

Daily Prayer

Fifth Sunday of Easter Year B
The Year of Mark; Year of Prayer 2024



Readings: Acts 9: 26–31; Psalm 21: 26–28, 30–32; 1 John 3: 18–24; John 15: 1–8.

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.

Overview of the Week

Day and Liturgical Colour	Daily Prayer	Links to Liturgy, Traditional Prayers and Forms of Prayer
Monday – <i>White</i>	<i>Paul experiences a conversion and wants to join the disciples.</i>	Gather Praying with the First Reading Quiet Reflection Go Forth Prayer for the Journey
Tuesday – <i>White</i>	<i>I will praise you, Lord, in the assembly of your people.</i>	Listen Praying with the Responsorial Psalm Writing and Praying Group Prayer Go Forth Prayer of Praise
Wednesday – <i>White</i>	<i>Let us not love in word and speech but in deed and truth.</i>	Praying with the Second Reading Respond Prayers of Intercession
Thursday – <i>White</i>	<i>I am the vine and you are the branches.</i>	Gather Praying with the Gospel Reflection Go Forth Echo Prayer



Day and Liturgical Colour	Daily Prayer	Links to Liturgy, Traditional Prayers and Forms of Prayer
Friday – <i>White</i>	<i>Remember, we are all but travellers here.</i>	Listen Praying with the Words of Saint Mary of the Cross Reflection and Writing Go Forth Sign of Peace

Note that scripture quotations are from the Lectionary 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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Today's Daily Prayer – Saul (later Paul) experiences a conversion and wants to join the disciples

Today's prayer will focus on the First Reading. **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.

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: In this Easter season, let us continue to celebrate the essence of our faith – the resurrection of Jesus.

Light candle and pause.

Leader: Creator God, be with us. We pray ...

All: Be with us.

Leader: Loving Jesus, be with us. We pray ...

All: Be with us.

Leader: Spirit of hope, be with us. We pray ...

All: Be with us. Amen.

Background to the First Reading

Prior to his conversion to Christianity, Paul (then named Saul) was a committed Pharisee who was vigorously engaged in persecuting Christians. At Damascus, he experienced a vision of Christ and, from then on, he became a Christian. At first, Jewish Christians were very wary of him, knowing that he had been an active persecutor of the followers of Jesus, while the Pharisees who had been his allies felt betrayed. Paul's friends were few and far between and, although he had a great enthusiasm for the new religion, it took a while before the depth of his fervour and his active preaching convinced them that Paul was true in his love for Christ and the message of the Gospel.

Listen

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

Reader: A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

When Saul arrived in Jerusalem he tried to join the disciples,
but they were all afraid of him,
not believing that he was a disciple.



Then Barnabas took charge of him and brought him to the apostles,
and he reported to them how he had seen the Lord,
and that he had spoken to him,
and how in Damascus he had spoken out boldly in the name of Jesus.
He moved about freely with them in Jerusalem,
and spoke out boldly in the name of the Lord.
He also spoke and debated with the Hellenists,
but they tried to kill him.
And when the brothers learned of this,
they took him down to Caesarea
and sent him on his way to Tarsus.

(Pause)

The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Respond

Reflective Questions

Leader: Let us sit very still and quiet, feet on the floor, hands in our laps, eyes closed. Slow your breathing, empty your mind. *(Pause)*

What are the consequences for us when we choose Jesus' way over popular thought?

When we choose Jesus' way, what gives us the courage to be a person of action rather than just words?

Time for quiet reflection ...

Go Forth

Prayer for the Journey

Leader: May your hand be upon us, Lord Jesus, so we may know you are always with us.

All: Amen.

Leader: May your Spirit be within us, giving us the courage to walk in your footsteps.

All: Amen.

Leader: May your light shine on us, guiding and directing us to follow your way.

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: Acts 9: 26–31; Psalm 21: 26–28, 30–32; 1 John 3: 18–24; John 15: 1–8.

Today's Daily Prayer – I will praise you, Lord, in the assembly of your people

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.

Leader: As we gather 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: Let our hearts seek the Lord: may we turn to him and see his face.

All: Amen.

