

St Matthew Academy



Image "Summer" By Mya Lam-Butron Yr 7

Galatians 6:9 "And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up."

Daily Act of Worship

Three days a week when there is no assembly the Daily Act of Worship takes place immediately after registration.

*It is the **QUALITY** of this time that is most important. We are supporting pupils to become more **REFLECTIVE** and therefore it is essential that the prayer time is **NOT RUSHED** and there is a time of silence.*

Daily Act of Worship

1. Place "At prayer please wait" notice on form room door.
2. Prayer begins with the Sign of the Cross. "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen."
3. Each day a daily prayer can be found in the form prayer book and this can be followed by a short time for pupils to share prayer in silence of their own hearts or out loud. This can then be followed by a Common Prayer found at the front of the prayer book.
4. End the prayer by saying "St Matthew pray for us" and the sign of the cross "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen."
5. The prayer time can be led by pupils however it is essential that the Form Tutor ensures that the time is reflective and has a clear beginning and end.

Theological Commentary

April to July - Term 3- Reaping the Harvest

"And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up."

Every seed is a tiny beginning with a great future. Farmers work tirelessly through the long cold winters, nourishing and protecting their plants and animals to keep them safe and to help them to continue to grow. For us here at SMA, seeds were planted many months ago when we began our new school year and students and staff have been working tirelessly to ensure that they were nurtured and cherished. It is almost time to reap the harvest from those seeds. The prophet Isaiah wrote "I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity; yet surely my right is with the Lord, and my recompense with my God." Jesus knew what it meant to be tired and weary, but he knew that the rewards would be great if he kept going. Let us take example from him for the next few months so we too can happily reap a bountiful harvest this Summer.



COMMON PRAYERS

Use one of these prayers each morning

Our Father who art in heaven

Hallowed be your name

Your kingdom come your will be done

On earth as it is in heaven

Give us this day, our daily bread

And forgive us our trespasses

As we forgive those who trespass against us And lead us not into temptation But deliver us from evil.

AMEN

Hail Mary full of grace

The Lord is with you

Blessed are you among women

And blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus.

Holy Mary, mother of God

Pray for us sinners now

And at the hour of our death.

AMEN

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

St Matthew Academy Prayer

You are the light of the world

I have your light within me

I will not hide it away

But let your Light Shine out before others

So that they may see your good works

And give glory to You Father in heaven

AMEN

(Adapted from Matthew 5:14)

Morning Offering

My God, I adore You, and I love You with all my heart. I thank you for having created me, made me a Christian, and preserved me this night. I offer You the actions of this day. Grant that all of them may be in accordance with Your holy Will and for Your greater glory. Protect me from sin and from all evil. Let Your grace be always with me and with all my dear ones. Amen

<p>Week beginning: 15th April 2024 Eastertide</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Recognition Matthew 5:14 <i>"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden"</i></p>
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Liturgical Colours: White (Innocence, Purity, Victory, Joy)

It is good to be recognised for the good things we do. We feel a sense of pride and confidence in ourselves when we are told what a good job we've done. We want to be recognised. When we say our Academy prayer we are reminded though that being noticed by others is good but being recognised by God is fantastic! Let us think about this today and ask ourselves what we can do every day that our good work will shine out and give glory to God in heaven.

Day One

Dear Lord, I thank you for my gifts and talents and for the special things that make me stand out from others. Help me dear Father to live a life that is pleasing to you so that I may one day be recognised as one of your good and faithful servants in heaven. Amen

Day Two

Dear Lord, today I pray that you will help me to recognise and acknowledge my friends and family who love and care for me. I pray that today you will bless and keep them. I thank you for them and for the joy they bring to my life. Amen

Day Three

Dear Lord, we thank you today for all that you give us. You are generous with your gifts and blessings on our lives. Even when we fail to realize it, you are the giver of every good thing we receive. Help us to attribute all the praise, honour and recognition to you rather than claiming it for ourselves. Just as John the Baptist did, let us make you greater and ourselves less so that all those around us can see that you are the one who deserves all the glory. We pray today that our lives will be a testimony to your greatness and show others that it is not I, but Christ through me. Amen

Saints focus this week

St Bebnuda Paphnutius- Feast Day 15th April

Matryr of Tentyra, Kemet. The tree from which I was hung bore fruit in the very same hour.

<p>Week beginning: 22nd April 2024 Eastertide</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Believe <i>Matthew 7:8</i> “For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened”</p>
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Liturgical Colours: White (Innocence, Purity, Victory, Joy)

Belief always comes with persistence. Those who never give up will endeavour until the door opens.

