

Daily Prayer

Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A
The Year of Matthew



Readings: Isaiah 55: 10–11; Psalm 64: 10–14; Romans 8: 18–23; Matthew 13: 1–23.

Preparations for Daily Prayer

The following daily prayers can be used in their entirety or adapted to meet the needs of the audience. The prayers draw on the Sunday readings, so you may use any of the prayers on any day, although special focus will be given to Feast days, Solemnities and days of cultural significance. Feel free to adapt the prayers for special occasions or specific intentions of your own class and school.

The prayers will introduce students to traditional prayer and liturgical practices and responses, as well as a variety of Christian spiritual experiences. Take the opportunity to create a **sacred space** for prayer as you might do in creating a protected garden. This may include a prayer cloth or placemat, a bible, a candle and flowers. Additional resources (apps, websites, music, videos) will be suggested for those wanting to enrich the prayers or to understand the readings at a deeper level.

Overview of the Week

Day and Liturgical Colour	Daily Prayer	Links to Liturgy, Traditional Prayers and Forms of Prayer
Monday – Green	<i>Listen ... Let anyone with ears listen!</i>	Praying with the Gospel Praying a Breath Prayer
Tuesday – Green	<i>Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear.</i>	Praying with the Gospel Gospel Acclamation Prayers of Intercession
Wednesday – Green	<i>As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there until they have watered the earth ...</i>	Praying with the First Reading Imaginative Prayer Response
Thursday – Green	<i>Creation can only be understood as a gift from the outstretched hand of the Father ... (Pope Francis, Laudato Si')</i>	Praying through Song
Friday – Green	<i>Listen with the ear of your heart. (Rule of St Benedict)</i>	Visio Divina

Note that scripture quotations are from the Lectionary (*Jerusalem Bible*) or the NRSV.

Suggested Teacher Background for the Readings

- Liturgy Help: [Commentaries](#)
- Liturgy Help: [Homilies & Reflections](#)
- Loyola Press: [Sunday Connection](#)
- The Emmaus Series: [Sunday Reflections](#).



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Readings: Isaiah 55: 10–11; Psalm 64: 10–14; Romans 8: 18–23; Matthew 13: 1–23.

Today's Daily Prayer – Listen ... Let anyone with ears listen!

Today's prayer will focus on the Gospel from last Sunday. In the Gospel, we are reminded of our call to listen to the Word of God. **Preparation:** Provide a piece of coloured card or paper for each person and pens, pencils, crayons or textas. Choose voices for the parts that are written for the Leader and the Reader.

Monday

Gather

Remind those present to turn phones to silent, close computer screens, sit quietly and prepare for prayer by becoming aware of their breath. There may be special occasions or specific intentions that those gathered want to include in today's prayer. Sound a singing bowl, a bell or a chime to begin.

Leader: As we gather together in God's presence, let us pause to listen to our breathing ...

Let us make the Sign of the Cross reverently and mindfully.

All: **In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

Light candle and pause.

Listen

Background to the Gospel

Jesus used parables to teach the people about God's love and compassion and forgiveness. A parable is a story that uses metaphors drawn from everyday life to express religious truths or explain how God wants people to act and live as kingdom people. A parable contains a surprise twist to engage the audience.

In the first part of this well-known parable, Jesus used the everyday example of sowing seeds to explain his teaching about the kingdom of heaven.

Reader: A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea.

Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach.

And he told them many things in parables, saying: '**Listen!** A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up.

Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away.

Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them.



Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. **Let anyone with ears listen!**

(Pause for silence)

The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Respond

Breath Prayer

Leader: Let us take a moment to pray with the word 'listen'.

I invite you to slowly and mindfully write the word listen on a piece of coloured paper or card. (It is interesting to note that the letters in the word listen can be rearranged to create the word 'silent'.)

Hold your card and say the word gently and slowly in your mind, using it as a single-word breath prayer.

Breathe in the word listen ...

Breathe out the word listen ...

Repeat this simple prayer pattern 10 times.

In the silence of your hearts, listen to God. Be still and know that God is with you!

Time for silent prayer ...

Go Forth

Leader: May we be people who listen deeply to the whisperings of God in our hearts.

All: Amen.

Leader: May God continue to lead us.

All: As our lives are formed in faith, hope and love in the light of Christ.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Extinguish candle and pause.



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Readings: Isaiah 55: 10–11; Psalm 64: 10–14; Romans 8: 18–23; Matthew 13: 1–23.

Today's Daily Prayer – The Parable of the Sower

Today we will again listen to and reflect on the Gospel from last Sunday. Jesus teaches about the purpose of parables and then explains the Parable of the Sower. **Preparation:** Choose readers and someone to light the candle.

Tuesday

Gather

Leader: As we gather in God's presence, let us make the Sign of the Cross reverently and mindfully.

All: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Light candle and pause.

Listen

Background to the Gospel

In the explanation of the parable, Jesus uses the seeds and compares them with the Word of God. He teaches that the kingdom of heaven is like seed that has been sown in good soil. Some followers of Jesus will open their hearts to listen attentively to the Word and the seed will produce abundant fruit.

