

Daily Prayer

Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A,
*The Year of Matthew 2026 and
Jubilee Year of Saint Francis*



Readings: Sirach 15: 15–20; Psalm 118: 1–2, 4–5, 17–18, 33–34; 1 Corinthians 2: 6–10; Matthew 5: 20–22, 27–28, 33–34.

The Year of Matthew and Jubilee Year of Saint Francis

On January 10, 2026, Pope Leo XIV inaugurated the special Jubilee Year of Saint Francis. This special Jubilee Year commemorates the 800th anniversary of Saint Francis of Assisi's death. (Refer to the [Vatican News](#) link for further details.)

You may like to share Sister Rita's, first [MacKa Moment video](#) for 2026 on The Year of Saint Francis Assisi with your teachers, leaders, students and families. Sister Rita is a [Sister of Saint Joseph](#), who supports our schools and parishes with the [Mary Mackillop Heritage Centre](#) in East Melbourne.

Further, locally, the theme for Catholic Education Week 2026 is [Christ beside me: Walking in the footsteps of Saint Patrick](#). For further details about the theme, please refer to page 2 our [Liturgical Calendar](#).

The Gospel readings for this Year A are taken from the Gospel of Matthew, and the Church is currently celebrating the Season of Ordinary Time. **Ash Wednesday** is the beginning of the Season of **Lent**, a time of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving in preparation for Easter.

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 special cultural significance. Feel free to adapt the prayers for special occasions or specific intentions of your own class and school.

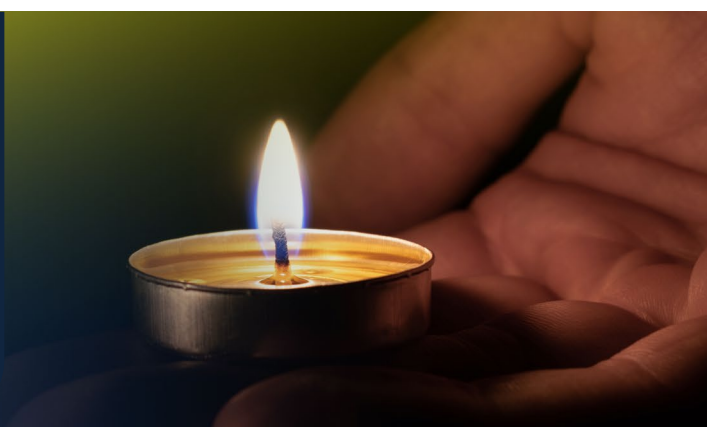
Every day of the week, Daily Prayer will invite those gathered to participate in prayer rituals and respond respectfully in a prayerful context. This week is about setting up for success in a way that those gathered will become comfortable with the structure, the responses, the gestures, the prayers and the symbols. Daily Prayer will be a time when all feel welcomed and valued.

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 (protected) Space** for prayer as you might do in creating a protected garden. This may include a prayer cloth or placemat, a bible, a crucifix, 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.



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Overview of the Week

The Gospel readings for this Year A are taken from the Gospel of Matthew, and the Church is currently celebrating the Season of Ordinary Time. **Ash Wednesday** is the beginning of the Season of **Lent**, a time of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving in preparation for Easter.

Day and Liturgical Colour	Daily Prayer	Links to Liturgy, Traditional Prayers, and Forms of Prayer
Monday – Green	<i>Happy are they who follow the law of the Lord!</i>	Gospel Responsorial Psalm
Tuesday– Green <i>Shrove Tuesday</i>	<i>God is kind and merciful</i>	Sign of Peace
Wednesday – Violet Ash Wednesday	<i>Come back to me with all your heart!</i>	Silent prayer response, Sign of Peace
Thursday– Violet	<i>Names for God.</i>	Video/Book Reflection Praying in Colour
Friday – Violet	<i>Pope Francis modelled that simple prayers can be very powerful.</i>	Prayers of Intercession, Sign of Peace, Five Finger Prayer

