

“Lord, teach us to pray ...”



SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT 2024
IN THE WORLDWIDE YEAR OF PRAYER 2024 AND
CELEBRATING 150 YEARS OF THE DIOCESE OF SANDHURST.

From the Readings

With God on our side, who can be against us? Since God did not spare his own Son, but gave him up to benefit us all, we may be certain, after such a gift, that he will not refuse anything he can give. Could anyone accuse those that God has chosen? When God acquits, could anyone condemn? Could Christ Jesus? No! He not only died for us – he rose from the dead, and there at God’s right hand he stands and pleads for us. *Romans 8:32-34*

I trusted, even when I said: ‘I am sorely afflicted,

O precious in the eyes of the Lord is the death of his faithful.

Your servant, Lord, your servant am I; you have loosened my bonds.

A thanksgiving sacrifice I make; I will call on the Lord’s name. *Psalms 115(116):10, 15-17*

Jesus took Peter, James and John and led them up a high mountain apart by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no fuller on earth could bleach them. Then Elijah appeared to them along with Moses, and they were conversing with Jesus ... Then a cloud came, casting a shadow over them; from the cloud came a voice, “This is my beloved Son. Listen to him.” Suddenly, looking around, they no longer saw anyone but Jesus alone with them. *Mark 9:2-8*

Teach us to Pray

I: THE PSALMS

JESUS MODELS THE KIND OF PRAYER WE NEED to cope with a world that goes mad at times, and with hearts prone to drink in that madness. The Gospels describe Jesus praying in different ways, but sometimes they simply say, “He turned his eyes toward heaven!” The same expression is used of other great faith figures – Stephen, Paul, the early martyrs – and it’s used of them precisely at those times when the forces of madness are threatening to kill them. When the world around them is going mad, they “turn their eyes toward heaven”. Rolheiser, Ronald, *Prayer: Our Deepest Longing*, 41.

[The] psalms were the hymns of Israel. Jesus and his disciples would have heard them sung or chanted in the liturgy of the Synagogue or Temple.

“... **[Mary] read the Scriptures, she prayed the psalms.** You want to learn to pray with Scripture? Open it with Mary. Say the psalms with her. You will quickly reap the benefits of such companionship. ... Our Lady, Mother of wisdom, will teach you to treasure in your heart the richness of God’s word in

order to draw from it; when the time comes, the strength to stand upright in the face of events.”. Laplace, Jean, S.J., *Prayer: According to the Scriptures*, 36..

THE PSALTER [BOOK OF PSALMS] is the book in which the Word of God becomes man’s prayer ... CCC 2587

“There is no aspect of the interior life, no kind of religious experience, no spiritual need of man that is not depicted and lived out in the Psalms – The Psalms are full of the incarnate Word ... the Psalms contain in themselves all the Old and New Testaments, the whole mystery of Christ.” Merton, Thomas, cited in Vetter, Bernadette, H.M., Ed, *My Journey, My Prayer* , 84.

“Each psalm is an invitation to rethink our own situation. The psalms can be universalised, in them I can speak with all the voices of the world, my prayer can become universal. The psalms invite me to be someone endowed with the gift of tongues, that is, ‘a person who speaks all languages’ all languages of human distress.” Thomas Merton, cited in Vetter, Bernadette, H.M., Ed, *My Journey, My Prayer*, 84.

“The psalm I sing is no longer David’s. ... I am talking about myself. It is with my own sin in mind that I cry to God. .” Laplace, Jean, S.J., *Prayer: According to the Scriptures*, 35-36.

CHOOSE ONE OR TWO PSALMS ... pray the psalm by entering into the thoughts, experiences and trials that the Psalmist is addressing to God through their words and prayers. Archdiocese of Birmingham, “*Suggestions for Personal Prayer*”.

II: THE OUR FATHER – THE PRAYER THAT JESUS TAUGHT US

- **The kingdom of God is here and the kingdom of God will come.** It is the treasure hidden in the field; it is the precious pearl for the sake of which the merchant sells all he has (cf. Mt 13:44-46). The kingdom of God is the good wheat that grows alongside the weeds, and you have to fight against the weeds (cf. Mt 13:24,40). The kingdom of God is also hope; the kingdom of God is coming now but at the same time has not yet come completely. This is how the kingdom of God has already come: Jesus has taken flesh, he has become man like us, he walks with us, and he gives us hope for our tomorrow: “I am with you always, to the close of the age”. (Mt 28:20). Pope Francis, *Our Father*, 51.
- **... the kingdom of God needs our participation, but it is above all an initiative and gift of the Lord.** Our feeble work may appear small in the face of the complexity of the world’s problems, but if imbedded within God’s work it has no fear of the difficulties. The Lord’s victory is assured: his love will cause to sprout and grow every seed of goodness present on the earth. Pope Francis, *Our Father*, 60.

FOR THINKING AND TALKING

- What words or phrases stand out for you in the readings and insights on prayer?
- What insights might you take with you on your own journey?

Let Us Pray

Our Father,
who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil. Amen.



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Email: adultfaith@sandhurst.catholic.org.au. **Acknowledgements:** Pope Francis, *Our Father: Reflections on the Lord's Prayer*, London, Sydney, Auckland, Johannesburg: Rider, 2018, Kindle Ed.; Laplace, Jean, S.J., *Prayer: According to the Scriptures*, Brighton Massachusetts: The Alpine Press, Merton, Thomas, cited in Vetter, Bernadette, H.M., Ed, *My Journey, My Prayer*, Villa Maria, Pennsylvania: Center for Learning, 1977; Archdiocese of Birmingham, "Suggestions for Personal Prayer" <https://www.vocations.org.uk/year-of-prayer-2024>; Catholic Church, *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (2nd ed.), Citta Del Vaticana: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1993. Internet: www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_INDEX.HTM; Rolheiser, Ronald, *Prayer: Our Deepest Longing*, Cincinnati, Ohio: Franciscan Media, 2013