

COVID-19  
**UNITED IN PRAYER**

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**COLLECTION**



*marist*  
ASSOCIATION OF  
ST MARCELLIN CHAMPAGNAT



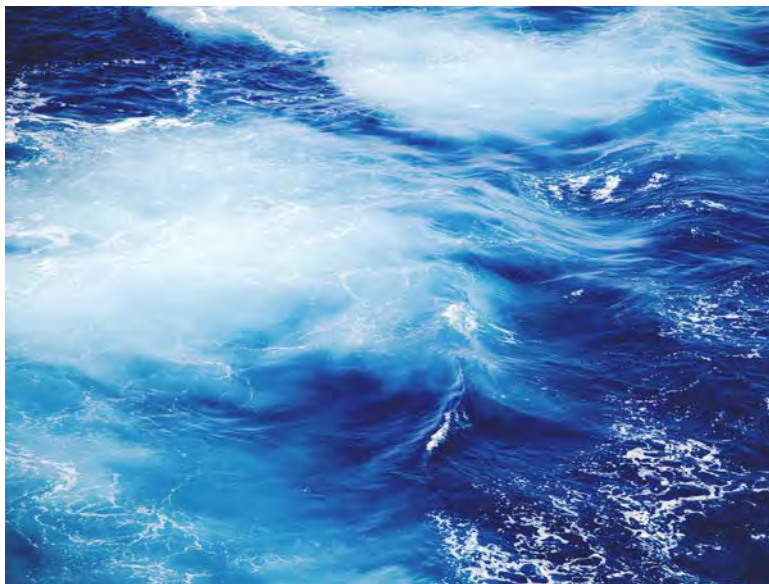
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# UNITED IN PRAYER

*And the world came together as the people stayed apart.<sup>1</sup>*



## INTENTIONS

*We remember today our Marist family around the world.*

*We pray for all health care workers, doctors, nurses, medical researchers and carers.*

*We pray for the poorest and most vulnerable members of our communities.*

*For what else shall we pray...*

*Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.*

## OPENING PRAYER

O Lord

You travelled through towns and villages 'curing every disease and illness.'

Be with us now, that we may experience Your healing love and protection.

Let us feel your calming presence amidst any anxiety and fear.

In Jesus' name we pray. *Amen.*

## WE LISTEN

*Speak Lord, your servant is listening...*

### ***A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Mark (4:35-41)***

On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side." And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. Other boats were with him. A great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him up and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm. He said to them, "Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?" And they were filled with great awe and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

## WE REFLECT

The fishermen were frightened; some thought they would die. The waves kept breaking into the boat while Jesus slept peacefully on a cushion. With the panic on board and the unpredictable storm all around them, we can surely ask how He was able to sleep? But we know the answer. *Faith.*

**Where in my life do I feel overwhelmed?**

**Where can I find moments of stillness?**

*Pause for a moment of reflection.*

## WE RESPOND



*Water From The Rock* reminds us that as we journey in faith...[this] journey of discovery has many twists and turns. At times we struggle with our fears and doubts, as Mary did at the Annunciation. Yet, in each moment of our search God remains faithful and always present, continually inviting us to see our lives through God's eyes. (*WFR 61.*)

We know that as Marists express our Spirituality through family. In these troubled times we are being invited to show the passion and compassion that are so central to our tradition and spirituality.

## CLOSING PRAYER

God of love and healing  
help us, your human family, to join together  
on our journey of faith.  
Send us all your spirit of hope,  
so that we may do what we can  
to alleviate human anxiety and suffering  
and to create and promote charity and justice  
in our world.

***Amen.***

Saint Marcellin Champagnat  
Mary of the Cross MacKillop  
Mary Our Good Mother  
And let us always remember

***Pray for Us***  
***Pray for Us***  
***Pray for Us***  
***To Pray for One Another***

## STILLNESS<sup>2</sup>

JOYCE RUPP

*stillness*  
*just stillness*  
*like my world seldom knows,*  
*inside I have an expressway*  
*that never slows down,*  
*always full of going somewhere*  
*always another thing to do*

*stillness*  
*just stillness*  
*filled with quiet, numinous sound,*  
*like butterfly wings, river murmurs,*  
*cloud breaths, firefly blinks,*  
*and silence, simple, serene silence,*  
*nothing more*

*stillness*  
*just stillness*  
*here in this satisfied space,*  
*and I, so crippled from my chaos,*  
*sound inside like the cawing crow*  
*flying low over the pond,*  
*breaking the stillness*  
*with his harshly handled song*

<sup>1</sup> Jennifer Wagner, 2020

<sup>2</sup> Joyce Rupp, *The Cosmic Dance* (Orbis Books, Maryknoll, 2002), 37.

# UNITED IN PRAYER



And the world came together as the people stayed apart.<sup>1</sup>

*We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of this land and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.*



## INTENTIONS

*We remember today our Marists communities and ministries.*

*We pray for all students in our schools affected by the disruption to their learning.*

*We pray for our elderly Marist Brothers; may they remain safe and well.*

*For what else shall we pray...*

*Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.*

## OPENING PRAYER

God of Love  
As we come to you today,  
fill our hearts and our whole being with the wonder  
of your presence.  
Help us remain receptive to you;  
to make appropriate choices, not just  
for ourselves, but for all people.  
Loving God, be close, fill our minds with peace and  
keep us safe in your love.<sup>2</sup>

Amen

## WE LISTEN

*Speak Lord, your servant is listening...*

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.

<sup>1</sup> *John 4: 7-8 (NRSV)*

## LOVE DOES THAT

MEISTER ECKHART

*All day long a little burro labours,  
sometimes  
with heavy loads on her back and  
sometimes just with worries  
about things that bother only  
burros.*

*And worries, as we know, can be more  
exhausting  
than physical labour.*

*Once in a while a kind monk comes  
to her stable and brings  
a pear, but more  
than that,*

*he looks into the burro's eyes and  
touches her ears*

*and for a few seconds the burro is free  
and even seems to laugh,*

*because love does  
that*

*Love frees.<sup>3</sup>*

## WE REFLECT

Allow a word or a phrase to emerge from this scriptural passage and repeat that word or phrase over and over in your mind and in your heart.

**What message is there for you today in this word or phrase?**

**Where in your life do you experience love?**

**How do you tend, nurture and affirm?**

*Pause for a moment of reflection.*

## WE RESPOND



Today, those of us who follow in the footsteps of Marcellin and his first disciples are seized by the same inner dynamism. We develop a way of being, loving and doing, in the spirit of our origins. Gradually, day by day, we deepen our experience of the loving presence of God within ourselves and in others. This presence of God is a profound experience of being personally loved by God, and the conviction that he is close to us in our daily human experiences. (WFR 16)

*"When love awakens in your life, in the night of your heart, it is like the dawn breaking within you. Where before there was anonymity, now there is intimacy; where before there was fear, now there is courage; where before in your life there was awkwardness, now there is a rhythm of grace and gracefulness; where before you used to be jagged, now you are elegant and in rhythm with your self. When love awakens in your life, it is like a rebirth, a new beginning."<sup>5</sup>*

## CLOSING PRAYER

*(in the words of Pope Francis Urbi Et Orbi address on Friday 27 March)*

Lord, may you bless the world, give health to our bodies and comfort our hearts.

You ask us not to be afraid. Yet our faith is weak and we are fearful.

But you, Lord, will not leave us at the mercy of the storm.

Tell us again: *"Do not be afraid"* (Mt 28:5).

And we, together with Peter, *"cast all our anxieties onto you, for you care about us"* (cf. 1 Pet 5:7).

**Amen.**

Saint Marcellin Champagnat  
Mary of the Cross MacKillop  
Mary Our Good Mother  
And let us always remember

**Pray for Us**  
**Pray for Us**  
**Pray for Us**  
**To Pray for One Another**

## TOGETHER AT THE EDGE: TRUST ME<sup>4</sup>

NOEL DAVIS

*Embrace Life*

*All of Life*

*Trust me.*

*Launch out into the deep  
into*

*Bliss*

*Blessing*

*Confusion*

*Comedy*

*Sadness*

*Absurdity*

*Hurt*

*Grief*

*Contradiction*

*New Life*

*Thanksgiving*

*Know I am with you in it all.*

*Trust Me.*

<sup>1</sup> Jennifer Wagner, 2020

<sup>2</sup> Adapted from *The Irish Jesuits, Sacred Space* P.163

<sup>3</sup> Mesiter Eckhart, *Love Does That*, 2002.

<sup>4</sup> Noel Davis, *Together at the Edge: Trust Me*, 2011.

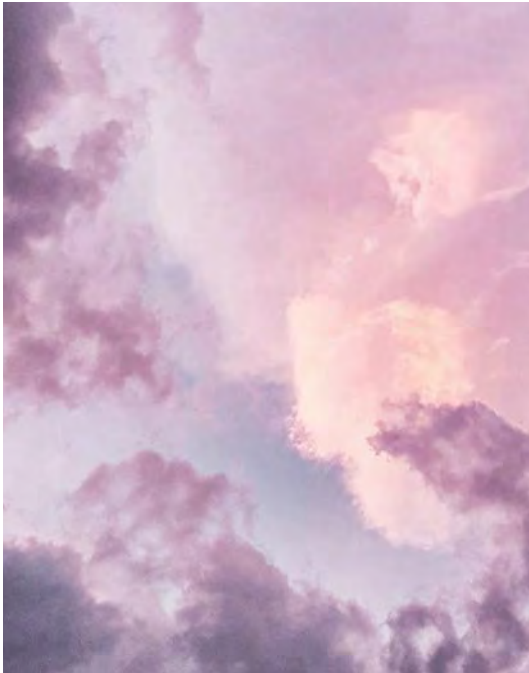
<sup>5</sup> John O'Donohue, *Anam Cara: A Book of Celtic Wisdom*, 1997

# UNITED IN PRAYER



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## INTRODUCTION

**Holy Thursday** begins the Easter Triduum: that is, the three days concerning the events of Christ's passion, death and resurrection. Our prayer today invites us to enter more deeply into the mystery of Christ's institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper – where Jesus “took, blessed, broke and gave.” The Gospel reading today is John’s account of Christ washing the feet of His disciples. This is the example Christ sets for each of us to follow; what Henri Nouwen would refer to as the “nobility of service” – which for us as Christians, sees the Eucharist made visible in the witness of service and selfless love.

We begin our prayer today with the sign of our faith:  
*In the name of the Father, and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

## OPENING PRAYER

Let us pause and call to mind  
the presence of God within and among us,  
today and always.

*Brief pause.*

God of mercy and infinite love,  
we place ourselves before you.  
Help us to be open to your Word,  
responsive to your Spirit,  
and alert to your call.

May your peace be with us.

We make this prayer through  
Christ our Lord. Amen.

Amen



## WE LISTEN

*Speak Lord, your servant is listening...*

### **A reading from Paul's first letter to the Corinthians. (1 Cor 11:23-26)**

This is what I received from the Lord, and in turn passed on to you: that on the same night that he was betrayed, the Lord Jesus took some bread, and thanked God for it and broke it, and he said, 'This is my body, which is for you; do this as a memorial of me.' In the same way he took the cup after supper, and said, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Whenever you drink it, do this as a memorial of me.' Until the Lord comes, therefore, every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you are proclaiming his death.



## RESPONSORIAL PSALM <sup>2</sup>

115(116):12-13,15-18

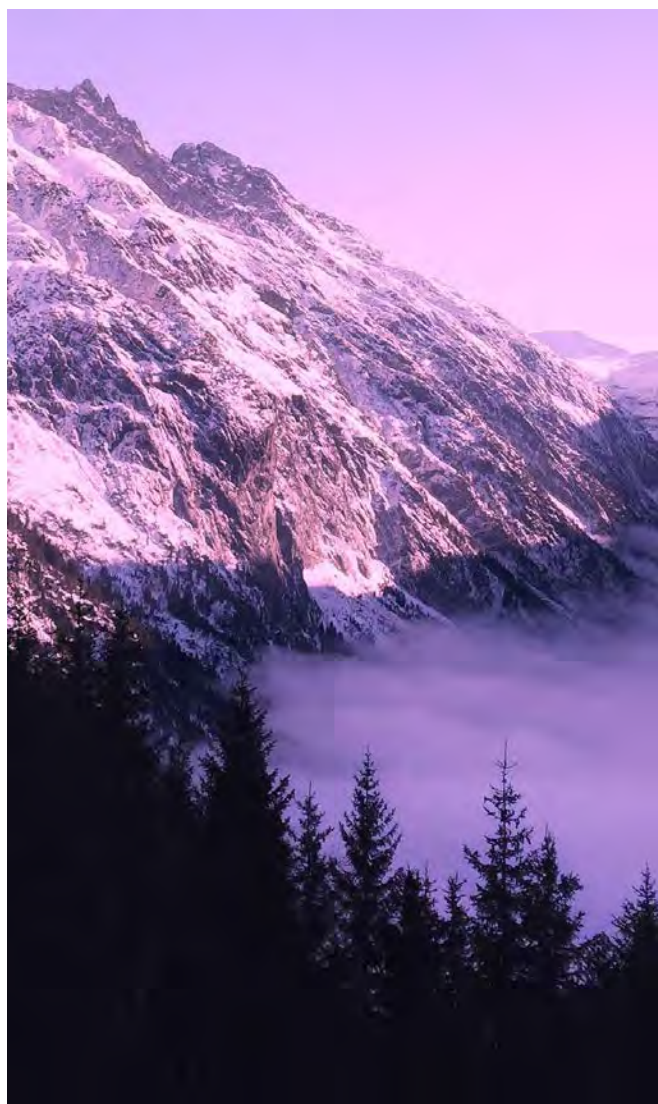
Option: Listen to the Psalm [here](#).

### **R. Our blessing-cup is a communion, with the Blood of Christ**

How shall I make a return to the Lord  
for all the good he has done for me?  
The cup of salvation I will take up,  
and I will call upon the name of the Lord. **R.**

Precious in the eyes of the Lord  
Is the death of his faithful ones.  
I am your servant, the son of your handmaid;  
You have loosened my bonds. **R.**

To you I will offer sacrifice of thanksgiving,  
And I will call upon the name of the Lord.  
My vows to the Lord I will pay,  
In the presence of all his people. **R.**



### **This is the Night of Love**

(cf Matt 26:17-30 | John 13:1-15)

On the night Jesus took a towel and basin,  
and washed his disciples' feet.  
On this night he told them to do the same for  
others  
to show their love for him  
and for one another.  
This is the night of love.

On this night, followers of Jesus  
have invited those preparing for baptism  
to begin with them a solemn vigil of prayer  
and fasting  
until the day of Christ's resurrection is  
fulfilled.  
This is the night of love.