Day One

Loving father, thank you for breaking down the barrier between God and man and permitting me to come into your holy presence in prayer, for mercy to find help in time of need. Help me to believe and keep on believing in the spirit and in truth. Help me to pray purposefully and persistently, and in accordance with your will. Amen.

Day Two

Heavenly Father, grant me the strength to believe in the power of hope and possibility. Help me to trust in the inherent goodness of humanity and the potential for positive change. Fill my heart with courage so that I may face each challenge with resilience and determination. Amen.

Day Three

In moments of doubt, remind me Father of the strength and resilience that lies within me, and help me to hold onto the belief that I am capable of overcoming any obstacle. With faith as my guide, I trust in you, that you will help me to find my way to a brighter tomorrow. Amen.

Saints focus for the week

St Thomas The Apostle – Feast Day 3rd July

St. Thomas is best known for his role in verifying the Resurrection of his Master. Thomas' unwillingness to believe that the other Apostles had seen their risen Lord on the first Easter Sunday earned him the title of "doubting Thomas."

<p>Week beginning: 29th April 2024 Eastertide</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Courage <i>Psalm 31:24</i> <i>“Be strong and let your heart take courage, all who wait for the Lord.”</i></p>
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Liturgical Colours: White (Innocence, Purity, Victory, Joy)

Abraham from the Old Testament, is an example of a person in the bible who was courageous. One day when Isaac was a boy, God came to Abraham and told him to sacrifice Isaac on Mount Moriah. Though he loved his son dearly, he did not hesitate to obey the Lord. It was, without a doubt, a very hard thing to do. I mean would you kill your son because God told you to? How can you follow Abraham’s example? When things look too scary? When it seems hard and risky? When you are asked to read to the class or take part in an event? One step of faith is all it takes. Think now about how you can start to show courage every day. Ultimately the key is prayer. When you pray for help from the Lord he’ll also encourage you.

Day One

Heavenly Father, I ask for your courage to face the trials ahead. Give me the strength to overcome fear and uncertainty. Give me courage to lead in the right way and do the right things. Lord God, help me always to remember, that you go before me and you will be with me; you will never leave me nor forsake me. Help me to know I need never be afraid; I do not need to be discouraged even in the face of what seems dangerous or risky. May your presence be my source of bravery. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen

Day Two

“For God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.” Dear God, I don't want to live afraid. I don't want to let my anxieties rule me, keeping me from stepping out in faith and doing what you want me to do. O Lord come down, take control and have your perfect way in my life and give me the grace to continue to do your will. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen

Day Three

Lord God, I need your help today. My courage and faith are weak, and I need your strength, Lord, for the courage to keep fighting, keep trusting You even when my eyes cannot see. Strengthen my faith in You and forgive my weakness. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Saint focus for the week

St George - Feast Day 23rd April

Saint George stands out among other saints and legends because he is known and revered by both Muslims and Christians. It is said Saint George made the sign of the cross then killed a dragon near the sea in Beirut to save a maiden being offered as a sacrifice. Saint George bay was named in his honour and many pagans converted to Christianity because of him.

<p>Week beginning: 06th May 2024 Eastertide May- The Month Of Our Blessed Mother Mary</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Called By God <i>Luke 1:30</i> <i>“But the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favour with God.”</i> <i>And Mary said, “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.”</i></p>
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Liturgical Colours: White (Innocence, Purity, Victory, Joy)

The month of May is very special to us as it is the month that we recognise and honour our Blessed Mother Mary. At a very young age, Mary was called by God for the most important task any human being in her time would have, to be the Mother of Our Saviour Jesus Christ. Imagine how difficult it would have been for her to say yes to God in that moment. Her life would be changed forever, but yet she had the courage to step up and answer God’s call.

Day One

Dear Lord, thank You for our Blessed Mother Mary and her example of complete and utter trust in your will for her life. We ask you to help us to take inspiration from her so that we also may humble ourselves before you. Give us the strength and courage necessary to take that next step in Your will for us. Oh Mary conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee. Amen.

Day Two

O Jesus, through the most pure Heart of Mary, I offer You all my prayers, works, joys and suffering of this day, for all the intentions of Your Sacred Heart, in union with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass throughout the world, in reparation for my sins, and in particular for the intentions of the Holy Father the Pope. Amen.