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

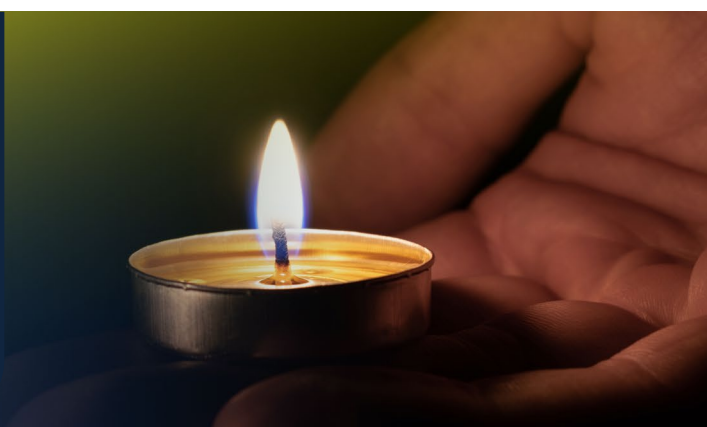
Suggested Teacher Background for the Readings

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



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Matthew 5: 20–22, 27–28, 33–34.

Monday

Today's Daily Prayer – Happy are they who follow the law of the Lord!

Today's prayer will invite those gathered to reflect on the key message from the Sunday Gospel about the importance of following laws. Jesus came to show all how to live God's law of love.

Preparation: Choose readers and someone to light the candle. Provide copies of the response for all.

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 may wish to include in today's prayer.

Leader: Let us pause and call to mind God's presence within and among us, today and always.

(Pause)

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

(Light candle and pause.)

Leader: Today Jesus' message in the Gospel reading is all about following God's law. Jesus teaches that this law of God's love is designed to lead us to the fullness of life and happiness. Jesus came to show all how to live God's law of love.

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.

Background to the Sunday Gospel

When Jesus began teaching, some people thought that he had come to abolish the Law of Moses that the Jewish people had been following for centuries. In this gospel reading, Jesus explains what he has come to do: he has come to teach about obeying God's law of love - to love God and to respond in love to others.

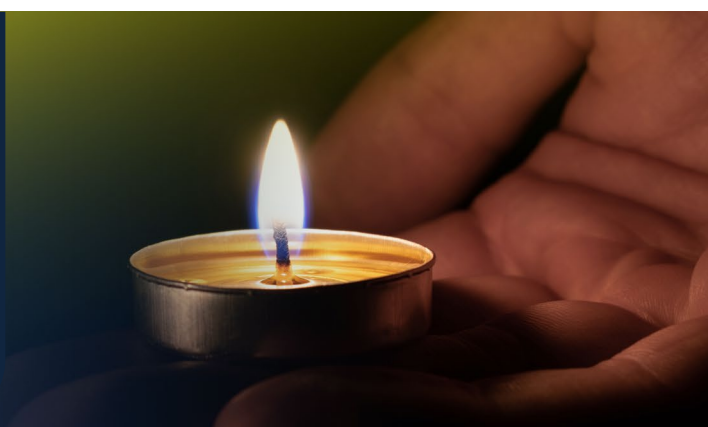
Reader: A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Jesus said to his disciples: 'Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfil. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, will be called



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least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.'

Pause for silence.

Reader: The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Respond

Leader: Let us respond to the message of this Gospel story by praying together the ancient words of Psalm 118.

Reader: Happy are they who follow the law of the Lord!

All: Happy are they who follow the law of the Lord!

Reader: They are happy whose life is blameless, who follow God's law!
They are happy those who do his will, seeking him with all their hearts.

All: Happy are they who follow the law of the Lord!

Reader: You have laid down your precepts to be obeyed with care.
May my footsteps be firm to obey your statutes.

All: Happy are they who follow the law of the Lord!

Reader: Teach me the demands of your statutes and I will keep them to the end.
Train me to observe your law, to keep it with my heart.

All: Happy are they who follow the law of the Lord!

Time for silent prayer

Go Forth

Leader: With Christ beside me, my life is formed in faith hope and love.

Saint Patrick, patron saint of our local Church in Melbourne.

All: Pray for us

Leader: In this special Jubilee Year of Saint Francis, Saint Francis of Assisi.

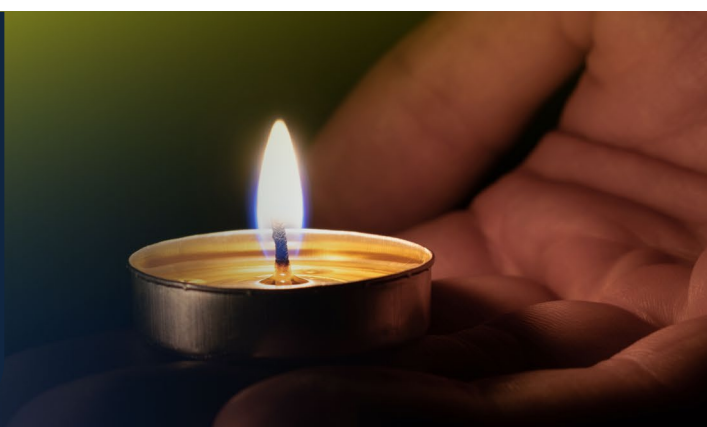
All: Pray for us
In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Extinguish candles and pause.