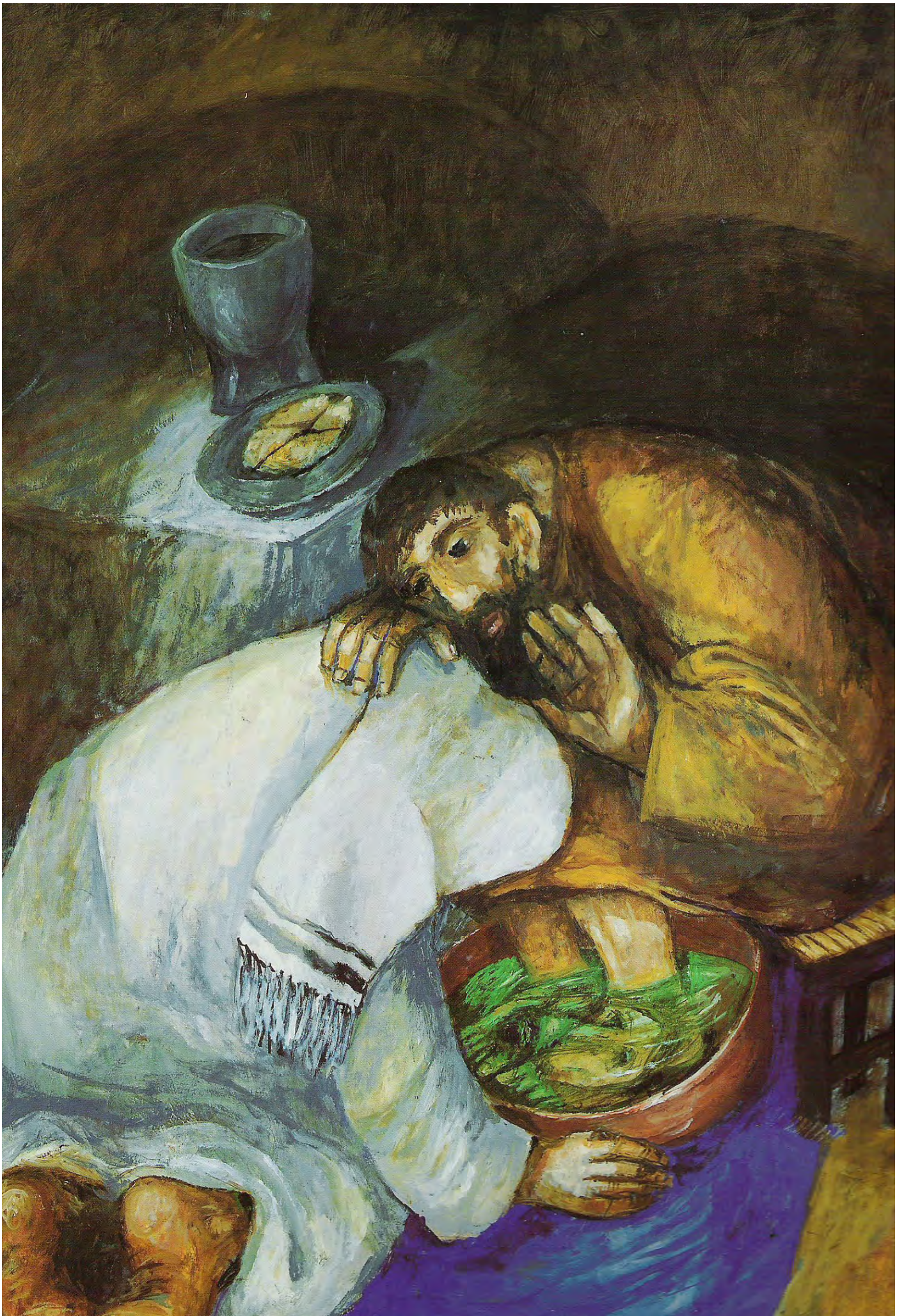
On this night, Jesus broke bread and shared  
wine with his followers  
for the last time,  
and invited them to remember him  
to encounter him anew,  
whenever they did the same.  
This is the night of love.

On this night, followers of Jesus  
have welcomed those who have returned to  
the way of Jesus  
after a time of wandering  
and a journey of returning.  
This is the night of love.

This is the night of love.  
And so, on this night,  
we welcome the penitent -  
all here have wandered -  
and invite all preparing -  
all here are still learning -  
to join us in hearing and obeying  
the commandment of our Master  
and to feast at his table,  
that we may love one another  
as he has loved us.

Come to the night of love.

*A time for stillness and contemplation.*



## WE REFLECT

*Crumbs on the floor, remnants of bread broken.  
Drops of sweet wine in the bottom of a cup.  
The sound of water splashing into a basin.  
A servant's towel wrapped around the waist.*

*Today is a day of taste and touch. It is a day of earthiness, of remembrance. Today we wash feet.*

The famous painting of *The Washing of Feet* by Sieger Koder is often used as a visual meditation on John's Gospel (13:1-15). Koder's art is predominantly paintings of gospel scenes which invite the viewer into the scene. This particular piece is the washing of Peter's feet during the Last Supper, in which we see things from Christ's angle - including His reflected face.

Look at the painting. What do you notice? What seems to be happening?

Looking closely, we see in the bowl of dirty water, the face of Christ revealed.

Where is the face of Christ to be found today? Is it in the places of messiness, disruption, confusion, chaos and anxious moments of our lives?

Where is Jesus in this moment most present to you?

### **This is Love – John Birch**

This is love.  
Not that you spoke words of comfort,  
walked with the unclean and unloved,  
shared wisdom, bread and wine,  
brought healing into lives  
and challenged the status quo.

This is love.  
That you spoke the word of God,  
walked a painful road to the Cross,  
shared living water, bread of life,  
brought Salvation to the world  
and died for the sake of all.

This is love.  
It is a seed  
sown in the ground,  
which germinates,  
blossoms,  
and spreads its sweet perfume.

John Birch, [Faith and Worship](#)



*What a wild love it is that does these things, that suffers these things!  
What can anyone say to do it justice?  
Stillness before it is our best response.*

*Dr Eleonore Stump, 2018*

*A time for stillness and contemplation.*

## WE RESPOND

Life together supports and challenges us to be a community of mission. We listen to the invitations of God that flow through our shared life and discern our shared response. Based on a common trust in God, we offer our lives in service. In ministry we find ourselves, like Jesus, broken open for our brothers and sisters. Truly, we are bread of life for others as Jesus has been for us. (*WFR 107*)

### *Let us pray:*

In remembrance we gather in spirit.  
In humility we look to God.  
In confidence we pray for the Church and the world.

For all those who are affected by COVID-19,  
through illness, isolation or anxiety,  
that they may find peace and comfort.

*We pray to the Lord.*

For the those who are vulnerable and fearful,  
for the critically ill and those who have died,  
that they find rest and peace in You.

*We pray to the Lord.*

For those who are guiding our country,  
developing plans and policies,  
that they make wise decisions.

*We pray to the Lord.*

For all Marists around the world  
that they find renewed inspiration in serving one another.

*We pray to the Lord.*

For what else shall we pray...

*A time for stillness and contemplation.*

## CLOSING PRAYER

Jesus, may Your perfect example of endless love and service model our own lives.  
Jesus, may Your life teach us how to love and care for all people in our world.  
Jesus, may Your life be reflected in our heart, hands, and words.

*Amen.*

Saint Marcellin Champagnat	<i>Pray for Us</i>
Mary of the Cross MacKillop	<i>Pray for Us</i>
Mary Our Good Mother	<i>Pray for Us</i>
And let us always remember	<i>To Pray for One Another</i>

# UNITED IN PRAYER

And the world came together as the people stayed apart.<sup>1</sup>

*We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of this land and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.*



## INTENTIONS

*We remember today our Marists who are in isolation from their communities.*

*We pray for all our teachers creating on-line learning environments for their students.*

*We pray for our families that we stay safe and connected.*

*For what else shall we pray...*

*Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.*

## OPENING PRAYER

Dear God,

Help us to embrace the tension of our experience and to live with our discomfort and uncertainty.

Let us be guided by God's Spirit

so that this space can be a place of new experiences and grace.

May we grow the faith we need and find peace in our confusion.

Amen

## WE LISTEN

*Speak Lord, your servant is listening...*

In great fear the Israelites cried out to the Lord. They said to Moses, "Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us, bringing us out of Egypt? Is this not the very thing we told you in Egypt, 'Let us alone and let us serve the Egyptians'? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness." But Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid, stand firm, and see the deliverance that the Lord will accomplish for you today; for the Egyptians whom you see today you shall never see again. The Lord will fight for you, and you have only to keep still." Then the Lord said to Moses, "Why do you cry out to me? Tell the Israelites to go forward. But you lift up your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, that the Israelites may go into the sea on dry ground. *Ex 14: 10-16*

## WE REFLECT

The water separates Egypt from the wilderness and creates a liminal space for the Israelites. It is a boundary of sorts that must be crossed in order to enter a new way of living. The crossing is dangerous. They had to go through the unknown to reach the promised land. The circumstances, however, forced them to go forward... they were, after all, being chased by 600 chariots! The thing is, they entered the water as slaves and exited as new people.

**What can you let go of in your life to help you be free/changed?**  
*(perhaps an attitude or behaviour)*

**What can you commit to in your life to help you be free/changed?**  
*(perhaps meditation, some stillness or prayer)*

*Pause for a moment of reflection.*

## WE RESPOND

During this time of Covid 19, we find ourselves in a liminal space – that is, an in-between space – a space between who we once were and who we are becoming in this 'new normal.' A space where we let go of a life that we no longer have but we are still uncertain of how life will be on the other side of this experience.

The liminal space is a space of openheartedness... we need a container that will hold us with gentleness and strength, without short-circuiting the process or forcing us into the wrong outcome.

Mary stood in this liminal space, the space between the time when Jesus occupied an important physical place in hers and everyone else's life and the new life that came through the resurrection. Perhaps Mary, herself, is that liminal space, as Platt suggests, *that container that will hold us with gentleness and strength* in our troubled times.<sup>2</sup>

## CLOSING PRAYER

Let us pray that in this liminal space we do not lose heart but journey on together, trusting in God's providential care.

**Amen.**

Saint Marcellin Champagnat  
Mary of the Cross MacKillop  
Mary Our Good Mother  
And let us always remember

**Pray for Us**  
**Pray for Us**  
**Pray for Us**  
**To Pray for One Another**

*Perhaps liminality is given to us as a gift? Instead of fighting it, we can make peace with it. When we truly grasp that we are living in a liminal space then we can also learn how to live in the moment and the now. So, breathe deeply. You are that trapeze artist who can let go and not freak out. You can change ... You are fearfully and wonderfully made. You've got this! <sup>3</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> Jennifer Wagner, 2020  
<sup>2</sup> Heather Platt, *The Liminal Space*, <https://www.awakin.org/read/view.php?>  
<sup>3</sup> Many Bayton, [christiantoday.com](http://christiantoday.com)

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## INTENTIONS

*We remember those who are suffering, especially those unable to be with elderly family members.*

*We pray for those who grieve the loss of loved ones.*

*We pray for new life, and the hope Easter Sunday brings to our world.*

*For what else shall we pray...*

*Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.*

## OPENING PRAYER

Dear Lord,

We ask you to be present with us during this time of crisis in our world. We pray for the many who have lost loved ones during this pandemic and for those who are grieving. We ask you to help our world see the eternal hope of new life that you offer us; a new humanity.

Amen

## WE LISTEN

*Speak Lord, your servant is listening...*

### ***A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John (20:1-9)***

On the first day of the week, Mary of Magdala came to the tomb early in the morning, while it was still dark, and saw the stone removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and told them, "They have taken the Lord from the tomb, and we don't know where they put him." So Peter and the other disciple went out and came to the tomb. They both ran, but the other disciple ran faster than Peter and arrived at the tomb first; he bent down and saw the burial cloths there, but did not go in. When Simon Peter arrived after him, he went into the tomb and saw the burial cloths there, and the cloth that had covered his head, not with the burial cloths but rolled up in a separate place. Then the other disciple also went in, the one who had arrived at the tomb first, and he saw and believed. For they did not yet understand the Scripture that he had to rise from the dead.

## WE REFLECT

Each day that we are alive we have much to celebrate. Life is a great gift from God, and we show our love for our creator by the way we live our one wild and precious life. So, get up, life has conquered death, shout for joy and get busy living!

What are the stones we need to roll away in our life so we can live it more abundantly?

*Pause for a moment of reflection.*

## WE RESPOND

In seeking to be present in the world of young people, at times we will encounter injustice, suffering and sometimes evil. Jesus invites us to incorporate these experiences into our lives as a sharing in his Paschal Mystery – the unity of Good Friday and Easter Sunday, the paradox of failure producing life, life drawn from suffering. (WFR 143)

We carry out this mission in a variety of ways. In all of them, we seek to kindle the faith of people, and we give special value to initiatives that promote life and justice. (WFR 145)

In responding to the crisis unfolding around us globally we turn to our Marist spirituality which calls on us to be both passionate and compassionate in our love and care of each other. To understand that our response must give hope, that while physically apart we are together, united in prayer.

## CLOSING PRAYER

Mary and the disciples were distressed by the empty tomb as they "did not yet understand the Scripture that he had to rise from the dead". We ask your help to believe just as Mary and the disciples did, and to help all share in your Paschal Mystery.

**Amen.**

Saint Marcellin Champagnat  
Mary of the Cross MacKillop  
Mary Our Good Mother  
And let us always remember

**Pray for Us**  
**Pray for Us**  
**Pray for Us**  
**To Pray for One Another**

<sup>1</sup> Jennifer Wagner, 2020



Someone I loved once  
gave me a box full of  
darkness.

It took me years to  
understand that this, too,  
was a gift.

Mary Oliver

x x x x x x

x  
x  
x





# UNITED IN PRAYER



And the world came together as the people stayed apart. <sup>1</sup>

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## INTENTIONS

*We pray for our business and political leaders that they enact policies that support those most exposed and vulnerable.*

*We pray that calm and consideration mark our words and actions towards all people in society.*

*We pray we see with the eyes of faith the possibilities of new life in the midst of this pandemic.*

*For what else shall we pray...*

*Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.*

## OPENING PRAYER

Dear Lord,

Like the disciples walking the road to Emmaus, we are often confused and anxious. We ask that we are open to your presence and guidance during these challenging times. We pray with confidence for the courage and kindness needed by all your people at this time.

Amen

## WE LISTEN

*Speak Lord, your servant is listening...*

### ***A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke (24:15-18, 30-32)***

As they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, but *their eyes were kept from recognising him.*

And he said to them, "What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?"

They stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?" When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them.

Then *their eyes were opened, and they recognised him.*

## WE REFLECT

A world in the grip of a pandemic: COVID-19 confronts us on every continent, among all peoples. The statistics are frightening; the contagion is rapid; and the deaths are multiplying. Health systems are crippled by the demands, and economies are set to topple. We are horrified, scared, exhausted, isolated and powerless.

In their fear and distress, the two disciples have set out for Emmaus. They set out talking about "all that has happened" up to the darkness of the empty tomb. Do they believe that Jesus still goes ahead and will meet them on the way?

It takes courage to live this radical discipleship, to follow the way of the crucified, waiting in darkness for light, for glimpses of our loving God.

These disciples, after their encounter with Jesus, go together in faith - faith forged by the journey so far.

We, too, go in faith. We wait to see the risen one in the midst of this pandemic.

Our churches are empty, our liturgies home-based. Communities are unable to gather; two is the new crowd limit. And yet, we are courageous enough to proclaim, "The Lord is truly risen... and we have seen him".<sup>2</sup>

*Pause for a moment of reflection.*

## WE RESPOND

In this Easter season, amongst all the difficulties and restrictions, how are our eyes being opened to recognise the 'Risen One'? What do you see?

*(Perhaps in the clear waters and skies, the exploration of our neighbourhoods, the new ways of doing things with family, a more grateful spirit...)*

## CLOSING PRAYER

Creator God, even though we are unable to break bread together in our usual way, we pray for the recognition of Your presence and action among us through prayer and new awareness.

**Amen.**

Saint Marcellin Champagnat  
Mary of the Cross MacKillop  
Mary Our Good Mother  
And let us always remember

**Pray for Us**  
**Pray for Us**  
**Pray for Us**  
**To Pray for One Another**



### WHAT WE MAKE IT<sup>3</sup> L.R. KNOST

*All is not as it should be.  
But all is as it is.  
And as it is  
we can still see wishes in stars  
and new leaves sprouting on trees  
and shapes in the clouds  
and silver webs with tiny owners  
and flowers tilting toward warm sunlight  
and love in our children's eyes  
and hope in the mirror.  
Yes, it is as it is.  
But it is also what we make it.*

<sup>1</sup> Jennifer Wagner, 2020

<sup>2</sup> Adapted from Catherine McCahill sgs, *The Good Oil*, 2020

<sup>3</sup> L.R. Knost, *The Gentle Parent*, 2013.

# UNITED IN PRAYER



And the world came together as the people stayed apart. <sup>1</sup>

*We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of this land and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.*



## INTENTIONS

*We pray for the deceased members of the human family across the world.*

*We pray for leaders who are shepherds to and for their people.*

*We pray for God's grace and mercy to be living realities in our lives.*

*We pray for those who are suffering economic, social and political hardships.*

*We pray for our Marist communities, especially in the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu*

*For what else shall we pray...*

*Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.*

## OPENING PRAYER

God of mercy, life and love, be with us always. You have promised that where two or three are gathered in your name there you will be. Stay with us in our times of trial. Fill our dry bones and emptiness with your Spirit. Help us to be Easter people and make ALLELUIA our song.

Amen

## WE LISTEN

*Speak Lord, your servant is listening...*

### ***A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John (10:7-11)***

Jesus said: 'I AM the gate for the sheep. All who enter by me will be saved and will come in and go out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it to the full. I AM the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.