Reader: A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Jesus said to his disciples, 'Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear.

'Hear then the parable of the sower.

'When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path.

'As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away.

'As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing.

'But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.'

(Pause for silence)

The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.



Respond

Prayers of Intercession

Leader: Let us respond by praying these Prayers of Intercession.

Creator God, we bring these prayers to you.

Reader: May we be people who, having heard the Word of God, hold on to it, even when we feel life is difficult and confronting. Lord, hear us.

All: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Reader: May we be people who, having heard the Word of God, hold on to it, even when life seems unfair and challenging. Lord, hear us.

All: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Reader: May we be people who, having heard the Word of God, go forth to spread goodness and peace in our world. Lord, hear us.

All: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Leader: We make these prayers through Christ, our Lord.

All: **Amen.**

Go Forth

Leader: Gracious God, you plant new seeds of faith, hope and love in our hearts.

Bless us with eyes that truly see.

All: **Amen.**

Leader: Bless us with ears that truly hear.

All: **Amen.**

Leader: Bless us with hearts that are rich soil for your Word.

All: **Amen.**

Leader: May God continue to lead us.

All: **As our lives are formed in faith, hope and love in the light of Christ.**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Extinguish candle and pause.



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Readings: Isaiah 55: 10–11; Psalm 64: 10–14; Romans 8: 18–23; Matthew 13: 1–23.

Today's Daily Prayer – Imaginative Prayer with the Prophet Isaiah

Today those gathered will be invited to pray with the first reading from Isaiah using an imaginative prayer response. **Preparation:** Choose readers and someone to light the candle.

Wednesday

Gather

Remind those present to turn phones to silent, close computer screens, sit quietly and prepare for prayer by becoming aware of their breath. There may be special occasions or specific intentions that those gathered want to include in today's prayer. Sound a singing bowl, a bell or a chime to begin.

Leader: As we gather together in God's presence, let us make the Sign of the Cross reverently and mindfully.

All: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Light candle and pause.

Listen

Background to the First Reading

Isaiah speaks about the power and imagery of God's Word. The rain and the snow fall to the earth and, in doing this, they make something happen: plants and trees and all creatures live and grow. Isaiah compares God's Word to the rain and the snow. The Word of God nourishes us and helps us to grow in our relationship with God and the whole of creation.

Leader: Let us prepare to listen attentively to the Word of God.

Reader: A reading from the Book of Isaiah.

For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven,
and do not return there until they have watered the earth,
making it bring forth and sprout,
giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,
so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth;
it shall not return to me empty,
but it shall accomplish that which I purpose,
and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.
The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.



Respond

Imaginative Prayer

Leader: Close your eyes and still your body.

In your imagination, see rain falling gently on our earth.

It covers the bare ground and the places where plants grow.

See the rain landing on the grass or a field of crops.

What does the rain do to the crops?

(Time for silent reflection)

It refreshes ... See the plants come to life.

It helps growth ... Imagine the plants growing.

(Time for silent reflection)

Let us leave the field and return to ourselves.

God's Word is like that rain.

When we hear it, we are refreshed and we are enabled to grow as people of love and goodness.

(Time for silent reflection)

Go Forth

Leader: Trusting in Jesus who shows us the way, let us go forth from here reflecting his truth and life in what we say and what we do.

All: **Amen.**

Leader: May God continue to lead us.

All: **As our lives are formed in faith, hope and love in the light of Christ.**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Extinguish candle and pause.



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Readings: Isaiah 55: 10–11; Psalm 64: 10–14; Romans 8: 18–23; Matthew 13: 1–23.

Today's Daily Prayer – Love Song to the Earth

Today those gathered for prayer will revisit the messages from Pope Francis about our responsibility to care for creation. Those gathered will be invited to pray with two songs: a contemporary song response to *Laudato Si'*, 'Love Song to the Earth' ([lyrics](#)), and the ancient song from Psalm 64.

Preparation: Choose voices for the parts that are written for the **Leader** and the **Reader**.

Thursday

Gather

Remind those present to turn phones to silent, close computer screens, sit quietly and prepare for prayer by becoming aware of their breath. There may be special occasions or specific intentions that those gathered want to include in today's prayer. Sound a singing bowl, a bell or a chime to begin.

Leader: As we gather together in God's presence, let us make the Sign of the Cross reverently and mindfully.

All: **In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

Light candle and pause.

Listen

Leader: Pope Francis has a clear and consistent message for all about our responsibility to be good and faithful stewards of creation. In his encyclical *Laudato Si'*, he writes:

'Creation can only be understood as a gift from the outstretched hand of the Father.'

In 2015, '[Love Song to the Earth](#)' was released to honour *Laudato Si'*.

Let us listen to this song.

Respond

R sponsorial Psalm

Leader: Our response will be to pray Psalm 64. This ancient song is a prayer of praise to God for his abundant blessing of us and our earth.

Reader: The response to the psalm is:

The seed that falls on good ground will yield a fruitful harvest.

All: **The seed that falls on good ground will yield a fruitful harvest.**

Reader: You care for the earth, give it water,
you fill it with riches.

