

Daily Prayer

Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe
The Year of Matthew



Readings: Ezekiel 34: 11–12, 15–17; Psalm 22: 1–3, 5–6; 1 Corinthians 15: 20–26, 28; Matthew 25: 31–46.

Using 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.

Readings this Week – the End of the Liturgical Year

The thirty-fourth Sunday of the year (or the Feast of Christ the King) marks the end of the liturgical year. This week's readings include many images concerning sheep. God is described as a loving and caring shepherd both in the First Reading and the Responsorial Psalm, guiding and protecting his flock. In the Gospel, the sheep are the ones who took care of others and saw to their needs. These are welcomed into the kingdom.

Overview of the Week

Day and Liturgical Colour	Daily Prayer	Links to Liturgy, Traditional Prayers and Forms of Prayer
Monday – Green	<i>Come, you who are blessed by my father, inherit the kingdom.</i>	Praying with the Gospel Entrance Antiphon Reflection Our Father
Tuesday – Green	<i>The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.</i>	Praying with the Responsorial Psalm Praying in Song Reflective Activity
Wednesday – Green	<i>In Christ all shall be brought to life.</i>	Praying with the Second Reading Meditation Glory Be
Thursday – Red Saint Andrew	<i>I myself will look after and tend my sheep, says the Lord.</i>	Praying with the First Reading
Friday – Green	<i>Whatever you did for the least of mine, you did it for me.</i>	Praying with the Gospel

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 – Whatever you did for the least of mine, you did it for me

Today, we will focus on the Gospel. **Preparation:** 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.

Sign of the Cross

Leader: Let us pray together the Entrance Antiphon from the Feast of Christ the King.

All: **How worthy is the Lamb who was slain,
to receive power and divinity,
and wisdom and strength and honour.
To him belong glory and power for ever and ever.**

Light candle and pause.

Background to the Gospel

In this Gospel, God puts the righteous at his right hand and the damned at his left. The right hand, or right side, indicated a position of strength and power, or a special place of honour and is often referred to in the Bible. When Jesus is speaking, he refers to people as either sheep or goats. Sheep were considered in a more positive light than were goats. They were intelligent and quiet animals known for their loyalty and strength. Males would defend females and the young in times of trouble. Goats, however, were stubborn, difficult and trying creatures who did not protect each other in times of danger. Jewish people saw the term 'goat' as derogatory, meaning a person was undisciplined and morally lax.

Listen

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

‘Then the king will say to those on his right,

“Come, you who are blessed by my Father.

Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

For I was hungry, and you gave me food,

I was thirsty, and you gave me drink,

a stranger and you welcomed me,



naked and you clothed me,
ill and you cared for me,
in prison and you visited me.”

Then the righteous will answer him and say,

“Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you,
or thirsty and give you drink?

When did we see you a stranger and welcome you,
or naked and clothe you?

When did we see you ill or in prison and visit you?”

And the king will say to them in reply,

“Amen, I say to you,

whatever you did for one of the least brothers of mine, you did for me.”

(Pause)

The Gospel of the Lord.

All: **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

Respond

Leader: Read the Gospel again with the thought: ‘What must I do? How am I called to act in justice and peace in response to this reading?’

Time for quiet reflection ...

Go Forth

Concluding Prayer

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

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

Amen.

Leader: May we go forth in the knowledge that 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 – The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want

Today, we will pray with the Responsorial Psalm. **Preparation:** Choose readers 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.

Sign of the Cross

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: As we gather together to pray, we do so with humble hearts knowing that, like a shepherd who knows and loves his sheep, God's love for us is deep and everlasting.

Light candle and pause.

Background to the Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 22 is one of the most known and loved of all the psalms. A pilgrim travelling on a journey travels light, as he knows that God will provide what he needs. The pilgrim has complete faith and trust in God, and speaks with such confidence and assurance. He knows that no matter what trouble or strife he may encounter, God will walk with him, protecting and keeping him from harm. At the end of the journey, God as the host will anoint him, feed him and care for him.

Listen

Leader: Let us pray the Responsorial Psalm using one of these reflections:

- [“I'm not out here on my own. The Lord is my shepherd”](#) by Shift Worship
- [‘The Lord is my shepherd’](#) by Brian Boniwell
- [‘Shepherd me, O God’](#) by Marty Haugen.

(Pause)



Respond

Reflection

Leader: In this psalm, God is described as a shepherd whose sole focus is the needs of his sheep.

What words come to mind for you to describe this shepherd?

God is our shepherd and we are his sheep. How does it make you feel knowing that: God is **your** shepherd, caring for you day and night, God calls you by **your** name and knows you intimately, and looks after **you**, protecting you and keeping you from harm?

