

THOUGHTS FOR PRAYER AND REFLECTION

January 2022

On the third day,
the friends of Christ,
coming at day break to the place,
found the grave empty
and the stone rolled away.

In varying ways
they realised the new wonder;
but even they hardly realised
that the world had died in the night.

What they were looking at
was the first day of a new creation,
with a new heaven and a new earth,
and in a semblance of the gardener,
God walked again in the garden,
in the cool not of the evening
but of the dawn.

G K Chesterton
1874-1935



1 st	The Naming and Circumcision of Jesus: Blessed be the name of the Lord from this time on and forevermore. From the rising of the sun to its setting, the name of the Lord is to be praised. <i>Psalms 113:2-3</i>
2 nd	Second Sunday after Christmas: The poor are always prophetic. As true prophets always point out, they reveal God's design. That is why we should take time to listen to them. And that means staying near them, because they speak quietly and infrequently; they are afraid to speak out, they lack confidence in themselves because they have been broken and oppressed. But if we listen to them, they will bring us back to the essential. <i>Jean Vanier: Community And Growth</i>
3 rd	And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. All who obey his commandments abide in him, and he abides in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit that he has given us. <i>1 John 3:23-24</i>
4 th	Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. <i>1 John 4:7-8</i>
5 th	When God gets us alone through suffering, heartbreak, temptation, disappointment, sickness, or by thwarted friendship – when He gets us absolutely alone, and we are totally speechless, unable to ask even one question – then He begins to teach us. <i>Oswald Chambers (1874-1917)</i>
6 th	The Epiphany of our Lord: Today the Magi gaze in deep wonder at what they see: heaven on earth, earth in heaven, man in God, God in man, one whom the whole universe cannot contain now enclosed in a tiny body. As they look, they believe and do not question, as their symbolic gifts bear witness: incense for God, gold for a king, myrrh for one who is to die. <i>Peter Chrysologus (c.380-450)</i>
7 th	The first duty of love is to listen. <i>Paul Tillich (1886-1965)</i>
8 th	Because your steadfast love is better than life, my lips will praise you. So I will bless you as long as I live; I will lift up my hands and call on your name. <i>Psalms 63:3-4</i>
9 th	The Baptism of our Lord: But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. <i>Isaiah 43:1-2</i>
10 th	William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, martyr (d.1645): We are called to show utter commitment to the God who is revealed in Jesus and to all those to whom His invitation is addressed. <i>Rowan Williams</i>
11 th	I will sing of your steadfast love, O Lord, forever; with my mouth I will proclaim your faithfulness to all generations. I declare that your steadfast love is established forever; your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens. <i>Psalms 89:1-2</i>
12 th	Awareness of the sacred in life is what holds our world together and the lack of awareness and sacred care is what is tearing it apart. <i>Joan Chittister OSB</i>
13 th	Hilary of Potiers, bishop and teacher (d.367): The perfection of learning is to know God in such a way that, although you realise he is knowable, yet you know him as indescribable. <i>Hilary of Potiers</i>
14 th	Sava, First bishop of the Serbian church (d.1235): Come, O children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord. Which of you desire life and covets many days to enjoy good? Keep your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking deceit. Depart from evil, and do good, seek peace and pursue it. <i>Psalms 34:11-14</i>