Day Three

Here I am Lord, I come to do your will. You have called me and I have answered. I give myself over to you that you may mould me and shape me into the person you want me to be. Amen

Saint focus for the week

Blessed Mary Ever Virgin, Help of Christians- Feast Day 24th May

The church has traditionally focused on two aspects of Our Lady's help on this feast day. Firstly, the church focuses on the role of Our Lady's intercession in the fight against sin in the life of a believer. Secondly, the church focuses on Our Lady as one who assists Christians as a community, through her intercession, in fighting against anti-Christian forces

<p>Week beginning: 13th May 2024 Eastertide</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">The Feast of The Ascension <i>Acts 1:9</i> <i>“And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight.”</i></p>
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Liturgical Colours: White (Innocence, Purity, Victory, Joy)

Last week the church celebrated the Feast of The Ascension. This is the 40th day after Easter where Christ leaves his disciples on earth and goes to his Father in heaven. Each Sunday we profess through the Creed, "*He ascended into Heaven.*" Christ's Ascension was the culmination of God's Divine plan for Christ Jesus – his return to his Father with his "Mission Accomplished." Ascension is the grand finale of all Jesus' words and works done for us and for our salvation. The Feast of The Ascension is very important to us as it gives us hope.

Day One

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the gift of your Son and the salvation which he brought to us. Help us in our daily lives to be good and faithful servants so that we may continuously glorify him who suffered, died and rose again for us. Amen.

Day Two

Jesus, thank You for the gift of Your life, the incredible love demonstrated through Your death on the cross, the victory won through Your resurrection from the tomb, and the power released through Your Ascension into heaven and the sending of Your Spirit. I yield myself completely to You. Spirit of Jesus, fill me and lead me today.

Day Three

O Lord, in your mercy help us as we pray, and just as we believe the Saviour of the world is seated with you in your majesty, we may also be assured that he dwells with us as he has promised, even to the end of the age; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Saint focus for the week

St Pachomius Feast Day 9th May

St. Pachomius was born in Egypt and became a soldier in the Emperor's army at the age of 20. The great kindness of Christians at Thebes toward the soldiers became embedded in his mind and led to his conversion after his discharge. He was the first monk to organize hermits into groups and who began monasticism as we know it today.

Week beginning: 20th May 2024	Pentecost <i>Acts 4:31</i> <i>“And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.”</i>
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Liturgical Colours: Green (Hope, Growth, Increase, Life)

Pentecost in the Old Testament was a Jewish festival which took place 50 days after Passover. Also called the Feast of First Fruits, it was the celebration of Israel’s deliverance from Egypt. In the New Testament Pentecost takes on a whole different meaning, as it was the day that the Apostles received the Holy Spirit, just as Jesus had foretold. Today we continue to celebrate Pentecost to remember the gifts that the Holy Spirit gives to us and to remember that the power of God lives in each and every one of us.

Day One

Lord Jesus, you said to your disciples, “Receive the Holy Spirit”. Today, I receive you, Holy Spirit! I open myself to you today, knowing that in receiving you there may be parties of salvation and joy ahead, a few things will get moved around, I will be filled with the fire of love for others, and I will be empowered with gifts for the mission of loving the world to life in Jesus’ name. Amen

Day Two

Heavenly Father, I come before You, recognizing Your infinite love and grace. You are the source of all goodness and the giver of every perfect gift. I beseech You today to activate within me the gifts of the Holy Spirit that I may bear witness to Your love and bring glory to Your name. Use me as a vessel of Your grace to bring light to the darkness and proclaim Your Gospel to the nations.

Day Three

Breathe in me, O Holy Spirit, that my thoughts may all be holy. Act in me, O Holy Spirit, that my work, too, may be holy. Draw my heart, O Holy Spirit, that I love but what is holy. Strengthen me, O Holy Spirit, to defend all that is holy. Guard me, then, O Holy Spirit, that I always may be holy. Amen

Saint focus for the week

St Rita of Cascia- Feast Day 22nd May

In the midst of chronic illnesses, she received visions and wounds on her forehead which resembled the crown of thorns. She died on May 22 at Cascia, and many miracles were reported instantly. Canonized in 1900, she is honoured in Spain as La Santa de los Impossibles and elsewhere as a patron saint of hopeless causes.

