



Birth Day Prayer

O creator God, you who abide in the core of my being I bow before you. I sense your presence all around me, in all the living and non living. You are the reason for the miracle of life in this universe. You continue to be at the heart of creation, guiding, leading, inspiring, empowering and letting us know the depth and width of your love for us. Spirit of Jesus, we earnestly desire that we may be awakened to the reality of omnipresence of the divine.

- Creator Spirit/ Hymn to Holy Spirit

Each one of us represents a miracle - a miracle that God wished to happen. Dear Sr....as a unique individual, you are the fullness of God's miracle. God thought of you with much love and tenderness and created you with lots of dreams and purpose, to be on this earth for a while. There is no one like you on this earth, as even the identical twins have some differences between them.

Long before you were conceived by your parents, you were conceived in the mind of God. He thought of you first. God prescribed every single detail of your body. He deliberately chose your race, the color of your skin, your hair, and every other feature. He custom-made your body just the way he wanted it. He also determined the natural talents you would possess and the uniqueness of your personality.

The Bible says, *"You know me inside and out, you know every bone in my body; You know exactly how I was made, bit by bit, how I was sculpted from nothing into something."*

Because God made you for a reason, he also decided *when and where* you would be born, where you'd live for his purpose, *how long* you would live etc Your race and nationality are no accident. God left no detail to chance. He planned it all for *his* purpose. Most amazing, God decided *how* you would be born. Regardless of the circumstances of your birth or who your parents are, God had a plan in creating you. It doesn't matter whether your parents were good, bad, or indifferent. God knew that those two individuals possessed *exactly* the right genetic makeup to create the custom "you" he had in mind. They had the DNA God wanted to make you.

God never does anything accidentally; He has a reason for everything he creates. Every plant and every animal was planned by God, and every person was designed with a purpose in mind. God's motive for creating you was his love.

The Bible says, "*Long before he laid down earth's foundations, he had us in mind, had settled on us as the focus of his love.*" God was thinking of you even *before* he made the world. In fact, that's why he created it! God designed this planet's environment just so we could live in it. We are the focus of his love and the most valuable of all his creation.

B'day is an occasion where we take time to think of this divine intelligence behind our making. So let us pay homage to Him- the fullness, the ever existing reality, through a Sanskrit chant. I invite----- to chant the same, expressing the deepest sentiments of gratitude.

Poornam adah.....

(Meaning:

Homage to you!

Fullness there, Fullness here

Fullness proceeds from fullness

When fullness is deducted from fullness,

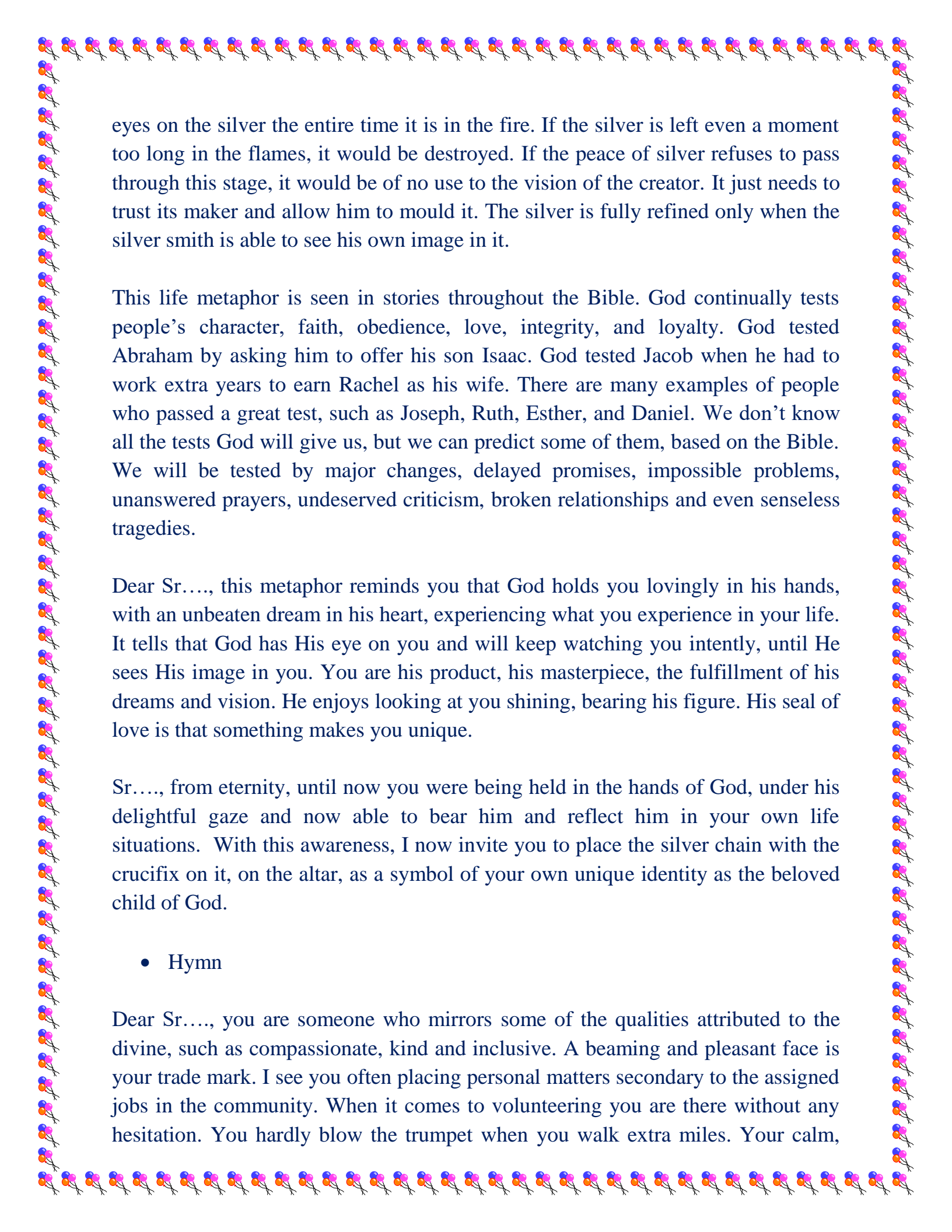
What remains is only fullness!

