

Daily Prayer

Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A
The Year of Matthew



Readings: Exodus 22: 20–26; Psalm 17: 2–4, 47, 51; 1 Thessalonians 1: 5–10; Matthew 22: 34–40.

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>God's law is about justice and compassion for all.</i>	Praying with the First Reading Reflection
Tuesday – Green	<i>I love you, Lord, my strength.</i>	Praying with the Responsorial Psalm Reflection
Wednesday – White Feast of All Saints	<i>Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven.</i>	Praying with the Gospel of the Feast of All Saints Reflection – the Beatitudes Response – the Litany of Saints
Thursday – Purple The Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed (All Souls' Day)	<i>Call them to their heavenly home and fill them with light and peace.</i>	First Reading from the Mass of All Souls' Day Prayers of the Faithful
Friday – Green	<i>Love the Lord, your God, with all your heart and all your mind and your neighbour as yourself.</i>	Praying with the Gospel Lectio 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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Today's Daily Prayer – God's law is about justice and compassion

Today's prayer will focus on the First Reading. **Preparation:** Each person present will need three small pieces of card (about 5 cm x 3 cm) or three sticky notes and a pen/pencil. Choose readers and someone to light the candle.

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 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.

Leader: As we light this candle, we pray for faith.

All: Help us, O God, to be faith-filled people.

Leader: As we light this candle, we pray for hope.

All: Help us, O Lord, to be hope-filled people.

Leader: As we light this candle, we pray for love.

All: Help us, O Lord, to be loving people. Amen.

Background to the First Reading

The First Reading and the Gospel are always linked together, and are chosen carefully to reflect a similar message and content. The First Reading is taken from a long section of Exodus about rules for the way the Israelites were to live their lives and treat each other. They were societal, moral and religious laws. This reading focuses on treatment of foreigners, widows and orphans, and directs the people to show justice and compassion for others.

Listen

Leader: Let us listen attentively.

Reader: A reading from the book of Exodus.

Thus says the Lord:

'You shall not molest or oppress an alien,

for you were once aliens yourselves in the land of Egypt.

You shall not wrong any widow or orphan.



If ever you wrong them and they cry out to me,
I will surely hear their cry.
My wrath will flare up, and I will kill you with the sword;
then your own wives will be widows, and your children orphans.
If you lend money to one of your poor neighbours among my people,
you shall not act like an extortioner toward him by demanding interest from him.
If you take your neighbour's cloak as a pledge,
you shall return it to him before sunset;
for this cloak of his is the only covering he has for his body.
What else has he to sleep in?
If he cries out to me, I will hear him; for I am compassionate.'

(Pause)

The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Respond

Reflective Questions

Leader: What qualities is God demanding of the Israelites in this reading? *(Pause)*
Can you sum it up in three words? *(Pause)*
Write these words on your cards.
Share your words (just the words) with those around you. *(Pause)*
Keep those words with you for the week, reminding you what God is calling from you.

Time of reflective silence ...

Go Forth

Leader: Give us, Lord, hearts filled with compassion.
All: Amen.
Leader: May we speak words of justice and peace.
All: Amen.
Leader: Lead us to be of service to others.
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.

Extinguish candle and pause.

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



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Today's Daily Prayer – I love you, Lord, my strength

Today we will pray with the Responsorial Psalm. **Preparation:** Choose readers for each of the parts and someone to light the candle.

Tuesday

Gather

Remind those present to turn phones to silent, close computer screens, sit quietly and prepare for prayer by becoming aware of God present in the Word, in each other and in ourselves. Take a few slow, deep breaths to help us attend to this moment. 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.

Leader: Let our hearts seek the Lord; may we turn to him and see his face.

All: Amen.

Listen

If possible, the scripture passage is to be read from a lectionary or a bible, which could be put in an honoured place. Readers are to read slowly and clearly when proclaiming the Word of God, and treat the text with reverence.

Leader: Let us pray the Responsorial Psalm.

Reader: I love you, Lord, my strength.

All: I love you, Lord, my strength.

Reader: I love you, O Lord, my strength,
O Lord, my rock, my fortress, my deliverer.

All: I love you, Lord, my strength.

Reader: My God, my rock of refuge,
my shield, the horn of my salvation, my stronghold!
Praised be the Lord, I exclaim,
and I am safe from my enemies.

All: I love you, Lord, my strength.



Reader: The Lord lives and blessed be my rock!
Extolled be God my saviour.
You who gave great victories to your king
and showed kindness to your anointed.

All: **I love you, Lord, my strength.**

Respond

Reflective Questions

Leader: In this psalm, there are many images of God – my strength, my rock, my fortress, my deliverer, my shield, my rock of refuge, my stronghold.

Which of these images speaks most to you of God?

Let's now spend some time reflecting on that image and what it tells you about God.

What qualities does this image suggest that God has?

How does this enhance and shape your understanding of God?

Time for quiet reflection ...

Go Forth

Leader: May we go forth from here believing that God is reliable and dependable. We need not fear, we need not worry, we need not feel alone. God is with us.