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Tuesday

Today's Daily Prayer – Shrove Tuesday

Preparation: This week will see the commencement of the Church Season of Lent, with the celebration of Ash Wednesday tomorrow. Prepare for Ash Wednesday by changing the liturgical colour to purple and creating a simple, uncluttered prayer space. It is important to explain the ritual of the distribution of ashes and their symbolism.

Choose readers and someone to light the candle. Provide copies of the response for all.

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 focus on this moment. There may be special occasions or specific intentions that those gathered may wish to include in today's prayer.

Leader: Holy Spirit, come and fill our time together. Help us to be fully present here, to your Word, to one another and to the world you love.

Let us make the Sign of the Cross, being aware of the movement of our hands and the words that we are saying.

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

Light candle and pause.

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.

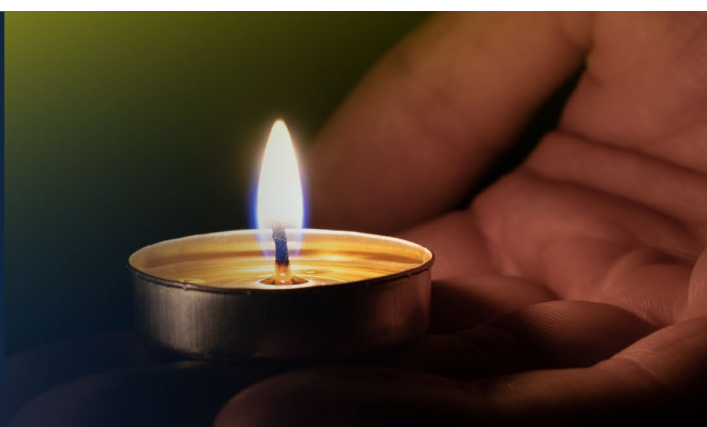
Leader: **The Lord is kind and merciful.**

1. My soul, give thanks to the Lord, all my being, bless his holy name.
My soul, give thanks to the Lord
and never forget all his blessings. **(R.)**
2. It is he who forgives all your guilt, who heals every one of your ills,
who redeems your life from the grave,
who crowns you with love and compassion. **(R.)**
3. The Lord is compassion and love, slow to anger and rich in mercy.
He does not treat us according to our sins nor repay us according to our faults. **(R.)**



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4. As far as the east is from the west so far does he remove our sins.
As a father has compassion on his sons,
the Lord has pity on those who fear him. **(R.)**

Respond

Leader: We pray this day for the grace to strengthen our relationship with God through acts of giving, sacrifice and self-discipline throughout the season of Lent. May we reflect on the ways that God has been merciful to us and praise him for his love. Amen

Go Forth

Offering the Sign of Peace

When offering the Sign of Peace, participants might like to say the name of the person, looking at them with friendly eyes, speaking the words in a clear voice – ‘Peace be with you’ – while mindfully shaking their hand in a respectful manner. The words and action are like a prayer for others.

Leader: Let us offer each other the Sign of Peace

(Time for Sign of Peace to be exchanged)

Signal for Sign of Peace to come to a conclusion and for people to sit in silent prayer and reflection.

(Time for silent reflection)

Leader: With Christ beside me, are lives are formed in faith hope and love.

Saint Patrick, patron saint of our local Church in Melbourne.

All: Pray for us

Leader: In this special Jubilee Year of Saint Francis, Saint Francis of Assisi.

All: Pray for us

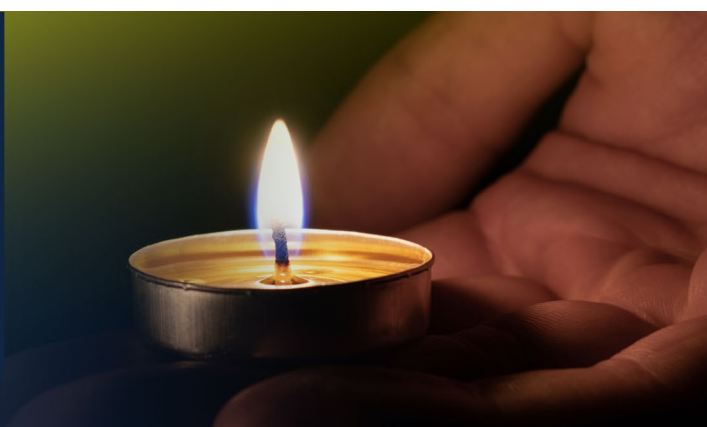
All: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Extinguish candles and pause.



