

## **Prayer Calendar**

### **March 2021**

#### **Reading Matthew in Lent**

This prayer calendar accompanies the Bible Reading Plan throughout March. Our scripture readings cover the beginning of Lent with readings from Matthew, Chapters 5-27. Our themes cover Matthews' gospel as we journey through Lent. I hope you will use this Prayer Calendar as a companion to your daily bible readings and they both will be a blessing to your continued spiritual formation and discipleship.

The Season of Lent is not about giving something up, instead it is about confession and dying to self so that we may be a part of the new life and resurrection of the Christ.

#### **Monday, March 1**

*Matthew 5:1,2 | Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up a mountain. He sat down and disciples came to him. He taught them....*

~ Loving Jesus, I look forward to sitting at your feet as you teach me and other disciples through the scriptures. Open my ears to your teaching and let me see with new eyes, your example of what it means to love others.

#### **Tuesday, March 2**

*Matthew 6:25 | Therefore, I say to you, don't worry about your life, what you'll eat or what you'll drink, or about your body, what you'll wear. Isn't life more than food and the body more than clothes?*

~ Lord, it is hard not to worry – worry feels good sometimes, it seems right, it is a habit. Worry shows I care, doesn't it? Yet, you say, do not worry let worry overwhelm us. Help us trust you to provide for the necessities of life.

#### **Wednesday, March 3**

*Matthew 7: 8 | For everyone who asks, receives. Whoever seeks, finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door is opened.*

~ Holy God, there is no barrier between us, for we have total access to you and your forgiveness, your grace and your love. For this access we are grateful.

#### **Thursday, March 4**

*Matthew 8:23-24 | When Jesus got into a boat, his disciples followed him. A huge storm arose on the lake so that waves were sloshing over the boat.*

~ Lord Jesus, your disciples followed you in the everyday moments of life and we see that storms come and seem to overwhelm us. But you are there, with us, even in the storm. Help us remember your presence in the overwhelming difficult times and not be afraid.

#### **Friday, March 5**

*Matthew 9:9| As Jesus continued on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at a kiosk for collecting taxes. He said to him, "Follow me," and he got up and followed him.*

~ Holy Jesus, as you called Matthew in his daily work, so you call us to follow you. We do not have to be perfect or even good to follow you – you call us wherever we are to follow you. Help us to get up out of our comfortable spots and follow you to places unknown.

### **Saturday, March 6**

*Rest | Enjoy the day as you are able. Take a nap, prepare a simple meal, walk or sit by a window and watch the birds. Call a friend or write a thank you note. Sit in the sunshine or the light of your room and let it pour over you.*

### **Sunday, March 7**

*Reflect | Reflect on your readings from last week. What verses or themes from the readings stood out to you? How might the scriptures read from last week be applied in your own life? In what ways did the Holy Spirit convict you? What spiritual practices will you engage in during Lent?*

### **Monday, March 8**

*Matthew 10:2 | Here are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon, who is called Peter; and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee; and John his brother; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas; and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus; and Thaddaeus; Simon the Cananaean; and Judas, who betrayed Jesus.*

~ Lord God, these simple men listened, risked all, and followed Jesus and so we remember them today. We remember their stories, their struggles and their fears – we are just like them – all of them. Help us today to be fully your disciples in all our struggles and victories.

### **Tuesday, March 9**

*Matthew 11:28 | “Come to me, all you who are struggling hard and carrying heavy loads, and I will give you rest. Put on my yoke, and learn from me. I’m gentle and humble. And you will find rest for yourselves. My yoke is easy to bear, and my burden is light.”*

~ Lord of Life, your “yoke” is your teaching and yet we push against it. We try to live under the old laws of earning your love, living without grace, and trying to do everything ourselves. We fail. Help us trust your grace and love.

### **Wednesday, March 10**

*Matthew 12:33 | Either consider the tree good and its fruit good, or consider the tree rotten and the fruit rotten. A tree is known by its fruit.*

~ Jesus, we want to bear good fruit, but to do that, we must suffer pruning and pruning can be painful. Help us be willing to submit to reflection, evaluation, and change in order to bear sweet and good fruit in our lives.

