

INTERRELIGIOUS Insight

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A Daily Practice (a Jewish insight)

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*"May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in
Your sight."*

Psalm 19:15

I pray as a Jew, intoning words from liturgy, psalms and scripture that have been used for thousands of years, breathing new life into them as they enliven me. Before I get out of bed in the morning, I utter a prayer of gratitude for the opportunity of another day. It begins, *Modah ani l'Yanocha*: "I give thanks before You." The Hebrew, sometimes recited, sometimes chanted, feels delicious. It rolls off my tongue like honey and connects me to the realm of spirit. The prayer ends with two amazing words – *Raba emunatecha*: "Great is Your faith." This is the empowering reality that God is entrusting me (and you and all of us) with the task of co-partnership in the Divine-human enterprise of perfecting life on earth. Jews call this task *tikkun olam* – the healing and transformation of our precious, wounded world.

*Laura Bernstein is a poet and writer active in interfaith ministry in the Chicago area. She has published articles and essays on spiritual practice, led interfaith groups in sacred chant and meditation, and spent five years in rabbinical studies at the Hebrew Seminary of the Deaf in Skokie, Illinois. She is the co-author (with Ron Müller) of *Healing the Jewish-Christian Rift: Growing Beyond Our Wounded History*, published by SkyLight Paths (available Oct. 2005).*

