

Prayer is the blood that runs round the veins of the body of the Church. As a work of the Spirit it brings the body to life, it animates it. In prayer we remember God and seek to communicate with him – speaking and listening, both being equally important. Scripture tells us to ‘pray at all times’, but we can’t pray at all times unless we also pray at specific times, and amongst those specific times, we must include coming together to pray at those times when we are bound to do so – Sundays and days of obligation. Two important prayers are the Lord’s Prayer and the Mass. The Lord’s Prayer is the prayer which Jesus himself taught us, and told us to say. We would do well to repeat this often, daily or moreso. The Mass is certainly our prayer or offering, but more importantly the prayer or offering of Jesus on the Cross, made present to us in our particular situation. Both of these prayers remind us that at the heart of prayer is accepting the will of God and living for him – ‘Thy will be done’ – spoken in the Lord’s Prayer, enacted in the sacrifice of Calvary present in the Mass. May our prayer bring us into a closer relationship with God and with one another.

The commands of the Gospel are nothing else than God's lessons, the foundations on which to build up hope, the supports for strengthening faith, the food that nourishes the heart. They are the rudder for keeping us on the right course, the protection that keeps our salvation secure. As they instruct the receptive minds of believers on earth, they lead safely to the kingdom of heaven. God willed that many things should be said by the prophets, his servants, and listened to by his people. How much greater are the things spoken by the Son. These are now witnessed to by the very word of God who spoke through the prophets. The Word of God does not now command us to prepare the way for his coming: he comes in person and opens up the way for us and directs us toward it. Before, we wandered in the darkness of death, aimlessly and blindly. Now we are enlightened by the light of grace, and are to keep to the highway of life, with the Lord to precede and direct us.




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4<sup>th</sup> February 2024  
Second Sunday before Lent/  
Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time



*Gospel: St. John 1:1-14*