Background to the Responsorial Psalm

Of the 150 psalms in the Hebrew Scriptures, 50 of them are laments. A lament is a cry or prayer of distress, suffering or anguish to God which enables the petitioner to ask God for help. The petitioner could be an individual or a community. In the first part of this psalm, the psalmist feels that God is a long way from him, has abandoned him and left him to his enemies. He asks God why all these bad things are happening to him because he doesn't understand, but still he chooses to trust in God. Despite all that is going wrong, he knows that God does care and is very close to him. The psalm of lament then becomes a prayer of praise and thanksgiving, which is the part we pray today. The psalmist knows that God has heard his prayer and will answer him. He is assured of God's activity in his life.

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: I will praise you, Lord, in the assembly of your people.

All: I will praise you, Lord, in the assembly of your people.

Reader: I will fulfil my vows before those who fear the Lord.

The lowly shall eat their fill;

they who seek the Lord shall praise him:

'May your hearts live forever!'



All: I will praise you, Lord, in the assembly of your people.

Reader: All the ends of the earth
shall remember and turn to the Lord;
all the families of the nations
shall bow down before him.

All: I will praise you, Lord, in the assembly of your people.

Reader: To him alone shall bow down
all who sleep in the earth;
before him shall bend
all who go down into the dust.

All: I will praise you, Lord, in the assembly of your people.

Reader: And to him my soul shall live;
my descendants shall serve him.
Let the coming generation be told of the Lord
that they may proclaim to a people yet to be born
the justice he has shown.

All: I will praise you, Lord, in the assembly of your people.

Respond

Leader: Let us sit quietly and reflect on the words of this psalm.
What would you like to praise and thank God for? *(Pause)*
Let us now make our own response to God by praying our own psalm. Each person is invited to say one thing that they would like to thank God for, e.g. 'I praise and thank God for my good health'. The rest of us will respond after each one with the response: 'I will praise you, Lord, in the assembly of your people'.

Time for quiet reflection ...

Go Forth

Leader: We praise you God for your faithfulness.

All: We praise you.

Leader: We praise you God for your mercy.

All: We praise you.

Leader: We praise you God for your love.

All: We praise you.

Leader: May our hearts be lifted up with gratitude and thanksgiving, and may we rejoice in all God's great gifts to us.

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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Today's Daily Prayer – Let us love not in word or speech, but in deed and truth

Today's prayer will focus on the Second Reading. **Preparation:** Choose readers and someone to light the candle.

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: Let us pause and call to mind God's loving presence within us and among us.

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 remember that Jesus is the light who dispels all darkness.

All: Amen.

Background to the Second Reading

This reading is part of an epistle written by the same author as John's Gospel to a community that relied on it as its central guide. The audience was most likely gentile (non-Jewish), as it contains few Old Testament references and has no Jewish forms of expression. This was a relatively small church that often felt battered by the hostile world around it. The reading points out that the community needs to do two things well: believe in Jesus Christ as God's own Son and love each other as they would like to be treated. Christ gives his unconditional love to us and demands our unconditional love for each other. 'How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and refuses to help?' (1 Jn 3: 17).

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 Word of God.

Reader: Children, let us love not in word or speech
but in deed and truth.

And his commandment is this:

we should believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ,
and love one another just as he commanded us.

Those who keep his commandments remain in him, and he in them,
and the way we know that he remains in us
is from the Spirit he gave us.



(Pause)

The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Respond

Prayers of Intercession

Leader: With faith and trust, let us now place our prayers before our God.

Reader: That like the early Christian community, we can be filled with the hope and joy that our loving God brings. *(Pause)* We pray ...

All: Lord, unite us in love.

Reader: That like the early Christian community, we can show a willingness to serve others before ourselves. *(Pause)* We pray ...

All: Lord, unite us in love.

Reader: That like the early Christian community, we can strive for justice and equality for all people. *(Pause)* We pray ...

All: Lord, unite us in love.

Reader: That like the early Christian community, we may be more willing to share what we have with those who don't have enough. *(Pause)* We pray ...

All: Lord, unite us in love.

Reader: That like the early Christian community, we may be less concerned with what we have and more concerned with who we are. *(Pause)* We pray ...

All: Lord, unite us in love.

