What prayers should I use to get through a bad day?

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 “Be still and know that I am God!” (Psalm 46:10)

The Church guides us on our path of prayer and proposes that we rely on her accumulated experience of prayer. This experience indicates that we need to set aside designated time to speak with God … (see Christ Our Pascha #700). But the question is what do I say to God in order to get through a bad day. One should always start by thanking God for this new day and by praying the usual daily prayers that also include the Lord’s Prayer.

This is what Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky teaches about the significance of the Lord’s Prayer for the Christian’s spiritual life: “If we pray in a properly Christian way, we cannot say more than what is contained in the Lord’s Prayer. This is because we cannot desire anything better or higher or more suitable for us than the desires we express in the petitions of the Our Father. The Our Father is the last word in prayer, it is the absolute prayer. We might even say that outside of this prayer, there is no prayer. Everything that is prayer is contained in this prayer” (Christ Our Pascha #683).

One can also pray short prayers such as Lord, have mercy or the Jesus Prayer (Lord, Jesus Christ, have mercy on me, a sinner). To help you along, you can let the Jesus Prayer pray in you.

By repeating these prayers over and over again, we express our worries, our anxiety or our joy and at the same time we commend ourselves and others to God’s protection.

I often invite my parishioners to pray using their own words and express to Our Heavenly Father all their fears, all their anxieties, all their emotions and all their joys. Try praying that way and also remember that we can always turn to our Heavenly Mother in prayer. This is the prayer to the Mother of God that I like to pray when I have a bad day:

O most gracious Queen, my hope, Mother of God, you receive the poor and help the travellers. You are the joy of those who are in sorrow, and the refuge for the oppressed. Look upon my affliction and see my needs. Help me as you would one in despair. Feed me as you would a stranger. You know all my troubles, acquit them according to your will, for I have no other help but you, no other ready recourse or comfort but you, O Mother of God. Help me and protect me for all ages. Amen. [Beneath the Mantle of Your Mercy, A Devotional Prayer Book, p. 90]