## WE REFLECT

The Gospel is part of the inexhaustible mystery of the person of Jesus. Here Jesus is both lamb and shepherd.

*What image of Jesus do I most reflect on?*

*Am I a good shepherd to those I serve?*

*Am I able to ask for forgiveness for the times I have not been a good shepherd?*

*Am I able to live life and have it in all its fulness, especially when times are tough?*

*What is God's word for me to take from today's reflection?*

***Pause for a moment of reflection.***

## WE RESPOND

**Response:** *Shepherd me O God, beyond my wants, beyond my fears, from death into life.*

God is my shepherd, so nothing shall I want, I rest in the meadows of faithfulness and love, I walk in the quiet waters of peace. **R.**

Gently you raise me and heal my weary soul, you lead me by pathways of righteousness and truth, my spirit shall sing the music of your name. **R.**

Though I should wander the valley of death, I fear no evil, for you are at my side, your rod and your staff, my comfort and my hope. **R.**

You have set me a banquet of love in the face of hatred, crowning me with love beyond my power to hold. **R.**

Surely your kindness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life; I will dwell in the house of my God for evermore. **R.**

*Listen to the Psalm [here](#).*

Words: Marty Haughen (b. 1950) © 1986 GIA Publications, Inc.

Music (Shepherd Me, O God irregular): Marty Haughen (b. 1950) © 1986 GIA Publications, Inc.

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## CLOSING PRAYER

God of grace and mercy,

You call us out of darkness and death to new life in you. You satisfy our hungry hearts with the the gift of finest wheat so that we can say AMEN in gratitude. Help us to be good shepherds to those we serve and may we be truly able to live life to the full. Through Christ our good shepherd and Lord.

***Amen.***

Saint Marcellin Champagnat  
Mary of the Cross MacKillop  
Mary Our Good Mother  
And let us always remember

***Pray for Us  
Pray for Us  
Pray for Us  
To Pray for One Another***

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## INTENTIONS

*We pray for those called to religious vocations, as well as those called to minister in the world as lay people.*

*We pray for the young people, especially those most in need.*

*We pray for mothers, women who cannot conceive and those who have lost children.*

*For what else shall we pray...*

*Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.*

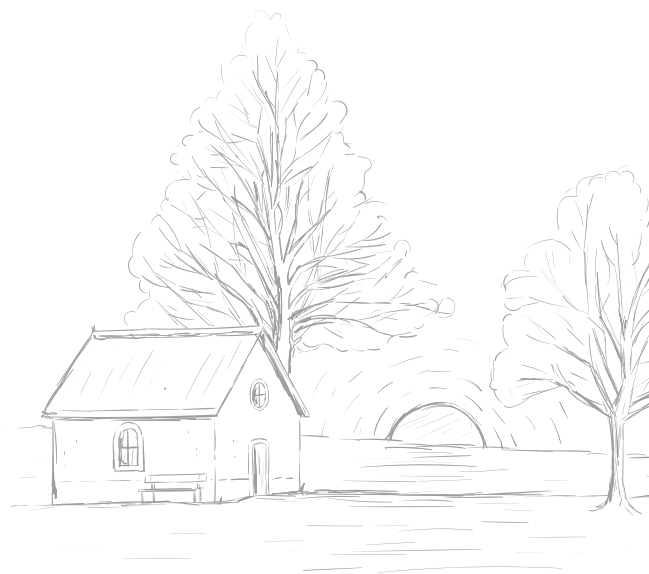
## OPENING PRAYER

Loving God,  
we rejoice in Your love for us,  
and in the life we have been given  
through the gift of Your Son, Jesus.

Open our eyes to recognise Your presence among us;  
open our hearts to the love that You have for us;  
open our minds to the truth You would reveal to us.  
Amen.

## WE LISTEN

*Speak Lord, your servant is listening...*



## ***A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John (14:1-6)***

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going." Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

## WE REFLECT

"In my Father's house there are many rooms." (John 14:2) In speaking of the Father's house, Jesus is not pointing to a mansion in the sky, but to God's heart. God's heart is big, wide-open and generous. It embraces everything. We are assured that in the heart of God there is room enough even for us. Often the Psalms describe God as our psychological "dwelling place" (PS 90:1, 91:9) and other times it refers to the whole of creation or universe. God's "house" or "dwelling place" is where God is and wherever God's presence is, there is an abundance of love and grace. John 14:2 simply reminds us that that there is plenty of room when it comes to our God.

*Pause for a moment of reflection.*

## WE RESPOND

In this time of COVID-19 we have seen many instances of simple and extraordinary acts of generosity. Many have purchased groceries for a neighbour in need, children have used their pocket money to assist those most affected, small businesses have opened their doors to letters of hope and care. There is something about this pandemic that is binding people together. These generous acts of love and kindness are a welcome antidote to the background hum of worry during this pandemic.

*What are the opportunities to show others the big, wide-open and generous heart of God through us this week?*



*In My Father's House* by Patricia Howitt

## CLOSING PRAYER

Let us pray:

Lord Jesus, teach us to be generous;  
teach us to serve you as you deserve,  
to give and not to count the cost,  
to fight and not to heed the wounds,  
to toil and not to seek for rest,  
to labour and not to seek reward,  
except that of knowing that I do your will.

*St. Ignatius Loyola*

**Amen.**

Saint Marcellin Champagnat  
Mary of the Cross MacKillop  
Mary Our Good Mother  
And let us always remember

**Pray for Us  
Pray for Us  
Pray for Us  
To Pray for One Another**

And the world came together as the people stayed apart. <sup>1</sup>

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## INTENTIONS

*We pray for the safety and protection of those who are particularly vulnerable.*

*We pray for the peace of mind of those who are anxious or frightened.*

*We pray for steadfastness for those without jobs and income.*

*For what else shall we pray...*

*Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.*

## OPENING PRAYER

Sustaining God,  
be with us as we come to You, in search of tenderness and compassion.  
May we come to know You, more deeply, through our neighbour,  
our experiences and the gift of life itself.  
May we be ever trusting in Your love.  
Amen.

## WE LISTEN

*Speak Lord, your servant is listening...*

### ***The Good Samaritan (based on Luke 10:25-37)***

In the course of a discussion about what it means to love one's neighbour, Jesus tells a parable, a story we all know well, about a man in need who receives compassionate care from a person who was supposed to be his enemy, a Samaritan.

As Jesus makes clear in this story, what matters isn't what one knows or believes, but what one does or fails to do. It is a story about acting with courage, compassion, generosity and boundary-breaking solidarity. This isn't a story about a superhero; it's a story about doing what we can – no more and no less.

Now, perhaps more than ever, we are being asked to accept that there are no non-neighbours. No-one is 'other' or 'outcast'. Being a neighbour is belonging to a tribe, a race and a humanity. We all belong to each other.

## WE REFLECT

Rather than "Who is my neighbour? perhaps it is better to ask ourselves:

What kind of a neighbour am I?

To whom am I a neighbour?

In the movie: *A Beautiful Day in the Neighbourhood*, Rogers says,

*"I think the best thing we can do is to let people know that each one of them is precious".*

How do I do that?

***Pause for a moment of reflection.***

## WE RESPOND

For the people we meet each day we seek to be reflections of God. Our desire to be a visible and permanent memory of the loving and merciful presence of God in the midst of people: living signs of the Father's tenderness. (WFR137)

"This one thing is undeniable. We are, all of us, thirsty for kindness. Gentleness. And compassion. Let us not pretend. This is not easy - easy is shutting down. Being overcome by weariness. Giving way to numbness. Or pretending not to see. And finding someone to blame". (Terry Hershey)

## CLOSING PRAYER

Our compassionate God,  
may we learn from the Parable of the Samaritan  
and be willing to share our resources with others,  
however humble we perceive them to be.

During this time of COVID 19, we ask that we be filled with courage and generosity.

***Amen.***

Saint Marcellin Champagnat  
Mary of the Cross MacKillop  
Mary Our Good Mother  
And let us always remember

***Pray for Us***  
***Pray for Us***  
***Pray for Us***  
***To Pray for One Another***

## O WHERE ARE YOU OUR EASTER HOPE <sup>2</sup>

NOEL DAVIS

*I am here  
with your neighbour  
sitting on the front steps of his burnt out home  
the man who says he'd offer you a cuppa  
but there's no milk at hand.*

*I am here  
where you are washing each other's feet  
vulnerable with the sinned against  
welcoming all to share your table.*

*I am here  
where you are being raised up by each other  
raised by your care and concern  
courageous action for the used and abused  
crying out against injustice and betrayal.*

*I am here  
where you have gathered together  
open, prayerful, waiting, expectant  
empowering each other  
to live what you believe in.*

*I am here.*



<sup>1</sup> Jennifer Wagner, 2020

<sup>2</sup> Extracts from *O Where are you now Our Easter Hope* by Noel Davis, *The Heart Waking and Breaking into Dance*, 2003 p. 121)



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## INTENTIONS

*We pray that international organisations, governments and Church leaders work harmoniously to institute measures to combat the spread of the virus.*

*We pray for political leaders that they make wise and compassionate decisions in transitioning our societies from restrictions.*

*For what else shall we pray...*

*Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.*

## OPENING PRAYER

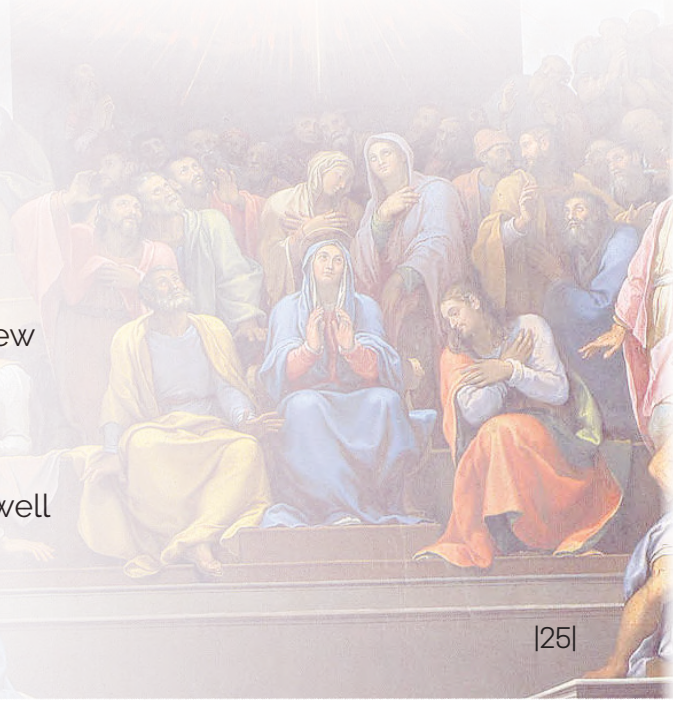
Loving God,  
in a world that is in a state of fear and uncertainty in the face of the unseen virus,  
we pray that Mary, in her concern and solidarity for our global family,  
intercede for us with her Son to bring about deep healing and release from anxiety.  
Amen.

## WE LISTEN

*Speak Lord, your servant is listening...*

### ***A Reading from the Acts of the Apostles (1:13-14)***

Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey away. When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying, Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.



## WE REFLECT

The origins of this ancient icon are unclear. One tradition suggests it's a copy of a painting by St Luke. These days it is found in the Redemptorist church of St Alfonso in Rome. Family homes in many countries have an image of the icon where it is a focus of prayer and a symbol of reassurance.

What has the icon to say to us in the turmoil of today? In it, we see a Jesus who is fearful; his face is unsure, concerned. He's turning towards one of the angels, and he's realising in that moment that doing the will of his father is going to involve suffering. Both his hands are clutching his mother; he knows she will look after him, that she is the person he mustn't let go.



*Icon of Our Lady of Perpetual Help (Succour)  
CRETAN SCHOOL, BEFORE 1499*

So here is a Jesus who shares our fear right now, and here also is a Jesus showing us what to do. In time, he will break open the tomb, overcome death and rise again. But for now, we must face this suffering as Christ faced it.

It's frightening and it's understandable that we are afraid, but if we hold on to Mary the Mother of God, she will help us through. Suffering will not be the final word - of that, we can be certain.<sup>2</sup>

## WE RESPOND

How conscious are we of the presence of Mary in these times of waiting and uncertainty?

Are we able to be patient and caring in the way Mary is, as she stays among the believers?

Do we learn from her love and understanding as we go about our daily duties?

### CLOSING PRAYER<sup>3</sup>

Mary, Queen of Creation,  
Mother who cared for Jesus,  
You care for this wounded world with maternal affection.  
You treasured the life of Jesus in your heart (cf. Luke 2: 19,51).  
Now, you understand the meaning of all things.

**Amen.**

Saint Marcellin Champagnat  
Mary of the Cross MacKillop  
Mary Our Good Mother  
And let us always remember

**Pray for Us**  
**Pray for Us**  
**Pray for Us**  
**To Pray for One Another**

<sup>1</sup> Jennifer Wagner, 2020

<sup>2</sup> Adapted from Vincent Nicholls, Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster (*The Tablet* 11 April 2020, p23)

<sup>3</sup> Prayer based on Pope Francis, "On Care for Our Common Home," *Laudato Si*, paragraph 241

# UNITED IN PRAYER



And the world came together as the people stayed apart. <sup>1</sup>

*We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of this land and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.*



## INTENTIONS

*We pray for all Marist Brothers, especially those who are ill or have died during COVID-19.*

*We pray for migrants and displaced peoples struggling to support their families during this humanitarian crisis.*

*We pray for teachers and students in our schools and ministries suffering from anxiety and mental health challenges.*

*For what else shall we pray...*

*Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.*

## OPENING PRAYER

Loving God,

We give thanks for the gift of Marcellin and the profound relationship he had with Jesus and Mary. Inspired by our Marist spirituality, help us to have the same confidence and trust to share this gift with others.

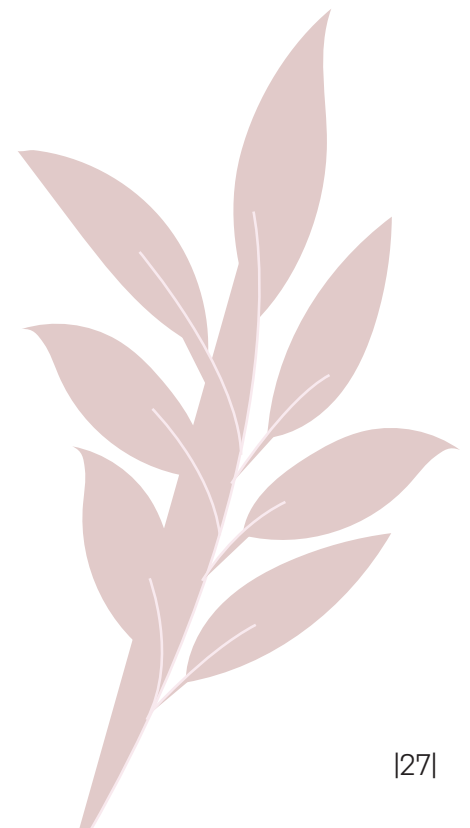
Amen.

## WE LISTEN

*Speak Lord, your servant is listening...*

### ***A Reading from the Gospel According to Matthew (28:16-20)***

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."



## WE REFLECT

"We do our best to remain faithful to the Spirit of the Risen Saviour, who gives us, as he did the first Christians, the grace to live "one in mind and heart".<sup>2</sup>

*In walking with our young people how do we, as Marists, live **one in mind and heart?***

**Pause for a moment to reflect on this question.**

## WE RESPOND

We believe the charism of Marcellin is a gift given to the Church and to the world, a gift which we are being invited to further develop and live by progressively deepening our participation in this charism. Our spirituality describes and expresses this charism as it is incarnated at any particular place and time in history. As with all authentic charisms, it is a grace of the Holy Spirit entrusted to us for the purpose of building and unifying the Church as the Body of Christ. (WFR#13)

As Marists, we are privileged to be participating in an ongoing expression of this gift of the charism of Saint Marcellin Champagnat. Through our ministries in schools, Solidarity, Youth, Marist180, Spiritual Formation, and the Marist Association, we are continuing to express this spirit in our world today. The Marist dream that began in Fourviere in 1816 continues to live in our hearts in "a certain way" for each of us. We rejoice and give thanks for the Holy Spirit that allows this wonderful work to transform the lives of so many.