Week beginning: 03rd June 2024	Corpus Christi “Christ has no body now but yours” <i>Acts 12: 27</i> <i>“Now you together are Christ’s body; but each of you is a different part of it.”</i>
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Liturgical Colours: Green (Hope, Growth, Increase, Life)

Yesterday the Church celebrated the Feast of *Corpus Christi*, Latin words for The Body and Blood of Christ. On the Feast of Corpus Christi, we commemorate God’s greatest gift to humankind, the person of Jesus Christ. This feast day is celebrated by Catholics worldwide to proclaim the truth of the transubstantiation of bread and wine into the actual body and blood of Christ during Holy Mass. God gives us His Son, and then Christ gives us Himself, body and blood, soul and divinity. Gift, gift-giver, and receiver meld into one in this sacrament of sacraments to strengthen us and allow us to be his hands, his feet, and his body here on earth

Day One

Jesus, Bread of Life, feed our faith, help us to share fairly, to find joy in our differences, and to love one another as you have loved us. Amen.

Day Two

Jesus, Body and Blood, we are grateful for the gift of your life and the way it strengthens us to live our lives. Teach us to draw on the gift of your Body and Blood for hearts filled with peace, for renewal, strength and grace. May we never take for granted the gift of your presence in the Holy Eucharist. Amen

Day Three

Anima Christi

Soul of Christ, sanctify me. Body of Christ, save me. Blood of Christ, inebriate me. Water from the side of Christ, wash me. Passion of Christ, strengthen me. O good Jesus, hear me. Within thy wounds hide me. Suffer me not to be separated from thee. From the malicious enemy defend me. In the hour of my death call me and bid me come unto thee that with thy saints I may praise thee forever and ever. Amen.

Saint focus of the week

St Charles Lwagana – Feast Day 3rd June

Charles is one of many Ugandan martyrs who died defending the faith of themselves and others from oppressive governmental leadership. They showed courage and zeal for the faith even until death.

Week beginning: 10th June 2024	Integrity <i>Proverbs 10:9</i> <i>“Whoever walks in integrity walks securely, but he who makes his ways crooked will be found out.”</i>
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Liturgical Colours: Purple (Sorrow, Penitence, Preparation)

Do I show integrity in my day to day life? Am I an honest and just person? Do I choose comfort over courage? Do I choose what is fun over what is right? How can I show integrity today? How can I be an example of integrity to others today?

Day One

Lord God, you who called yourself "the way, the truth, the life," instil within each of our hearts a passion for truth in all we do. Grant us the grace of personal and institutional integrity. Amen

Day Two

Father, we pray for the joy and peace that comes with the gift of integrity. We know that the path of integrity is revealed in your Word. Fill our hearts and minds with the truth of your Word. Guide us by your faithful instructions. May each step we take along a path of integrity bring us greater joy. Amen

Day Three

Dear Lord, we pray that your integrity will live in us. Help us to be honest and true in all our actions and help us to uphold strong values of uprightness, justice and honour in our day to day lives. Let our integrity inspire others to be pure in their ways as well. Let our integrity be a shining light in the lives of others. Amen

Saint focus for the week

St Thomas More- Feast Day 22nd June

St Thomas More was a man of deep piety, asceticism, voluntary self-discipline, and penitence. Thomas More has been widely remembered as a man of tremendous integrity and as someone who stood up for the Catholic Church's teachings, even until death

Week beginning: 17th June 2024	Celebrating Our Houses <i>Isaiah 58:11</i> <i>The LORD will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail.</i>
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Liturgical Colours: Green (Hope, Growth, Increase, Life)

We are blessed here at St Matthew Academy to have St Oscar Romero, St Mother Teresa and Nelson Mandela as our house icons. These three truly embodied Integrity Courage and Service. As we celebrate our houses we remember that their lives were a service to God and to others. Let us look to them for inspiration in all we do so we may be the same.

Day One

Dear Lord we thank you for the life of Nelson Mandela, who fought so bravely for freedom and righteousness. Instil in us a spirit of love and peace and help us to always do what is right for others. Amen

Day Two

Merciful Lord, we are truly blessed to have the living example of St Mother Teresa, who worked so tirelessly to serve the poor in her community. Grant us the same spirit of service that we may always look to place others before ourselves, for your glory. Amen.

Day Three

Dear Heavenly Father, we give you thanks for the life of St Oscar Romero who was the defender of the poor and prophet of peace. Guide us and inspire us oh Lord that Like St Oscar Romero, we too, with wisdom and compassion, would work for justice and reconciliation. Amen.

