

Daily Prayer

First Sunday of Lent Year A
The Year of Matthew



Readings: Gen 2: 7–9; 3:1-7 Psalm 50: 3–6. 12–14. 17. Rom 5: 12, 17-19; Matthew 4: 1–11.

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 **Lent**.

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.

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.

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

The Gospel readings for this Year A are taken from the Gospel of Matthew, and the Church is currently celebrating 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 Forms of Prayer
Monday – Violet	<i>Jesus is tempted by the devil in the desert</i>	Gospel, Praying with a Mantra
Tuesday – Violet	<i>Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned</i>	First Reading, Responsorial Psalm
Wednesday – Violet	<i>Death reigned until Christ came to atone for sin.</i>	Prayer Responses to the symbolism and significance of Ash Wednesday and Lent
Thursday – Violet	<i>Project Compassion theme & stories</i>	Project Compassion story, Prayers of Intercession
Friday – Violet	<i>Jesus is tempted by the devil in the desert</i>	Visio Divina – praying with art

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

Suggested Teacher Background for the Readings

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



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Monday

Today's Daily Prayer – Jesus is tempted by the devil in the desert.

Preparation: Choose readers and someone to light the candle. You will need access to audio visual equipment to play the Lenten Gospel Acclamation.

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: As we begin this time of prayer, we ask God to be with us.

Focusing on the pattern of our breath will help us to become still and silent.

Allow time for slowing down the breath in preparation for prayer.

Let us pray together the Sign of the Cross.

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 listen to Sunday's Gospel.

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

In Sunday's Gospel, Jesus is led by the Holy Spirit out into the wilderness. The scripture preceding this tells us of Jesus' baptism by John and the revelation of his call by God. In the wilderness Jesus confronts a very common human experience of self-doubt. In the spiritual life, the temptation to doubt frequently follows a powerful experience of God.

Leader: Let us welcome the gospel by singing together [Lenten Gospel Acclamation](#)

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

Jesus was led by the Spirit out into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted for forty days and forty nights, after which he was very hungry, and the tempter came and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to turn into loaves.' But he replied, 'Scripture says:

Man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'



The devil then took him to the holy city and made him stand on the parapet of the Temple. 'If you are the Son of God,' he said, 'throw yourself down; for scripture says: He will put you in his angels' charge, and they will support you on their hands in case you hurt your foot against a stone.'

Jesus said to him, 'Scripture also says: You must not put the Lord your God to the test.'

Next, taking him to a very high mountain, the devil showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour. 'I will give you all these', he said, 'if you fall at my feet and worship me.' Then Jesus replied, 'Be off, Satan! For scripture says:

You must worship the Lord your God, and serve him alone.'

Then the devil left him, and angels appeared and looked after him.

(Pause for silence.)

Reader: The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Respond

Praying with a Mantra

Leader: Let us name in our hearts some of the worries that might be troubling us at this time. Some of them might be worries that we can't do anything about. Let us put them aside. To do this we will pray with words from the Gospel in a Breath Prayer.

Let us pray a breath prayer using the words that Jesus spoke: 'Worship the Lord your God' We can make them our prayer word or mantra. A mantra is a single word or short phrase that one repeats throughout a time of meditation. It helps us to focus and to make space for God to be with us.

Say 'Worship the Lord your God' as you inhale.

Say 'Serve him alone' as you exhale.

Breathing in: Worship the Lord your God

Breathing out: Serve him alone.

We will continue this mantra until we hear the sound of the prayer bell/chime.

Time for silent reflection

Go Forth

Leader: With Christ beside me, our 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 candle and pause.



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Tuesday

Today's Daily Prayer – Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

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 may wish to include in today's prayer.

Leader: As we begin this time of prayer, we ask God to be with us.

Focusing on the pattern of our breath will help us to become still and silent.

Allow time for slowing down the breath in preparation for prayer.

Let us pray together the Sign of the Cross.

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

Background to the First Reading

Leader: The readings for the First Sunday of Lent act as a kind of overture to the entire season. They enable us to engage in a double confession: a confession of sin and the repentance which follows; and a confession of praise for the mercy of God which is shown to us in spite of our sin.

Leader: Let us prepare to listen attentively to the Word of God.