### **Thursday, March 11**

*Matthew 13:3-9 | Read the Parable of the soils/seeds*

~ Holy God, help us examine our lives so that we understand the kinds of seeds we are sowing. Are they seeds of oppressive power, our-way or no-way, impatience, intolerance? Help us to do whatever is needed so we can fill our sacks with seeds of justice, love, care tenderness, reconciliation and peace!

### **Friday, March 12**

*Matthew 14:16 | But Jesus said to them, "There's no need to send them away. You give them something to eat."*

~ Lord, you call us to feed your hungry people with what we have at hand: prayer, our resources, our creativity, our energy and our own gifts, talents and abilities. You empower us to serve, minister and encourage others because we follow you, we have learned from you, and you equip us. Help us remember and go and do what you call us to do without excuse.

### **Saturday, March 13**

*Rest | Today just be. Take deep breaths and go about your activities breathing in what is good and beautiful about the day.*

### **Sunday, March 14**

*Reflect | Review these beautiful stories of Jesus: the teachings of the sermon on the mount, the healings and the parables. What is revealed to you about your life and witness as you sat with the disciples and listened to the voice of Jesus.*

### **Monday, March 15**

*Matthew 15:30 | Large crowds came to him, including those who were paralyzed, blind, injured, and unable to speak, and many others. They laid them at his feet, and he healed them.*

~ Loving God, today, as part of the crowds coming to you, I lay down at your feet, these persons, for your healing. Thank you. \_\_\_\_\_.

### **Tuesday, March 16**

*Matthew 16:24 | Then Jesus said to his disciples, "All who want to come after me must say no to themselves, take up their cross, and follow me.*

~ Lord God, it is hard to die to self, to die to our own selfish ways and our wants and entitlement. You knew that and yet you call us to die to self, in order to follow you. Help us, one day at a time, take up the will and desire to die to what we think we want and need and trust only you for our sanctification.

### **Wednesday, March 17**

*Matthew 17:5 | While he was still speaking, look, a bright cloud overshadowed them. A voice from the cloud said, "This is my Son whom I dearly love, I am very pleased with him. Listen to him!"*

~ Holy God, we can only imagine what power and majesty the disciples encountered on the mountain top with Jesus. Help us hear every day the powerful words: Listen to him, and may we truly listen with our whole hearts.

### **Thursday, March 18**

*Matthew 18:2-5 | Then he called a little child over to sit among the disciples, and said, "I assure you that if you don't turn your lives around and become like this little child, you will definitely not enter the kingdom of heaven.....Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me."*

~ Jesus, you hold a special place in your heart for children and those who have a child like faith. May we come to you with that trusting, open, dependent and hope-filled faith. May we welcome children of all races, nations and creeds in your name, knowing you love them.

**Friday, March 19**

*Matthew 19:13-15 | Some people brought children to Jesus so that he would place his hands on them and pray. But the disciples scolded them. Allow the children to come to me," Jesus said, "Don't forbid them, because the kingdom of heaven belongs to people like these children." Then he blessed the children and went away from there.*

~ Holy God, help us remember the special love Jesus had for children and for us in turn to love and care for them – all children, everywhere. We are entrusted to the care of children and are called to bring them to Jesus. Today, I pray for these children I know \_\_\_\_\_. And these children in difficult circumstances I do not know \_\_\_\_\_.

**Saturday, March 20**

*Rest | Take time to do something for yourself; something that gives you life and feeds your soul.*

**Sunday, March 21**

*Reflect | Reflect over your past week. Where did you see God at work in you and in others? What scripture verses touched you and caused you to think about your life as you are living it now?*

**Monday, March 22**

*Matthew 20:10 | When two blind men sitting along the road heard that Jesus was passing by, they shouted, "Show us mercy, Lord, Son of David!"*

~ Great God, indeed, show us mercy, good Lord, show us mercy. We call from the side of the road and from our places of despair, 'show us mercy.' We know we are blind and we want to see with new eyes that can see the world through eyes of grace, hope and faith.

