

Scripture Prayer For The Week

"Once...
when Jesus...
was praying alone..." (Luke 9:18)



Artwork Dorothy Woodward

Ordinary Time – Twenty-second Sunday - Yr A

We Gather: *In the prayer space, have the bible opened at the Gospel reading. Green is the appropriate liturgical colour. An empty bowl turned towards the group could be placed on the table. A cross is placed in or near the bowl.*

Leader: My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord, my God
All: My lips will speak your praise

We Listen: The Gospel Matthew 16:21-27

Read the gospel passage reflectively. After a time of silent reflection, the line from scripture below could be repeated and the short commentary read.

"Let them renounce themselves, take up their cross and follow me."

If we come from a religious background of manipulative Retribution rather than a creative and loving Incarnational perspective, these words will cause anxiety and burden to our souls. The 'retribution' worldview means that we have to become enslaved to a God who allows us to fear being wholesome and joyful humans and demands that we suffer. An 'incarnational' approach allows us to renounce all the negativity and the habits of sin (missing the mark) to be free to follow in the path of Jesus, to take up his saving stand against greed and injustice. The cross, remember, is draped in white at Easter. We shoulder the way of the cross which is responsibility for others, acceptance of our weaknesses and mortality, but above all, is promise of total unity in the Divine mystery.

We Respond: ***"..anyone who wants to save their life will lose it."***

In silence, reflect on the questions below? You may wish to have a time of brief sharing. As each person leaves, place your hand on the cross in the empty bowl for a moment.

- What do I want to renounce so as to be free of love and be happy?
- What if I take the initiative (i.e. respond to the Spirit) to jettison anger, resentment, guilt, isolation, narcissism, restlessness, impatience, pride?????

Song: God of Day & God of Darkness (M Haugen-AOV1) Come to Set Us Free (B Farrell-AOV1)

We Go Forth:

God who desires to draw us into life, into light, into joy. You call us to see things in a new way, to head towards a new goal, where emptying ourselves from hate and confusion allows us to fill ourselves with the peace of the cross. Help us to change our worldview and grab onto the truth of your love. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen

Leader: O God, your love is better than life **All:** My soul shall be filled as with a banquet