Homage to you!

Peace, Peace, Peace.)

The Bible offers three metaphors that teach us God's view of life: Life is a *test*, life is a *trust*, and life is a *temporary assignment*. Today as we celebrate the life of our dear Sr...., I thought of taking a Biblical metaphor '**life as a test and trust**' for our prayer. I have chosen the symbol- **Silver chain bearing a cross**.

The metal silver, needs to pass through a series of process, if it has to come to this shape of a chain, bearing the crucifix. For this, first and foremost the piece of silver allows itself to be held tightly in the hands of the silversmith, over the fire, where the flames are hottest as to burn away all the impurities. The silversmith has to sit there in front of the fire the whole time the silver is being refined. He not only sits there holding the silver, experiencing the heat and fatigue but he has to keep his

A decorative border of colorful birds, including blue, pink, and orange ones, surrounds the text on all four sides.

eyes on the silver the entire time it is in the fire. If the silver is left even a moment too long in the flames, it would be destroyed. If the peace of silver refuses to pass through this stage, it would be of no use to the vision of the creator. It just needs to trust its maker and allow him to mould it. The silver is fully refined only when the silver smith is able to see his own image in it.

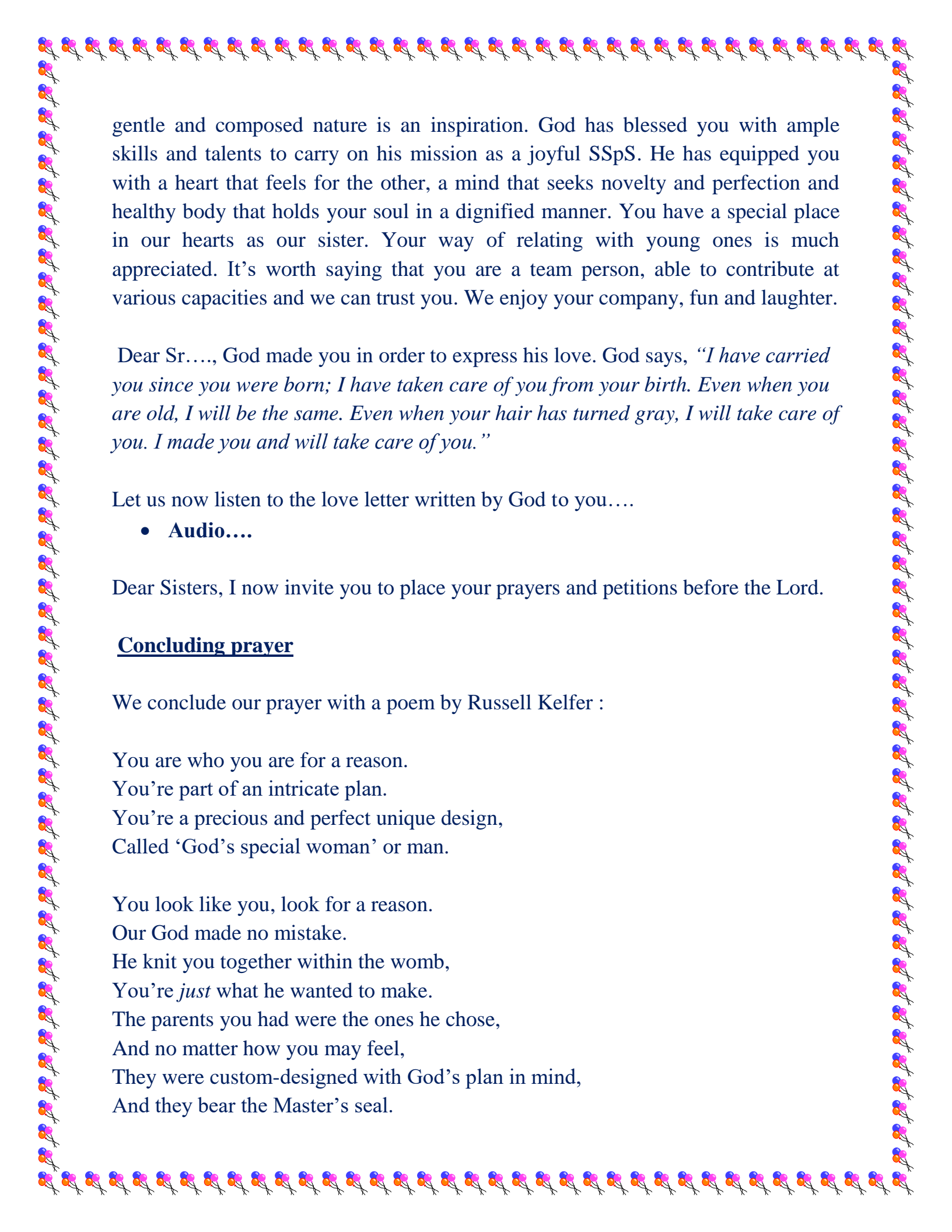
This life metaphor is seen in stories throughout the Bible. God continually tests people's character, faith, obedience, love, integrity, and loyalty. God tested Abraham by asking him to offer his son Isaac. God tested Jacob when he had to work extra years to earn Rachel as his wife. There are many examples of people who passed a great test, such as Joseph, Ruth, Esther, and Daniel. We don't know all the tests God will give us, but we can predict some of them, based on the Bible. We will be tested by major changes, delayed promises, impossible problems, unanswered prayers, undeserved criticism, broken relationships and even senseless tragedies.

