

Lectionary
Readings for every day
You Select!



in the HCUC

No. 6

For 11 June 2017

Dear Friends

We all do it. We call it prayer.

Sometimes our prayers are wrung out of us. As when we are confronted by a situation that disturbs or frightens us— “God help me!” Sometimes when a crisis passes and we are so grateful the words just bubble out from deep within us. Does this hint that we are created with the need to contact something or being greater than ourselves? At such times we may sigh with relief and repeat with feeling “Thank God!”

And there are moments when we are surprised by joy, understanding, wonder or sudden beauty and the response comes out as “My God!”

I know that these brief arrow prayers are sown into the seams of our culture, but who says that cultural habits cannot carry deep conviction? Whatever prompts our prayers is often from a dark hidden crevasse in our lives— heartful and authentic. The main factor seems to be finding the words that give accurate expression to our thoughts and feelings. The words don’t have to be polite, full of effort, nor excellence. As the poet Rumi says “Praying is only the external form...”.

Prayer can be a change agent. It can change the way we think about ourselves and others. It can deepen our understanding of the purpose of our lives—and of existence. It can open a way to think more honestly about the consequences of our personal choices and actions, and how we value life and think about death.

As an example—Larry Dossey in his book called “*Healing Words*” says that a major survey indicated that those who prayed for people who needed healing definitely identified positive benefit in their own lives—greater wholeness, balance and better health.

Sincerely - Lester

	Psalm	Epistle/OT	Gospel
Monday 12 June:	112	Acts 11:19-30	John 15:12-17
Tuesday 13 June:	119:129-136	2 Cor 1:18-22	Matt 5:13-16
Wednesday 14 June:	78:1-4	2 Cor 3:4-11	Matt 5:17-19
Thursday 15 June:	116:10-17	1 Cor 11:23-26	John 6:51-58
Friday 16 June:	99	2 Cor 4:7-15	Matt 5:27-32
Saturday 17 June:	103:1-12	2 Cor 5:14-end	Matt 5:33-37
Sunday 18 June <u>Pentecost 2</u>			
Ps 116:1-2,12-19; Gen 18:1-15 (21:1-7); Rom 5:1-8; Matt 9:35-10:8(9-23)			

	Psalm	Epistle/OT	Gospel
Monday 19 June:	98	2 Cor 6:1-10	Matt 5:38-42
Tuesday 20 June:	146	2 Cor 8:1-9	Matt 5:43-end
Wednesday 21 June:	112	2 Cor 9:6-11	Matt 6:1-6, 16-18
Thursday 22 June:	111	2 Cor 11:1-11	Matt 6:7-15
Friday 23 June:	34:1-6	2 Cor 11:18,21a-30	Matt 6:19-23
Saturday 24 June:	85:7-13	Isa 40:1-11	Luke 1:57-66, 80
Sunday 25 June <u>Pentecost 3</u>			
Ps 86:1-10,16-17; Gen 21:8-21; Rom 6:1b-11; Matt 10:24-39			

	Psalm	Epistle/OT	Gospel
Monday 26 June:	33:12-end	Gen 12:1-9	Matt 7:1-5
Tuesday 27 June:	15	Gen 13:2,5-end	Matt 7:6,12-14
Wednesday 28 June:	105:1-9	Gen 15:1-12,17,18	Matt 7:15-20
Thursday 29 June:	125	Acts 12:1-11	Matt 16:13-19
Friday 30 June:	128	Gen 17:1,9,10,15-22	Matt 8:1-4
Saturday 1 July:	68	Gen 18:1-15	Matt 8:5-17
Sunday 2 July <u>Pentecost 4</u>			
Ps 13; Gen 22:1-14; Rom 6:12-23; Matt 10:40-42			

Over the centuries our world view has been shocked out of its stuckness. Start away back. When people believed the earth was flat they warned the adventurers “Don’t go too far. You may fall over the edge.” Then the adventurers began sailing right round the earth. Others began to see the curve in the horizon.

Up until the 15th century the official view was that the earth (our home) was the centre of the universe. The sun and the planets spun round our world. Copernicus proved the sun was the centre and all the planets spun around it.

More recently we have been surprised by the discovery that the world of material and physical objects are not as solid as we imagine. Chairs, bricks, trees, birds and bees are what we call the real world. Namely, what we can see, touch, cut, measure and hold is solid stuff and real. That’s when scientists began looking for the building blocks of what our “real” world is made of. Then we were having to try and understand that all the “real” things we used each day are the dance of energy, surging, spinning, empowering. Behold, the things we can see, touch, taste are dimensions of this creative energy. There are colours we can’t see, sounds we can’t hear, scents we can’t smell, x-rays we can’t feel. We know no more than 5% of the universe physicists tell us.

Taking it even further the exploration into the atom revealed it was space and energy. We were (and still are) finding it hard to accept that the nucleus of the atom is no more, by comparison, than a cricket ball within the Westpac Stadium.

All of this has implications for our view/understanding of the way prayer might work. The view of sending spoken messages to a person who is somewhere out there, listening to us is a view that is wearing thin. But we will hang onto this assumption—we want someone bigger, brighter, greater to be there for us. Why? Because we are people, personal and human and we want someone like us to talk to. So we give ourselves a God, a Supreme Being, who meets our need. More than trying to get rid of that view, it becomes a richer exercise if we explore the implications of being at one with the energy and intelligence of the universe. Along with everything else we are all swimming in a vast ocean of consciousness, or deep awareness. We all function at different levels of this consciousness—like radio stations that we can tune into or may not know about. They are all there. We spend our lives tuned into only a few.

Prayer is a way of tapping into this vast Source of energy and sharing it with others. It is being in touch with this flow of creative energy (Love) and trusting the intelligence and wisdom that is the heart and mystery of an evolving universe.

WHAT OTHERS HAVE SAID

The function of prayer is not to influence God, but rather to change the nature of the one who prays.

- S Kierkegaard

Prayer is a longing of the soul ... and an instrument of action.

- M Gandhi

Prayer cannot bring water to parched fields, mend a broken bridge, rebuild a broken city; but prayer can water an arid soul, mend a broken heart, and rebuild a weakened will.

- Rabbi A Heschel

Prayer takes us beyond ordinary thinking. It moves us. Its sweep is vast, and vastly subtle.

- S Dowrick

You must know that God blows through you, from the beginning.

- R Rilke

Prayers

For a Rescue not always wanted

Save us

O generous and patient
God of Jesus,
save us not just from
hardness of heart
but from thickness of head.
Deliver us from the
paralysing myopia
that allows a vision
no further distant from
our own limited experience,
local concerns, and selfish
interests.

- D Evans

Life is a mystery.
It is to lose oneself
more utterly, to love
more deeply,
to feel oneself
part of life—not separate.
Oh Life accept me
—make me worthy
—teach me.

- Katherine Mansfield