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Matthew 5: 20–22, 27–28, 33–34.

Wednesday

Today's Daily Prayer – Ash Wednesday

Today's prayer will invite those gathered to reflect on the symbolism and significance of this first day of Lent.

Preparation: Preview [Ash Wednesday and Lent in Two Minutes](#). You will need access to AV equipment to play the video. Review the Response section and choose in advance which activity to use as your response.

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 may wish to include in today's prayer.

Leader: On this Ash Wednesday, Christians all over the world will stop to celebrate this very first day of the Church Season called Lent. On Ash Wednesday, many Catholics receive the ashes, which are traced on their foreheads to remind them that they are disciples of Jesus and that this six-week season of Lent is a time to give special attention to prayer, fasting and good deeds.

Let us make the Sign of the Cross, being aware of the movement of our hands and the words that we are saying.

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

Light candle and pause.

Listen

Lent in Two Minutes

Leader: Let us prepare to watch a very fast-moving video, [Ash Wednesday and Lent in Two Minutes](#).

As you watch this video, take note of words and images that grab your attention.

Some of the things you will see are things that you might already know.

Some of the information may be new to you.

We will pause at the end of this viewing to share a word or phrase we remember from the video.



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Respond

Leader: Let us pray the [Three Minute Retreat](#): *Marked with Salvation*.

(Alternative suggestions for responding are available below.)

Go Forth

During this time of Lent, may we find ways to come back to our God of mercy and compassion.

Leader: With Christ beside me, are lives are formed in faith hope and love.

Saint Patrick, patron saint of our local Church in Melbourne.

All: Pray for us

Leader: In this special Jubilee Year of Saint Francis, Saint Francis of Assisi.

All: Pray for us

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

Extinguish candles and pause.

Suggested Additional Resources

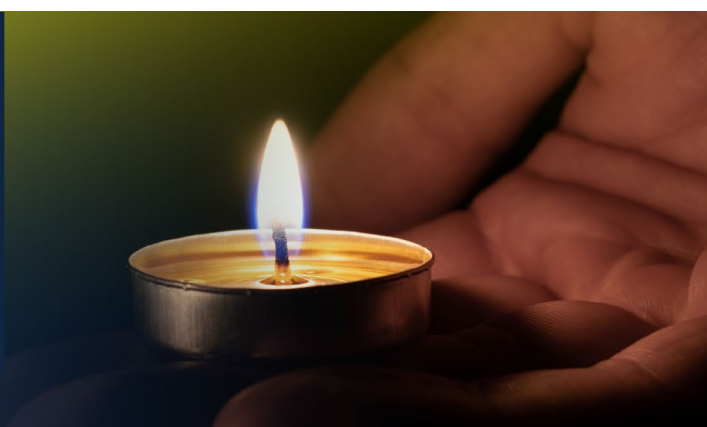
Alternative suggestions for the [Respond](#) section:

- Begin a Lent Chapter in Prayer Journals with the intention of writing or drawing prayer responses over the coming six weeks.
- Listen to and pray with the song Ashes by Tom Conry.
- Write a Lenten To-Do List! In Lent Christians are asked to do three things:
 1. Pray – e.g. Pray before going to sleep; invite family members to pray before the evening meal.
 2. Fast or Give Up – e.g. Give up a favourite food; give up saying unkind things about others.
 3. Do Good Deeds or Give to – e.g. help out someone in need; support fundraising for Caritas.
- Invite those gathered to write their To-Do List with one commitment for each of the three invitations for Lent.



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Matthew 5: 20–22, 27–28, 33–34.

Thursday

Today's Daily Prayer – Names of God

Today's prayer will invite those gathered to reflect on the many names for God and to use one of these in a response that invites them to enter into Praying in Colour. On one side of a sheet of paper they will list names for God that they know and ones that they hear in the story [In God's Name](#). If you can't access this book, you can watch the [video clip](#).

Preparation: paper, coloured pencils, crayons or textas. Preview the video [In God's Name](#), and Praying in Colour to prepare yourself for this activity.

