

The Ohlone Prayer in the Four Directions

The East is the direction from which the new day comes into the world. It is the direction of renewal. It is the place of innocence, guilelessness, spontaneity, joy and the capacity to believe in the unseen. **In the East** is the rising sun, the dawn of a new day. As we walk the sacred path of life today, help us, Creator God, to grow in wisdom and strength.

The South is the direction of the sun at its highest point. It is the place of summer, of fullness, of youth, of physical strength and vigor. It is also the time that people work to prepare for the fall and winter months. Hence, symbolically, it is a time of preparing for the future, of getting ready for the days ahead. **To the South**, where new and fresh rains come, we ask your help, gracious Creator, to walk in the ways of goodness and gentleness in heart and speech.

The West is the direction from which darkness comes. It is the direction of the unknown, of going within, of dreams, of prayer and of meditation. The West is the place of testing, where the will is stretched to its outer limits so that the gift of perseverance may be won. **To the West**, the place of the setting sun, we thank you, good and generous God, for our day, we ask forgiveness for the times we caused disharmony today.

The North is the place of winter, of white snows that remind us of the white hair of our elders. It is the dawning place of true wisdom. Here dwell the teachers of intellectual gifts symbolized by the great mountain and the sacred lake. Some of the special gifts that await the traveler in the North include the following capacities: to think, to synthesize, to speculate, to predict, to discriminate, to solve problems, to imagine, to analyze, to understand, to calculate, to organize, to criticize, to remember, and to interpret hidden meanings. **To the North** we find courage to walk each day and ask your help to overcome fears and anxieties.

And now we bend down and touch our **mother the earth**...

And now we stand up and reach out and up towards our Grandfather who watches over us...

Note: Andrew Galvan is a Native American Indian Consultant and member of the Ohlone Tribe. He shares this prayer that he learned from his father, who in turn learned it from his mother, who heard the prayer from her grandfather.