



‘Jesus Christ our Hope’

Booklet for Lent and Easter 2025
Weekly Scripture, Reflection, Prayer



Diocese of Sandhurst

‘The [Jubilee Year] theme is “**Jesus Christ our Hope**”
for He is the aim of our pilgrimage,
and He Himself is the way, the path to follow.’
(Pope Francis, General Audience 18 December 2024)

Prepared for Lent 2025 (Year C) for the Sandhurst Diocese
PO Box 201 Bendigo, Vic, 3552
Email: adultfaith@sandhurst.catholic.org.au

GUIDE FOR USING THIS RESOURCE DURING LENT AND FOR EASTER 2025

AN HOUR FOR AN INDIVIDUAL

**A journal or notebook, and a lit candle symbolising Christ's presence, may be helpful.*

- **Begin with the sign of the Cross:** “In the name of the Father...”
Ask God, who loves you, to be with you and guide you.
- **Read and re-read the Gospel passage**, pausing for words or phrases that may ‘stand out’. What might God, in Jesus, be saying to you? Talk with Jesus about what comes to mind, or simply rest in God’s loving presence.
- **Read and reflect on the writings of ‘Fellow Pilgrims’.**
- **Find words or an image** for your insights, and a hope, intention or prayer for the future. You may like to write these in a journal.
- **Conclude** with the final Prayer for this week and the **Sign of the Cross.**

75 MINUTES FOR A GROUP

(optimal group size 5 – 7)

**Journals or notebooks, and a lit candle symbolising Christ's presence, may be helpful.*

**One person may assist the group by: leading prayer, keeping time, ensuring each may share while others listen respectfully.*

1. WELCOME PRAYER

(5 minutes)

- **Greet and welcome each person.**
- **Pray together:** “In the name of the Father...”
- **Pray silently:** Ask God, who loves you, to be with you and guide you. You may like to pray together a common or prepared prayer.

2. READING THE GOSPEL AND INDIVIDUAL QUIET TIME

(25 minutes)

- **Read aloud and re-read aloud** the Gospel passage; each person notes words or phrases that ‘stand out’ to them.
- **Consider silently:** What is God, in Jesus, saying to me?
- **Talk with Jesus** about what comes to mind or rest in God’s loving presence.
- **Read** the writings of ‘Fellow Pilgrims’. Which one speaks to you?
- **Find words or an image** for your insights, and a hope, intention or prayer for the future. You may like to write these in a journal.

3. DISCUSSION *(35 minutes - or longer for a larger group)*

- **Each is invited to share one or two key insights** from their personal reflection and prayer *(1–3 min each)*.
- **General discussion.**

4. CONCLUDING PRAYER

(5–10 minutes)

- **For what are you grateful today?** Each person shares a word or phrase.
- **Pray** the final Prayer for this week and the **Sign of the Cross**.





FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT 2025

“... He was hungry ...” (Lk 4:2)

‘The [Jubilee Year] theme is “**Jesus Christ our Hope**” for He is the aim of our pilgrimage, and He Himself is the way, the path to follow.’ (*Pope Francis*)

THE GOSPEL

Filled with the Holy Spirit, Jesus left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the desert, for forty days being put to the test by the devil. During that time he ate nothing and at the end he was hungry. Then the devil said to him, ‘If you are Son of God, tell this stone to turn into a loaf.’ But Jesus replied, ‘Scripture says: Human beings live not on bread alone.’ Then leading him to a height, the devil showed him in a moment of time all the kingdoms of the world and said to him, ‘I will give you all this power and splendour, for it has been handed over to me, for me to give it to anyone I choose. Do homage, then, to me, and it shall all be yours.’ But Jesus answered him, ‘Scripture says: You must do

homage to the Lord your God, him alone you must serve.’ Then he led him to Jerusalem and set him on the parapet of the Temple. ‘If you are Son of God,’ he said to him, ‘throw yourself down from here, for scripture says: He has given his angels orders about you, to guard you, and again: They will carry you in their arms in case you trip over a stone.’ But Jesus answered him, ‘Scripture says: Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’ Having exhausted every way of putting him to the test, the devil left him, until the opportune moment. Jesus, with the power of the Spirit in him, returned to Galilee; and his reputation spread throughout the countryside. (Luke 4:1-14)

Read and re-read the Gospel passage, pausing for words or phrases that may ‘stand out.’

Talk with Jesus about what comes to mind or take some moments to rest in God’s loving presence.

THE DESTINATION, THE WAY, THE PATH TO FOLLOW

After 40 wilderness days, Jesus is offered seemingly rational, easy solutions: A ‘quick fix’ with miraculous bread? Personal power? An escape from human limits and suffering? He rejects it all. God’s way will leave him vulnerable, hungry, powerless. He will stay with the joys and mess of ordinary human living, in hope, trusting his Father.

FROM FELLOW PILGRIMS – FOR REFLECTION

Jesus... is born, grows, awakens to human consciousness with fellow human beings, receives into his mind and imagination the varied beauty of creation. He knows human weakness and human temptation... All this is involved in the incarnation. And more... (*Tony Kelly, The Creed by Heart, 131*)

... **Hope**, therefore, is not a habit or a character trait – that you either have or you don't – but a strength to be asked for.

