

# Daily Prayer

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



**Readings:** Jeremiah 23: 1–6; Psalm 22; Ephesians 2: 13–18; Mark 6: 30–34.

## 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.

## 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.

The optional shorter prayer of the day is indicated by [green headings](#) on each day.

## Readings this week

This week's readings focus on Jesus as the compassionate shepherd-king, who gathers and instructs a scattered people. Early Christians read passages in the Old Testament as a window into the revelation of Jesus, the messianic shepherd-king, which we find in the Gospels. The Responsorial Psalm is one of the most familiar and best-loved psalms of the entire psalter. God is characterised as a shepherd who attends to both the physical and the spiritual needs of each individual sheep. In the reading from Ephesians, Paul speaks of Christ breaking down the wall that separates Jews from Gentiles through his sacrifice, forming a united community in the Church which forms the nucleus of a new humanity. A modern parallel might be the breach of the Berlin Wall in 1989.

## Overview of the Week

Day and Liturgical Colour	Daily Prayer	Links to Liturgy, Traditional Prayers and Forms of Prayer
Monday – Green	<i>The Lord sustains my soul.</i>	<a href="#">Gather</a> Short Responsorial Prayer Words of Jeremiah
Tuesday – Green	<i>See, I have God for my help.</i>	<a href="#">Gather</a> Short Responsorial Prayer <a href="#">Go Forth</a>
Wednesday – Green	<i>We have received with joy your holy gifts.</i>	<a href="#">Gather</a> Short Responsorial Prayer Gospel <a href="#">Go Forth</a>



Day and Liturgical Colour	Daily Prayer	Links to Liturgy, Traditional Prayers and Forms of Prayer
Thursday – <i>Green</i>	<i>With willing heart we praise your name, O Lord.</i>	<a href="#">Listen</a> Responsorial Psalm <a href="#">Go Forth</a>
Friday – <i>Green</i>	<i>Blessed Saints Joachim and Anne were the grandparents of Jesus.</i>	<a href="#">Listen</a> Gospel <a href="#">Respond</a> Reflective Questions

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

### Suggested Teacher Background for the Readings

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



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**Readings:** Jeremiah 23: 1–6; Psalm 22; Ephesians 2: 13–18; Mark 6: 30–34.

## Today's Daily Prayer – The Lord sustains my soul

Today, we will focus on the First Reading, which is from Jeremiah. **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 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.

*Light candle and pause.*

### Short responsorial prayer

**Leader:** May we be ever watchful in keeping your commands.

**All:** The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

**Leader:** May we ever live in hope, faith and charity.

**All:** The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

**Leader:** May we be ever mindful of the grace and mercy of God.

**All:** The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

### Background to the First Reading

*In the midst of confusion, there are reliable shepherds who walk with us in the dark valleys. They are willing to share the dangers through which we pass, even at the risk of their own safety. They do not pit one segment of the community or one theological perspective against another, scattering the sheep and driving them away. Instead, they work to dismantle the walls that divide us. They speak the word that gathers us together. They reconcile us with God and with each other. They may not give us easy answers, but their primary concern is to lead us to Jesus, the one who is our peace.*

### Listen

**Leader:** Let us sit in silence and open our mind to hear the Word of God.

**Reader:** A reading from the prophet Jeremiah.



It is the Lord who speaks! But the remnant of my flock I myself will gather from all the countries where I have dispersed them, and will bring them back to their pastures: they shall be fruitful and increase in numbers. I will raise up shepherds to look after them and pasture them; no fear, no terror for them anymore; not one shall be lost – it is the Lord who speaks!

*(Pause)*

The Word of the Lord.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

## Respond

### Reflective time

**Leader:** Let's now spend some time in reflective silence pondering our wonderings.

What kind of world does this text reflect? *(Three minutes)*

You are invited to share your wonderings with those around you. *(Five minutes)*

Shepherd God, you care for us with gentleness and love. Help us to listen for your voice and turn to you in our time of need.

**All: Amen.**

## Go Forth

**Leader:** Let us now ask God to bless us.

**All: May the Lord guide our hearts, lead us in the ways of love and fill us with peace.**

**May he bless us all as we go forth to work for the students in our care.**

**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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**Readings:** Jeremiah 23: 1–6; Psalm 22; Ephesians 2: 13–18; Mark 6: 30–34.

