

Inspire

ST JAMES & ST BONIFACE,
MID DEVON PARISH,
NR_11_09-01-22



THE FIRST WEEK OF ORDINARY TIME

Sunday is the **Baptism of the Lord**. In the reading from **Luke's Gospel** we hear God speak, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased." This feast marks the end of the Christmas season and the beginning of Ordinary Time on the Church calendar.

During the weekdays, we begin a three-week cycle of captivating readings from the **Book of Samuel**. We read of Samuel's mother, Hannah, who promises the Lord, "if you give your handmaid a male child, I will give him to the LORD for as long as he lives." Samuel hears a call from the Lord and responds, "Speak, for your servant is listening." An epic battle against the Philistines ends in devastating losses for Israel and the capture of the Ark of the Covenant. In his old age, Samuel rules Israel and the elders ask Samuel to appoint a King to rule them. Samuel meets Saul. "When Samuel caught sight of Saul, the LORD assured him, 'This is the man of whom I told you; he is to govern my people.'"

From now until the beginning of Lent, the weekday gospels are from **Mark's Gospel**. Mark offers us a look at the beginning of Jesus public ministry.

DAILY PRAYER THIS WEEK

In this first week of Ordinary Time, we might find ourselves feeling a little let-down after the Christmas season, especially in parts of the world where it seems cold and dark most days. This is where we can ask for the grace to let the stories of the gospels come alive in our hearts.

The vivid narratives of this week's gospel are packed with stories of Jesus' entering into the lives of real people and touching them in extraordinary ways. These are not far away

stories, but ones that have a real meaning for us. This is a week of invitation from Jesus to us.

We have parts of our lives that are dark and embarrassing and seem unchangeable. It is into this very darkness and discomfort that Jesus extends the same invitation to us: "Follow me."

This clear and personal call to us is from Jesus who already knows us and our failings and yet asks us to be with him. We can hear this invitation more clearly if we can be touched with awareness of our own failings and understand more deeply how much we need a saviour in our lives. It is then that our hearts open to accept this invitation. This week Jesus invites us to follow him, as friends and disciples.

See "Weekly Guide for Daily Prayer" on the Creighton University's Online Ministries web site: <http://www.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/online.html> used with permission.

OPEN OUR HEARTS

Gracious God, be with us in this time and space.

Open our hearts that we may receive the passion of your love.

Open our hearts that we may embrace all those near and dear to us.

Open our hearts that we may reverence all whom we find not lovely in our eyes.

Open our hearts that we may be filled with joy for all who enter the sacred space of life.

Open our hearts and lives, O God, to the "graces you give us with such burning love".

Open us to the wonders of our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Open us to the friendship of your Son, in whose name we make this prayer. Amen. Catherine of Siena

I pray that nothing but your love will ever overwhelm me, so that I may grow as the extraordinary person you call me to be.

Nicholas Hutchinson – A De La Salle brother "Praying Each Day"

CONTEMPLATION

This morning brings a different breeze, a breath of change and newness.

What do I sense, what blurry vision flickers, tempting me?

The winds of change blow in my life, and I must now decide. Do I unfurl my sails to catch them or keep the sails furled?

My choice this season will set the course of many season's journeys. Let meditation be my guide: let calmness lead the way.

Author Unknown but used with thanks



A HAND PRAYER

Your fingers can be used to bring to mind different things to pray for.

Thumb - this is the strongest digit on your hand. Give thanks for all the strong things in your life, like home and family, relationships that support and sustain you.

Index finger - this is the pointing finger. Pray for all those people and things in your life who guide and help you. Friends, teachers, doctors, nurses, emergency services and so on.

Middle finger - this is the tallest finger. Pray for all the important people who have power in the world, like world leaders and their governments, members of parliament and local councillors, the Royal Family, other world leaders and their governments.

Ring finger - this is the weakest finger on your hand. It can not do much by itself. Remember the poor, the weak, the helpless, the hungry, the sick, the ill and the bereaved.

Little finger - this is the smallest and the last finger on your hand. Pray for yourself.

Anglican Diocese of St Albans

LORD, I WILL TRUST YOU,

Lord, I will trust You, help me to journey beyond the familiar and into the unknown. Give me the faith to leave old ways and break fresh ground with You.

Christ of the mysteries, can I trust You to be stronger than each storm in me? Do I still yearn for your glory to lighten on me? I will show others the care You've given me.

I determine amidst all uncertainty always to trust. I choose to live beyond regret, and let You recreate my life. I believe You will make a way for me and provide for me, if only I trust you and obey.

I will trust in the darkness and know that my times are still in Your hand. I will believe You for my future, chapter by chapter, until all the story is written.

Focus my mind and my heart upon You, my attention always on You without alteration. Strengthen me with Your blessing and appoint to me the task.

Teach me to love with eternity in view. Tune my spirit to the music of heaven. Feed me, and, somehow, make my obedience count for You.

Celtic Daily Prayer - Northumbrian Community

BLESSING

May God shield you on every steep,
May Christ aid you on every path
May the Spirit fill you on every slope,
on hill and on plain.

May the roads rise to meet you
May the wind be always on your back,
May the sunshine warm upon your face,
The rains fall soft upon your fields
And until we meet again
May God hold you in the hollow of His hand.

(Celtic)