Saints focus for the week
St Oscar Romero and St Mother Teresa

Week beginning: 24th June 2024	Discipleship – Feast of St Peter and Paul <i>John 8:31</i> <i>“To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples.”</i>
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Liturgical Colours: Green (Hope, Growth, Increase, Life)

This week we will celebrate the Feasts of Sts Peter and Paul. Both Peter and Paul gave their lives to spread the Good News of God’s love and our call to love one another. Both died martyrs’ deaths. In them we see examples of the Spirit of God working through the weaknesses and strengths of the most unlikely persons! What a challenge this is to each one of us who call ourselves “Christian” What excuse can we offer for failing to witness the Gospel in our very lives?

Day One

God Our Father, today you give us the joy of celebrating the feast of the apostles Peter and Paul. Through them your Church first received the faith. Keep us true to their teaching. Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

Day Two

O God, Whose right hand raised up blessed Peter, when he walked upon the water and began to sink, and thrice delivered his fellow-Apostle Paul from the depths of the sea, when he suffered shipwreck: graciously hear us and grant, by the merits of them both, that we also may attain unto everlasting glory. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen

Day Three

Heavenly Father who has consecrated this day by the martyrdom of your Apostles Peter and Paul; grant to thy Church that she may in all things follow their instruction by whom she received the Faith. We ask this in the name of Jesus Amen.

Saints focus of the week

St Peter and St Paul- Feast Day 29th June

Also known as Simon Peter of Cephas, St Peter is considered to be the first Pope. Peter had humble beginnings as a fisherman after which Jesus declared him as the rock on which he would build his church.

Saint Paul is one of the most important and influential of all the saints. Many of his writings are contained in the Canon of the Bible and have influenced the growth and development of the Church since the first century.

Week beginning:
01st July 2024

Being The Best We Can

James 1:17

“Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.”

Liturgical Colours: Green (Hope, Growth, Increase, Life)

We all have different gifts and talents. Some of us already know where our talents lie and others may not be completely sure yet. A couple simple little things you can do to discern your talents includes praying to God to show you what they are, paying attention to what you enjoy doing or even asking others to highlight what they think you're good at. Talents aren't developed overnight, we must sometimes work at them, but this is good, because it encourages us to be our best selves. Let us ask God today to help us to be our best and to help us to use our gifts and talents to help build his Church here on earth.

Day One

Dear Lord, I give thanks to you today for the gifts and talents that you have given to me. Help me to realise what they are and give the grace to use them according to your holy will. Amen

Day Two

Dear Jesus, I do not yet know where my talents lie, but I trust that you have given them to me and I ask that you will help me to use them to be the best I can be. Thank you Lord. Amen

Day Three

Holy Spirit, Divine Consoler, I adore You as my true God, with God the Father and God the Son. I adore You and unite myself to the adoration You receive from the angels and saints. I give You my heart and I offer my ardent thanksgiving for all the grace which You never cease to bestow on me. Amen

Saint focus of the week

St Elizabeth of Portugal – Feast Day 4th July

St. Elizabeth was faithful to daily Mass where she found strength to carry her many great crosses. Her young steward followed her example of going to mass daily and because of this he escaped a wrongful death.

Week beginning:
08th July 2024

A Call To Action

Matthew 25:40

“And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.’”

Liturgical Colours: Green (Hope, Growth, Increase, Life)

The seven principles of Catholic Social Teaching (CST) are Dignity, Solidarity, The Common Good, Option for the Poor, Peace, Creation and The Environment and The Dignity of Work and Participation. These principles are a moral compass for us Christians, helping us to live like Jesus. They are our guidelines for how we should live our faith bringing justice, peace and love to an unjust world. CST is our call to action, to live in solidarity with human beings all over the world to help build better and more meaningful lives for all.

Day One

Loving God, we pray for all those countries which are suffering or afraid due to war, that you will be close to them and protect them. We pray for world leaders, for compassion, strength and wisdom to guide their decisions. We pray for the world that in this moment of crisis, we may reach out in solidarity to our brothers and sisters in need. May we walk in your ways so that peace and justice become a reality for all the world. Amen.

Day Two

O God, give us your gifts so that we may live and work according to your vision for humanity, a vision where all are treated with respect and love because of their great worth in your eyes. May we answer your call to treat all as we ourselves wish to be treated and to promote the healing of all persons, especially those who are most vulnerable. Amen.