Reader: **A reading from the book of Genesis**

The Lord God fashioned man of dust from the soil. Then he breathed into his nostrils a breath of life, and thus man became a living being.

The Lord God planted a garden in Eden which is in the east, and there he put the man he had fashioned. The Lord God caused to spring up from the soil every kind of tree, enticing to look at and good to eat, with the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the middle of the garden.

The serpent was the most subtle of all the wild beasts that the Lord God had made. It asked the woman, 'Did God really say you were not to eat from any of the trees in the garden?' The woman answered the serpent, 'We may eat the fruit of the trees in the garden. But of the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden God said, "You must not eat it, nor touch it, under pain of death".' Then the serpent said to the woman, 'No! You will not die! God knows in fact that on the day you eat it your eyes will be opened and you will be like gods, knowing good and evil.' The woman saw that the tree was good to eat and pleasing to the eye, and that it was desirable for the knowledge that it could give. So she took some of its fruit and ate it. She gave some also to her husband who was with her, and he ate it.



Then the eyes of both of them were opened and they realised that they were naked.
So they sewed fig-leaves together to make themselves loin-cloths.

Reader: The Word of the Lord

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Respond

Responsorial Psalm

Leader: The response is: Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

All: **Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.**

Reader: *Have mercy on me, God, in your kindness.
In your compassion blot out my offence.
O wash me more and more from my guilt
and cleanse me from my sin. (R.)*

All: **Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.**

Reader: *My offences truly I know them;
my sin is always before me.
Against you, you alone, have I sinned;
what is evil in your sight I have done. (R.)*

All: **Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned**

Reader: *A pure heart create for me, O God,
put a steadfast spirit within me.
Do not cast me away from your presence,
nor deprive me of your holy spirit. (R.)*

All: **Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned**

Reader: *Give me again the joy of your help;
with a spirit of fervour sustain me.
O Lord, open my lips
and my mouth shall declare your praise. (R.)*

Time for silent prayer

Go Forth

Leader: With Christ beside me, our 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 candle and pause.



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Readings: Gen 2: 7–9; 3:1-7 Psalm 50: 3–6. 12–14. 17. Rom 5: 12, 17-19; Matthew 4: 1–11.

Today's Daily Prayer – Death reigned until Christ came to atone for sin.

Preparation: Choose readers and someone to light the candle. Participants will need their prayer journal to respond.

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 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)*
Let us breathe ... *(Pause)* ... noticing the pattern of our in breath and our out breath.

Light candle and pause.

Leader: Today we will pray with the Second Reading from Sunday.

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

Reader: A reading from the letter of Saint Paul to the Romans

Reader: Sin entered the world through one man, and through sin death, and thus death has spread through the whole human race because everyone has sinned. If it is certain that death reigned over everyone as the consequence of one man's fall, it is even more certain that one man, Jesus Christ, will cause everyone to reign in life who receives the free gift that he does not deserve, of being made righteous. Again, as one man's fall brought condemnation on everyone, so the good act of one man brings everyone life and makes them justified. As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by one man's obedience many will be made righteous. *(Pause for silence.)*

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**



Respond

Leader: Take a few minutes to reflect on Saint Paul's message. Saint Paul uses the word 'grace' to describe the gracious love of God that is poured out freely on us. Lent can be a time to reflect on the graciousness of God, the gifts that each of us experience in our lives that are small indicators of God's presence and love.

Journaling Exercise

Invite everyone to spend some time writing in their journals, responding to the following prompts:

- Describe a recent occasion when you felt aware of God's presence or love in your life.
- What are three things that you are grateful for today?
- How can you better serve God?

Invite everyone to share their responses with the group.

Leader: Lord, during this Lenten season nourish us with your Word of life and make us one with you in love and prayer. Let us pray silently, in our own words, asking the Holy Spirit to strengthen us in faith and make us active in good works.

Time for silent prayer

Go Forth

Leader: With Christ beside me, our 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 candle and pause.



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Readings: Gen 2: 7–9; 3:1-7 Psalm 50: 3–6. 12–14. 17. Rom 5: 12, 17-19; Matthew 4: 1–11.

