

Pray, Fast and Struggle for a more Perfect Union with Christ as a Family

Suggested Prayers, Readings and Thoughts for the week

A Psalm for the Morning (*Psalm 149, Douay Rheims*)

Sing ye to the Lord a new canticle: let his praise be in the church of the saints. Let Israel rejoice in him that made him: and let the children of Sion be joyful in their king. Let them praise his name in choir: let them sing to him with the timbrel and the psaltery. For the Lord is well pleased with his people: and he will exalt the meek unto salvation. The saints shall rejoice in glory: they shall be joyful in their beds.

The high praise of God shall be in their mouth: and two-edged swords in their hands: To execute vengeance upon the nations, chastisements among the people: To bind their kings with fetters, and their nobles with manacles of iron. To execute upon them the judgment that is written: this glory is to all his saints. Alleluia.

A Gospel for the Morning (*Matthew 9:1-8, RSV-CE*)

And getting into a boat he crossed over and came to his own city. And behold, they brought to him a paralytic, lying on his bed; and when Jesus saw their faith he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, my son; your sins are forgiven." And behold, some of the scribes said to themselves, "This man is blaspheming." But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he then said to the paralytic—"Rise, take up your bed and go home." And he rose and went home. When the crowds saw it, they were afraid, and they glorified God, who had given such authority to men.

A Psalm for the Evening (*Psalm 15; Douay Rheims*)

Preserve me, O Lord, for I have put my trust in thee. I have said to the Lord, thou art my God, for thou hast no need of my goods. To the saints, who are in his land, he hath made wonderful all my desires in them. Their infirmities were multiplied: afterwards they made haste. I will not gather together their meetings for blood offerings: nor will I be mindful of their names by my lips. The Lord is the portion of my inheritance and of my cup: it is thou that wilt restore my inheritance to me. The lines are fallen unto me in goodly places: for my inheritance is goodly to me. I will bless the Lord, who hath given me understanding: moreover my reins also have corrected me even till night. I set the Lord always in my sight: for he is at my right hand, that I be not moved. Therefore my heart hath been glad, and my tongue hath rejoiced: moreover my flesh also shall rest in hope. Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; nor wilt thou give thy holy one to see corruption. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life, thou shalt fill me with joy with thy countenance: at thy right hand are delights even to the end.

A Gospel for the Evening (*John 16:29-33 from RSV-CE*)

His disciples said, "Ah, now you are speaking plainly, not in any figure! Now we know that you know all things, and need none to question you; by this we believe that you came from God." Jesus answered them, "Do you now believe? The hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, every man to his home, and will leave me alone; yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me. I have said this to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

A Prayer to St. Thomas Aquinas

O Thomas, honor and glory of the Order of Preachers and teacher of the ways of God, bring us to eternal delights. Amen.

A Marian Prayer

Holy Mary, Mother of God and Mother of mercy, pray for us and all of the departed. Amen.

From the Catechism of the Catholic Church

1429 Jesus' look of infinite mercy drew tears of repentance from Peter and, after the Lord's resurrection, a threefold affirmation of love for him. The second conversion also has a communitarian dimension, as is clear in the Lord's call to a whole Church: "Repent!"

St. Ambrose says of the two conversions that, in the Church, "there are water and tears: the water of Baptism and the tears of repentance."

1430 Jesus' call to conversion and penance, like that of the prophets before him, does not aim first at outward works, "sackcloth and ashes," fasting and mortification, but at the conversion of the heart, interior conversion. Without this, such penances remain sterile and false; however, interior conversion urges expression in visible signs, gestures and works of penance.

1431 Interior repentance is a radical reorientation of our whole life, a return, a conversion to God with all our heart, an end of sin, a turning away from evil, with repugnance toward the evil actions we have committed. At the same time it entails the desire and resolution to change one's life, with hope in God's mercy and trust in the help of his grace. This conversion of heart is accompanied by a salutary pain and sadness which the Fathers called *animi cruciatus* (affliction of spirit) and *compunctio cordis* (repentance of heart).

From the Saints

The enjoyment of God is insatiable. The more anyone tastes and eats of Him, the more he hungers. Such men possess a love and desire for God that nothing can restrain. – *St. Macarius the Great*

It is not God's will that a soul be disturbed by anything or suffer trials, for if one suffers trials in the adversities of the world it is because of a weakness in virtue. The perfect soul rejoices in what afflicts the imperfect one. – *St. John of the Cross*

God deliver you from the peace of many kinds that worldly people have...When such persons of the world remain quiet, while going about in serious sin, and so tranquil about their vices, for their consciences don't feel remorseful about anything, their peace, you have read, is a sign that they and the devil are friends. While they live, the devil does not wage war against them. – *St. Teresa of Avila*

When harmed or insulted or persecuted by someone, do not think about the present, but wait for the future, and you will find that he has been the agent for bringing about a number of good things for you, not only in the present, but also in the age to come. – *St. Mark the Ascetic*

Fast, abstain and/or sacrifice this Wednesday and Friday

For Engaged and Married Couples

Memorize the Twelve Fruits of the Holy Spirit

charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, generosity, gentleness, faithfulness, modesty, self-control, chastity

Opportunities for Christian Formation this Week at the Parish

Sunday, December 21st at 10:30AM in CCM Lounge – Donuts and Dogma

Bible Study in Aquinas Hall will resume on Monday, January 19, 2026

Adult Catechism/OCIA will resume on Tuesday, January 6, 2026

Saint's Book Study will resume on Wednesday, January 7, 2026