## CLOSING PRAYER

Lord we ask that in living our spirituality  
we find our thirst quenched at the streams of "living water."

We look, in turn, to become "living water" for others through:

- our presence with our young people
- our working with a style of simplicity
- our love for the work that we do
- our sense of family spirit and fraternity and
- that at all times we do your will in the way of our Good Mother Mary.

**Amen.**

Saint Marcellin Champagnat	<b>Pray for Us</b>
Mary of the Cross MacKillop	<b>Pray for Us</b>
Mary Our Good Mother	<b>Pray for Us</b>
And let us always remember	<b>To Pray for One Another</b>

<sup>1</sup> Jennifer Wagner, 2020

<sup>2</sup> Marist Brothers' Constitutions from *A Certain Way* – Craig Larkin, sm (1995)

# UNITED IN PRAYER

And the world came together as the people stayed apart. <sup>1</sup>

*We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of this land and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.*



## INTENTIONS

*We pray for all those who are suffering.*

*We pray that we follow the examples of Mary Our Good Mother and St Marcellin in times of distress.*

*We pray for all our students, in schools and in welfare .*

*We pray for all those who care and support others in a time of pandemic.*

*For what else shall we pray...*

*Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.*

## OPENING PRAYER

God of compassion and love, give us hearts this day to be your presence in the world. Wherever we go, whoever we meet, whatever situations we find ourselves in, let us be examples of your justice, love and compassion. May the examples of Mary Our Good Mother and St Marcellin Champagnat guide us.

Through Christ our Lord, Amen.

## WE LISTEN

*Speak Lord, your servant is listening...*

***A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke (11:27)***

## TRUE BLESSEDNESS.

While he was saying this, a woman in the crowd raised her voice and said to him, 'Blessed is the womb that bore you and the breasts that nursed you. But he said, 'Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it.'

## WE REFLECT

Mary accepted the will of God in her life and was called "blessed" by Elizabeth.

Mary is the first beatitude of God.

Blessed are the poor in spirit, blessed are those who mourn, blessed are the meek, blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, blessed are the merciful, blessed are the pure in heart, blessed are the peacemakers, blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake.

And Mary said, "Let it be done to me according to your word."

## WE RESPOND

***Response: O holy dwelling place of God, O holy temple of the Word, O holy Mary, Mother of God.***

O blessed beyond all others, of every land and race, possessing in your soul, the fulness of God's grace. **R.**

From heav'n the angel Gabriel announced the ancient plan, and humbly you accepted, to bear the God made man. **R.**

With joy beyond all measure, you cared for God's own son, and pondered in your heart the new age now begun. **R.**

Exquisite was your sorrow, unequalled was the loss you suffered when your son was raised upon a cross. **R.**

All praise and adoration we sing now to your son who reigns in highest heaven and has the vict'ry won. **R.**

*O Holy Mary. Owen Alstott. Copyright 1985 OCP Publications. 5536. NE Hassolo, Portland Oregon. All rights reserved. Used by permission One License # L-642133*

## CLOSING PRAYER

God of compassion and love, we praise you and we thank you for the gift of life. May our lives be blessed though following the examples of Mary Our Good Mother and your servant St Marcellin Champagnat. Blessed be your glorious name both now and forever.

***Amen.***

Saint Marcellin Champagnat  
Mary of the Cross MacKillop  
Mary Our Good Mother  
And let us always remember

***Pray for Us  
Pray for Us  
Pray for Us  
To Pray for One Another***

*1 Jennifer Wagner, 2020*



# UNITED IN PRAYER

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## INTENTIONS

*We pray for the lonely and forgotten and for those without family or friends.*

*We pray for healing and justice for all those who have experienced violence and racism.*

*We pray for solidarity in our global human family, particularly those who are vulnerable and most in need.*

*For what else shall we pray...*

*Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.*

## OPENING PRAYER

Creator God,

Still and quiet our souls. May we hear the whisper of your divine call, asking us each day to accept the treasure of your life within us. Gift us with the ability to move forward into the unknown, confident that you will guide and direct us.

Amen.

## WE LISTEN

*Speak Lord, your servant is listening...*

### ***A Reading from the Gospel According to Luke (2:41-52)***

After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, "Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in great anxiety." He said to them, "Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" But they did not understand what he said to them.

Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart.

## WE REFLECT

### *The Heart of a Mother*

The other day, I was sitting on a train as it came to a stop at Town Hall Station in Sydney. Behind me was a mini commotion. Into the carriage piled this woman of about 55 carrying half-a-dozen plastic bags full of shopping. It was a very hot day and she was really puffing. She almost fell into the seat.

But there were two people. In the rush and rumble from door to seat, this woman, with the shopping in one hand, had her other arm entwined around a man. This man was about 30 and he was severely handicapped: his legs went in all directions and his head twitched and rolled around on his shoulders while his face was quite distorted.

Well, somehow they piled onto the seat opposite me and she proceeded to disentangle herself from the man and drop her shopping bags. Then this red-faced woman looked up at us with a big smile and said, with her arm around this man, holding him erect: "This is my son – isn't he lovely!"

I (and, I'm sure, my seat companions) saw mess, distortion, suffering – How does she cope? She saw (while living in the pain of it all – note that it wasn't separate) beauty, pride, dignity in her son – a reason for gratitude.

She is Mary at the foot of the Cross. She is a woman of the Resurrection. She has the heart of a mother. That woman lives the reality of God-at-one-with-all-that-is human: Jesus.<sup>2</sup>

**How can Mary's example be an inspiration to your own life?**

## WE RESPOND

Since Marcellin's time the Church has deepened its appreciation of Mary as First Disciple. Marists therefore have a growing relationship with Mary as our Sister in Faith, a woman with dust on her feet, a woman who was disturbed and puzzled by God, who was challenged to trust and give without knowing all the answers, whose faith life was a journey. (WFR#29)

## CLOSING PRAYER

Spirit of love, linger long at the door of our hearts. Call to us time and again until we hear your voice and respond to you. Open our minds and our hearts so that we will respond as your servant Mary did. Help us to give our "yes" to you even though our faith groans and wobbles with doubts and concerns.

***Amen.***

Saint Marcellin Champagnat  
Mary of the Cross MacKillop  
Mary Our Good Mother  
And let us always remember

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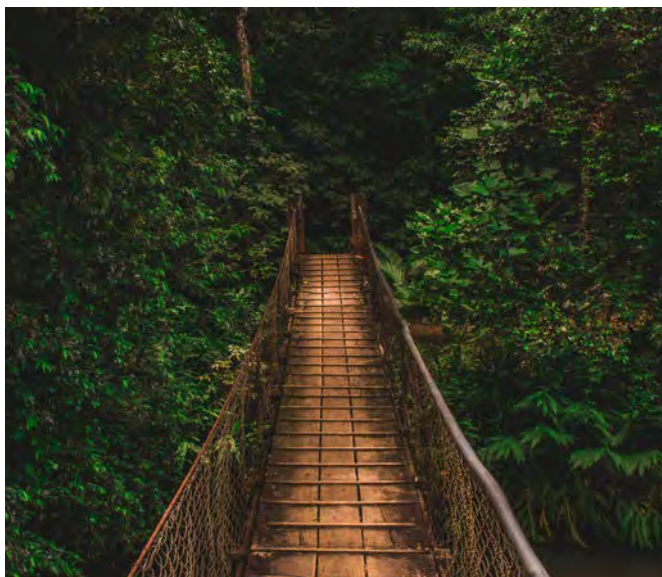
<sup>2</sup> Fr Brian Stony, a Jesuit priest who for many years worked with the homeless and addicted people of inner-city Sydney



# UNITED IN PRAYER

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## INTENTIONS

*We pray for boldness to stand in solidarity with Aboriginal Australians as they seek recognition and justice.*

*We pray for peace in communities affected by racial tensions.*

*We pray for courage and sensitivity in finding fresh answers to old problems.*

*For what else shall we pray...*

*Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.*

## OPENING PRAYER

We pray that, like Mary, in the face of uncertainty and fear, we become acutely aware of God speaking through the events and challenges of daily life. May the gifts of our Gospel values help us to reach out and recognise the strangers among us, value the gifts that they bring to us and know that in journeying together we are each enriched.

We ask this through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

## WE LISTEN

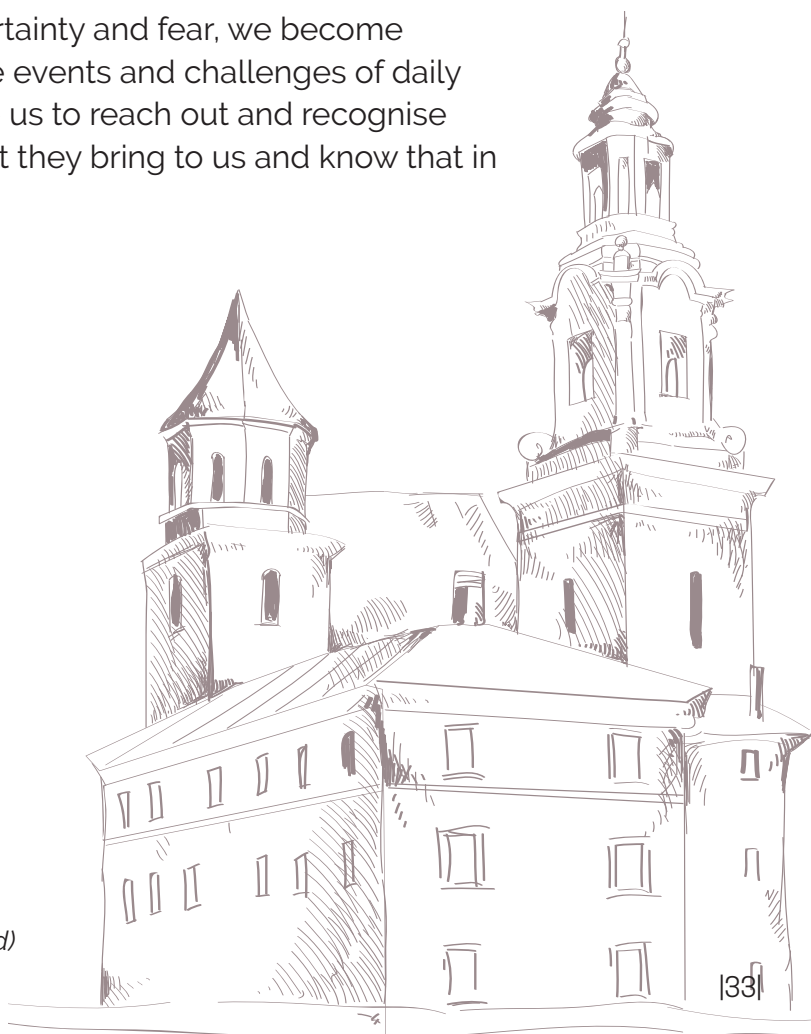
*Speak Lord, your servant is listening...*

Psalm 127:1-2

Unless the LORD builds the house,  
those who build it labour in vain.  
Unless the LORD guards the city,  
the guard keeps watch in vain.

It is in vain that you rise up early  
and go late to rest,  
eating the bread of anxious toil;  
for he gives sleep to his beloved.

*(\*Psalm 127 was one that St Marcellin regularly prayed)*



## WE REFLECT

In his Feast Day message, Br Ernesto Sánchez speaks of Marcellin's boldness -

*Marcellin was a man with an acute awareness of God speaking through the events of life. He learned "to read the signs of the times". And in prayer, searching deep within himself, he responded with courage... he was bold enough to devote himself to the education and evangelisation of young people, giving priority to the most abandoned, and to found an Institute at their service. He encouraged the first missionary Brothers to go beyond their borders even to very distant countries... Simplicity, solidarity, and attention to the poorest and neediest were characteristics that were reflected throughout his life. His boldness led him to be open and flexible, to find fresh answers without getting stuck in pre-determined schemes. As always, he was inspired by Mary, always ready to respond and serve as she did at the Visitation and at Cana. <sup>2</sup>*



## WE RESPOND

**As I read the "signs of the times", where am I finding God?**

**What bold actions for justice are challenging me as I grow to understand the spirit of Marcellin in my life?**

**How has responding to the poor, the lonely and needy changed and enriched me spiritually?**

## CLOSING PRAYER

We pray that the inspiration of St Marcellin Champagnat encourages us, as Marists, to walk together, hand in hand with Mary, confidently and boldly searching for fresh ways of responding to the needs of our time. We ask this through the compassion and love of Jesus Our Lord.

**Amen.**

Saint Marcellin Champagnat  
Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop  
Mary Our Good Mother  
And let us always remember

**Pray for Us**  
**Pray for Us**  
**Pray for Us**  
**To Pray for One Another**

<sup>1</sup> Jennifer Wagner, 2020

<sup>2</sup> "Walking Together, Taking the Best of Our Marist DNA with Us", Message of Br. Ernesto Sánchez Barba, Superior General, on the occasion of the celebration of the feast of St. Marcellin Champagnat - Rome, 6 June 2020.

# UNITED IN PRAYER

And the world came together as the people stayed apart. <sup>1</sup>

*We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of this land and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.*



## INTENTIONS

*We pray for all families, particularly those who face the future with anxiety.*

*We pray for family members who have died, and for those who we have been unable to farewell as a wider community.*

*We pray for families who are struggling with the financial, emotional and spiritual stress that this pandemic has brought.*

*For what else shall we pray...*

*Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.*

## OPENING PRAYER

Loving God,

We ask that families may be filled with love, respect and guidance. May we always have as an example the relationship that Jesus, Mary and Joseph had as a family unit based on love. Inspired by the Marist characteristic of Family Spirit, help us to live in community with those around us.

We ask this through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

## WE LISTEN

*Speak Lord, your servant is listening...*

### **A Reading from the Gospel According to Matthew (2:19-23)**

When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child's life are dead." Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, "He will be called a Nazorean."



## WE REFLECT

*You are a child of God.....*

*We were born to make manifest  
the glory of God  
that is within us.  
It's not just in some of us;  
it's within everyone.  
And as we let our light shine,  
we unconsciously give other people  
permission to do the same.  
As we are liberated from our own fear  
our presence automatically liberates others.*

- Nelson Mandela

*Marcellin and the first Brothers  
were united in heart and mind.  
Their relationships were marked  
by warmth and tenderness. In their  
discussions about living together  
as Brothers they found it useful  
to compare the spirit of their  
community life to that of a family...  
love and forgiveness, support and  
help, forgetfulness of self, openness  
to others and joy. This style of  
relating has become a characteristic  
of our way of being Marist.  
(WFR#30)*

## WE RESPOND

As Marists, we value the gift of *family spirit*. Our work with young people is not a labour but rather a relationship based on love and respect. Whether it be in our schools, solidarity initiatives, youth ministry, acts of social justice, or spiritual formation, we relate to those around us as brothers and sisters.

## CLOSING PRAYER

Holy Family of Nazareth,  
grant that our families, too,  
may be places of communion and prayer,  
authentic schools of the Gospel  
and small domestic churches.

Holy Family of Nazareth,  
may families never again experience  
violence, rejection and division;  
may all who have been hurt or scandalised  
find ready comfort and healing.

Holy Family of Nazareth,  
make us once more mindful  
of the sacredness and inviolability of the family,  
and its beauty in God's plan. Amen.

Saint Marcellin Champagnat  
Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop  
Mary Our Good Mother  
And let us always remember

*Pray for Us  
Pray for Us  
Pray for Us  
To Pray for One Another*

# UNITED IN PRAYER

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*Marist*  
ASSOCIATION OF  
ST MARCELLIN CHAMPAGNAT



## INTENTIONS

*We pray for those who have been forgotten by others.*

*We pray for the elderly, especially those who are confined to their homes or hospital beds.*

*We pray for those who have nobody to pray for them.*

*We pray for one another as we each face our own daily trials in life that we may see that we are not alone.*

*For what else shall we pray...*

*Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.*

## OPENING PRAYER

God of tenderness, in this time of concern in our world, may we show a willingness to offer compassion to those we meet and to those whose lives we touch.

