

Prayer Gathering for 24th Week of Ordinary Time

SIGN OF THE CROSS +

OPENING PRAYER

**Generous God,
You offer us love and guidance through our relationships,
providing friends to walk with us along life's path –
up the mountains of challenge and through valleys of despair.
Help us appreciate our friends; to be loyal to you and good to them.
We ask this in the power of the Holy Spirit, through Christ, Our Lord. AMEN.**

READING

MOMENT FOR SILENCE

GOSPEL PASSAGE

SHARING QUESTIONS

Could anyone nourish anger against another and expect healing from the LORD?
Anger is an epidemic in our society. We are told in Scripture not to “nourish” anger. What does it mean to nourish anger?

Remember your last days, set enmity aside; remember death and decay, and cease from sin!
If we could see our lives from the biggest possible perspective, we might make different choices in the moment. As you've gone through life, what habits have you developed to calm your anger before it causes you to sin?

POSTED RECENTLY

Rats and roaches live by competition under the laws of supply and demand; it is the privilege of human beings to live under the laws of justice and mercy.
(Wendell Berry)

DISCUSSION

When has someone let you off the hook for something you did wrong? How did it feel?

When have you let someone off the hook after they did something hurtful? How did it feel?

What are you currently having the hardest time to forgive?

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

That our Church may show mercy to the those with broken marriages and complicated histories;
we pray... **Lord, hear our prayer**

That our leaders will recognize God as the true head of our world and live by God's law of
mercy; we pray... **Lord, hear our prayer**

That we may have mercy on those we are tempted to punish and shame; we pray...
Lord, hear our prayer

That our anger may be directed at injustice and not at individuals; we pray...
Lord, hear our prayer

That our schools may be safe places for learning and growing; we pray...
Lord, hear our prayer

That all first responders may be given strength for their tasks; we pray...
Lord, hear our prayer

That the sick and the dying may be shown mercy and care; we pray...
Lord, hear our prayer

For the needs we share with God in silence... we pray...
Lord, hear our prayer

OUR FATHER

[OPTIONAL] PRAYER FOR SPIRITUAL COMMUNION (St. Alphonsus Ligouri)

**My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the most Blessed Sacrament.
I love You above all things and I desire to receive You into my soul.
Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart.
I embrace You as if You were already there, and unite myself wholly to You.
Never permit me to be separated from You. AMEN.**

CLOSING PRAYER

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. AMEN.**

SIGN OF THE CROSS +

READING 1

A reading from the book of the Prophet Sirach

Wrath and anger are hateful things,
yet the sinner hugs them tight.

The vengeful will suffer the LORD's vengeance,
for he remembers their sins in detail.

Forgive your neighbor's injustice;
then when you pray, your own sins will be forgiven.

Could anyone nourish anger against another
and expect healing from the LORD?
Could anyone refuse mercy to another like himself,
can he seek pardon for his own sins?

If one who is but flesh cherishes wrath,
who will forgive his sins?

Remember your last days, set enmity aside;
remember death and decay, and cease from sin!

Think of the commandments, hate not your neighbor;
remember the Most High's covenant, and overlook faults.

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

READING 2

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew

Peter approached Jesus and asked him,

*“Lord, if my brother sins against me,
how often must I forgive?
As many as seven times?”*

Jesus answered,

*“I say to you, not seven times but seventy-seven times.
That is why the kingdom of heaven may be likened to a king
who decided to settle accounts with his servants.
When he began the accounting,
a debtor was brought before him who owed him a huge amount...*

*The servant fell down, did him homage, and said,
‘Be patient with me, and I will pay you back in full.’
Moved with compassion the master of that servant
let him go and forgave him the loan.*

*When that servant had left, he found one of his fellow servants
who owed him a much smaller amount.
He seized him and started to choke him, demanding,
‘Pay back what you owe.’*

*Falling to his knees, his fellow servant begged him,
‘Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.’*

*But he refused.
Instead, he had the fellow servant put in prison
until he paid back the debt.*

*His master summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked servant!
I forgave you your entire debt because you begged me to.
Should you not have had pity on your fellow servant,
as I had pity on you?’*

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to You, Lord, Jesus Christ

Matthew, chapter 18