

## PLEASE TAKE SPARE PEW

**BULLETINS** to anyone housebound or absent this morning.

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**BEFORE** the service, talk to God.  
During the service, listen to God.  
After the service, talk with each other.

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**FAITH BOOK:** *Mini-reflections on the Sunday scripture readings designed for persons on the run.*

### From today's Gospel reading:

Jesus said to his disciples,  
"Suppose one of you has a friend,  
to whom he goes at midnight and says,  
'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread....'"

#### Reflection:

Jesus says to us today, "Suppose you were hungry and it was late and you were weary of trying on your own, but then decided to hold out a hand to God. Wouldn't God give you something nourishing? Something you needed and can't provide for yourself? Of course God would, because God is our friend in the night." Then Jesus would add: "You go and do likewise."

#### So, we ask ourselves:

- For what "bread" am I hungering these days?
- Am I being constant and trusting as I pray for it?

*Jude Siciliano, OP,  
Southern Dominican Province, USA*

necessary – and we will be given that thing. 'Everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened.' God will respond to those who ask through the Holy Spirit.

- Lord, help me to pray for those things that are necessary and good for me to have.
- Give thanks for the work and witness of the Church of Bangladesh.

*Text: Robert McLean © Anglican Board of Mission, 2025*

### REFLECTIONS ON THEME:

The Gospel reading sets the tone for this week's theme. The call to persistence is clear from Jesus, and it is directly linked with our prayer life – our relationship with God. In a similar way, ... Abraham's bargaining with God reveals both the value of persistence in our seeking God's resources, and God's persistence in seeking our restoration. [The psalm offers] praise and requests in the assurance of God's faithfulness, and out of a persistent commitment to God's ways. Finally, Paul instructs the believers to stay true to the new life that they have received in Christ, and not be drawn away by legalism or by dramatic visions and stories. If we are to follow Christ and make a difference in the world then it will not be quick, dramatic or constantly changing innovations that will help, but rather – to use the name of one of Eugene Peterson's books – "a long obedience in the same direction." This does not mean we cannot be creative or adopt new ideas and strategies, but that we remain faithful and committed to Christ and the Gospel proclamation of God's reign,



Jesus teaches us how to pray, and tells us to be persistent in prayer. We are to ask for what we need – repeatedly if

working consistently and persistently to fulfil God's purposes in our world a little more each day.

*Sacredise*



## "...your kingdom come."

*Luke 11: 2*

Do you ever try to envision what the kingdom of God would look like? Perhaps a few visual images from scripture would help. The Old Testament contains no references to the "kingdom of God" but does speak of God's sovereign power over all kings and kingdoms. In the New Testament, we can look to Jesus' parables where the kingdom is compared to a farmer, a mustard seed, a yeast, a buried treasure, a pearl merchant, a fishnet, an employer, a king inviting people to a marriage feast, and ten young women (Mt 13:24,31,33,44, 45,47; 20:1; 22:2; 25:1). Is this what you think of when you envision a kingdom, these situations from everyday life? I can honestly say that I see more pomp and ceremony, but what I am seeing in the parables is a kingdom that is earthy.

The kingdom of God is not a geographical area and not a political entity. Paul clarifies the definition in Romans 14: 17 when he says the kingdom of God is "righteousness, peace, and joy in the holy Spirit." As Luke Timothy Johnson writes in *The Writings of the New Testament* (Fortress, 1999), along with faith, hope, and love, these states and dispositions are "living qualities that could be described behaviorally in terms of attitudes and actions." This is kingdom as a state of being.

We can look at one other source to get a visual of the kingdom of God. The Hebrew understanding of their word, *shalom*, means peace and more. The verb root, *shalam*, literally means to make whole or complete. *Shalom* is that situation in which everyone has what is necessary for a full life. I can picture God's kingdom as a place where everyone is wholly who they are meant to be, living lives of righteousness, peace and joy, on this earth. This could be pie-in-the-sky thinking, but, I believe, with every act of social justice that we perform collectively or individually, we come one step closer to *shalom* on earth. Only God can bring the kingdom but we, who are made in God's image, can seek to emulate our creator to the best of our ability. Like Abraham, in the first reading, God invites us to be a covenant partner to deliberate with God and be part of the plan.

*Barbara Molinari Quinby, MPS, Director  
Office of Human Life, Dignity, and Justice Ministries  
Holy Name of Jesus Cathedral, Raleigh, NC*



**T**he prayer that Jesus taught is among the shortest of the daily disciplines in the world's great religions. But to the eyes of Christian faith it shimmers like the most precious of diamonds. When we pray it, allowing ourselves to be centered in the kingdom petition, a prism effect occurs. With light from the Spirit, other parts of the prayer fan out into a rainbowlike display of what it means for us to participate in the coming reign of God. C.S. Lewis wrote that he had gotten into the habit of mentally "festooning" individual petitions of the Lord's Prayer as he prayed them. Festooning means "to adorn with colorful decorations," and

Lewis used the term to describe his way of adding “private overtones” to certain of the petitions. I think we can all do that. Both the prayer itself and the Spirit within us encourage our imaginations to paint with the full palette of the kingdom.