Let us praise God in our hearts for his love and care.

Time for quiet reflection ...

Go Forth

Leader: Shepherd us, O God, as we go forth today,
walk this journey with us,
shield us from all harm
and keep us close to you.

All: **Amen.**

Leader: May we go forth in the knowledge that 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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Wednesday

Today's Daily Prayer – In Christ all shall be brought to life

Today, we pray with the Second Reading. **Preparation:** Choose readers and someone to light the candle.

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.

Sign of the Cross

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: As we light this candle, we ask our loving God to be with us as we pray for the wisdom we need to understand and be guided by the workings of the Spirit.

All: **Amen.**

Light candle and pause.

Background to the Second Reading

The Second Reading comes from Paul's first letter to the Corinthians. A Greek city, Corinth was situated on a narrow piece of land that separated upper and lower Greece. It was well placed as a centre of trade and commerce because of its position. People from many countries lived there, but the overriding culture was Greek. Paul found it difficult to translate Jewish thinking and culture into concepts that the Greeks would understand and accept. They particularly struggled with the notion of resurrection.

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 listen attentively to the Second Reading.

Reader: A reading from Saint Paul's first letter to the Corinthians.

Brothers and sisters:

Christ has been raised from the dead,
the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep.



For since death came through man,
the resurrection of the dead came also through man.

For just as in Adam all die,
so too in Christ shall all be brought to life.

(Pause)

The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Respond

Meditation

Leader: Let us meditate on these words from the Second Reading:

‘In Christ all shall be brought to life.’

What does this statement mean for you?

Time for quiet reflection ...

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.

Be with us Lord, as we go forth in the knowledge that 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 – God is our shepherd and we are his sheep

Today's prayer focuses on the First Reading. **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.

Sign of the Cross

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, let us imagine the face of someone who cares for us deeply. Ask God to bless that person especially today.

Background to the First Reading

Shepherding was a very common occupation for people in the bible and we know that great men of the bible, such as Abraham, Moses and David, were shepherds. The terrain of Palestine lent itself to the raising of sheep and goats, despite there being a scarcity of grass and water. A good shepherd would move his flock from one pasture to another to feed his sheep and, if the streams had dried up, he would draw water from a well to provide for his thirsty flock. Often, he would name his sheep and would call them to him. They knew his voice and he knew each one of them.

Listen

Leader: Let us listen attentively to the First Reading.

Reader: A reading from the prophet Ezekiel.

Thus, says the Lord God:

I myself will look after and tend my sheep.

As a shepherd tends his flock

when he finds himself among his scattered sheep,

so will I tend my sheep.



I will rescue them from every place where they were scattered
when it was cloudy and dark.

I myself will pasture my sheep;

I myself will give them rest, says the Lord God.

The lost I will seek out,

the strayed I will bring back,

the injured I will bind up,

the sick I will heal.

(Pause)

This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Respond

Leader: God, you are our shepherd and we are your sheep.

All: **You call my name, you know me, and you love me.** *(Pause)*

Reader 1: When I am hungry, you nourish me.

All: **You call my name, you know me, and you love me.** *(Pause)*

Reader 2: When I am lost, you come searching for me.

All: **You call my name, you know me, and you love me.** *(Pause)*

Reader 3: When I am injured, you bind up my wounds.

All: **You call my name, you know me, and you love me.** *(Pause)*

Reader 4: When I am sick in heart and soul, you heal me.

All: **You call my name, you know me, and you love me.** *(Pause)*

Reader 5: I lay my weary body in the safety of your arms.

All: **You call my name, you know me, and you love me.** *(Pause)*

Leader: God, you are our shepherd and we are your sheep.

Go Forth

Leader: May goodness, kindness and mercy fill our hearts and minds all the days of our lives.

All: **May I live forever in the house of the Lord. Amen.**

We go forth in the knowledge that 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 was hungry, and you did not feed me

Today's prayer focuses on the Gospel. **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.

Sign of the Cross

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

The Gospel

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

'Then he will say to those on his left,
"For I was hungry and you gave me no food,
I was thirsty and you gave me no drink,
a stranger and you gave me no welcome,
naked and you gave me no clothing,
ill and in prison, and you did not care for me."
Then they will answer and say,
"Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty
or a stranger or naked or ill or in prison,
and not minister to your needs?"



He will answer them, "Amen, I say to you,
what you did not do for one of these least ones,
you did not do for me."

(Pause)

The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Respond

Reflective Song

Leader: Let us watch this video clip and reflect on the message:

[‘The Matthew 25 song’](#) by Sherri Youngward.

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 in the knowledge that our lives are formed in faith, hope and love in the light of Christ.

All: Thanks be to God.

Extinguish candle and pause.

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