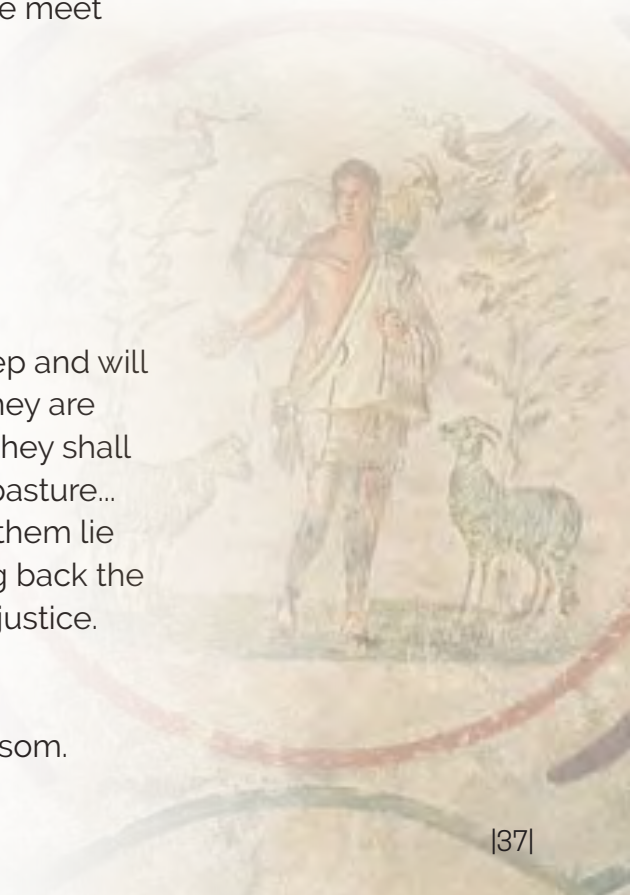
We ask this through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

## WE LISTEN

*Speak Lord, your servant is listening...*

For thus says the Lord God: I myself will search for my sheep and will seek them out. As shepherds seek out their flocks when they are among their scattered sheep, so I will seek out my sheep...they shall lie down in good grazing land, and they shall feed on rich pasture... I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I will make them lie down, says the Lord God. I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured...I will feed them with justice.  
*(adapted from Ezekiel 34:11-16)*

I will gather the lambs in my arms and carry them in my bosom.  
*(adapted from Isaiah 40:11)*



## WE REFLECT

For the people we meet each day we seek to be reflections of God. Our desire is to be a visible and permanent memory of the loving and merciful presence of God in the midst of people: living signs of the Father's tenderness. In some mysterious way, God works through us and in us. Despite our limitations, which we well know, our goodness is able to come through. By being with God we learn our way of being like him: shepherd, friend, faithful companion. (WFR 137)

## WE RESPOND

As a shepherd, God assures us of His heartfelt desire to protect us. Sheep require an enormous amount of care and work. If the shepherd loses sight of the sheep, sure enough, they will wander. They get stuck. They fall into ravines. The lambs are carefully carried with tenderness. How does the little lamb come to be in the shepherd's "bosom" — the folds of his upper garment? The lamb might approach the shepherd, even nudge his leg. However, it is the shepherd who bends over, picks up the lamb, and gently places it in the security of his bosom. What a tender picture of the willingness of our Great Shepherd to shield and protect us!

### *Pause for a moment of reflection.*

When have I felt carried?

When have I been a living sign of tenderness to others?

*Whatever happens, whatever we do, we are certain that God is near, compassionate, ready to be moved for us. Tenderness is a beneficial word, it is the antidote to fear with regard to God, because "there is no fear in love" (1 Jn 4:18), because trust overcomes fear. To feel loved, therefore, means learning to trust in God, to say... "Jesus, I trust in You". God's tenderness leads us to understand that love is the meaning of life.*

*(Pope Francis: Conference on "The theology of tenderness" 13.09.2018)*

## CLOSING PRAYER

Dear Mary, Mother of God and our mother,  
your gentle embrace of your Son, Jesus,  
shows your great affection toward him and all of us, your children.  
Instill in our hearts the same love and tenderness you have for Jesus.  
Intercede for us with him in all our needs and teach us compassion toward the needs of all.  
In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

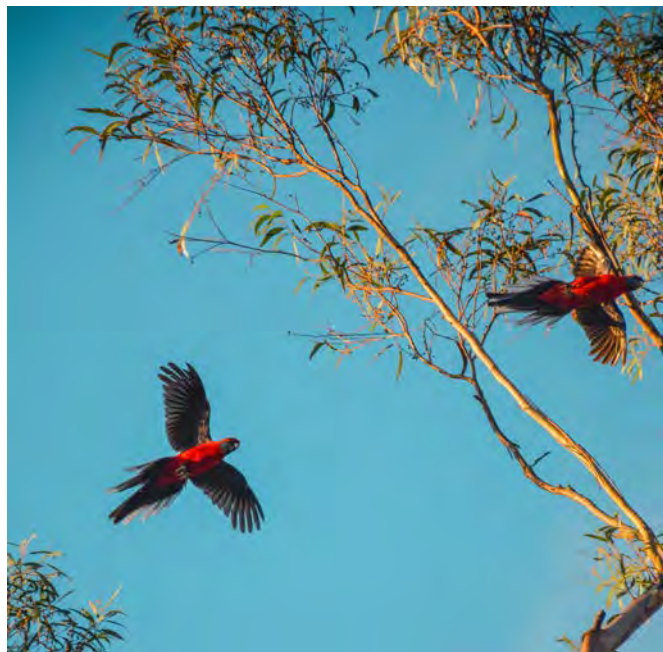
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To Pray for One Another***

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## INTENTIONS

*We pray for those suffering in this time of uncertainty from physical, social, spiritual and economic loss.*

*We pray for our leaders both great and small.*

*We pray for the creation of a world built on God's justice, love and peace.*

*We pray for all who work in Marist ministries.*

*For what else shall we pray...*

*Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.*

## OPENING PRAYER

God of life and love, open our hearts today to hear your gentle voice calling us to live as you would have us live. We pray especially for all those people in situations of unease and distress at this time. (Recall names and situations needing prayers). Transform us all into the life giving, love giving and self giving image of your Son, Jesus.

Amen

## WE LISTEN

*Speak Lord, your servant is listening...*

### ***A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew (13: 31-33)***

The Kingdom of Heaven is like a mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his field. It is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the biggest shrub of all and becomes a tree so that the birds of the air come and shelter in its branches.

The Kingdom of Heaven is like the yeast a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour till it leavened all through.

### ***Matthew (13: 8-9)***

Some seed fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundred fold, some sixty, some thirty. Let anyone with ears 'listen!'

## WE REFLECT

Parables convey a lesson and invite us to see the world in a different way.

Jesus' imaginative message is for me. Am I listening?

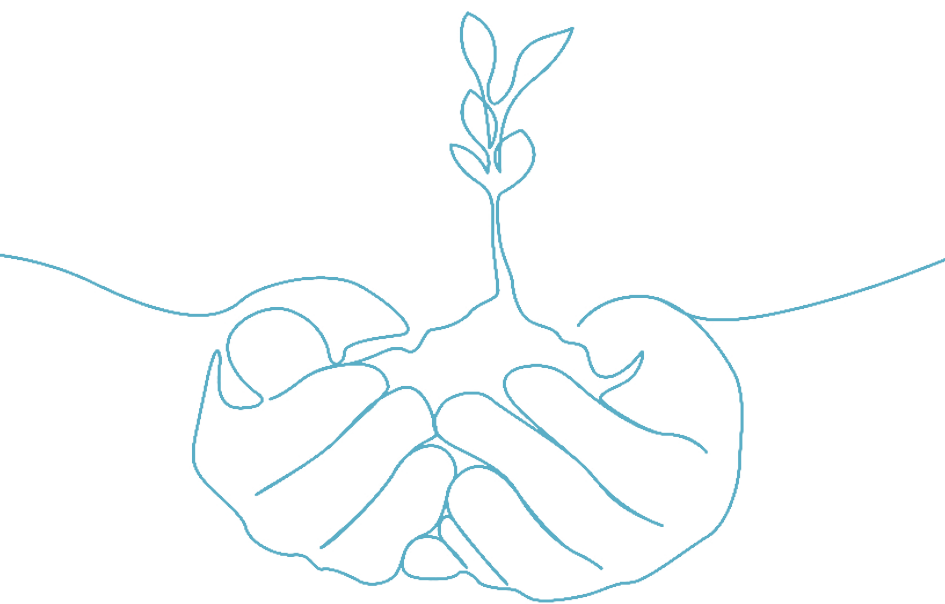
How will my sometimes humble and small efforts be transformed into a tree of life for others?

Am I prepared to wait in hope for the leaven of God's Word to come to life in me?

*Pause for a moment of reflection.*

## WE RESPOND

**Response: *Seed scattered and sown, wheat gathered and grown, bread, broken and shared as one, the Living Bread of God. Vine, fruit of the land, wine, work of our hands, one cup that is shared by all; the Living Cup the Living Bread of God.***



You care for the earth, give it water, you fill it with riches. Your river in heaven brims over to provide its grain. **R.**

You crown the year with your goodness, abundance flows in your steps, in the pastures of the wilderness it flows. **R.**

The hills are girded with joy, the meadows are covered with flocks, the valleys are decked with wheat, they shout for joy, yes, they sing. **R.**

*Words: Dan Feiten © 1987. International Liturgy Publications, Nashville USA.*

## CLOSING PRAYER

God of life and love, be with us this day. Let us bring your compassion, justice and love to a world that can be so torn and angry at times. Mary our Good Mother, help us to bring your Son's reign to life in us and in all whom we meet this day.

**Amen.**

Saint Marcellin Champagnat  
Mary of the Cross MacKillop  
Mary Our Good Mother  
And let us always remember

**Pray for Us  
Pray for Us  
Pray for Us  
To Pray for One Another**



# UNITED IN PRAYER



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## INTENTIONS

*We pray for the poor, the unemployed and all who are struggling to make ends meet.*

*We pray for those who dedicate their lives to the welfare of other people.*

*We pray for those who lead the world's nations, particularly where there is unrest.*

*For what else shall we pray...*

*Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.*

## CENTERING PRAYER

Softly whispering Spirit, blow gently into our lives.  
Blow softly into our minds and bring peace  
Blow softly into our thoughts and bring understanding  
Blow softly into our concerns and bring calm  
Blow softly into our fears and bring courage  
Blow softly into our hearts and bring love  
Life-giving Spirit breathe your life into our lives each day.

Amen.

## WE LISTEN

*Speak Lord, your servant is listening...*

### **A Reading from the Gospel According to John (7:37-38)**

On the last day of the festival, the great day, while Jesus was standing there, he cried out, 'Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, and let the one who believes in me drink. As the scripture has said, "Out of the believer's heart shall flow rivers of living water.'" Now he said this about the Spirit, which believers in him were to receive; for as yet there was no Spirit, because Jesus was not yet glorified.



## WE REFLECT

At the climax of the festival when thousands of people were milling around in the highest expectation and in the most animated spirits, Jesus *shouted* this open and generous invitation. "Listen all of you!" He called out to the throng of religious celebrants. "If you are thirsty, come to me! *This* is what you are looking for. *This* will satisfy you forever. It will be like a spring of water bubbling up from within you. *Living* waters, always flowing, fresh and new every day. Never stagnant, never brackish, always sweet and refreshing."

His raised voice and the extraordinary content of what He offered immediately called the attention of the crowd. While the crowd, and even the religious leaders, were divided over the question of who Jesus was (and what He was talking about), the writer and we who peer over his shoulder know that Jesus was no carnival huckster selling a magic potion or advocating self-help regimes or disciplines. He was speaking of the Spirit of God that is given freely, a Spirit who thereafter keeps bubbling up from within, an endless source of delight and refreshment.

*This* is what Jesus offers. He gives us not just love, forgiveness, and teaching, but also joy - like a living, bubbly fountain.<sup>2</sup>

***Pause for a moment of reflection.***

In what ways can you be a living, bubbling fountain of joy in your world today?

## WE RESPOND

Our present age is characterised by a thirst for spirituality. We disciples of Marcellin believe that our way to God is a gift to be shared with the Church and the world. We are invited to join with Mary in a journey of faith. If we are able to give witness in our daily lives to the vitality of this spirituality, people - particularly youth and children - will feel themselves attracted and invited to take it up as their own way to become "living water." (WFR 42)

### CLOSING PRAYER

The Lord bless you  
and keep you;  
the Lord make his face shine on you  
and be gracious to you;  
the Lord turn his face toward you  
and give you peace.

*Num 6:24-26*

Saint Marcellin Champagnat  
Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop  
Mary Our Good Mother  
And let us always remember

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To Pray for One Another***

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## INTENTIONS

*We pray especially for our Victorian brothers and sisters to keep persisting in being safe and vigilant during this time of increasing pandemic.*

*We pray for family members who have lost loved ones and have not been able to hold their hands and farewell them with dignity.*

*We pray for greater patience and understanding in our world where there is a torrent of confusion and bewilderment.*

*For what else shall we pray...*

*Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.*

## OPENING PRAYER

Living God,  
You are my strength;  
Come among us as new life and energy.  
Glory to you God of our waiting, promising, appearing, fulfilling!  
Glory, praise and honour to you today, tomorrow and always.

Amen.

## WE LISTEN

*Speak Lord, your servant is listening...*

### ***A Reading from the Book of Ruth (1:16)***

"Wherever you go, I will go, and wherever you live, I will live. Your people will be my people, and your God my God too."



## WE REFLECT

These three words of Ruth — *Wherever you go* — convey an almost unimaginable strength, an ability to endure, persist, overcome. They can help you and me to express some of our deepest longings. No longer Ruth's words alone, they become our words also. Likewise, they capture Marcellin's experience as well as that of our first brothers, and, indeed, of all Marists who have preceded us.

*(Source: Marist Brothers' Rule of Life, p.3)*

### ***Pause for a moment of reflection.***

In these trying times many feel their endurance wearing and faith being tested. What is your reaction to the words from Ruth and how are you persisting and overcoming?

## WE RESPOND

We share in the spiritual motherhood of Mary as we take our part in bringing Christ-life to the world of those whose lives we share. We nurture that life in the ecclesial community, whose communion we strengthen through fervent prayer and generous service. (WFR 26)

### **CLOSING PRAYER**

May all that is unforgiven in you  
Be released.  
May your fears yield  
Their deepest tranquilities.  
May all that is un-lived in you  
Blossom into a future  
Graced with love.

- John O'Donohue

Saint Marcellin Champagnat  
Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop  
Mary Our Good Mother  
And let us always remember

[44]

## INVITATION

MARY OLIVER

*Oh do you have time  
to linger  
for just a little while  
out of your busy*

*and very important day  
for the goldfinches  
that have gathered  
in a field of thistles*

*for a musical battle,  
to see who can sing  
the highest note,  
or the lowest,*

*or the most expressive of mirth,  
or the most tender?  
Their strong, blunt beaks  
drink the air*

*as they strive  
melodiously  
not for your sake  
and not for mine*

*and not for the sake of winning  
but for sheer delight and gratitude  
believe us, they say,  
it is a serious thing*

*just to be alive  
on this fresh morning  
in the broken world.  
I beg of you,*

*do not walk by  
without pausing  
to attend to this  
rather ridiculous performance.*

*It could mean something.  
It could mean everything.  
It could be what Rilke meant, when  
he wrote:  
You must change your life.*

***Pray for Us  
Pray for Us  
Pray for Us  
To Pray for One Another***

1 Jennifer Wagner, 2020

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## INTENTIONS

*For those who are anxious about the health of loved ones they cannot hold.*

*For people struggling to hold their family together in the face of unemployment and hardship.*

*For the doctors, nurses, scientists and carers whose skill and dedication holds out hope to us all.*

*For what else shall we pray...*

*Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.*

## OPENING PRAYER

Merciful God,

We pray for Your peace in these times of uncertainty and fear.

May we recognise Your ongoing presence and companionship, through the healing and supportive hands of people helping others.

We prayerfully seek Your grace amidst COVID-19 here and overseas.

We ask this prayer through Jesus Christ our Lord.

