

Daily Prayer

Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time Year B
The Year of Mark; Year of Prayer 2024



Readings: Deuteronomy 18: 15–20; Psalm 94: 1–2, 6–9; 1 Corinthians 7: 32–35; Mark 1: 21–28.

Year of Prayer 2024

Pope Francis proposed that 2024 be marked as a year dedicated to prayer in preparation for the Jubilee 2025. The Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) Daily Prayer resources will support both individual and community prayer in the Year of Prayer 2024. In addition, the Dicastery for Evangelization will publish a series of [prayer notebooks](#), with material taken from the many forms of prayer to be found in the rich Catholic tradition.

The Beginning of the Year of Mark

Welcome to week one of the school year. This is the fourth week of the liturgical season of Ordinary Time, so the background colour for the prayer space is green for this week.

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.

Overview of the Week

Day and Liturgical Colour	Daily Prayer	Links to Liturgy, Traditional Prayers and Forms of Prayer
Monday – <i>Green</i> Teachers return to school		MACS 2024 Liturgical Calendar Staff prayer for the start of the school year
Tuesday – <i>Green</i> Students return to school		Prayer for the beginning of the school year
Wednesday – <i>Green</i>	<i>Jesus commands an unclean spirit.</i>	Sunday's Gospel
Thursday – <i>Green</i>	<i>If today, you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.</i>	Responsorial Psalm
Friday – <i>White</i> <i>The Presentation of the Lord</i>	<i>Jesus is brought to the Temple by Mary and Joseph.</i>	Gospel for the Feast of The Presentation of the Lord

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

Suggested Teacher Background for the Readings

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



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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 in God's presence and in the presence of each other, let us prepare to engage our minds, hearts and hands in prayer.

We begin 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: Let us pray:

Open our minds to know and hear your call to service.

All: **Open our minds, Lord.**

Leader: Open our hearts to the gift of your incredible love and mercy.

All: **Open our hearts, Lord.**

Leader: Open our hands to receive your grace and do your work.

All: **Open our hands, Lord.**

Background to the Sunday Gospel

Sunday's Gospel (Mk 1: 21–28) describes the first public act of Jesus in Mark's Gospel: his teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum, in the course of which he dramatically frees a man possessed by an evil spirit.

Mark's Gospel frequently presents Jesus as a teacher – though, curiously, does not tell us much about the actual content of his instruction. The evangelist simply wants to present Jesus as one who teaches with great authority. We note how, at both the beginning and the end of this episode, the people in the synagogue are struck by the authority with which Jesus teaches – in contrast to that of the other religious authorities (the scribes). Indeed, what is really surprising is that they seem just as impressed by the authority with which he teaches as by the authority with which he drives out demons, an example of which has just taken place before their eyes.

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 prepare to listen attentively to the sacred words of Scripture.



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

Jesus and his followers went as far as Capernaum, and as soon as the Sabbath came Jesus went to the synagogue and began to teach. And his teaching made a deep impression on them because, unlike the scribes, he taught them with authority.

In their synagogue just then there was a man possessed by an unclean spirit, and it shouted, 'What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are: the Holy One of God.' But Jesus said sharply, 'Be quiet! Come out of him!' And the unclean spirit threw the man into convulsions and with a loud cry went out of him. The people were so astonished that they started asking each other what it all meant. 'Here is a teaching that is new' they said 'and with authority behind it: he gives orders even to unclean spirits and they obey him.' And his reputation rapidly spread everywhere, through all the surrounding Galilean countryside.

The Gospel of the Lord.

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

Respond

Leader: In today's Gospel, Jesus is teaching in the temple. What was it about Jesus that made the people listen? What did the people say about him? What did they do?

Pause a few minutes for reflection ...

Go Forth

All: **Gracious God, you call us to follow you and to be faithful disciples of Jesus. Give us the courage we need to listen to Jesus and live out his teachings through our words and actions.**

Help us to be examples of generosity, kindness and forgiveness, so that we may bring about your kingdom here on earth. We make our prayer through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Extinguish candle and pause.

Leader: May God continue to lead us.

All: **Inspired to live faithfully in the light of Christ.**

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



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Thursday

Gather

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We begin 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: Let us pray:

Open our minds to know and hear your call to service.

All: **Open our minds, Lord.**

Leader: Open our hearts to the gift of your incredible love and mercy.

All: **Open our hearts, Lord.**

Leader: Open our hands to receive your grace and do your work.

All: **Open our hands, Lord.**

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 together the Responsorial Psalm.

Reader: If today, you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

All: **If today, you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.**

Reader: Come, ring out our joy to the Lord;

hail the rock who saves us.

Let us come before him, giving thanks,

with songs let us hail the Lord.

All: **If today, you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.**



Reader: Come in, let us kneel and bend low;
let us kneel before the God who made us
for he is our God and we
the people who belong to his pasture,
the flock that is led by his hand.

All: **If today, you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.**

Reader: O that today you would listen to his voice!
'Harden not your hearts as at Meribah,
as on that day at Massah in the desert
when your fathers put me to the test;
when they tried me, though they saw my work.'

All: **If today, you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.**

(Pause)

Respond

Leader: The psalm issues a plea to be open to the voice of God today. God desires our hearts to be open and not hardened by selfishness or lack of faith.

How can you make time to listen to God's voice in your life? Where is God inviting you to be open and respond more lovingly to God's presence in your daily actions and relationships with others?

(Pause)

Go Forth

Leader: Let us go forth from here praising God in all that we do and say.

All: **Inspired to live faithfully 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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Listen

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Leader: Let us prepare to listen attentively to the sacred words of Scripture.

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

When the day came for them to be purified as laid down by the Law of Moses, the parents of Jesus took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord – observing what stands written in the Law of the Lord: Every first-born male must be consecrated to the Lord – and also to offer in sacrifice, in accordance with what is said in the Law of the Lord, a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.

Now in Jerusalem there was a man named Simeon. He was an upright and devout man; he looked forward to Israel's comforting and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death until he had set eyes on the Christ of the Lord. Prompted by the Spirit he came to the Temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the Law required, he took him into his arms and blessed God, and he said:



'Now, Master, you can let your servant go in peace, just as you promised; because my eyes have seen the salvation which you have prepared for all the nations to see, a light to enlighten the pagans and the glory of your people Israel.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Respond

Leader: In presenting Jesus as a child, Joseph and Mary offer to God their most precious gift. Their offering will be continued in Jesus' adult life as he continues to offer himself to God by seeking always to do as God wants.

Your life is a precious gift too. Reflect on your unique abilities and talents. What can you offer God?

(Pause)

Go Forth

Leader: Let us go forth from here praising God in all that we do and say.

All: Inspired to live faithfully 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.