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 focus on this moment. There may be special occasions or specific intentions that those gathered may wish to include in today's prayer.

Leader: Let us pause and call to mind God's presence within and among us, today and always.

(Pause)

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: Throughout history, people have tried to find words and images to respond to the questions, Who is God? and What is God like? Many of these come from the Scriptures, e.g. God as Creator, God as Potter, God as Shepherd, God as Shelter, Provider or Rock. There are other names that people have used in prayer like Gracious God, Forgiving God, Gentle God, God of Peace, Everyday God and many others.

Listen

In God's Name

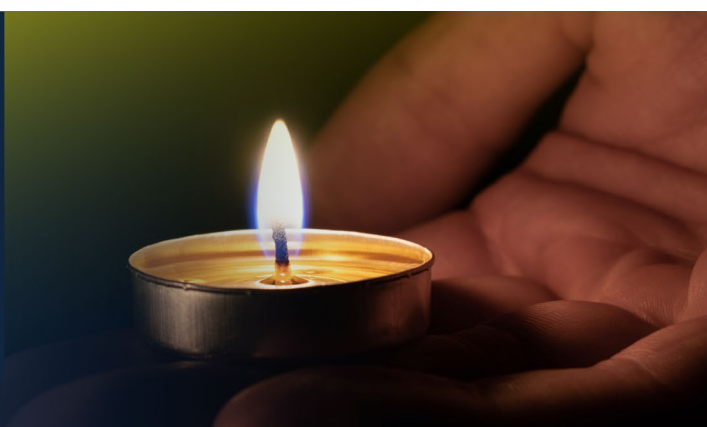
Hand out paper and pencils, etc.

Leader: As we listen to this story, [In God's Name](#), write down the names for God that you hear.
Watch the video.



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Leader: Now add to this list any names for God that you have heard from Scripture or in prayers.

Respond

Leader: Write your name for God on the back of the piece of paper where you have listed names for God.

Draw a shape around it and choose a colour to begin to illustrate.

(Lead participants in creating a prayer experience with illustrating in colour.)

Time for silent prayer

Go Forth

During this time of Lent, may we find ways to come back to our God of mercy and compassion.

Leader: With Christ beside me, are lives are formed in faith hope and love.

Saint Patrick, patron saint of our local Church in Melbourne.

All: Pray for us

Leader: In this special Jubilee Year of Saint Francis, Saint Francis of Assisi.

All: Pray for us

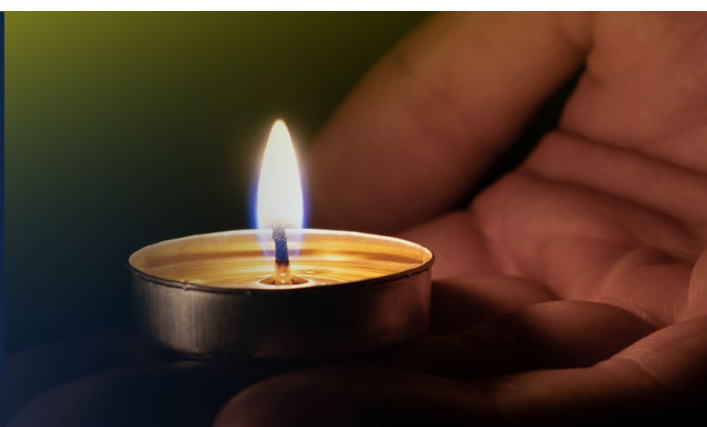
All: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

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Matthew 5: 20–22, 27–28, 33–34.

Today's Daily Prayer – The Five Finger Prayer of Pope Francis

In the prayer today those gathered will be invited to pray the Pope Francis Five Finger Prayer. Using each of the fingers on one hand, all will be guided to pray Prayers of Intercession for family and friends, teachers, leaders, those who are sick and suffering and for yourself.

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 may wish to include in today's prayer.

Leader: We now prepare our minds and bodies for prayer.
Let us be silent ... *(Pause)*
Let us be still ... *(Pause)*

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

Light candle and pause.

Leader: Today we will pray the Five Finger Prayer.

Listen

Leader: From the earliest times believers have used their hands during prayer. Prayerful actions with hands include praying with beads, raising hands to praise God, extending hands to make the Sign of Peace, joining hands and placing hands close to the heart. Pope Francis has taught about and practised a simple prayer pattern using five fingers. It has become known as 'The Five Finger Prayer' and is five prayers of intercession.

