

Prayer Gathering for 33rd Week of Ordinary Time

SIGN OF THE CROSS +

OPENING PRAYER

**Almighty God,
You sent each of us into the world for a specific purpose,
one that only we can achieve.
Give us the courage to invest ourselves in what matters most to you
and never to let fear divert us from our holy mission.
We ask this in the power of the Holy Spirit, through Christ, Our Lord. AMEN.**

READING

MOMENT FOR SILENCE

GOSPEL PASSAGE

SHARING QUESTIONS

“When people are saying, ‘Peace and security,’ then sudden disaster comes upon them, like labor pains upon a pregnant woman”

We humans are so vulnerable and never know what is around the corner; this being so, how can we avoid being crippled by our fear?

“Let us not sleep as the rest do, but let us stay alert and sober.”

**How do we ‘stay alert’ to the presence of God in the midst of our busy lives?
How could we be more alert?**

POSTED RECENTLY

To leave the world better than you
found it, sometimes you have to
pick up other people's trash.

— Bill Nye —

DISCUSSION

“To one he gave five talents; to another, two; to a third, one – to each according to their ability.”
What is a talent that you have been hand-selected by God to have? How do you use it?

What is a talent you wish you had, but lack?

If all of us have an obligation to leave the world somehow better than we found it, what specifically do you hope to improve for others before you depart this life?

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

May the Church offer vision where there is blindness, faith where there is doubt, and hope where there is despair;

Let us pray... **God, help us leave things better than we found them.**

May each citizen see it as a personal and sacred duty to participate in and uphold democracy;

Let us pray... **God, help us leave things better than we found them.**

May we live as patient and generous neighbors to those who surround us and live as the kind of people others consider a blessing;

Let us pray... **God, help us leave things better than we found them.**

May the way we drive demonstrate that we care not only about ourselves, but about the safety and dignity of all others on the road;

Let us pray... **God, help us leave things better than we found them.**

May our desire to provide for ourselves and our families not completely overshadow our need to care for others;

Let us pray... **God, help us leave things better than we found them.**

May we replace anger and intolerance with gratitude and acceptance;

Let us pray... **God, help us leave things better than we found them.**

May we be willing to make sacrifices in order to spend time with the sick, the lonely and the suffering;

Let us pray... **God, help us leave things better than we found them.**

May the virtue of our most beloved deceased relatives and friends serve as inspiration for the way we wish to live;

Let us pray... **God, help us leave things better than we found them.**

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 first letter from Paul to the Thessalonians

Concerning times and seasons, brothers and sisters,
you have no need for anything to be written to you.
For you yourselves know very well
that the day of the Lord will come like a thief at night.

When people are saying, "Peace and security,"
then sudden disaster comes upon them,
like labor pains upon a pregnant woman,
and they will not escape.

But you, brothers and sisters, are not in darkness,
for that day to overtake you like a thief.

For all of you are children of the light
and children of the day.

We are not of the night or of darkness.
Therefore, let us not sleep as the rest do,
but let us stay alert and sober.

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

READING 2

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew

Jesus told his disciples this parable:

*"A man going on a journey
called in his servants and entrusted his possessions to them.
To one he gave five talents; to another, two; to a third, one--
to each according to his ability.
Then he went away.*

*Immediately the one who received five talents went and traded with them,
and made another five.*

Likewise, the one who received two made another two.

*But the man who received one went off and dug a hole in the ground
and buried his master's money.*

After a long time the master of those servants came back and settled accounts with them.

The one who had received five talents came forward bringing the additional five. He said,

'Master, you gave me five talents. See, I have made five more.'

His master said to him,

'Well done, my good and faithful servant.

Since you were faithful in small matters, I will give you great responsibilities.

Come, share your master's joy.'

Then the one who had received two talents also came forward and said,

'Master, you gave me two talents. See, I have made two more.'

His master said to him,

'Well done, my good and faithful servant.

Since you were faithful in small matters, I will give you great responsibilities.

Come, share your master's joy.'

Then the one who had received the one talent came forward and said,

'Master, I knew you were a demanding person,

harvesting where you did not plant and gathering where you did not scatter;

so out of fear I went off and buried your talent in the ground.

Here it is back.'

His master said to him in reply,

'You wicked, lazy servant!

So you knew that I harvest where I did not plant and gather where I did not scatter?

Should you not then have put my money in the bank

so that I could have got it back with interest on my return?