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: Exodus 22: 20–26; Psalm 17: 2–4, 47, 51; 1 Thessalonians 1: 5–10; Matthew 22: 34–40.

Today's Daily Prayer – Feast of All Saints: the Beatitudes and the Litany of Saints

Today's prayer will focus on the Gospel of the Feast of All Saints. **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: Let us pause and call to mind God's loving presence within us and among us.
We begin prayer by making 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.

Leader: As we light this candle,

All: **May we be inspired by the words of great saints.**

Leader: As we light this candle,

All: **May we be inspired by the actions of great saints.**

Leader: As we light this candle,

All: **May we aspire to be modern day saints.**

Background to the Feast of All Saints

The feast of All Saints began in the Eastern Churches to commemorate all martyrs and was progressively adopted in the West. It was celebrated on this day in the eighth century and soon became widely observed. Honoured today are all holy men and women in glory with Christ, known or unknown, mighty or lowly, all whose lives were modelled on the Beatitudes and on the great commandment of love (ed. Schwantes 2016).

Listen

If possible, the scripture passage is to be read from a lectionary or a bible, which could be put in an honoured place. Readers are to read slowly and clearly when proclaiming the Word of God, and treat the text with reverence.

Leader: Today we listen to the Gospel from the Mass of All Saints. We remember that saints are people who model their lives on the Beatitudes.

Reader: A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew (Mt 5: 1–12).



Reader 1: 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Reader 2: Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land.

Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied.

Reader 3: Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Blessed are the clean of heart, for they will see God.

Reader 4: Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Reader 5: Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of evil against you falsely because of me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven.'

(Pause)

The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Respond

Litany of Saints

The Litany of Saints is an ancient prayer which is prayed on All Saints Day and also at the Easter Vigil and at Ordinations. It calls for help from many of our greatest saints and also calls for divine protection. We pray to saints to intercede on our behalf to God and offer our prayers to God. The litany needs to be read prayerfully and without haste.

Leader: Lord, have mercy on us.

All: Lord, have mercy on us.

Leader: Christ, have mercy on us.

All: Christ, have mercy on us.

Leader: Lord, have mercy on us.

All: Lord, have mercy on us.

Leader: Christ, hear us.

All: Christ, graciously hear us.

Leader: God, the father of heaven,

All: Have mercy on us.

Leader: God the Son, Redeemer of the world,

All: Have mercy on us.

Leader: God the Holy Spirit,

All: Have mercy on us.

Leader: God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, hear us.

All: Holy Trinity, God in One, graciously hear us.



Leader: Holy Mary, Mother of God,
All: **Pray for us.**

Leader: All you holy angels and archangels,
All: **Pray for us.**

Leader: All you disciples, apostles and evangelists,
All: **Pray for us.**

Leader: All you holy priests and religious persons,
All: **Pray for us.**

Leader: All you holy martyrs,
All: **Pray for us.**

Leader: All you holy men and women,
All: **Pray for us.**

Leader: Saint Mary of the Cross,
All: **Pray for us.**

Leader: Saint Patrick, patron of our Archdiocese,
All: **Pray for us.**

Leader: *(Name the patron saint of your school/community),*
All: **Pray for us.**

Leader: From all evil,
All: **O Lord, deliver us.**

Leader: From all sin,
All: **O Lord, deliver us.**

Leader: From anger and hatred,
All: **O Lord, deliver us.**

Leader: Through your death and resurrection,
All: **O Lord, deliver us.**

Leader: That you would forgive us and all those we love,
All: **O Lord, hear us.**

Leader: That you would grant peace and unity to all,
All: **O Lord, hear us.**

Leader: That you would give rest to those who have died,
All: **O Lord, hear us.**

Leader: That you would lift up our minds to heavenly desires,
All: **O Lord, hear us.**



Leader: Christ, Son of God, hear us.

All: Christ, graciously hear us.

Go Forth

All: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. 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.

Reference

Schwantes, C (ed.) 2016, *Daily Mass Book 2017*, Liturgy Brisbane, Brisbane.



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Today's Daily Prayer – The Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed (All Souls' Day)

Today's prayer focuses on the First Reading from the Mass of All Souls' Day. **Preparation:** Choose readers and someone to light the candle.

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.

Leader: Let us pray together the Entrance Antiphon from the Mass of All Souls.

All: Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and may perpetual light shine upon them.

Light candle and pause.

Background to the Feast of All Souls

This day of commemoration began in the Middle Ages with annual prayers for the dead in monastic communities. Fixed on this day, it spread more widely after the 10th century and now ranks with the principal feast days in the liturgical calendar. Commonly known as All Souls, it expresses Christian faith in the communion of saints and our need to pray for one another in the Church, especially those souls in purgatory 'who have been buried in their human imperfection' (ed. Schwantes 2016).

Listen

Leader: Today we listen to the First Reading from the Mass of All Souls' Day.

Reader: A reading from the Book of Wisdom (Wis 3: 1–6, 9).

The souls of the virtuous are in the hands of God,
no torment shall ever touch them.