15 th	The Lord is your keeper; the Lord is your shade at your right hand. The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life. The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time on and forevermore. <i>Psalms 121:5-8</i>
16 th	Second Sunday after Epiphany: Like the Magi, may we also journey and be attentive, untiring and courageous on the path to find the invisible God who was born among us. <i>Pope Francis</i>
17 th	Antony of Egypt, abbot (d.356): "My secret is quite simple.....I pray!" <i>Anthony of Egypt</i>
18 th	Confession of Peter: " ...Now therefore why are you putting God to the test by placing on the neck of the disciples a yoke that neither our ancestors nor we have been able to bear? On the contrary, we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will." <i>Acts 15:10-11</i>
19 th	The way to love anything is to realise that it may be lost. <i>G K Chesterton</i>
20 th	The spiritual task of life is to feed hope. Hope is not something to be found outside of us. It lies in the spiritual life we cultivate within. The whole purpose of wrestling with life is to be transformed into the self we are meant to become, to step out of the confines of our false securities and allow our creating God to go on creating. In us. <i>Joan Chittister</i>
21 st	Agnes, martyr at Rome, virgin (d.304): My brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of any kind, consider it nothing but joy, because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance; and let endurance have its full effect, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking in nothing. <i>James 1:2-4</i>
22 nd	Vincent, deacon and martyr (d.304): But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers, who deceive themselves. For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like. <i>James 1:22-24</i>
23 rd	Third Sunday after Epiphany: This world and all within it is part of your glorious plan, devised and created in love for your people to enjoy. Such divine mystery; Such wonder; that you should consider humankind so precious and provide for our needs. God of all, our creator, our rock, our refuge, our confidence and hope, our rescuer and deliverer, in whom we can rely, we will praise your name today and all days. <i>Amen.</i>
24 th	Companions of Paul, incl Timothy, Titus & Silas: You will do well if you really fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." But if you show partiality, you commit sin and are conflicted by the law as transgressors. For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it. <i>James 2:8-10</i>
25 th	Conversion of Paul the Apostle: Humility is the solid foundation of all virtues. <i>Confucius</i>
26 th	Australia Day: We bless you, God of the universe, for this land, for its contrasts of landscape and climate, for its abundance of wealth and opportunity. Bless us so that we might be a blessing to others. <i>Amen</i>
27 th	John Chrysostom, bishop of Constantinople, teacher (d.407): If you cannot find Christ in the beggar at the church door, you will not find Him in the chalice. <i>St John Chrysostom</i>
28 th	Thomas Aquinas, theologian (d.1274): May God the Son, who turned water into wine at the wedding feast at Cana, transform your lives and make glad your hearts.
29 ^{THF}	True humility does not know that it is humble. If it did, it would be proud from the contemplation of so fine a virtue. <i>Martin Luther</i>
30 th	Fourth Sunday after Epiphany: What are you doing, O Magi? Do you adore a little Babe, in a wretched hovel, wrapped in miserable rags? Can this child be truly God? .. Are you become foolish, O wise Men ... Yes, these Wise Men have become fools that they may be wise. <i>St Bernard of Clairvaux</i>
31 st	Attention is the rarest and purest form of generosity. <i>Simone Weil (1909-1943)</i>



PRAYER THOUGHTS

- Sunday** Help us to live out your call to love genuinely, widely and wildly, whether or not our faith feels strong. Amen
- Monday** Help me, Lord, to seek you in all the events of my life, to praise you in good times and in troubled moments. Encourage me to bear the crosses of my life as you bore yours – with courage and faith. Amen
- Tuesday** Almighty and eternal God, so draw our hearts to you, so guide our minds, so fill our imaginations, so control our wills, that we may be wholly yours, utterly dedicated to you; and then use us, as you will, and always to your glory, and the welfare of your people; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. *Amen. Book of Common Prayer, 1979 version, Protestant Episcopal Church in the USA (adapted)*
- Wednesday** For those who bring hope where there is none, love where there is hatred, peace where there is war, sustenance where there is hunger, water where there is drought and comfort where there is sadness, bless them Lord Jesus whether they be Christian, Muslim, no faith or any faith; for all love has its source in You.
- Thursday** Loving God, lead me to make choices that bring you glory and allow me to experience the life you intended for me.
- Friday** Lord, please keep me from the foolishness of sin. I ask for wisdom and discernment to make wise choices in my life. When I am tempted, give me strength to flee it. When I am uncertain, help me to know the right course of action. When I need good ideas, enlighten my mind with creativity and intelligence. May I walk in your wisdom and learn your ways.
- Saturday** Dear Lord, I pray that I can show mercy without judgement, compassion unconditionally. Lord, guide my hands to serve you. Move me. Infuse my spirit. Bless me.

Thoughts for Prayer & Reflection
for our *city on a hill*.... and beyond.

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