John Koenig  
*Rediscovering New Testament Prayer*



Do you see how nothing,  
even the smallest thing,  
escapes the gaze of God.

St. Basil the Great



Once a man was asked, 'What did you gain by regularly praying to God?' The man replied, 'Nothing ... but let me tell you what I lost: anger, ego, greed, depression, insecurity, and fear of death.' Sometimes the answers to our prayers is not gaining but losing, which is ultimately the gain.

@myspiritualpath



## Monastic Wisdom

### Desire

Above all else, remember that Jesus loves you. The desire we cultivate for Jesus is mutual.

Br. Jack Crowley, SSJE

### Nourish

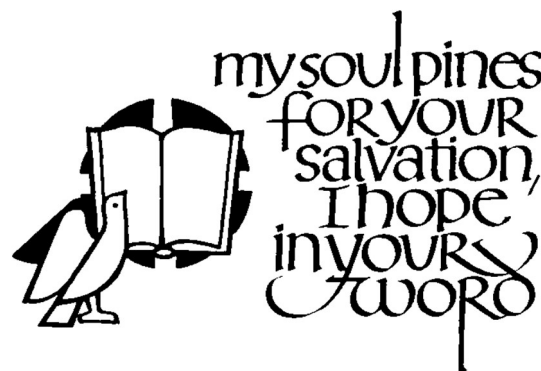
What is on your heart? What hurts? What do you need? What is getting in the way? The good news is Jesus is alive with power and compassion to nourish and heal again and again. Jesus is God made flesh, who perceives us clearly, and with love.

Br. Luke Ditewig, SSJE

### Sabbath

We are commanded to rest on the sabbath, not because we are tired and overworked, although we may be, but because in keeping sabbath we discover again who God is, and what it might mean for us to participate in God's very nature, who is a God of mercy, joy, and rest.

Br. James Koester, SSJE



*Holy God, we live in a world that is full of temptations. We are tempted to be self-centered, to prioritize our own gratification, to be oblivious to others' needs, to hurt and harm in pursuit of our own desires. Hear us when we pray for deliverance from all that draws us away from what is good and right. Give us the strength to resist all that is harmful to ourselves or others. God of love and compassion, keep us safe from ourselves. Amen.*



*An umbrella cannot stop the rain but it allows us to stand in the rain.*

*Faith in God may not remove  
our trials but it gives us  
strength to overcome them.*

*Living Christian*



Father!  
Let your name be honored!  
Let your Kingdom come!  
Give us tomorrow's bread  
everyday!  
Forgive us, as we forgive all who  
hurt us!  
And don't allow us to be tested by  
the devil!"

*Lk 11:2-3, trans. Larry Broding  
sunday-word.com*



*As for our saying, 'thy kingdom come,' it will  
surely come whether we will it or not. But  
we are stirring up our desires for the  
kingdom so that it can come to us and we  
can deserve to reign there.*

*St. Augustine*



## *God Changes Us*

A mother sent her fifth grade boy up to bed. In a few minutes she went to make sure that he was getting in bed. When she stuck her head into his room, she saw that he was kneeling beside his bed in prayer. Pausing to listen to his prayers, she heard her son praying over and over again. "Let it be Tokyo! Please dear God, let it be Tokyo!"

When he finished his prayers, she asked him, "What did you mean, 'Let it be Tokyo'?"

"Oh," the boy said with embarrassment, "we had our geography exam today and I was praying that God would make Tokyo the capital of France."

Prayer is not a magical means by which we get God to do what we want. Prayer is an inner openness to God which allows his divine power to be released in us.

Ultimately, the power of prayer is not that we succeed in changing God, but that God succeeds in changing us.

*Robert L. Allen,  
Greatest Passages of The Bible*



## *Prayer to the Outside Observer*

Father Barry Foster, a priest in Dublin, Ireland, parked his car on a rather steep slope close to his church. His little cairn terrier was lying on the rear seat and could not be seen by anyone outside the vehicle. Father Foster got out of the car and turned to lock the door with his usual parting command to the dog. "Stay!" he ordered loudly, to an apparently empty car. "Stay!" An elderly man was watching the performance with amused interest. Grinning, he suggested, "Why don't you just try putting on the emergency brake?"

Our subject today is prayer. To the mind of the unbeliever, watching someone pray is the equal of watching someone say "Stay," to their automobile fully expecting it to obey. To the unbeliever prayer is an exercise in futility. But to the believer, prayer is the most powerful and the most reliable force in the world today.

*King Duncan,  
Collected Sermons*