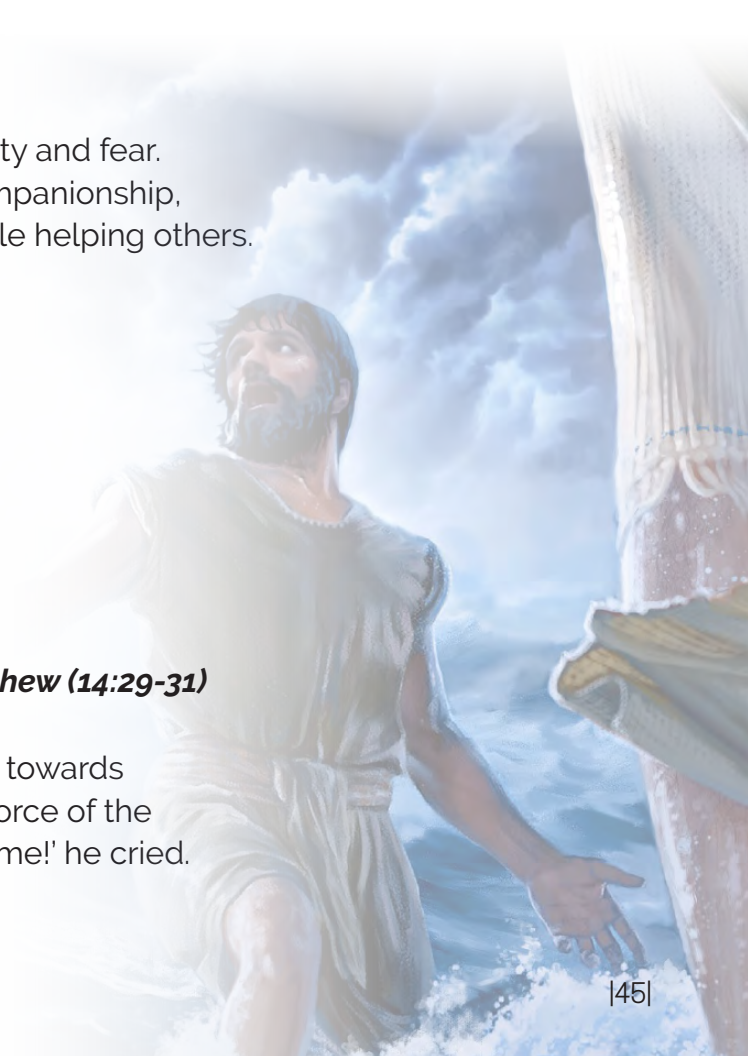
Amen.

## WE LISTEN

*Speak Lord, your servant is listening...*

### ***A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew (14:29-31)***

Then Peter got out of the boat and started walking towards Jesus across the water, but as soon as he felt the force of the wind, he took fright and began to sink. 'Lord! Save me!' he cried. Jesus put out his hand at once and **held** him.



## WE REFLECT

Let go of fear  
and rest in that which is.  
For peace, like love,  
comes to those who allow it.

Let go of fear  
and rest in stillness.  
Watch the breath rise...  
and fall.

Watch the tide rise...  
and fall.  
Watch towers rise...  
and fall.

Watch walls rise...  
and fall.  
Watch statues rise...  
and fall.

Watch empires rise...  
and fall.  
Watch the breath rise...  
and fall.

Let go of fear  
and rest in the arms  
of the One  
who has always held you,  
the One who holds  
atoms and empires  
and oceans and stars.

Let go of fear  
and watch what happens next.

*Rise and Fall by Larry Robinson*

## CLOSING PRAYER

Lord, like Peter, our faith is shaken; we are frightened. In these times we need you more than ever. Into your hands we trustingly place ours. Let us turn to you in faith, knowing that you hold us and comfort us in times of doubt and fear. Amen.

Saint Marcellin Champagnat  
Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop  
Mary Our Good Mother  
And let us always remember

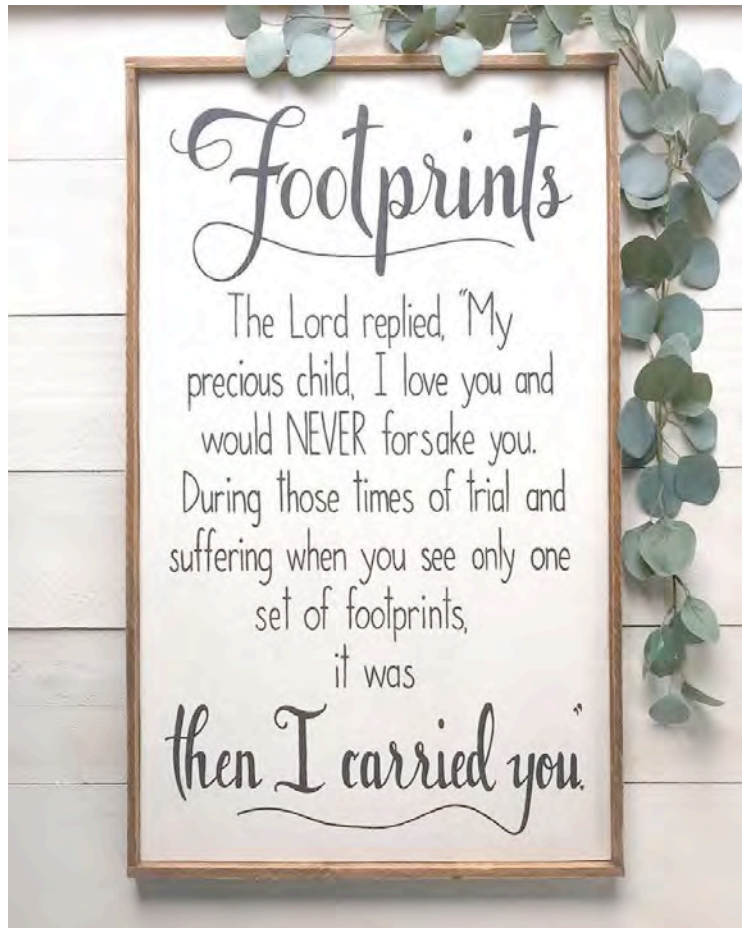
[46]

## WE RESPOND

Life is unpredictable. We can be happy one day and sad the next, healthy one day and sick the next, rich one day and poor the next. So who is there to hold on to? Who is there to feel secure with? Who is there to trust at all times?

Only Jesus, the Christ. He is our Lord, our shepherd, our rock, our stronghold, our refuge, our brother, our guide, and our friend. He came from God to be with us.

*Henri Nouwen "Holding onto the Christ" from Daily Meditations*



***Pray for Us  
Pray for Us  
Pray for Us  
To Pray for One Another***

*1 Jennifer Wagner, 2020*

# UNITED IN PRAYER



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## INTENTIONS

*We pray for single parents who tirelessly look after their children.*

*We pray for all those whose significance is currently undermined.*

*We pray for all those deprived of their human rights.*

*We pray for those struggling to make ends meet.*

*For what else shall we pray...*

*Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.*

## OPENING PRAYER

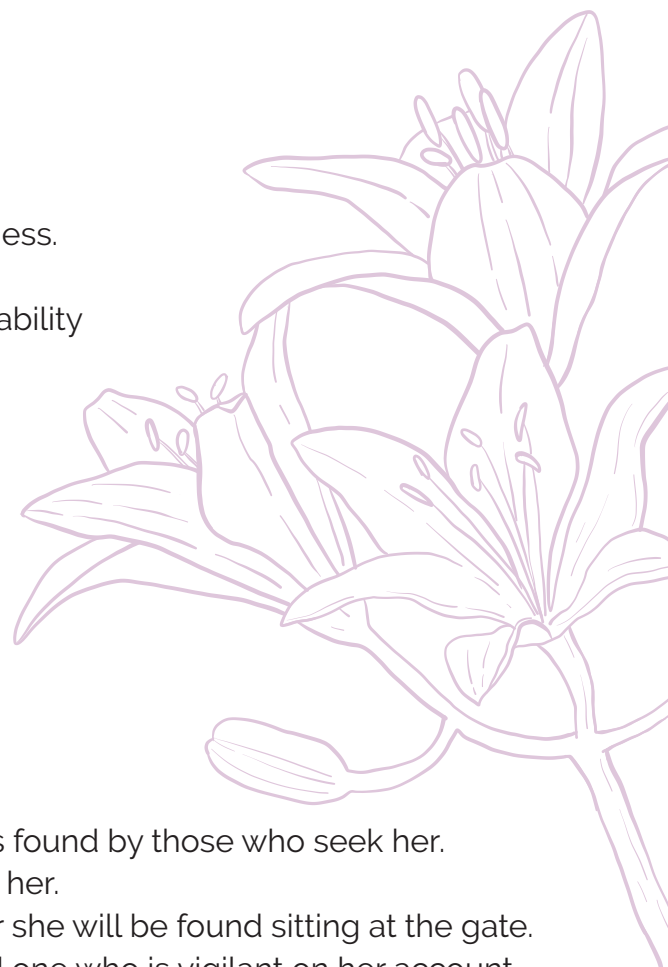
Together we pray,  
may we cultivate Mary's courage to express our tenderness.  
May we seek Mary's gentleness in our relationships.  
May we foster Mary's fierceness in protecting the vulnerability that is always within and all around us.  
We ask this prayer through Jesus Christ, our Lord.  
Amen.

## WE LISTEN

*Speak Lord, your servant is listening...*

## ***A Reading from the Book of Wisdom (6:12-16)***

Wisdom is radiant and unfading,  
and she is easily discerned by those who love her, and is found by those who seek her.  
She hastens to make herself known to those who desire her.  
One who rises early to seek her will have no difficulty, for she will be found sitting at the gate.  
To fix one's thought on her is perfect understanding, and one who is vigilant on her account will soon be free from care, because she goes about seeking those worthy of her, and she graciously appears to them in their paths, and meets them in every thought.



## WE REFLECT

August 22 is the Feast of the Queenship of Mary. For us today, 'Queenship' provides a curious image of womanhood. However, in the Christian tradition, which can lean so heavily on images of male sanctity and masculine divinity, Mary offers us another perspective. She is the embodiment of the sacred feminine, a window into another understanding of the divine presence.

Mary is 'wisdom radiant and unfading' and is a loving and compassionate force within us. As Marists, both men and women, it is about naturally expressing the characteristics of feminine energy as we navigate the world around us and guide the young people in our care. When we align ourselves to this feminine intuitive, and maintain harmony with the Divine Masculine, we maximize our fullest potential.

Mary's Queenship is a cause for joy. It is a belief in human destiny, the destiny that God wants for each of us; full participation in life. It is, at the same time, a challenge to act on that trust and begin our transformation in the present – now.<sup>2</sup>

### *Pause for a moment of reflection.*

When have you experienced tenderness and compassion in your life?

## WE RESPOND

Since the time of Marcellin, his disciples have made Mary known and loved. Today we continue to be convinced that to follow Jesus in the way of Mary is a privileged way of bringing our Christian journey to fullness. (WFR 28)

## CLOSING PRAYER

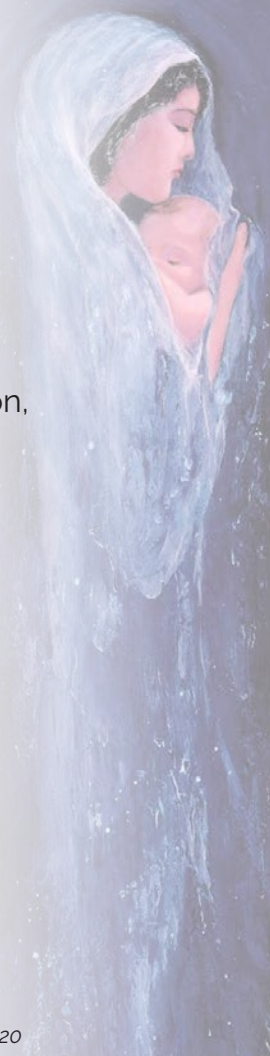
### *Memorare*

Remember, O most loving Virgin Mary,  
that never was it known in any age, that anyone who fled to your protection,  
implored your help, or sought your intercession,  
was abandoned.

Inspired with confidence, therefore  
I fly to you, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother.  
To you do I come, before you I stand, sinful and sorrowful.  
Do not, O Mother of Jesus,  
despise my prayers,  
but graciously hear and grant them.  
Amen.

Saint Marcellin Champagnat  
Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop  
Mary Our Good Mother  
And let us always remember

*Pray for Us*  
*Pray for Us*  
*Pray for Us*  
*To Pray for One Another*



<sup>1</sup> Jennifer Wagner, 2020

<sup>2</sup> Christine Valters Paintner [wow@womenofwisdom.org](mailto:wow@womenofwisdom.org)

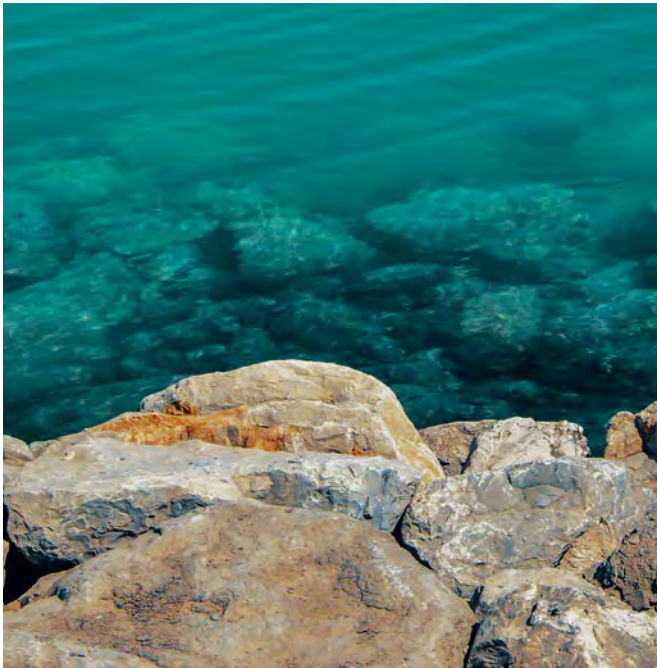


# UNITED IN PRAYER



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## INTENTIONS

*We pray for students who are experiencing school in a different way during these unsettled times.*

*We pray for senior students as they embark on final examinations and prepare to leave school without experiencing the traditional rites of passage.*

*We pray for the elderly, especially those in nursing homes who are living through periods of great fear and uncertainty.*

*For what else shall we pray...*

*Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.*

## OPENING PRAYER (Psalm 46)

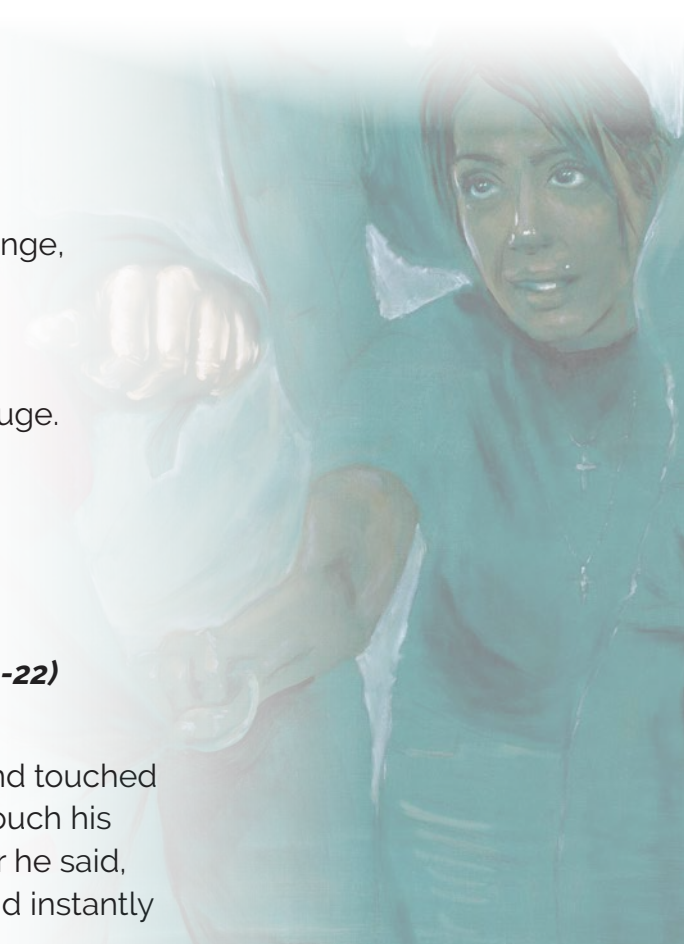
Loving God,  
You are our refuge and strength,  
and our help in times of trouble.  
Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change,  
though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea;  
though its waters roar and foam,  
though the mountains tremble with its tumult.  
The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.  
Amen.

