PRAYER TO CONSECRATE AUTISM

VIA SAINT THORLAK

Holy Saint Thorlak,

I come before you as a Christian and an autistic person.

As a Christian, I seek to love the Lord with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul, with all my body, and with all my strength. I seek to love my neighbor as myself. I seek to see Christ in the least of my sisters and brothers, as He has taught me. I seek to be close to Him always; close in prayer, close in the Sacraments, close as I read the Scriptures, close as I love others, close as I welcome the love of others for me.

As an autistic person, I know that Christ is the Truth, the ultimate Source of all truth that I seek. I know that God is Love. When I love anything intensely, I am beginning to know it as God does. I want to love as God does. I can feel that love, but I don't always know how to show it. I don't always know how to speak or act when I'm with other people. I have to confront great anxieties and fears at times. Certain sounds, smells, colors, or other things really hurt me and make it very hard for me to be with other people. I don't know all the social codes and misunderstand what others say, and they misunderstand what I say. I often have a hard time knowing what I feel, let alone expressing my emotions. Some people see me as someone they would rather not be with, or someone who has nothing to offer. I desperately want to do the right thing, but I often don't know what the right thing is.

Holy Thorlak, I need your help. In your life, you had to struggle to speak and be understood. You felt isolated and misunderstood. You felt anxieties and depression. And yet, in your love of God you found strength in your weakness and became a compassionate shepherd to those whom God entrusted to your care.

Holy Thorlak, I now entrust myself to your care. I wish to consecrate my autism to God by following the way you exemplify. I offer my weaknesses – my anxieties and fears, my depression and awkwardness, my sensitivities and my isolation. I offer my gifts – my great love for my interests, my desire for truth and integrity, my passion for justice, and every other gift I have received from God. I consecrate all of this, all that my autism has given me, to God.



Holy Thorlak, pray for me, that my autism may be a means of God's love, wisdom and strength. Guide me and show me how I can best serve God and others through my autism. Show me how what I thought of as weakness, or what some people called weakness, is really a way for God to bless me and to bless many through me.

Holy Thorlak, I ask all of this of you that I might become a true follower of the Lord just as you were in your life. Please pray for me to the Lord that He might bless me and bless others through me. Let me be that mustard seed, that measure of yeast, that seemingly small and insignificant thing that becomes a great blessing by God's love. Let it all happen for your own mission, Holy Thorlak, and for God's glory. May Our Blessed Mother, Mary, and all the angels and saints join you in prayer for me as I consecrate my autism.

May it all be according to God's Word, now and forever.

Amen.

Many autistic people, as well as their families, friends, and other fellow Catholics, have found in Saint Thorlak a powerful and compassionate intercessor before the Lord. Saint Thorlak, in his life, showed a number of personality traits that resemble autism. Whether or not he was actually autistic – and many believe he was – these traits make him a very appropriate Saint to turn to for intercession and help before the Lord.

This prayer is intended primarily for autistic people who wish to consecrate their autism to God in the way of Saint Thorlak. It may also be prayed by family members and allies on behalf of those who cannot say the words on their own.

Why would someone want to consecrate their own autism – or the autism of a loved one – to God, via Saint Thorlak? What is the point?

To be autistic is to possess a combination of strengths and limitations that is unusual. To be autistic is to feel isolated, misunderstood, even by some who truly love the autistic person. To be autistic is to face the challenges of extreme sensitivities to various things, overwhelming surges of anxieties, and the abysses of depression. On the other hand, to be autistic is to be able to love a certain interest with great focus and devotion. It is to be one who seeks truth and integrity above all. It is to be someone who notices things that others do not. It is to be someone who is capable of great loyalty. It is to be someone who is also capable of great compassion, even if that might not be expressed in the ways neurotypical people express it.

An autistic person who is baptized is no less a Catholic, no less a Christian, than anyone else. However, autistic people often feel misunderstood, incapable, unworthy and unwelcome even among fellow Catholics, for the reasons stated above and others.

This is where Saint Thorlak comes in. There are already many stories of autistic people who were led to their true calling in the Church by Saint Thorlak, even before they knew he existed. Others, in seeking his intercession, found their anxieties lessen so that they could take an important step in their lives. Still others found renewed hope and a sense that they also belonged to the family of God.

By consecrating one's own autism – or the autism of a loved one – to God in the way of Saint Thorlak, we open our hearts, minds and bodies to his blessing, intercession, and guidance. We entrust ourselves to Saint Thorlak's friendship, knowing that he will help us discover the power of God's love in our weakness, uncover the gifts God has given us, and help us see how to put them to the service of others. Saint Thorlak understands the unique challenges and blessings of autism. His presence and intercession will be a great gift, and a means of God's love, for all those who consecrate their autism with him.

Make this consecration only when you are ready. If you are unsure about consecrating your own autism via Saint Thorlak, pray and ask for guidance. You will know when the time has come. If you are a family member and are concerned about making this consecration in someone else's name, there is no need to worry. Remember the people who brought the paralyzed man to Jesus. The Gospels tell us that Jesus, when He saw *their* faith, healed the man. Saint Thorlak can bless your autistic family member though you making this consecration in that person's name. He will also bless you and your whole family.



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