

## Prayer Gathering for 31<sup>st</sup> Week of Ordinary Time

SIGN OF THE CROSS +

OPENING PRAYER

**O Lord of Life, Lover of Souls,  
you love everything that is... you bestow mercy on your whole creation...  
and you will only the highest good for each of your beloved children.  
Remind us of the power of your love for us  
and give us the grace to know our weaknesses and work to overcome them.  
We ask this in the power of the Holy Spirit, through Christ, our Lord. AMEN.**

READING

MOMENT FOR SILENCE

GOSPEL PASSAGE

SHARING QUESTIONS

*"Before the LORD the whole universe is as a grain from a balance  
or a drop of morning dew come down upon the earth."*

**Scientists estimate that the universe contains 1 quadrillion stars (1 followed by 24 zeros).  
The number of planets is uncountable. Yet, compared to God, all of that is like a grain of  
sand. What does this mean to you? How do you feel about the largeness of God?**

*"...You love all things that are and loathe nothing that you have made;  
for what you hated, you would not have fashioned."*

**Many of us have at times assumed that God disliked us; some mistakenly believe  
that God wants nothing to do with them. What would God gain from writing  
someone off? What would God lose from giving up on someone?**

POSTED RECENTLY

Just as God is  
our Father, so  
God is also  
our Mother.

– Julian of Norwich

**GOD**  
DESIGNED ME.  
CREATED ME.  
BLESSES ME.  
HEALS ME.  
DEFENDS ME.  
FORGIVES ME.  
**LOVES ME**

The love of a true *mother* comes  
nearer to being like the love of *God*  
than any other kind of *love*.  
–Joseph F. Smith

DISCUSSION

*"Jesus came to Jericho and intended to pass through the town... a man there named  
Zacchaeus... ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree in order to see Jesus,  
who was about to pass that way. ...Jesus looked up and said, 'Zacchaeus, come down  
quickly, for today I must stay at your house.'"*

**Jesus planned to pass through town, but when he saw the sinful tax collector he decided  
to stay. What does that tell you about God? Has Jesus ever "stopped" for you?**

**When have you adjusted your plans when someone needed help?**

## PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

That the Church may always bring the love of Jesus to those who are burdened by their sins and sorrows; we pray... **Lord, hear our prayer.**

That our leaders will abandon selfishness and generously serve the people entrusted to their care; we pray... **Lord, hear our prayer.**

That we will have the wisdom to be able to name our sins and have the grace to be sorry for them; we pray... **Lord, hear our prayer.**

That all those who are slaves to pursuing wealth will begin to recognize true riches; we pray... **Lord, hear our prayer.**

That all who have gained wealth through dishonesty or manipulation will return their gains to those who lost them, and embrace God's forgiveness; we pray... **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For all who are sick... for those in pain... for the lonely and the abandoned; we pray... **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For our beloved dead... ...and for all who are grieving a loss... ... 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 here, 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 Exodus:

Before the LORD  
the whole universe is as  
a grain from a balance  
or a drop of morning dew come down upon the earth.

But you have mercy on all, because you can do all things;  
and you overlook people's sins that they may repent.

For you love all things that are  
and loathe nothing that you have made;  
for what you hated, you would not have fashioned.

And how could a thing remain, unless you willed it;  
or be preserved, had it not been called forth by you?

But you spare all things, because they are yours,  
O LORD and lover of souls,  
for your imperishable spirit is in all things!

Therefore you rebuke offenders little by little,  
warn them and remind them of the sins they are committing,  
that they may abandon their wickedness  
and believe in you, O LORD!

The word of the Lord

*Thanks be to God*

## READING 2

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke

At that time, Jesus came to Jericho  
and intended to pass through the town.

Now a man there named Zacchaeus,  
who was a chief tax collector and also a wealthy man,  
was seeking to see who Jesus was;  
but he could not see him because of the crowd,  
for he was short in stature.

So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree  
in order to see Jesus,  
who was about to pass that way.

When he reached the place, Jesus looked up and said,  
*"Zacchaeus, come down quickly,  
for today I must stay at your house."*  
And he came down quickly and received him with joy.

When they all saw this, they began to grumble, saying,  
*"He has gone to stay at the house of a sinner."*

But Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord,  
*"Behold, half of my possessions, Lord,  
I shall give to the poor,  
and if I have extorted anything from anyone  
I shall repay it four times over."*

And Jesus said to him,  
*"Today salvation has come to this house  
because this man too is a descendant of Abraham.  
For the Son of Man has come to seek  
and to save what was lost."*

The Gospel of the Lord

*Praise to You, Lord, Jesus Christ*

*Luke, chapter 19*