(*Pope Francis, Jubilee Audience Address, 11 January 2025*)

Hope is precisely a new kind of strength that God instils in us, enabling us to persevere in the race, to see beyond present difficulties and to press forward to the goal of communion with him and the fullness of eternal life.

(*Pope Francis, XXXIX World Youth Day, 2024*)

At times we feel lost in the cosmos, pondering our identity and our destiny. Does anything make sense? Are we simply thrown into the universe without purpose or direction? Through the mystery of the Incarnation, God-made-man, our Redeemer has come among us to assure us that we are redeemed and saved. Despite the seeming absurdity of so much life and history, we trust and place our confidence in Jesus' promise of eternal life.

(*Bishop Robert Morneau, Pathways to God, 37*)

I will not fear, for you are ever with me, and you will never leave me to face my perils alone.

(Thomas Merton, Thoughts in Solitude, 103)

I saw a marvellous compassion that our Lord has for us for our sufferings...

(Julian of Norwich, Revelations of Divine Love, 161)

We become what we love and who we love shapes what we become.

(Saint Clare of Assisi quoted in LeMieux Weisenburg, Melissa, Pilgrims of Hope, 229)

Find words or an image for

- Insights gained from your reading and prayer today.
- A hope, intention or prayer for the future.

You may like to write down your thoughts or a prayer.



PRAYER

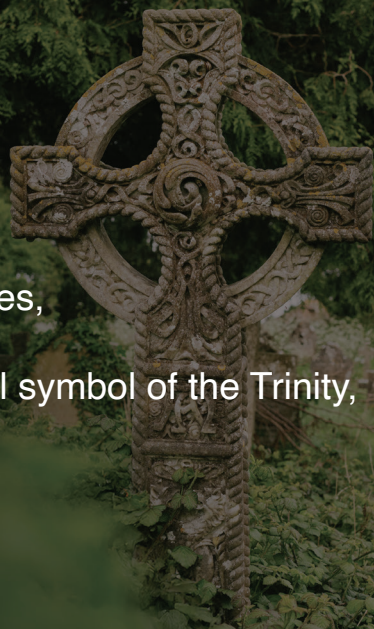
When things are difficult...

say a simple Celtic prayer.

The Celts are very fond of circles,
as we see in the Celtic Cross.

Moreover, the circle is a natural symbol of the Trinity,
and so the prayer goes:

**‘O holy Three,
Around me be.’**



I have found that saying that prayer brings a certain peace – not surprising because our relationship with the Trinity is the deepest reality in our life. In naming that reality, the reality becomes more alive in our hearts, and makes its presence felt.

(Patrick O’Sullivan, Prayer and relationships, 87)



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Acknowledgements: Scripture readings used in the seven Reflections of this series: Jerusalem Bible 1966, 1967, 1968, Hodder & Stoughton and Doubleday. “Jesus Christ Our Hope”, *Pope Francis, General Audience 18 Dec 2024*; Kelly, Tony CSsR, *The Creed by Heart: Re-Learning the Nicene Creed*, Blackburn, Vic: Harper Collins, 1996; Merton, Thomas, *Thoughts in Solitude*, New York: Farrar, Straus &

Giroux, 1998; Julian of Norwich, “I saw a marvellous compassion that our Lord hath in us for our woe, and a courteous promising of clear deliverance.” in *The Fifteenth Revelation*, in Warrack, Grace (Ed.), *Revelations of Divine Love: Recorded by Julian, anchoress at Norwich in 1373*, Springfield II, Templegate Publishers, 2002; LeMieux Weisenburg, Melissa, *Pilgrims of Hope: A 2025 Catholic Prayer and Affirmation Journal for Women*, Strikersville NY: MusoWave Digital LLC, 2025; Morneau, Bishop Robert, *Pathways to God: Four Weeks on Faith, Hope and Charity*, New York: New York City Press, 2008; Pope Francis, *XXXIX World Youth Day, 24 Nov 2024* (Search www.vatican.va): Pope Francis, *Jubilee Audience Address, 11 January 2025* (Search www.vatican.va): O’Sullivan, Patrick SJ, *Prayer and Relationships: Staying Connected – An Ignatian Perspective*, Melbourne: David Lovell Publishing, 2008.



SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT 2025

“... Listen to him ...” (Lk 9:35)

‘The [Jubilee Year] theme is “**Jesus Christ our Hope**” for He is the aim of our pilgrimage, and He Himself is the way, the path to follow.’ (*Pope Francis*)

THE GOSPEL

Jesus took with him Peter, John and James and went up the mountain to pray. And it happened that, as he was praying, the aspect of his face was changed and his clothing became sparkling white. And suddenly there were two men talking to him; they were Moses and Elijah appearing in glory, and they were speaking of his passing which he was to accomplish in Jerusalem. Peter and his companions were heavy with sleep, but they woke up and saw his glory and the two men standing with him. As these were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, ‘Master, it is wonderful for us to be here; so let us make three shelters, one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.’ He did not know what he was saying.