Day Three

Heavenly Father, defender of the poor and oppressed, we pray for the sick poor in our midst, whose dignity is often assaulted and who can be so vulnerable or even forgotten in being able to get adequate health care. O God, give them comfort in their sickness. Help us to hear their cries and come to their aid. Teach us to see with your eyes their tremendous dignity and to care for them as you care. Let us see in them your face, that through our solidarity with them they may experience your compassion, concern and love. Amen

Saint focus of the week

St Martin de Porres- Feast Day 3rd November

St Martin was a Dominican lay brother from Lima, Peru. Whilst living at the monastery, he was assigned to the infirmary where he would remain in charge until his death. He became known for encompassing the virtues needed to carefully and patiently care for the sick, even in the most difficult situations.

St Martin was praised for his unconditional care of all people, regardless of race or wealth. He took care of everyone from the Spanish nobles to the African slaves. Martin’s life reflected his great love for God and all of God’s gifts

Week beginning:
15th July 2024

Thanksgiving
Psalm 107:1

"Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever!"

Liturgical Colours: Green (Hope, Growth, Increase, Life)

As we come to the end of this school year we give thanks to God for everything. We are grateful for what we have learned and what we have achieved. We are thankful for the friendships that have strengthened and for being able to share our gifts and talents with others. We are thankful for being able to practice our faith, and for the opportunities to help others through charities and donations. Let us continue our day today with grateful hearts and with the knowledge that we are truly blessed and thankful.

Day One

Thank you, Lord, for the blessings you have bestowed on my life. You have provided me with more than I could ever have imagined. You have surrounded me with people who always look out for me. You have given me family and friends who bless me every day with kind words and actions. They lift me up in ways that keep my eyes focused on you and make my spirit soar. I am grateful for them. Amen.

Day Two

For each new morning with its light, For rest and shelter of the night,
For health and food, For love and friends, For everything thy goodness sends. We thank you Lord. Amen.

Day Three

Omnipotent and eternal God, You watch over your children, with your tender and loving care. I thank you this day for your mercy and grace. I am grateful for your healing power, and for the abundant blessings you have given me. But most of all, I am thankful for the promise of salvation, given through your Son, our Lord. Through him, when all is completed, there will be no more sickness or pain. I pray in his name. Amen

Saint focus of the week

St Thomas Aquinas – Feast Day 28th January

St Thomas Aquinas surpassed all his fellow students in learning and virtue although they all thought of him as stupid. He studied under St Albert the Great and at age 22 began teaching and publishing his first works. He wrote and preached often and was one of the greatest and most influential theologians of all time. He is the patron saint of students and universities.

Meditation

This meditation can be read at any time, and can be split into parts. Meditation is a reflective prayer leading pupils to contemplation and awareness of their own consciousness and their impact on the world around them.

BEFORE PRAYING- Take the pupils through the following steps, this should take 1 minute

- Keep feet flat on the ground
- Keep back straight
- Keep head straight, not drooping
- Keep hands on knees or one resting in the palm of the other, in the lap
- Keep eyes preferably closed
- Don't force any feelings one way or the other
- Relax all your muscles, one by one, from your toes to the top of the head
- Become aware of your breathing but without changing it other than to gradually slow it down

Begin by making yourself comfortable on your cushion. Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths. Inhale deeply through your nose, hold for a moment, and exhale slowly through your mouth. Do this a few more times. You are relaxed. You are calm. You are at peace.

Picture yourself walking along a deserted beach. You can hear the gentle breaking of the waves and the distant sound of a seagull soaring through the air. You can smell the salty sea air and you feel a warm breeze caressing your cheeks. With each step, you feel more present and aware of your surroundings. As you breathe in, you feel your mind and body being soothed.

As you walk along, you reflect on the significance of your life. Consider the sacrifices you can make to draw closer to God and deepen your faith. Think about areas where you can show more love, compassion, and forgiveness toward others and yourself.

Now, imagine encountering Jesus walking alongside you on this path. He smiles at you and tells you how very happy he is to see you. He is there, inviting you to share your thoughts, worries, and desires with Him. Take a moment to speak to Him in your heart. Tell him how you feel today. Tell Jesus of any areas in your life where a storm is raging. Feel His loving presence and His understanding of your journey. He reassures you of how much of a blessing you are to those who know and love you and that your life matters to him. He tells you how proud he is of you for using your gifts and talents to help others. Take this next moment to ask him for a special blessing for your loved ones or yourself. Now, take a few moments to sit in stillness and silence and allow the Holy Spirit to speak to you. (Pause)....What does he want from you? (Pause) Now thank Jesus for spending this time with you. When you are ready, take a few deep breaths and slowly open your eyes, gently bring your awareness back to the present moment. Carry this sense of peace and reflection with you as you continue your journey today.

Glory Be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. Amen

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