † 13 March 2004

Archbishop of Vienna from 1956 to 1985

Man of prayer and pastor | Council Father
and decisive player at the Second Vatican
Council 1962 – 1965 | Ecumenical and
inter-religious bridgebuilder | Dialogue
partner for non-believers | Advocate of
human dignity at the beginning and end of
life | Patron of the Hospice Movement |
Friend of the Society of Jesus

The text of this prayer is taken from: Kardinal Franz König, *Woher komme ich? Wohin gehe ich? Anregungen für ein angstfreies Leben*, Styria 2009, pp. 226f.



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