As he was saying this, a cloud came and covered them with shadow; and when they went into the cloud the disciples were afraid. And a voice came from the cloud saying, 'This is my Son, the Chosen One. Listen to him.' (Luke 9:28-35)

Read and re-read the Gospel passage, pausing for words or phrases that may 'stand out.'

Talk with Jesus about what comes to mind or take some moments to rest in God's loving presence.

THE DESTINATION, THE WAY, THE PATH TO FOLLOW

Jesus is transfigured as he prays, and his disciples know God is near. Two great persons appear: Moses, the Law Giver, who encountered God's glory (Ex 34:29-35) and Elijah, who found God in sheer silence, a gentle breeze (1 Kings 18-19). Peter thinks, "We've arrived! Let's build something to make it permanent!" Yet, this is a moment on the journey, not the destination. The disciples must follow Jesus to the places where people need his message, remembering the Father's words; 'This is my Son, the Chosen One. Listen to him.'

FROM FELLOW PILGRIMS – FOR REFLECTION

I invite all Christians... to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus... No one should think that this invitation is not meant for him or her... he is already there, waiting for us with open arms.

(Pope Francis, Evangelii Gaudium 'The Joy of the Gospel', 3)

...The Son, uniquely reveals what the Father is. Only through God's self-expression in the Son does faith know what God is like.

(Tony Kelly, The Creed by Heart, 109)

God is light because God is love. The incarnate Son radiates... the "love-light" of God's gracious presence to creation.

(Tony Kelly, The Creed by Heart, 105)

Jesus is not a memory. He is a presence.

(Chiara Lubich in Melissa LeMieux Weisenburg, 208)

The disciples are sent into the world with the consciousness of belonging to a new humanity as it has been realised in Christ. Grace and forgiveness are now the key to our co-existence.

(Tony Kelly, The Creed by Heart, 145)

To be "for us" is the basic law of Jesus' life and mission. He lives and lays down his life for others, "for many" (Mk 10:45), for the world.

(Tony Kelly, The Creed by Heart, 134)

...We are called to be tangible signs of hope for those of our brothers and sisters who experience hardships of any kind.

(Pope Francis, Spes Non Confundit, Bull of Indiction of the Jubilee 2025, 10)

“Acts of selfless love, acts of obedience to conscience, acts of fidelity to truth are of infinite value. Eternity is part of their inner nature. Wherever life is truly lived in faith, hope and love, eternity already truly occurs.”

(Denis Edwards, Jesus and the Cosmos, 113)

“Whenever and whatever we read of Christ in the Gospel, we are also reading our own self portrait, for Christ is what we are called to become... He is the source of our life and the sense of it, for to be another Christ is the meaning of our existence... By looking at him we begin to catch glimpses of what God has called us to become before the world was, namely, other Christs.”

(G. Hughes)

Find words or an image for

- Insights gained from your reading and prayer today.
- A hope, intention or prayer for the future.

You may like to write down your thoughts or a prayer.

A PRAYER OF PRESENCE

“Awareness of the Divine Presence

can be practised anywhere

– in planes, trains, buses, in offices
and waiting rooms, between classes,
conferences, and appointments.

These in-between moments enable us
to maintain this presence all during the day.

They relieve strain and restore our remembrance
of God.”

*(A van Kaam & S. Muto, Practicing the Prayer of
Presence, 44-45)*



Pause for a moment in your busy day

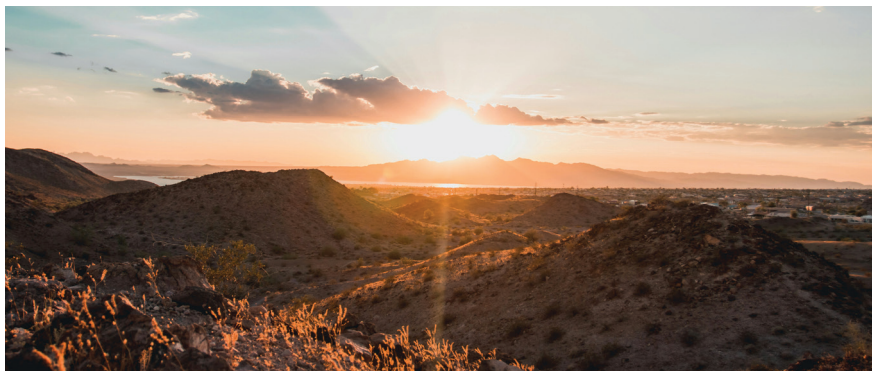
to remember, and bring God to the forefront of your thoughts, God who loved you into being and is with you, loving you, now.

OR

Take a quiet moment alone.

Become aware that God is with you, loving you into life, in every moment, with every breath. Rest for the moment in God's presence and love for you. Allow a word or phrase to come to you as a short prayer.