Today's Daily Prayer – Project Compassion

Preparation: Choose readers and someone to light the candle. You will need access to audio visual equipment to play the Lenten Gospel Acclamation.

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 may wish to include in today's prayer.

Leader: As we begin this time of prayer, we ask God to be with us.

Focusing on the pattern of our breath will help us to become still and silent.

Allow time for slowing down the breath in preparation for prayer.

Let us pray together the Sign of the Cross.

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

Leader: Today our focus for prayer will be Project Compassion. Project Compassion is Caritas Australia's annual Lenten fundraising and awareness-raising appeal. It is a concrete way of drawing on the faith, love and generosity of Catholics and caring supporters throughout Australia to help end poverty, promote justice and uphold dignity.

Listen

Leader: Throughout the six weeks of Lent, Project Compassion will invite us to listen to inspiring stories of people living in different countries around the world. In learning about the lives of each of these people we are called to stand in solidarity with them and to take action in our own communities.

Use materials from Project Compassion to focus on the story of [Sisilia from Tanzania](#).

Respond

Prayers of Intercession

Reader: Let us pray for young people, especially girls, living in countries such as Tanzania, that the work of Caritas will continue to support their education and empower them to pursue their dreams.

Time for silent prayer

Let us pray for all who are marginalised and feel disconnected from their communities and culture. May the work of organisations like Caritas Australia continue to provide opportunities for healing and belonging.

Time for silent prayer



Let us pray that we will challenge ourselves to face poverty by going without this Lent. May our relationship with God be deepened through acts of kindness and giving to those who do not experience the same privileges that we do.

Time for silent prayer

Go Forth

Leader: With Christ beside me, our 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 candle and pause.



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Readings: Gen 2: 7–9; 3:1-7 Psalm 50: 3–6. 12–14. 17. Rom 5: 12, 17-19; Matthew 4: 1–11.

Today's Daily Prayer – Visio Divina – Praying with Art

Today's prayer will invite those gathered to explore the spiritual practice of Visio Divina. Following the pattern of Lectio Divina, it fosters the practice of sacred seeing.

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

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. Sound a singing bowl, a bell or a chime to begin.

Leader: As we begin this time of prayer, we ask God to be with us.

Focusing on the pattern of our breath will help us to become still and silent.

Allow time for slowing down the breath in preparation for prayer.

Let us pray together the Sign of the Cross.

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 be reflecting on the Gospel from Sunday using religious artwork that depicts Jesus in the wilderness. Visio Divina means 'Sacred Seeing' and provides us with the opportunity to meditate on a sacred image and bring together the different dimensions of our faith.

Listen

Leader: Let us spend a few moments in quiet prayer with our eyes closed. Bring yourself towards stillness.

Open your eyes and gaze at the image. Let your eyes rest on the characters and objects. Note your feelings as you examine the whole and parts of the work.





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

Jesus was led by the Spirit out into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted for forty days and forty nights, after which he was very hungry, and the tempter came and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to turn into loaves.' But he replied, 'Scripture says:

Man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'

The devil then took him to the holy city and made him stand on the parapet of the Temple. 'If you are the Son of God,' he said, 'throw yourself down; for scripture says:

He will put you in his angels' charge, and they will support you on their hands in case you hurt your foot against a stone.'

Jesus said to him, 'Scripture also says: You must not put the Lord your God to the test.'

Next, taking him to a very high mountain, the devil showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour. 'I will give you all these', he said, 'if you fall at my feet and worship me.' Then Jesus replied, 'Be off, Satan! For scripture says:

You must worship the Lord your God, and serve him alone.'

Then the devil left him, and angels appeared and looked after him.

(Pause for silence.)

Reader: The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Respond

Leader: Gaze back at the artwork again. Imagine that you are in this scene. What do you see from your vantage point? What can you hear? Smell? Sense?

How is the sacred present to you in this experience?

How does this Visio Divina relate to your life now?

What insight from this experience do you want to retain? How will you do that?

Reader: Father, Son and Holy Spirit



We praise you and give you glory:
We bless you for calling us to be your holy people.
Remain in our hearts,
And guide us in our love and service.
Help us to let our light shine before others
And lead them to the way of faith.

All: Amen

Go Forth

Leader: With Christ beside me, our 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 candle and pause.