In the eyes of the unwise, they did appear to die,
their going looked like a disaster,
their leaving us, like annihilation;
but they are in peace.



If they experienced punishment as men see it,
their hope was rich with immortality;
slight was their affliction, great will their blessing be.
God has put them to the test
and proved them worthy to be with him;
he has tested them like gold in a furnace,
and accepted them as a holocaust.
They who trust in him will understand the truth,
those who are faithful will live with him in love;
for grace and mercy await those he has chosen.

(Pause)

The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Respond

Prayers of the Faithful

Leader: In your kindness, Lord, accept the prayers we now make to you.

Reader: We pray for friends and members of our families who have died. *(Pause)* Lord, hear us.

All: Call them to their heavenly home and fill them with light and peace.

Reader: We pray for those who have died in war and conflicts. *(Pause)* Lord, hear us.

All: Call them to their heavenly home and fill them with light and peace.

Reader: We pray for those who have died suddenly through accident or illness. *(Pause)*
Lord, hear us.

All: Call them to their heavenly home and fill them with light and peace.

Reader: We pray for those who have died from hunger and thirst. *(Pause)* Lord, hear us.

All: Call them to their heavenly home and fill them with light and peace.

Reader: We pray for those who have died in tragic and violent circumstances. *(Pause)*
Lord, hear us.

All: Call them to their heavenly home and fill them with light and peace.

Leader: Loving God, with hope and faith we ask you to accept the prayers we make to you.

All: Amen.

Go Forth

Leader: Let us finish today by praying together the Our Father.

All: Our Father, who art in heaven ...

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.

Reference

Schwantes, C (ed.) 2016, *Daily Mass Book 2017*, Liturgy Brisbane, Brisbane.



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Readings: Exodus 22: 20–26; Psalm 17: 2–4, 47, 51; 1 Thessalonians 1: 5–10; Matthew 22: 34–40.

Today's Daily Prayer – Lectio Divina with the greatest commandment

Lectio Divina is Latin for 'sacred reading'. It is a simple method of praying with Scripture that is practised in many different religious orders. It is a prayer practice that has been used for over 1500 years in the monastic movements of Christianity. Lectio Divina can be used with any biblical text. The text provided is an example template. **Structure:** There are four stages in this style of prayer: lectio (reading, listening), meditatio (meditating, reflecting), oratio (praying, responding), contemplatio (resting, contemplating). You will notice that these stages correspond to the Listen and Respond sections of our prayer today.

Sensitive pastoral leadership: In leading this kind of prayer, it is important to be invitational and to be sensitive to participants. A regular practice of this kind of prayer will generate familiarity and increase engagement, as participants learn the way of praying and become comfortable and supported to speak from their hearts. **Silence:** Enjoy and allow for extended periods of silence as these moments are precious in our noisy, busy world. **Preparation:** Choose readers and someone to light the candle.

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 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.

Leader: As we light this candle, we remember God's greatest commandment – to love God, love our neighbour and love ourselves.

All: **Amen.**

Listen

Lectio

Leader: Let us still our bodies and sit comfortably so that we listen attentively. After the reading, I invite you to quietly re-read the text and allow the words to sink in.

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

When the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees,
they gathered together, and one of them, a scholar of the law tested him by asking,
'Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?'



He said to him,
'You shall love the Lord, your God,
with all your heart,
with all your soul,
and with all your mind.

This is the greatest and the first commandment.

The second is like it:

You shall love your neighbour as yourself.

The whole law and the prophets depend on these two commandments.'

(Pause)

The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Silence for a while ...

Meditatio

Leader: Let us listen to this verse read slowly for the second time. As you listen, I invite you to remember a word or a short phrase that catches your attention, repeating it gently in your memory.

Reader 2: *(Read text again – just the actual Gospel passage, not the introductory dialogue)*

Silence for a while ...

Leader: I now invite you to speak aloud the word or phrase of your meditation. This is like a re-reading of the Scripture, except you say only the bit that you have been meditating on. As you speak this word or phrase, you give the words new life and each of us hears the words again in a new voice. After we have spoken our words, let us return to silent stillness, listening deeply.

Allow time for the participants to speak their word or phrase and then allow for silence. If there is no response, you may invite the participants to speak their word or phrase to the person next to them. Ensure that they only say their word or phrase and then return to silence.

Respond

Oratio

Leader: I invite you now to share with the person next to you the words of your meditation. How might you live these words? What are your wonderings? What might God be saying?

Once we have finished sharing, we will return to silence and stillness.

Two to three minutes for sharing ...

Contemplatio

Leader: Thank you for engaging in this sacred deep listening. Let us spend another few moments in contemplation, allowing these words, phrases, thoughts and feelings to sink deep into our hearts and minds, so that we move into our day deeply affected by God's Word.

One minute of silent prayer ...



Go Forth

Sign of Peace

Leader: As we come to the end of another week, let us offer each other a sign of peace.

(Sign of peace)

Let us go forth from here, proclaiming by our words and actions our love of God, our love of neighbour and our love of self.

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.