## WE LISTEN

*Speak Lord, your servant is listening...*

### **A Reading from the Gospel According to Matthew (9:20-22)**

Then suddenly a woman who had been suffering from haemorrhages for twelve years came up behind him and touched the fringe of his cloak, for she said to herself, "If I only touch his cloak, I will be made well." Jesus turned, and seeing her he said, "Take heart, daughter; your faith has made you well." And instantly the woman was made well.



## WE REFLECT

### Everything is Going to be All Right

*Derek Mahon, from Selected Poems*

How should I not be glad to contemplate  
the clouds clearing beyond the dormer window  
and a high tide reflected on the ceiling?  
There will be dying, there will be dying,  
but there is no need to go into that.  
The poems flow from the hand unbidden  
and the hidden source is the watchful heart.  
The sun rises in spite of everything  
and the far cities are beautiful and bright.  
I lie here in a riot of sunlight  
watching the day break and the clouds flying.  
Everything is going to be all right.

#### *Pause for a moment of reflection.*

What are the signs of hope you see in your world?  
For what do you give thanks to God?



In our times of solitude, we cultivate an interior life that strengthens our love of, and communion with, the world. In this way we become more sensitive to life. Though we experience the poverty of our limitations and failures, we also recognise the beauty and wonder of humanity and of all creation. (*WFR n.8g*)

## WE RESPOND

At the time you're living it you can sometimes think your life is nothing much. It's ordinary and every day and should be and could be in this or that way better. It is without the perspective by which any meaning can be derived because it's too sensual and urgent and immediate, which is the way life is to be lived. We're all, all the time, striving, and though that means there's a more-or less constant supply of failure, it's not such a terrible thing if you think that we keep on trying. There's something to consider in that.<sup>2</sup>

### CLOSING PRAYER

Compassionate God  
Help us look to Mary as a guide and example,  
the first Disciple, a woman with dust on her feet.  
May she remind us  
to strive to keep trying even after we experience failure,  
to accept our challenges and trust in God,  
to understand that our ordinary and everyday life is in fact extraordinary.  
Amen.

Saint Marcellin Champagnat  
Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop  
Mary Our Good Mother  
And let us always remember

*Pray for Us*  
*Pray for Us*  
*Pray for Us*  
*To Pray for One Another*

# UNITED IN PRAYER

Marist  
ASSOCIATION DE  
ET MARCELIN CHAMPAGNAT

And the world came together as the people stayed apart. <sup>1</sup>

*We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of this land and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.*



## INTENTIONS

*We pray for those whose mental health is suffering during the COVID-19 pandemic – may they reach out for the help that is available and offered to them.*

*We pray for those facing great loss due to the COVID-19 pandemic, especially women and the young. We pray that the economic help they so desperately need will ease their burden.*

*For what else shall we pray...*

*Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.*

## OPENING PRAYER

Jesus, you invite us all into the fullness of life.  
May we support one another to flourish  
in body, mind and spirit.  
Strengthen our commitment to ensure  
that nobody falls through gaps in our systems of care.  
Show us how to eliminate the stigmatisation of mental ill-health  
from our communities. Amen.

## WE LISTEN

*Speak Lord, your servant is listening...*

### ***A Reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah (41:8-10)***

But you, Israel, my servant,  
Jacob, whom I have chosen,  
the offspring of Abraham, my friend;  
you whom I took from the ends of the earth,  
and called from its farthest corners,  
saying to you, "You are my servant,  
I have chosen you and not cast you off";  
do not fear, for I am with you,  
do not be afraid, for I am your God;  
I will strengthen you, I will help you,  
I will uphold you with my victorious right hand.



## WE REFLECT

This journey of discovery has many twists and turns. At times we struggle with our fears and doubts, as Mary did at the Annunciation. Yet, in each moment of our search God remains faithful and always present, continually inviting us to see our lives through God's eyes. (WFR 61)

We pray in all situations, with creativity and generosity. No matter the difficulties and struggles of daily life, no matter the limitations and injustices we live with, we continue to see the blessings of God upon us and those we love. Like Mary in her Magnificat prayer, we are grateful to God who has blessed us. (WFR 88)

*Pause for a moment of reflection.*

## WE RESPOND

[God] impels us constantly to set out anew, to pass beyond what is familiar, to the fringes and beyond...Unafraid of the fringes, he himself became a fringe (cf. Phil 2:6-8; Jn 1:14). So if we dare to go to the fringes, we will find him there; indeed, he is already there. Jesus is already there, in the hearts of our brothers and sisters, in their wounded flesh, in their troubles and in their profound desolation. He is already there. (Pope Francis, 2018)

### KAZEM MANUS ISLAND

*"Will I see freedom again?  
My wings have become disabled  
in the cage of waiting.  
The vision of my eyes can't see from  
behind the grid fences any more.  
Hope and love are dying in my body.  
I have become a stranger with myself."*

Amnesty International Australia & Refugee Council of Australia.  
Until when? The forgotten men on Manus Island.  
Report. Sydney: AI & RCoA, 2018, 22.

## CLOSING PRAYER

Jesus, you drew near to those  
who were suffering in body or mind.  
May we too feel your nearness  
when we struggle with mental health challenges.  
May we be empowered by your spirit  
to reach out to all people in need.  
May we build communities of welcome and inclusion.

Saint Marcellin Champagnat  
Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop  
Mary Our Good Mother  
And let us always remember

*Pray for Us  
Pray for Us  
Pray for Us  
To Pray for One Another*

# UNITED IN PRAYER



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## INTENTIONS

*We pray for the beauty of the earth and for our brothers and sisters.*

*We pray for those suffering economic, political, social and physical hardship.*

*We pray for those in need of spiritual healing.*

*We pray for those who are searching for God and for meaning in life in a time of great challenge.*

*For what else shall we pray...*

*Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.*

## WE LISTEN

*Speak Lord, your servant is listening...*

### **A Reading from the Book of Psalms (148)**

Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord from the heavens;  
praise him in the heights! Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his host!

Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you shining stars!  
Praise him, you highest heavens, and you waters above the heavens!

Let them praise the name of the Lord, for he commanded and they were created.  
He established them forever and ever; he fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed.

Praise the Lord from the earth, you sea monsters and all deeps,  
fire and hail, snow and frost, stormy wind fulfilling his command!

Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars!  
Wild animals and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds!

Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the earth!  
Young men and women alike, old and young together!

Let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is exalted;  
his glory is above earth and heaven. He has raised up his people,  
praise for all his faithful, for the people who are close to him. Praise the Lord!

## WE REFLECT

In this *Season of Creation*, no matter how difficult things may appear we remember the gifts of our loving God for us personally and in community.

We thank God for the gift of creation and we show the world what love for creation looks like.

We ask guidance in working to change our ways and to live in harmony with how God wants us to live.

We pray for the courage to live more in communion with God and God's creation, and with one another.

*Pause for a moment of reflection.*



## WE RESPOND

We read from Pope Francis in *Laudato Si! Praise Be!*

*The rich heritage of Christian spirituality, the fruit of twenty centuries of personal and communal experience, has a precious contribution to make to the renewal of humanity... More than in ideas or concepts as such, I am interested in how such a spirituality can motivate us to a more passionate concern for the protection of our world. (n. 216)*

## CLOSING PRAYER

Mary, our Good Mother who cared for Jesus, care for us now with your maternal affection at a time of pain in our wounded world. Together with the Risen Christ help us to reach the fullness of beauty. Help us to look at this world with the eyes of wisdom and teach us the ways of your Son.

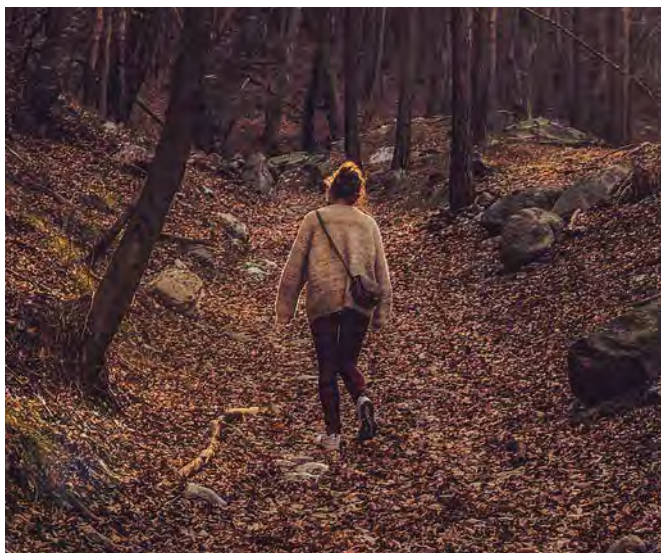
God our Father who calls us to generous commitment and to give our all, strengthen us for the journey. Do not abandon us to hysteria and hopelessness. You are present in the whole universe and embrace us in tenderness. Pour out on us the power of your love that we may protect life and beauty. Fill us with your peace so that we may always recognise the worth of your creation and our sisters and brothers.

Saint Marcellin Champagnat  
Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop  
Mary Our Good Mother  
And let us always remember

***Pray for Us  
Pray for Us  
Pray for Us  
To Pray for One Another***

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## INTENTIONS

*We pray for our young people in their preparation for exams.*

*We look for hope in creation as it blossoms around us during this season of spring.*

*Like Mary at the foot of the Cross, we pray that we also watch and wait patiently, in faith, through these times.*

*For what else shall we pray...*

*Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.*

## OPENING PRAYER

Mary, we look to you as our model of prayer.  
May we recognise like you, that Jesus walks with us in our suffering.  
We pray, as daughters and sons of God,  
that our grief, loss and isolation be transformed by our faith;  
finding hope, courage and peace.  
Let us be expectant people,  
just as the season of spring ushers forth new life. Amen

## WE LISTEN

*Speak Lord, your servant is listening...*

### ***A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to John (19:25-27)***

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, 'Woman, here is your son.' Then he said to the disciple, 'Here is your mother.' And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.



## WE REFLECT

At the foot of the Cross, the Mother of Jesus and the beloved disciple, waited, watching faithfully. Jesus 'sees' them and is attentive to them. In His suffering, He reached out to them, offering compassion and pointing them to their mission and service.

As His disciple now, contemplate the icon. Look at Mary through the eyes of John. As John would have, follow her gaze as she contemplates her Son pondering His life and now His death on the Cross.

***I stay with Mary, Our Good Mother, and hear Jesus say to me, as He did to the disciple, 'Here is your mother.'***



Detail from the Icon of the Theotokos, Holy Mother of the Lord, St Andrew Greek Orthodox Church, South Bend Indiana.

## WE RESPOND

We are called to love of neighbour, to acts of service that build up and sustain the community of faith, just as Mary did.

After the gloom of winter and despite COVID restrictions, how might Mary, in her sorrow, inspire us to act in solidarity and justice to those suffering?

***Pause for a moment of reflection.***

## CLOSING PRAYER

Mary, Woman of Sorrows, Queen of Creation,  
Mother who cared for Jesus,  
you care for this wounded world with maternal affection.  
You treasured the life of Jesus in your heart  
and stood at the foot of His Cross with the beloved disciple.  
Now, you understand the meaning of all things.  
Enable us to look at this world with eyes of wisdom  
and serve it through compassionate care for all creation. Amen

Saint Marcellin Champagnat  
Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop  
Mary Our Good Mother  
And let us always remember

***Pray for Us  
Pray for Us  
Pray for Us  
To Pray for One Another***

*At the foot of the Cross, we find  
a God who shares the physical  
and psychological suffering...  
experienced by humanity and  
transforms these experiences.*

*(Water From the Rock #22)*



# UNITED IN PRAYER

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## INTENTIONS

*We pray for all those whose homes are threatened by rising sea levels.*

*Let us pray for our beautiful earth which offers life and nourishment.*

*In the face of uncertainty and fear, let us pray for humility and hope.*

*For what else shall we pray...*

*Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.*

## OPENING PRAYER

Sustainer God.

May we endeavour to live lives of simplicity and compassion.

As we are reminded, in this 'Season of Creation', let us create opportunities to love and to heal ourselves, each other and our world.

Amen.

## WE LISTEN

*Speak Lord, your servant is listening...*

***A Reading from the book of Jeremiah (29:11) - adapted***

I know the plans I have for you my beloved, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.

## WE REFLECT

Many years ago, Teilhard de Chardin wrote:

*Someday, after mastering the winds, the waves, the tides and gravity, we shall harness for God the energies of love, and then, for a second time in the history of the world, humans will have discovered fire.*

We have come a long way in harnessing the energies of wind and tides and gravity. But we have not yet learned to live so that every being in the world can flourish. For this we need to harness the Energies of Love for the healing of the world and the flourishing of all beings.

<https://www.contemplativeevolutionnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/MEDITATION-FOR-WORLD-HEALING-flyer-3.pdf>

I wish I could show you when you are lonely or in darkness  
the astonishing light of your own being - Hafiz of Persia

We who are baptised into cosmic evolution, have a responsibility to evolve  
and to help this creation also evolve towards universal unity - Sr Elia Delio

***How do you recognise your astonishing light? How does that help others?***

***How do you nurture a sense of hope for the world?***

## WE RESPOND

Christian families and communities are united in Christ. In (Christ) we find our communion with each other, and with all of creation. In this unity with each other we strengthen our being one with Christ. (WFR 94)

There can be no renewal of our relationship with nature without a renewal of humanity itself. (Laudato Si 118)

***Pause for a moment of reflection.***

## CLOSING PRAYER

Let us pray this prayer attributed to St Francis of Assisi

(Loving God and Sustainer of all life),  
make me an instrument of Your peace;  
where there is hatred, let me sow love;  
where there is injury, pardon;  
where there is doubt, faith;  
where there is despair, hope;  
where there is darkness, light;  
and where there is sadness, joy.<sup>2</sup>

Saint Marcellin Champagnat  
Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop  
Mary Our Good Mother  
And let us always remember

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Pray for Us  
Pray for Us  
To Pray for One Another***

<sup>1</sup> Jennifer Wagner, 2020

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.loyolapress.com/catholic-resources/prayer/traditional-catholic-prayers/saints-prayers/peace-prayer-of-saint-francis/>

# UNITED IN PRAYER



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## INTENTIONS

*We pray for those who are battling illness and are unable to receive adequate healthcare.*

*We pray for those who are unable to return to their homes and are feeling isolated and forgotten.*

*We pray for healthcare workers who continue to put their own health and safety at risk in order to care for others.*

*For what else shall we pray...*

*Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.*

## OPENING PRAYER

### PSALM 71

In you, O Lord, I take refuge;  
let me never be put to shame.  
In your righteousness deliver me and rescue me;  
incline your ear to me and save me.  
Be to me a rock of refuge,  
a strong fortress, to save me,  
for you are my rock and my fortress.  
Amen.