(Adapted from: A van Kaam & S. Muto, Practicing the Prayer of Presence, 64,66)



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Vic: Harper Collins, 1996; LeMieux Weisenburg, Melissa, Pilgrims of Hope: A 2025 Catholic Prayer and Affirmation Journal for Women, Strikersville NY: MusoWave Digital LLC, 2025; Pope Francis, Evangelii Gaudium 'The Joy of the Gospel', 3 (www.vatican.va); Pope Francis, Spes Non Confundit, Bull of Indiction of the Jubilee 2025, 10 (www.vatican.va); G. Hughes, quoted in Pope Francis, Spes Non Confundit, Bull of Indiction of the Jubilee 2025, 21.



THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT 2025

“... It may bear fruit next year ...”
(Lk 13:9)

‘The [Jubilee Year] theme is “**Jesus Christ our Hope**” for He is the aim of our pilgrimage, and He Himself is the way, the path to follow.’ (*Pope Francis*)

THE GOSPEL

...Some people arrived and told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with that of their sacrifices. At this he said to them, ‘Do you suppose that these Galileans were worse sinners than any others, that this should have happened to them? They were not, I tell you. No; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. Or those eighteen on whom the tower at Siloam fell, killing them all? Do you suppose that they were more guilty than all the other people living in Jerusalem? They were not, I tell you. No; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did.’ He told this parable, ‘A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he

came looking for fruit on it but found none. He said to his vinedresser, “For three years now I have been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and finding none. Cut it down: why should it be taking up the ground?” “Sir,” the man replied, “leave it one more year and give me time to dig round it and manure it: it may bear fruit next year; if not, then you can cut it down.” (Luke 13:1-9)

Read and re-read the Gospel passage, pausing for words or phrases that may ‘stand out.’

Talk with Jesus about what comes to mind or take some moments to rest in God’s loving presence.

THE DESTINATION, THE WAY, THE PATH TO FOLLOW

Innocent people died in two tragedies. A traditional response was: ‘It is the victims’ fault: They sinned!’ Jesus rejects this answer. God’s response to sin is not like this. The fig tree parable explains God’s compassion and patience. Fig trees, although resilient, can wither with neglect. With time, and care, they can recover. Our lives can be like that. Lent reminds us that God offers every person opportunities for a change of heart and possibilities for re-focusing priorities.

FROM FELLOW PILGRIMS – FOR REFLECTION

Our Lord, by his very presence, was creating and offering a whole new world to his followers – a whole new way of living, loving and experiencing life. As followers of Jesus today, these are still questions for all of us. Does my life speak of newness and hope? Does my life say that things can be different? That fidelity, intimacy and respect for each person (including the ‘uncomely’...) are really what life is all about? As long as the Gospel has the capacity to make us feel uncomfortable, we are in good shape. For that is a sign that our heart is open to the Word ... As long as we feel the Word cutting into our heart, then our heart is still in the right place.

(Patrick O’ Sullivan, Prayer and Relationships, 63)

...In all the ways he spoke and acted, lived and suffered, and continues to be present to the community of faith, Jesus is “he who saves”.

(Tony Kelly, The Creed by Heart, 95)

...His followers were called “Christians.”

By committing themselves to the folly of following him, they committed themselves to the way of his vulnerable love. *(Tony Kelly, The Creed by Heart, 97)*

When we serve the poor and the sick, we serve Jesus. We must not fail to help our neighbours, because in them, we serve Jesus.

(Saint Rose of Lima in LeMieux Weisenburg, Melissa, Pilgrims of Hope, 241)

God does not look at the greatness of our actions, but at the love with which we do them.

(Saint Therese of Lisieux in LeMieux Weisenburg, Melissa, Pilgrims of Hope, 273)

Christians do not despair in the fight against evil. Christianity cultivates an incurable trust: It does not believe that negative and disintegrating forces can prevail.

(Pope Francis, General Audience, 21 June 2017)

No one has the right to sit down and feel hopeless – There's too much work to do!

(Dorothy Day, in Carol Graser, Pray to Love - Love to Pray, 56)

We have to serve in God's way, not in ours.

(St Teresa of Avila in Carol Graser, Pray to Love - Love to Pray, 33)

The solution to tiredness, oddly enough, is not to stand still and rest. It is to set out and become pilgrims of hope. This is my invitation to you: walk in hope! Hope overcomes all weariness, every crisis and every worry. It gives us a powerful incentive to press forward, for it is a gift received from God himself. The Lord fills our life with meaning, sheds light on our path and shows us its ultimate direction and goal...

(Pope Francis, Message for World Youth Day, 2024)

Find words or an image for

- Insights gained from your reading and prayer today.
- A hope, intention or prayer for the future.

You may like to write down your thoughts or a prayer.

PRAYER

Christ Be In Me

Christ be in my heart and in my loving.

Christ be in my mind and in my thinking.

Christ be in my eyes and in my seeing.

Christ be in my ears and in my hearing

Christ be in my voice and in my speaking.

Christ be in my life and all my living. Amen.