Respond

The Five Finger Prayer of Pope Francis

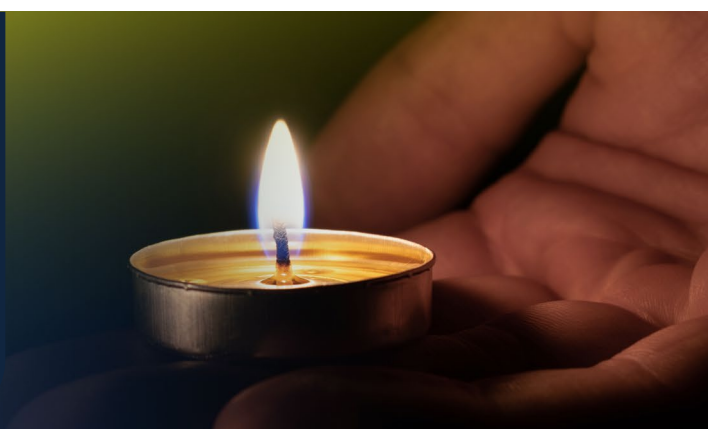
Leader: Let us pray together the Five Finger Prayer.

THUMB: Let us hold our thumb and think about people who are close to us. Maybe members of our family, our friends or people we work with. Let us close our eyes and ask God to bless them. May they always know God's never-ending love.



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Time for silent prayer

INDEX: Let us now take the finger next to our thumb. This finger reminds us of people who have pointed or shown the way for us. They could be people who teach us, guide us or heal us. Let us close our eyes and ask God to bless them. May God bless them with courage and wisdom. Let us name one person and hold that person gently in our hearts and pray for them.

Time for silent prayer

THIRD: *We will* now hold our tallest finger. It reminds us to pray for leaders: leaders of our country and world and leaders of our Church. Let us close our eyes and ask God to help them in their decision-making so that our world will be a peaceful and just place.

Time for silent prayer

FOURTH: Our fourth finger is our weakest finger. Let us hold it and remember all those in our world who are missing the things they need, for example the hungry, the lonely, the homeless, victims of war, terrorism or bullying. Let us close our eyes and pray for them, asking God to be with them.

Time for silent prayer

LITTLE: Our smallest finger is the last one to hold. Let us take it and pray for ourselves. Maybe we have something to ask God for or maybe we can just listen to God in the silence of our hearts.

Time for silent prayer.

Leader: Let us end our prayer by joining our hands with the palms touching and say together Amen.

Go Forth

Offering the Sign of Peace

When offering the Sign of Peace, participants might like to say the name of the person, looking at them with friendly eyes, speaking the words in a clear voice – ‘Peace be with you’ – while mindfully shaking their hand in a respectful manner. The words and action are like a prayer for others.

Leader: Let us offer each other the Sign of Peace.

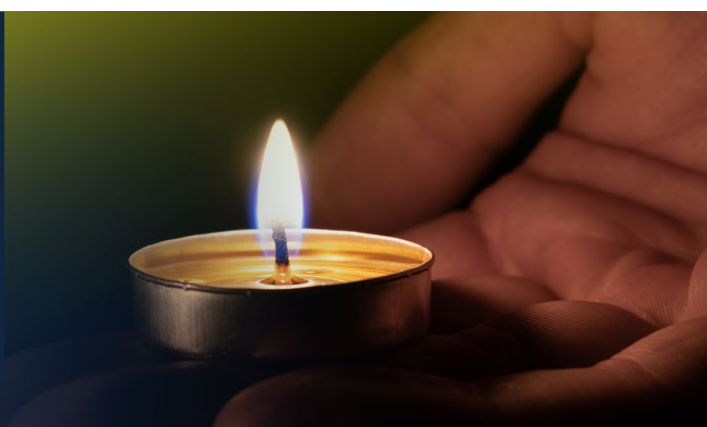
(Time for Sign of Peace to be exchanged)

During this time of Lent, may we find ways to come back to our God of mercy and compassion.



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Leader: May we be generous, merciful and just people.

All: Amen.

Leader: May we have firm hearts and trust in the Lord.

All: Amen.

Leader: May we give to the poor with open hands and hearts.

All: Amen.

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

Extinguish candles and pause.

Suggested Additional Resources

- [Five Finger Prayer for Children for young children](#)
- [Video: Five Finger Prayer: Teach Kids to Pray](#)

