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Psalm 51 has, of course, been set to music by Gregorio Allegri, and his transcendently beautiful 'Miserere Mei, Deus' is possibly one of the best ever pieces of choral music. But 'Lord, have mercy' should be a prayer that is on our lips whenever we fail, and, for me at least, that is very often. We must never forget that the sacrifice that God wants from us above anything else is not our time, money, skill, or effort, but our broken and contrite hearts.

God, whose love is never failing
Look with mercy upon me;
My transgressions I'm bewailing –
Wash my soul's iniquity!
Lord, have mercy; Lord, have mercy
Set my guilty spirit free!

Lord, I've sinned against You only –
Done what's evil in Your sight.
Yet great wisdom You have shown me
Shown what's just and what is right.
Lord, have mercy; Lord, have mercy
Make my black soul snowy white!

A pure heart create within me
A new spirit, steadfast, true.
From Your presence Holy, Kingly
Do not cast me forth from you!
Lord, have mercy; Lord, have mercy
May Your Spirit make me new