(Adaptation based on 'Breastplate of St. Patrick' in Maurice Ryan, Heartlines, 144)



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Staying Connected – An Ignatian Perspective, Melbourne: David Lovell Publishing, 2008; O'Sullivan, Patrick SJ, *Prayer and Relationships: Staying Connected – An Ignatian Perspective*, Melbourne: David Lovell Publishing, 2008; Pope Francis, *Message for World Youth Day, 2024 "Breastplate of St. Patrick"* in Ryan, Maurice (Ed.), *Heartlines: Prayer Resources for a Contemporary (Revised and Updated)* Hamilton Qld: Lumino Press, 2013.



FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT 2025

“... His father saw him and was moved with pity ...” (Lk 15:20)

‘The [Jubilee Year] theme is “**Jesus Christ our Hope**” for He is the aim of our pilgrimage, and He Himself is the way, the path to follow.’ (Pope Francis)

THE GOSPEL

The tax collectors and sinners, however, were all crowding round to listen to him, and the Pharisees and scribes complained saying, ‘This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.’ So, he told them this parable: Then he said, ‘There was a man who had two sons... [When the younger son returned...]

‘While he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was moved with pity. He ran to the boy, clasped him in his arms and kissed him. Then his son said, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I no longer deserve to be called your son.” But the father said to his servants, “Quick! Bring out the

best robe and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the calf we have been fattening and kill it; we will celebrate by having a feast, because this son of mine was dead and has come back to life; he was lost and is found.”

And they began to celebrate.

‘Now the elder son ... was angry then and refused to go in, and his father came out and began to urge him to come in; but he retorted to his father, “All these years I have slaved for you and never once disobeyed any orders of yours, yet you never offered me so much as a kid for me to celebrate with my friends. But, for this son of yours, when he comes back after swallowing up your property - he and his loose women - you kill the calf we had been fattening.” ‘The father said, “My son, you are with me always and all I have is yours. But it was only right we should celebrate and rejoice, because your brother here was dead and has come to life; he was lost and is found.”

(Extracts from Luke 15:1-3,11-32)

Read and re-read the Gospel passage, pausing for words or phrases that may ‘stand out.’

Talk with Jesus about what comes to mind or take some moments to rest in God’s loving presence.

THE DESTINATION, THE WAY, THE PATH TO FOLLOW

Two sons each choose their own way. As if his father was already dead to him, the younger asks for his inheritance. When, after squandering it all, he returns to beg forgiveness, his father runs to embrace and clothe him with compassion, love, honour - and no words of accusation. The elder son, lost to resentment and self-pity, sees himself as an unrewarded worker. Both sons must discover that they are beloved children of a loving parent who wants nothing but to love, welcome and forgive. How does God feel about me? Can I cope with a God who loves me extravagantly, as I am, and who loves those I might judge unworthy?

FROM FELLOW PILGRIMS – FOR REFLECTION

Jesus brought healing, graciousness, compassion and love, in ways never known before. He astonished, touched and frightened those who could not understand the source of such goodness. He was utterly transparent and open to God's love acting through him. Love was dominant over fear. He spoke truth from the heart to the hearts of those ready to listen. He was moved to tears at others' sorrow and moved to anger by exploitation of people. He challenged those who put burdens on others or who discarded the little ones. He welcomed and spoke for the children. He fed the hungry. He said that we who have plenty must share

with those who have little. He left disciples to finish what he began. We are among these disciples.

(AFES, Meet Jesus Again, 4, 4)

God so loved the world. However powerful the resistance to grace might be in ourselves or others, we are never entitled to lose hope in what God can do – and has already done.

(Tony Kelly, The Creed by Heart, 157)

There is no need to deny that even the best among us go to God marked by the tensions, imperfection, and unfinished business of the human condition. But to meet this judge is to encounter the ultimate love that can transform and purify.

(Tony Kelly, The Creed by Heart, 158)

Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you.

As the Father has sent me, so I send you...

Receive the Holy Spirit ... If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them... (Jn 20:21-23) Jesus’ gift of peace and reconciliation means that the disciples once themselves forgiven, are sent forth as the agents of divine forgiveness.

(Tony Kelly, The Creed by Heart, 144)

Grant me to recognise in other people, Lord God, the radiance of your own face.

(Teilhard de Chardin, in Maurice Ryan (Ed.) Heartlines, 80)

He will teach us, for in beholding his life we find that he is the best example.

(Saint Teresa of Avila, Carmelites Newcross)

In general, some of the signs that we are loving ourselves the way Jesus does are the following: We experience a growing need for prayer. We can give a reasonable account of our strengths and weaknesses. When clouds appear on the horizon of significant relationships, we can stay put and say our piece, rather than keep quiet and run for cover. There is a growth in compassion.

(Patrick O'Sullivan, Prayer and Relationships, 60)

Find words or an image for

- Insights gained from your reading and prayer today.
- A hope, intention or prayer for the future.

You may like to write down your thoughts or a prayer.



A PRAYER

We turn to you,
Compassionate One, trusting
that you will restore our loving
kindness when
it is depleted.

Guide us in knowing what
is required and what needs to
be released. Place within us a
strong hope that you are there
with us whenever we choose to
be with those who suffer.

**You are our strength and
companion of love. Thank you**
for moving our spirits toward ever
deeper, fuller, and more enduring
compassion. Amen.