## Today's Daily Prayer – See, I have God for my help

Today, we will focus on the Second Reading, which is from Saint Paul's letter to the Ephesians.

**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.

*Light candle and pause.*

### Short responsorial prayer

**Leader:** May we find time to rest in the silent peace of Christ.

**All:** The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

**Leader:** May we find inspiration in the teachings of Christ.

**All:** The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

**Leader:** May we always trust that we are in the care of our true shepherd.

**All:** The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

### Background to the Second Reading

*In the temple precinct in Jerusalem, there was a stone barrier setting apart the inner area into which only Jewish people could enter. A non-Jew would cross the barrier under pain of death. This is the 'dividing wall of enmity' to which Saint Paul refers and which has been torn down by Jesus Christ, in whom a new humanity is being created where discrimination or segregation are to have no place.*

### Listen

**Leader:** Let us sit in silence and open our mind to hear the Word of God.

**Reader:** A reading from the letter of Saint Paul to the Ephesians.



In Christ Jesus, you that used to be so far from us have been brought very close, by the blood of Christ. For he is the peace between us, and has made the two into one and broken down the barrier which used to keep them apart, actually destroying in his own person the hostility caused by the rules and decrees of the Law. This was to create one single New Man in himself out of the two of them and by restoring peace through the cross, to unite them both in a single Body and reconcile them with God. In his own person he killed the hostility. Later he came to bring the good news of peace, peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near at hand. Through him, both of us have in the one Spirit our way to come to the Father.

*(Pause)*

The Word of the Lord.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

## Respond

**Leader:** Let's sit with the reading for a minute or two, reflecting on what you think Paul is telling the Ephesians.

*(Pause)*

In pairs, share what you feel Paul is writing about and what it could mean for us today.

How does this reading add to your understanding of who Jesus is?

In response to the reading, we pray together:

**All: May the barriers and hostility between nations be broken down in the name of peace and unity. Where there is anger and bitterness, may we sow joy through our open compassion and respect. Father of all peace, may those who have lost sight of you be drawn back into your loving embrace. Amen.**

## Go Forth

**Leader:** Let us ask God to bless us.

**All: Bless us, O God, gather us into one fold with Jesus Christ as our shepherd. Bless our work so that it is seen as the work of your hands, and bring lasting peace to all, near and far.**

*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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**Readings:** Jeremiah 23: 1–6; Psalm 22; Ephesians 2: 13–18; Mark 6: 30–34.

## Today's Daily Prayer – We have received with joy your holy gifts

Today, we will focus on the Gospel. **Preparation:** Choose readers and someone to light the candle. Have paper and coloured pencils available for all participants.

## Wednesday

### 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.

*Light candle and pause.*

### Short responsorial prayer

**Leader:** May we act as shepherds to all we meet that they may know God.

**All:** The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

**Leader:** May the poor, the homeless and refugees seeking a safe country find us willing to shepherd them.

**All:** The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

**Leader:** May we be shepherds to your flock.

**All:** The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

### Background to the Gospel

*In this passage, Jesus has just begun his ministry and has quickly become popular, so that crowds are following him wherever he goes. As yet, the disciples don't know who Jesus is; they don't know his plan or how his story will end. Everything is very new and exciting. This passage has often inspired missionaries to cultivate a rich prayer life that can sustain them in their ministry.*

### Listen

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



**Reader:** The apostles rejoined Jesus and told him all they had done and taught. Then he said to them, 'You must come away to some lonely place all by yourselves and rest for a while'; for there were so many coming and going that the apostles had no time even to eat. So they went off in a boat to a lonely place where they could be by themselves. But people saw them going, and many could guess where; and from every town they all hurried to the place on foot and reached it before them. So as he stepped ashore he saw a large crowd; and he took pity on them because they were like sheep without a shepherd, and he set himself to teach them at some length.

*Time for quiet reflection ...*

## Respond

**Leader:** Sit with the reading for a minute or two. Pick one word from the reading and write it on your piece of paper. Make this word the centre of a sketch. As you draw, wonder about the following:

- When do you feel like a sheep without a shepherd?
- Where do you go to reconnect?
- How does this reading speak to us of God's dream for us?

Share a thought you had while completing your sketch.