Dear Sr...., this metaphor reminds you that God holds you lovingly in his hands, with an unbeaten dream in his heart, experiencing what you experience in your life. It tells that God has His eye on you and will keep watching you intently, until He sees His image in you. You are his product, his masterpiece, the fulfillment of his dreams and vision. He enjoys looking at you shining, bearing his figure. His seal of love is that something makes you unique.

Sr...., from eternity, until now you were being held in the hands of God, under his delightful gaze and now able to bear him and reflect him in your own life situations. With this awareness, I now invite you to place the silver chain with the crucifix on it, on the altar, as a symbol of your own unique identity as the beloved child of God.

- Hymn

Dear Sr...., you are someone who mirrors some of the qualities attributed to the divine, such as compassionate, kind and inclusive. A beaming and pleasant face is your trade mark. I see you often placing personal matters secondary to the assigned jobs in the community. When it comes to volunteering you are there without any hesitation. You hardly blow the trumpet when you walk extra miles. Your calm,



gentle and composed nature is an inspiration. God has blessed you with ample skills and talents to carry on his mission as a joyful SSpS. He has equipped you with a heart that feels for the other, a mind that seeks novelty and perfection and healthy body that holds your soul in a dignified manner. You have a special place in our hearts as our sister. Your way of relating with young ones is much appreciated. It's worth saying that you are a team person, able to contribute at various capacities and we can trust you. We enjoy your company, fun and laughter.

Dear Sr...., God made you in order to express his love. God says, *“I have carried you since you were born; I have taken care of you from your birth. Even when you are old, I will be the same. Even when your hair has turned gray, I will take care of you. I made you and will take care of you.”*

Let us now listen to the love letter written by God to you....

- **Audio....**

Dear Sisters, I now invite you to place your prayers and petitions before the Lord.

Concluding prayer

We conclude our prayer with a poem by Russell Kelfer :

You are who you are for a reason.
You're part of an intricate plan.
You're a precious and perfect unique design,
Called 'God's special woman' or man.

You look like you, look for a reason.
Our God made no mistake.
He knit you together within the womb,
You're *just* what he wanted to make.
The parents you had were the ones he chose,
And no matter how you may feel,
They were custom-designed with God's plan in mind,
And they bear the Master's seal.

No, that trauma you faced was not easy.
And God wept that it hurt you so;
But it was allowed to shape your heart
So that into his likeness you'd grow.

You are who you are for a reason,
You've been formed by the Master's rod.
You are who you are, beloved,
Because there is a God!

- Angelus

Sr. Jessy Mary Paul SSps



“Prayer is therefore our “word” to God, the response of our small-created being to the infinite being who communicates himself to us.”