*(Joyce Rupp, Prayers of Boundless
Compassion, 88)*



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FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT 2025

“... Go ... sin no more ...” (Jn 8:11)

‘The [Jubilee Year] theme is “**Jesus Christ our Hope**” for He is the aim of our pilgrimage, and He Himself is the way, the path to follow.’ (*Pope Francis*)

THE GOSPEL

The scribes and Pharisees brought a woman along who had been caught committing adultery; and making her stand there in the middle they said to Jesus, ‘Master, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery and, in the Law, Moses has ordered us to stone women of this kind. What have you got to say?’ They asked him this as a test, looking for an accusation to use against him. But Jesus bent down and started writing on the ground with his finger. As they persisted with their questions, he straightened up and said, ‘Let the one among you who is guiltless be the first to throw a stone at her.’ Then he bent down and continued writing on the ground. When they heard this they

went away one by one, beginning with the eldest, until the last one had gone and Jesus was left alone with the woman, who remained in the middle. Jesus again straightened up and said, 'Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?' 'No one, sir,' she replied. 'Neither do I condemn you,' said Jesus. 'Go away, and from this moment sin no more.'

(John 8:3-11)

Read and re-read the Gospel passage, pausing for words or phrases that may 'stand out.'

Talk with Jesus about what comes to mind or take some moments to rest in God's loving presence.

THE DESTINATION, THE WAY, THE PATH TO FOLLOW

Self-important community members drag a woman, but not the man with her, into Jesus' presence. With little interest in her they are using her to trap him. Jesus takes time to respond. While the woman stands humiliated, the accusers find that it is themselves they must judge. Jesus really sees the woman. He speaks to her with respect and compassion, focusing on her future, not her past. He does not condemn or say it doesn't matter, but "Don't sin again!" She is trusted to make better choices for a better future.

FROM FELLOW PILGRIMS – FOR REFLECTION

In Christ, what we most deeply feel ourselves to be is welcomed and loved, healed and made whole; and so given a hope, a peace and a joy not of this world.

(Tony Kelly, The Creed by Heart, 108)

The peace and joy pertaining to the realm of Christ flow from the “life to the full” (cf Jn 10:10) that Jesus came to give. He is, in person, the fountain of eternal life ... His kingdom abounds in a vitality beyond the destructive powers that now threaten our existence.

(Tony Kelly, The Creed by Heart, 160)

God loves each of us as if there were only one of us.

(Based on Saint Augustine’s words in ‘The Confessions’ III, 11)

Do not fear what may happen tomorrow.

The same loving Father who cares for you today will care for you tomorrow and every day.

(Saint Francis de Sales quoted in Melissa LeMieux Weisenburg, Pilgrims of Hope, 287)

When our relationship with Jesus is running truly, it influences the way we see things, which is why prayer – simply giving time to our relationship with Jesus – is so important.

(Patrick O’Sullivan, Prayer and Relationships, 67)

The hunger for God can only be satisfied by a love that is face to face, person to person. It is only in the eyes of another that we can find the Icon of Christ. We must make the other person aware that we love him. If we do, he will know that Christ loves him. He will never hunger again.

(Catherine de Hueck Doherty, Poustinia)

What is the happiness that we await and desire?

Not some fleeting pleasure... We aspire to a happiness that is definitively found in the one thing that can bring us fulfilment, which is love. Thus, we will be able to say even now: I am loved, therefore I exist; and I will live forever in the love that does not disappoint, the love from which nothing can ever separate me... [nothing] “will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord”

(Rom 8:38-39). (Pope Francis, Spes Non Confundit, Bull of Indiction of the Jubilee 2025, 21)

Find words or an image for

- Insights gained from your reading and prayer today.
- A hope, intention or prayer for the future.

You may like to write down your thoughts or a prayer.



THE GAP – A PRAYER

Loving God,
between the “is” and the “ought”
there is a gap.
Wide for some,
narrower for others.
But it is there,
never to be totally closed here on earth.

That gap is the land of guilt.
What should be, isn't;
What is, should be more.

The gap, I mean, between
the real and the ideal,
the actual and the potential,
yes, the sinner and the saint.

Thus, we all are struggling pilgrims,
all dwelling in between
what we are and are called to be.

**Help us therefore, to be patient,
To have compassion.
to trust in you, our merciful God. Amen.**

(Adapted from: Robert Morneau, Reconciliation, 132)



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Acknowledgements: “Jesus Christ our Hope,” *Pope Francis, General Audience 18 Dec 2024*; *Saint Augustine, The Confessions III, 11*: “O good and all-powerful One, you care for each of us as if we alone existed. You care for all with the same tenderness that you show to each one.”; *LeMieux Weisenburg, Melissa, Pilgrims of Hope: A 2025 Catholic Prayer and Affirmation Journal for Women, Strikersville*

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PALM (PASSION) SUNDAY OF LENT 2025

“... Father, forgive them ...” (Lk 23:34)

‘The [Jubilee Year] theme is “**Jesus Christ our Hope**” for He is the aim of our pilgrimage, and He Himself is the way, the path to follow.’ (*Pope Francis*)

FROM THE READINGS

So that I may know how to reply to the wearied he provides me with speech. Each morning he wakes me to hear, to listen like a disciple. The Lord has opened my ear... For my part, I made no resistance, neither did I turn away. I offered my back to those who struck me, my cheeks to those who tore at my beard; I did not cover my face against insult or spittle. The Lord comes to my help, so that I am untouched by the insults. So, too, I set my face like flint; I know I shall not be shamed.