Go Forth

Leader: May the love and joy that filled the hearts of the early Christian community also fill our hearts, so that we may go forth today putting our love into action and look beyond our own needs to focus on the needs of others.

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: Acts 9: 26–31; Psalm 21: 26–28, 30–32; 1 John 3: 18–24; John 15: 1–8.

Today's Daily Prayer – I am the vine and you are the branches

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

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: May our hearts and minds be lifted up to you, O God.

All: Alleluia, alleluia.

Leader: And may our prayers rise up to you, O God.

All: Alleluia, alleluia.

Background to the Gospel

Vines and vineyards were popular images for Israel in Scripture. (See Psalm 80, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Hosea.) Jesus uses symbols and images that would be very familiar with people of the time. As wine was a common drink, they would know all about growing vines and making wine. They would know about pruning back vines so that good fruit would be produced the following year. Again, Jesus uses the familiar to explain something of God. In Sunday's Gospel, Jesus compares our relationship with him to a tree and its branches. The branch cannot live if it is separated from the trunk, but it is not enough for the branch to be attached to the tree – it must produce fruit. It is not enough just to be a Christian: we must show through our words and deeds that God's love is at work within us. I must show my love to others, without exception, just as God does.

Listen

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

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

Jesus said to his disciples:

'I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower.

He takes away every branch in me that does not bear fruit,

and every one that does he prunes so that it bears more fruit.

You are already pruned because of the word that I spoke to you.

Remain in me, as I remain in you.



Just as a branch cannot bear fruit on its own
unless it remains on the vine,
so neither can you unless you remain in me.
I am the vine, you are the branches.
Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit,
because without me you can do nothing.
Anyone who does not remain in me
will be thrown out like a branch and wither;
people will gather them and throw them into a fire
and they will be burned.
If you remain in me and my words remain in you,
ask for whatever you want and it will be done for you.
By this is my Father glorified,
that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.'
(Pause)

The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Respond

Reflective Questions

Leader: Let us take some time to reflect on what the words of the Gospel might mean for us.
Am I really a living branch on the vine that is Jesus?
Am I really a Christian who bears fruit? What kind of fruit?
Can others see the influence that Jesus has on my life – in my words and actions, my general behaviour and my lifestyle?
Am I unmistakably a follower of Jesus?

Time for quiet reflection ...

Go Forth

Echo Prayer

Leader: Let us go with open hearts, ready to accept all.

All: Ready to accept all.

Leader: Let us go with open minds, ready to include all.

All: Ready to include all.

Leader: Let us go with open arms, ready to welcome all.

All: Ready to welcome all.

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: Acts 9: 26–31; Psalm 21: 26–28, 30–32; 1 John 3: 18–24; John 15: 1–8.

Today's Daily Prayer – Remember, we are all but travellers here

Today's prayer will focus on the words of Saint Mary of the Cross. **Preparation:** Each person will need a piece of card (approx. 5 x 10 cm) and coloured pens/pencils/markers. 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.

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 pray for strength and persistence when our faith is challenged, courage and faith when we doubt, and renewed hope and inspiration when we falter. Jesus, be our constant guide and protector.

All: Amen.

Listen

Leader: Let us listen to some words from Saint Mary of the Cross.

Reader: 'Remember, we are but travellers here.' *(Pause)*

'We must teach more by example than by word.' *(Pause)*

'Do all you can with the means at your disposal and calmly leave the rest to God.' *(Pause)*

'Courage, courage, trust in God who helps you in all things.' *(Pause)*

'We feel our crosses hard at times, but our courage should rise with them.' *(Pause)*

'Let God's Spirit guide you in your choice.' *(Pause)*

'Never see a need without doing something about it.' *(Pause)*

Respond

Reflective Questions

Leader: Let us take some time to reflect on these words from Saint Mary of the Cross.

Slowly re-read the words and think about them.

What words from Mary resonate most loudly in your heart and mind?

How will those words change your thinking or your actions?

Write these words on your card, and keep it with you to inspire and direct your choices.



Time for quiet reflection ...

Go Forth

Leader: May we be inspired by the life of Saint Mary of the Cross, reaching out to those in need, being living examples of the Gospel message, and willing to place out trust and faith in a loving and generous God.

All: **Amen.**

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 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.**