**Tuesday, March 23**

*Matthew 21:10-11 | And when Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred up "Who is this?" they asked. The crowds answered, "It's the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee."*

~ Lord, still we ask today, who is this Jesus? The Holy Spirit responds, Savior, healer, restorer, redeemer, teacher, Son of God and Son of Man. Sometimes, we do not believe it and we forget the grace and mercy extended to each of us. Help us in our apathy and indifference, we are like selfish children who want our own way.

**Wednesday, March 24**

*Matthew 22:37-40| He replied, "You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your being, and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: You must love your neighbor as you love yourself. All the Law and the Prophets depend on these two commandments.*

~ Loving God, carve these words upon our hearts and confirm them in our memory that we will never forget these great commandments of God. Then help us to live loving you and loving neighbor every moment of every day.

**Thursday, March 25**

*Matthew 23:11-12| But the one who is greatest among you will be your servant. All who lift themselves up will be brought low. But all who make themselves low will be lifted up.*

~ Lord, once again we see your humility and are grateful for the example set before us as your disciples. Titles, honors and entitlements are not your way and not the way for your disciples. Help us become more humble and like you a servant to all.

### **Friday, March 26**

*Matthew 24:46-47 | Happy are those servants whom the master finds fulfilling their responsibilities when he comes. I assure you that he will put them in charge of all his possessions.*

~ Lord Jesus, we do not know of when you will come again, but we know you are with us now, through the power and presence of the Holy Spirit. You charge us to be your disciples, to pray, to love, to forgive, to offer grace and healing, to teach and to proclaim the good news. You trust us to be your faithful disciples at work in your kingdom now, in this world, as a witness to your love.

### **Saturday, March 27**

*Rest | Today be still and let go of anxiety, breathing deeply and giving thanks for each breath.*

### **Sunday, March 28**

*Reflect | Reflect on this past month. What did you learn about yourself? What did you learn about others? What did you learn about God's love for humankind? In what ways will you apply what you have learned and experienced in your life to stretch and grow?*

### **Monday, March 29**

*Matthew 25:31-46 | Read this wonderful parable of the judgement of the nations*

~ Great God, this final parable is an image of grace and actions performed on behalf of those without a voice in society. Help us remember the least, the lost, the lonely and the poor and know you call us to minister to all for no one is beyond the bounds of your love.

### **Tuesday, March 30**

*Matthew 26:6-7 | When Jesus was at Bethany visiting the house of Simon, who had a skin disease, a woman came to him with a vase made of alabaster containing very expensive perfume. She poured it on Jesus' head while he was sitting at dinner.*

~ God of Love, this unnamed woman lavished expensive perfume upon Jesus as an act of faith and love, unknowingly preparing him for his death and burial. She displayed such overflowing love and devotion and is a beautiful witness to us today. Thank you for this story of generosity and love. May we be so generous with our love and actions toward Christ and his Body.

### **Wednesday, March 31**

*Matthew 27:55-56 | Many women were watching from a distance. They had followed Jesus from Galilee to serve him. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of Zebedee's sons.*

~ Loving God, we wonder at those who waited with Jesus as he died; their presence is a sign of hope that not all of Jesus' followers left him. I wonder, would I have the courage to stay, to

witness, to pray and to love in the face of such danger? In what ways do I abandon you now, Lord?

All scripture is taken from the Common English Bible (CEB)  
This prayer calendar is designed to aid you in your daily life of prayer.

**Read the scripture** for the day over and over, out loud if possible. As you read, listen with an “ear of the heart” to a word or phrase that strikes you.

**Reflect on that word or phrase** asking yourself the question: “What is God saying to me through this word or phrase at this time?” Spend time in silence with this scripture mulling it over in your mind and heart.

**Allow God to speak to you in the silence.** Offer a prayer out of your reflection.

**Thank God** for whatever you received in the silence of your prayer and take that with you through your day.