(From Isaiah 50:4-7)

...They crucified him there and the two criminals also, one on the right, the other on the left.

Jesus said,
“Father, forgive them; they do not know what they
are doing.” *(Luke 23:33-34)*

Read and re-read the Gospel passage, pausing for words or phrases that may ‘stand out.’

Talk with Jesus about what comes to mind or take some moments to rest in God’s loving presence.

THE DESTINATION, THE WAY, THE PATH TO FOLLOW

Isaiah described a suffering servant of God, attacked for compassionate response to the poor and weary. Jesus is God’s servant, suffering and bearing the burdens of others, forgiving with his dying breath. Those who met Jesus in his final hours invite our reflection: His friends wait, frightened and helpless, as he is condemned. Peter betrays Jesus. Simon of Cyrene, on what began as an ordinary day, finds himself helping Jesus’ journey to crucifixion. Crowds and soldiers mock. Women weep. A criminal turns to Jesus in sorrow, is forgiven and welcomed into the kingdom. The last words of the other are mocking and cynical. Jesus dies with words of forgiveness. A Roman soldier sees and declares Jesus’ innocence. Joseph of Arimathea ignores convention to care for his broken body.

Who am I in this story?

FROM FELLOW PILGRIMS – FOR REFLECTION

The Crucified One is God's standing solidarity with the suffering, the tragedy and the disaster of all time, and God's promise that it will not have the final word. The Risen One is God's final word about the universe and what God plans to do with all suffering.
(Richard Rohr, Immortal Diamond)

Most of our prayers begin and end with the Sign of the Cross, to remind us that Jesus on the cross is at the heart of our faith. Because the cross is at the heart of our faith, it is also at the heart of our lives. Our lives and our faith are inseparable. The cross is there for all of us. That is why it is important to recognise the cross when it comes, and accept it for what it is – an invitation to move beyond our comfort zones and go more deeply, in trust, into the mystery of an unconditionally loving God.
(Patrick O'Sullivan, Prayer and relationships, 82)

Yet if we follow Jesus with all our heart, also on this mysterious journey to the cross, courage and trust can be reborn. After we have seen, and opened ourselves to encounter, we will experience the grace of praying, no longer alone but together.
(The Way of the Cross Led by His Holiness Pope Francis, Rome, 30 March 2018)

**O Lord, our Lord,
we have heard the most unlikely story;
we have seen your saving power in a weak Man...**

He bore our uselessness,
and removed all charges against us.
His incomparable love-offering
has become our true peace.

(Bruce D. Prewer, Australian Prayers, 48-49)

O God, because of my free choice and for the sake of your love alone, I want to remain here and do what your will demands of me. No, I will not turn back.

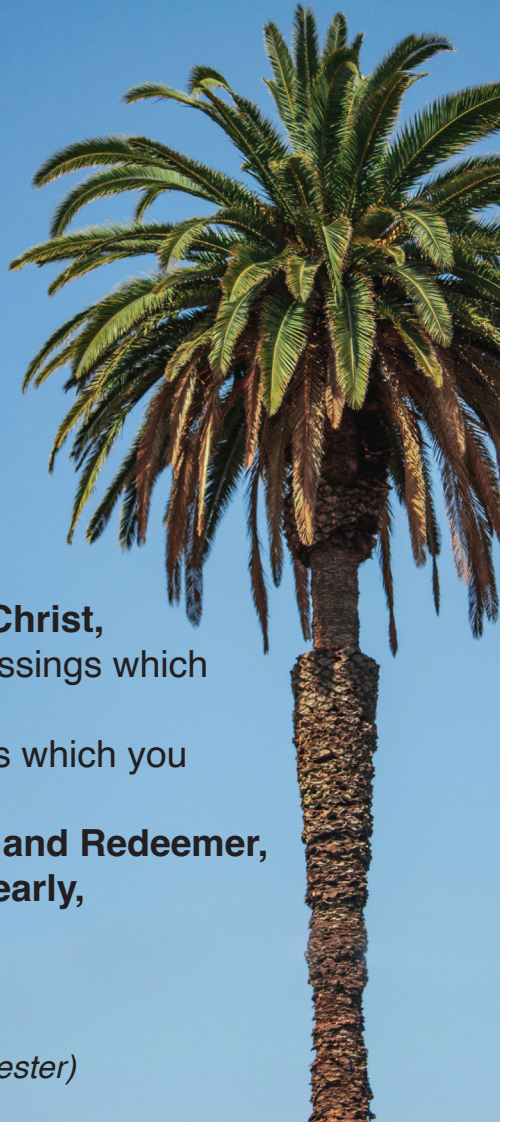
(Mother Teresa of Calcutta, in Praying with the Saints, 224)

Find words or an image for

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You may like to write down your thoughts or a prayer.