## Go Forth

**All:** **Know our thoughts and needs, O Lord, and help us to remain close in your embrace, sure of your love and confident that you hear our prayers. May we go forth into our work as shepherds to those who need us to lead them.**

**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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**Readings:** Jeremiah 23: 1–6; Psalm 22; Ephesians 2: 13–18; Mark 6: 30–34.

## Today's Daily Prayer – With willing heart we praise your name, O Lord

Today's prayer will focus on the Responsorial Psalm. **Preparation:** Choose readers and someone to light the candle. For the response, find three or four images that represent the psalm, e.g. a shepherd, sheep, a green pasture, a banquet. Alternatively, ensure that there are enough devices for everyone to search for their own image of the psalm.

## Thursday

### 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.

*Light candle and pause.*

### Gospel Acclamation

**Leader:** Let us begin today's prayer by saying the Gospel Acclamation together.

**All:** Alleluia, alleluia!

**My sheep listen to my voice, says the Lord;**

**I know them, and they follow me.**

**Alleluia!**

### Listen

### Responsorial Psalm

**Leader:** Let us pray the Responsorial Psalm together.

**Reader:** The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

**All:** **The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.**

**Reader:** The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

Fresh and green are the pastures where he gives me repose.

Near restful waters he leads me, to revive my drooping spirit.

**All:** **The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.**



**Reader:** He guides me along the right path; he is true to his name.  
If I should walk in the valley of darkness no evil would I fear.  
You are there with your crook and your staff, with these you give me comfort.

**All:** **The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.**

**Reader:** You have prepared a banquet for me in the sight of my foes.  
My head you have anointed with oil; my cup is overflowing.  
Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me all the days of my life.  
In the Lord's own house shall I dwell for ever and ever.

**All:** **The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.**

*(Pause)*

## Respond

### Images of the psalm

*During this time, you may wish to listen to 'The Lord is my shepherd' by Keith Green.*

**Leader:** I invite you to take a few minutes to look at the images provided and spend a few minutes reflecting on one of the images that you are drawn to.

*(Time for reflection on the image)*

In pairs, let's share with each other what we think about the image of the shepherd and why we chose the image that we did.

*(Time for sharing)*

Thank you for entering into this prayer time. Let's now finish out prayer time with a blessing.

*(Alternatively, using a computer or other device, search the internet (e.g. Google Images, Pinterest, Pixabay) with a partner and together choose an image which speaks to you of the psalm.)*

## Go Forth

### Blessing

**Leader:** Loving God, bless us with faith and hope.

**All:** **Amen.**

**Leader:** Lord Jesus, the Way, the Truth and the Light, journey with us.

**All:** **Amen.**

**Leader:** Blessed Holy Spirit, empower us with strength and courage.

**All:** **Amen.**

**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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**Readings:** Jeremiah 23: 1–6; Psalm 22; Ephesians 2: 13–18; Mark 6: 30–34.

## Today's Daily Prayer – Blessed Saints Joachim and Anne were Jesus' grandparents

Today's prayer will focus on the Gospel for the Feast of Saint Anne and Saint Joachim (Mt 13: 16–17).

**Preparation:** You might like to use an image of grandparents or someone's grandchild in the prayer space. Use a green cloth, a candle and a bible. 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 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:** We gather together in God's presence ...

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

*Light candle and pause.*

### Short responsorial prayer

**Leader:** May we cherish the gift of grandchildren and grandparents, and nurture this special bond to ensure the faith continues to live.

**All:** The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

**Leader:** May our grandparents who have gone to you be held in loving arms and know your peace.

**All:** The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

**Leader:** May we always cherish Anne's and Joachim's daughter, who brought our Saviour into the world.

**All:** The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

### Listen

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

**Reader:** Jesus said to his disciples: 'Happy are your eyes because they see, your ears because they hear! I tell you solemnly, many prophets and holy men longed to see what you see, and never saw it; to hear what you hear, and never heard it.'



## Respond

### Reflective questions

**Leader:** What meaning does this scripture text hold for you today?  
How does the image help you make connections between the text and our world today?  
Explore these two questions with those around you.  
We respond in prayer together:

**All:** **Keeper of wisdom and truth, help us to continue searching with open mind and open heart, so that we will see you in all we meet. Amen.**

## Go Forth

### Sign of Peace

**All:** **We ask you, God, to bless us,  
To keep us in your light,  
and to help us always to walk in your way.**

**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 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.**