Your river in heaven brims over

to provide its grain.



All: **The seed that falls on good ground will yield a fruitful harvest.**

Reader: And thus you provide for the earth;
 you drench its furrows,
 you level it, soften it with showers,
 you bless its growth.

All: **The seed that falls on good ground will yield a fruitful harvest.**

Reader: The hills are girded with joy,
 the meadows covered with flocks,
 the valleys are decked with wheat.
 They shout for joy, yes, they sing.

All: **The seed that falls on good ground will yield a fruitful harvest.**

Go Forth

Leader: As we go, let us call upon ourselves and our common home, the blessing of the God we know as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

All: **May our lives continue to be formed in faith, hope and love in the light of Christ.**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Extinguish candle and pause.



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Readings: Isaiah 55: 10–11; Psalm 64: 10–14; Romans 8: 18–23; Matthew 13: 1–23.

Today's Daily Prayer – Visio Divina: The Parable of the Sower

Today those gathered will meditate on a piece of artwork depicting the Gospel story of the Parable of the Sower. **Preparation:** Choose readers and someone to light the candle. Use the image below to create individual colour copies for those gathered to look at or project the image onto a screen.

Friday

Gather

Remind those present to turn phones to silent, close computer screens, sit quietly and prepare for prayer by becoming aware of their breath. There may be special occasions or specific intentions that those gathered want to include in today's prayer. Sound a singing bowl, a bell or a chime to begin.

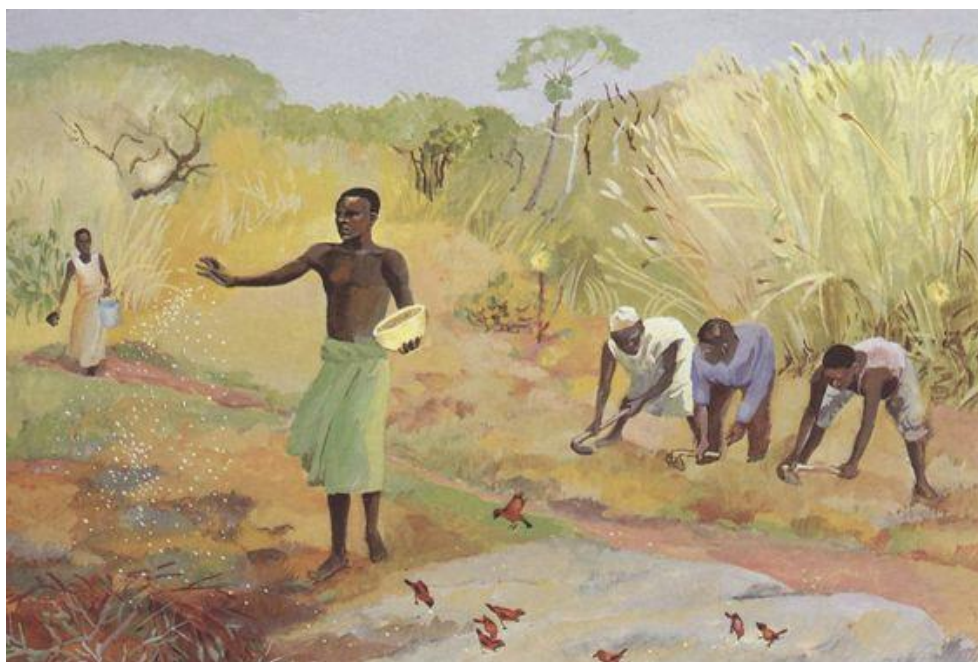
Leader: As we gather in God's presence, let us make the Sign of the Cross reverently and mindfully.

All: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Light candle and pause.

Listen

Leader: Visio Divina is Latin for 'sacred seeing'. It is a simple way of praying with art and has deep roots in the Benedictine tradition. The image chosen is 'The parable of the sower' (Jesus Mafa 1973). It allows us to see the story depicted in a way that we may not have seen before.



Respond

Visio Divina

Step 1 Visio/seeing

Make sure all participants can clearly see the image. Invite them to look at the image while the leader or reader reads the Parable of the Sower.

Reader: That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea.

Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach.

And he told them many things in parables, saying: '**Listen!** A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up.

Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away.

Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them.

Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. **Let anyone with ears listen!**

Step 2 Meditation

Look at the image and let your eyes stay on the first thing that you see. Keep your attention on that one part of the image for a minute or so.

Step 3 Prayer

Now, let your eyes gaze at the whole image. Take your time and look at every part of it. Reflect on the image for a minute or so.

Step 4 Contemplation

Consider the following questions:

- What emotions does this image evoke in you?
- What does the image stir up in you, bring forth in you?
- Does this image lead you into an attitude of prayer? If so, let these prayers take form in you. If you would like, you can write them down.

Step 5 Rest

Spend a few minutes in silent prayer with God. Allow yourself to rest in God.

Go Forth

Leader: May God continue to lead us.

All: **As our lives are formed in faith, hope and love in the light of Christ.**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Extinguish candle and pause.