A PRAYER

Thank you, Lord Jesus Christ,
for all the benefits and blessings which
you have given me,
for all the pains and insults which you
have borne for me.

Merciful Friend, Brother and Redeemer,
may I know you more clearly,
love you more dearly,
follow you more nearly,
day by day. Amen.

(Prayer of St Richard of Chichester)



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**THREE HOLY DAYS
THE EASTER TRIDUUM 2025**

“... He has risen ...” (Lk 24:5)

‘The [Jubilee Year] theme is “**Jesus Christ our Hope**” for He is the aim of our pilgrimage, and He Himself is the way, the path to follow.’ (*Pope Francis*)

GOSPEL FOR THE EASTER VIGIL

On the first day of the week, at the first sign of dawn, they went to the tomb with the spices they had prepared. They found that the stone had been rolled away from the tomb but on entering, they could not find the body of the Lord Jesus. As they stood there puzzled about this, two men in brilliant clothes suddenly appeared at their side. Terrified, the women bowed their heads to the ground. But the two said to them, ‘Why look among the dead for someone who is alive? He is not here; he has risen. Remember what he told you when he was still in Galilee: that the Son of Man was destined to be handed over into the power of sinful men and be crucified, and rise again on the third day.’ And

they remembered his words. And they returned from the tomb and told all this to the Eleven and to all the others. The women were Mary of Magdala, Joanna, and Mary the mother of James. And the other women with them also told the apostles, but this story of theirs seemed pure nonsense, and they did not believe them. Peter, however, went off to the tomb, running. He bent down and looked in and saw the linen cloths but nothing else; he then went back home, amazed at what had happened. (Luke 24:1-12)

Read and re-read the Gospel passage, pausing for words or phrases that may ‘stand out.’

Talk with Jesus about what comes to mind or take some moments to rest in God’s loving presence.

THE DESTINATION, THE WAY, THE PATH TO FOLLOW

And so the three holy days: the Friday of dying, when love goes “unto the end”; that Saturday of waiting for what only such love can do; the Sunday where love is revealed in its transforming power. *(Tony Kelly, The Creed by Heart, 142)*

FROM FELLOW PILGRIMS – FOR REFLECTION

At the moment when all seems to be lost, at the moment of suffering, when many people feel the

need to get down from the Cross, it is the moment closest to the Resurrection. Night becomes darkest precisely before morning dawns, before the light dawns. In the darkest moment God intervenes and raises. *(Pope Francis, General Audience, St Peter's Square, 16 April 2014)*

...Jesus Christ is risen! He alone has the power to roll away the stones that block the path to life. He, the living One, is himself that path. He is the Way: the way that leads to life, the way of peace, reconciliation and fraternity. He opens that path, humanly impossible, because he alone takes away the sin of the world and forgives us our sins. For without God's forgiveness, that stone cannot be removed.

(Pope Francis, Urbi et Orbi Message, 31 March 2024)

The logic of eucharistic existence is inescapable: "Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another."

(Jn 13:34) (Tony Kelly, The Creed by Heart, 135)

A new path leads through that empty tomb: the path that none of us, but God alone, could open; the path of life in the midst of death; the path of peace in the midst of war; the path of reconciliation in the midst of hatred; the path of fraternity in the midst of hostility.

(Pope Francis, Urbi et Orbi Message, 31 March 2024)

Those who have gone before us, and who will follow after, all alike can be healed and made whole. ... In the presence of the Lord, love cannot remain imperfect; and to him who first loved us our prayers commend all who have died.

(Tony Kelly, The Creed by Heart, 158)

...His becoming man... will not be complete until the love he embodies, the cause he lives for, the Spirit he breathes, finally include all who will come to call him “brother”; until all are members of his Body, until he is clothed with the whole of creation, and that creation is itself transformed.

(Tony Kelly, The Creed by Heart, 131)

The resurrection happens in the present moment, but it is a present moment bathed in future, a new relationship with God.

(Sr Ilia Delio, Making All Things New)

Little Easters are all around us, but we can only see them if we have willingly accepted to be Good Friday people. *(Patrick O’Sullivan, Prayer and relationships, 100)*

Find words or an image for

- Insights gained from your reading and prayer today.
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You may like to write down your thoughts or a prayer.

TWO EASTER BLESSINGS

Deep peace of the running wave to you,
Deep peace of the flowing air to you,
Deep peace of the quiet earth to you,
Deep peace of the shining stars to you,
Deep peace of the Son of Peace to you.

(“Celtic Prayers and Blessings” in Maurice Ryan, Heartlines, 69)

The blessing of the Emmaus Road be upon you:
the blessing that shares sorrow’s burden on the way,
that wakes to hope because of story and hospitality,
that is stirred to recognition of the stranger as Jesus,
the Way, the Truth and the Life, whose Spirit
sparks and blazes in the world even today. Amen.

(Mary Wickham RSM)



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Diocese of Sandhurst

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PO Box 201 Bendigo, Vic, 3552

Email: adultfaith@sandhurst.catholic.org.au