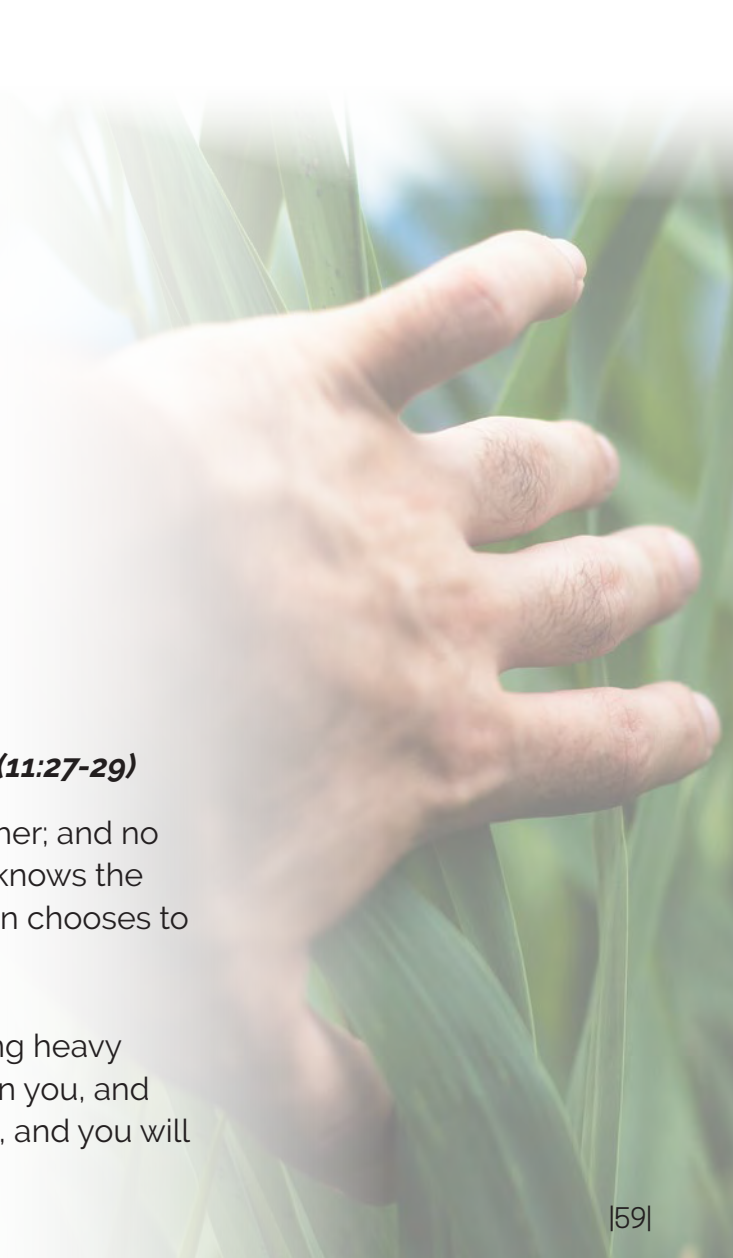
## WE LISTEN

*Speak Lord, your servant is listening...*

### ***A Reading from the Gospel According to Matthew (11:27-29)***

All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

“Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”



## WE REFLECT

### Laying Down My Burdens

*Joyce Rupp, from Prayer Seeds*

Cross-bearer and Wearer of the wood,  
many are the burdens that press with force  
upon my spirit as I trudge through life.  
These cares and concerns weigh heavily,  
pushing their energy upon both minds and heart,  
taking their toll, lessening my power to love well.  
These burdens shape themselves into leaden anchors  
of growling self-pity and loss of self-confidence.  
They snatch away joy and destroy empathy.  
Today I choose to release their useless weight.  
I am ready to stop dragging them alongside me.  
Here are my troubles, struggles, and afflictions.  
I lay them down before your cross. I let them go.  
I undo the clutching of shame, guilt, and blame.  
I step back from painful from painful patterns of the past.  
That leak into my current thinking and behaviour.  
I do not need to drag down my life under the bulk  
of these needless burdens bearing weight on me.  
I deliberately move on with fresh freedom,  
placing faith in your strength and compassion.  
I leave my burdens here with you today.  
I will not take them back.

#### Pause for a moment of reflection.

*What burdens will you lay down and leave behind you today?  
For what do you give thanks to God?*

### CLOSING PRAYER

Compassionate God, help us remember to call on the love of family and friends to sustain and support us, especially when we are feeling alone and lonely. Remind us of the resilience residing within us, a strength that enables us to go on when we feel weak and vulnerable. Help us to see the beauty contained in gestures of kindness, and in the loveliness of nature.

May we discover hope in the most unexpected situations, storing this treasure in a special corner of our heart where we can easily find it.

Saint Marcellin Champagnat  
Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop  
Mary Our Good Mother  
And let us always remember

*Pray for Us  
Pray for Us  
Pray for Us  
To Pray for One Another*

## WE RESPOND

*The cries of the world,  
especially those of  
poor people, touch  
the heart of God and  
ours as well. The depth  
of God's compassion  
challenges us to be  
men and women whose  
hearts have no bounds  
since in his infinite love,  
God continues to be  
totally involved with all  
men and women and  
today's world, with its  
disappointments  
and hopes.*

*Water From the Rock #127*

# UNITED IN PRAYER



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## INTENTIONS

*We pray for those weary and fatigued by the COVID-19 restrictions.*

*We pray for those worried and struggling because of financial pressures.*

*We pray for those suffering loneliness, bereavement or isolation.*

*For what else shall we pray...*

*Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.*

## OPENING PRAYER

God of all comfort and Father of compassion; we place ourselves before you during these continued times of trial and uncertainty.

We ask that you comfort us in all our troubles so that we may comfort others who are troubled too. We ask this in the name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace, who brought light and hope into the world. Amen.

## WE LISTEN

*Speak Lord, your servant is listening...*

### ***A Reading from the Letter of St Paul to the Philippians (4:6-7)***

There is no need to worry; but if there is anything you need, pray for it, asking God for it with prayer and thanksgiving, and that peace of God, which is so much greater than we can understand, will guard your hearts and your thoughts, in Christ Jesus.



## WE REFLECT

Marcellin's relationship with God, combined with knowledge of his limitations, explains his unbounded confidence in God. The depth of this trust amazed those who worked with him, and scandalised some who judged his actions as reckless. In his humble way, Marcellin saw God at work, and so acted with courage and commitment. *Let us not offend God, asking him very little. The bigger is our demand, the more we will be pleasing to God.* Marcellin's oft-expressed invocations *If the Lord does not build the house* and *You know my God* were the spontaneous expressions of this confident trust.

- *Water from the Rock #17*

## WE RESPOND

You are the Beloved<sup>2</sup>  
*Henri Nouwen*

I know that true joy comes from letting God love me the way God wants, whether it is through illness or health, failure or success, poverty or wealth, rejection or praise. It is hard for me to say, "I shall gratefully accept everything, Lord, that pleases you. Let your will be done." But I know that when I truly believe my Father is pure love, it will become increasingly possible to say these words from the heart.

Pause for a moment and open your heart to God praying for what you need today.

## CLOSING PRAYER

We Pray  
*By Blessed Charles de Foucauld OCSO (adapted)*

God, I abandon myself into your hands,  
do with me what you will.  
Whatever you may do, I thank you;  
I love you, Lord, and so need to give myself  
into your hands without reserve,  
and with boundless confidence; for you are my God.  
Amen.

Saint Marcellin Champagnat  
Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop  
Mary Our Good Mother  
And let us always remember

*Pray for Us*  
*Pray for Us*  
*Pray for Us*  
*To Pray for One Another*

<sup>1</sup> Jennifer Wagner, 2020

<sup>2</sup> From Daily Meditations, The Henri Nouwen Society, [www.henrinouwen.org](http://www.henrinouwen.org), 3/8/2020



# UNITED IN PRAYER



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## INTENTIONS

*We pray for every one of us whose lives have been touched and changed forever by COVID-19.*

*We pray for our leaders in need of enlightenment in their decision making.*

*We pray for the service of all our health ministers of care.*

*We pray for each other that we may experience the light of Christ.*

*For what else shall we pray...*

*Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.*

## OPENING PRAYER

Loving God, we pray for your glorious light to shine brightly in our world during COVID-19.

Help all people during the darkness to see the love and peace that radiates from you.

This is a love that reveals justice, dignity, freedom and compassion for all, especially the poor and marginalised.

Let us, as Marists, be beacons of light for our world, caring for the generous new life you bring.

Amen.

## WE LISTEN

*Speak Lord, your servant is listening...*

### **A Reading from the Gospel According to Matthew 5:14-16**

You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

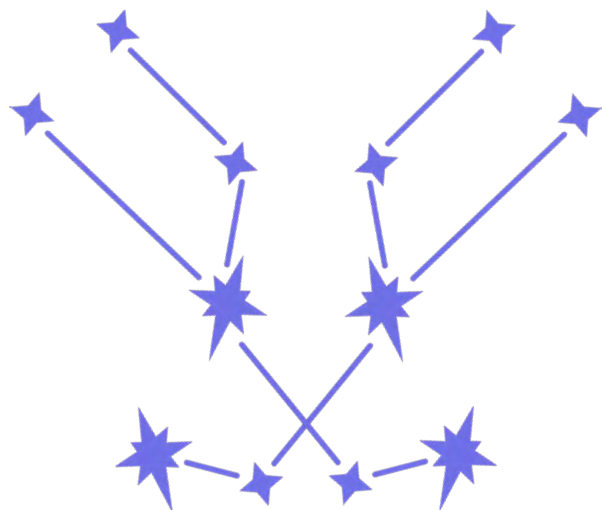
## WE REFLECT

Jesus' basic message to His earliest followers is found in verse 14: *"You are the light of the world."* Certainly no one had ever told them such a thing before — even John the Baptist had seen them first and foremost as sinners who needed to repent. The great gift of Jesus Christ's awareness is that He saw people as they truly are — whole and perfect expressions of divine light. And Jesus was able to translate that insight into practical, pragmatic terms everyone could understand.

We need to shine our light in such a way that people SEE God and Jesus Christ in us. We must allow ourselves to be visible to the world around us. That's our ultimate goal.

Pause for a moment to reflect on this question.

*How can you visibly live out your goodness, your light, for the people of your community?  
Who has God brought into your life especially to see your light?*



## WE RESPOND

Our Marist spirituality calls us to be witnesses of light, inspiring others to seek God...

Today's world deeply needs men and women who are mystics – people who are able to touch the mystery of all life, in an attitude of openness and surrender. Having experienced the love of God, they are witnesses of light among their fellow pilgrims inspiring them to seek God.

- *Water from the Rock #71*

## CLOSING PRAYER

God of light,  
may the blessing of Jesus Christ come to us,  
warming our hearts and brightening our way.  
May Christ our Saviour  
bring light into the darkness of this world  
and enflame our hearts with your grace.  
Amen.

Saint Marcellin Champagnat  
Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop  
Mary Our Good Mother  
And let us always remember

*Pray for Us  
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To Pray for One Another*



# UNITED IN PRAYER



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## INTENTIONS

*We pray for Year 12 students who commence their final examinations in the coming weeks – grant them peace of mind and clarity of thought.*

*We pray for school communities who are supporting these students during this stressful time – fill them with Your strength and wisdom.*

*We pray for all young people who are not only our future, but our now.*

*For what else shall we pray.....*

*Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.*

## OPENING PRAYER

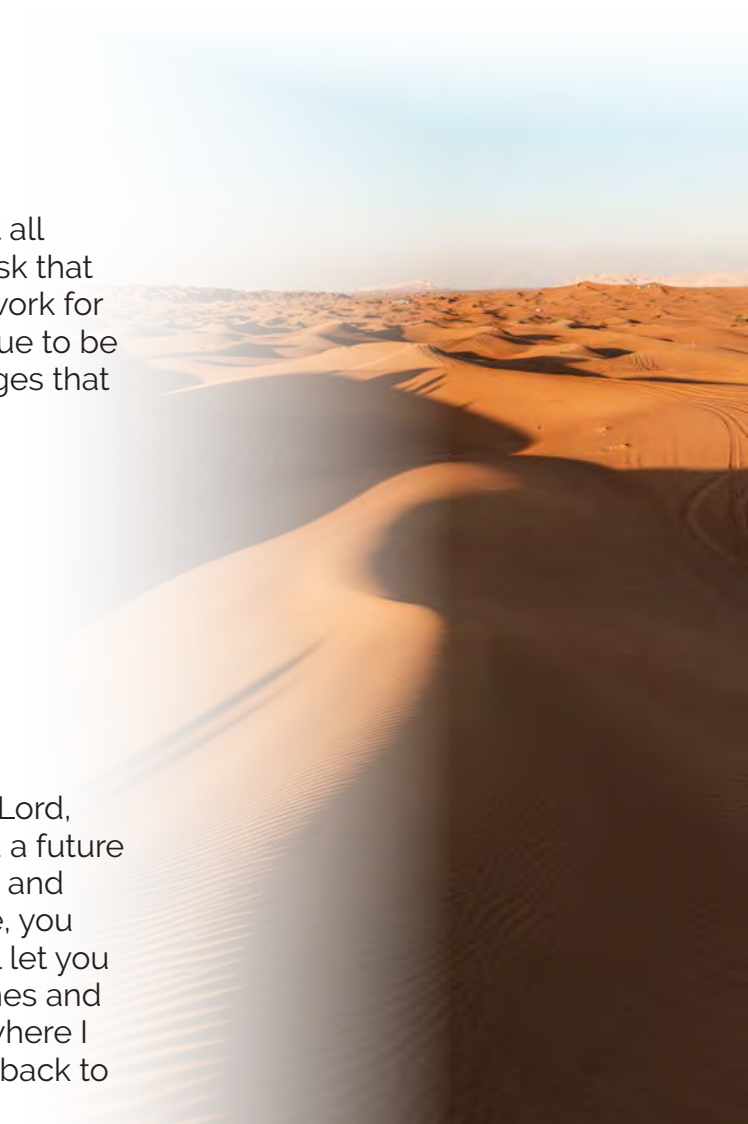
Loving God, we give thanks for the life journey that all our final year students have been navigating. We ask that you continue to guide them in being people who work for social justice and peace. Lord, help them to continue to be resilient and adaptable in dealing with the challenges that they may encounter throughout their lives. Amen.

## WE LISTEN

*Speak Lord, your servant is listening...*

### **A reading from the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah 29:11-14**

For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart, I will let you find me, says the Lord, and I will restore your fortunes and gather you from all the nations and all the places where I have driven you, says the Lord, and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile.



## WE REFLECT

Pope Francis acknowledges that the Church needs to encourage dreaming of and working for tomorrow, starting today. "You, dear young people, are not the future, but the now of God... He invites you and calls you in your communities and cities to go out and find your grandparents, your elders; to stand up and with them to speak out and realise the dream that the Lord has dreamed for you." (20 March 2019)

*What is your dream for the future?*

Pause for a moment to reflect on this question.

## WE RESPOND

All the people and events of life offer an opportunity to encounter our merciful God. Perhaps we meet God most closely when we are vulnerable and hurting or when we stand by our word despite the cost to ourselves. When we give thanks for the gift of life, when we heal relationships, when we offer and receive forgiveness, when we celebrate the Eucharist and share the Word - all can be moments of grace to meet and know God.

*- Water from the Rock #57*



*Our World, Our Future* by Tongbram Mahesh Singh

## CLOSING PRAYER

Loving God, in these times of great uncertainty, we ask You Lord to continue to guide the Graduating Class of 2020 in being the hope and the light of the world. May they use their gifts, talents and goodness in being a voice for the marginalised. Remind them that they play a fundamental part in building a world based on equality, love and fraternity, becoming brothers and sisters in "creating one new humanity" (Ephesians 2:15).

Amen.

Saint Marcellin Champagnat  
Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop  
Mary Our Good Mother  
And let us always remember

*Pray for Us  
Pray for Us  
Pray for Us  
To Pray for One Another*

And the world came together as the people stayed apart. <sup>1</sup>

*We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of this land and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.*



## INTENTIONS

*We pray for ourselves, that we may let God's light shine through us.*

*We pray that we look for times and places of quiet, where fears disappear.*

*For what else shall we pray...*

*Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.*

## OPENING PRAYER

God of Goodness, Truth and Beauty,  
we are drawn to You through the many gifts of creation as it unfolds in everyday ways.  
May we be conscious of Your Presence all around us and within us as we make space to trust  
and hear these gifts of Your creation.  
Amen.

## WE LISTEN

*Speak Lord, your servant is listening...*

### ***A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew 6:6***

But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door  
and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who  
sees in secret will reward you

## WE REFLECT

It is important to cultivate interiority and spirituality, often  
and with perseverance going into our inner room, shutting  
the door, and praying to our Father who is there unseen...  
This demands time, the right physical place and, above all,  
the desire, the thirst and the felt need to go within. It means  
experiencing silence. A silence that puts us in touch with the



deepest rhythms of our being and offers a better quality of life. A silence that gives us insight into the gift represented by each moment, each event and each encounter when viewed in the light of the Spirit, ever active and present.

- *Homes of Light*, page 20

Deep within us all there is an amazing inner sanctuary of the soul, a holy place, a Divine Centre, a speaking Voice, to which we may continually return.

- *Quaker Mystic*, Thomas Kelly

I have never been separate from God, nor can I be, except in my mind. In fact, why not stop reading now, and just breathe and let it sink in. It is crucial to know this experientially and at a cellular level – which is, in fact, a real way of knowing just as much as rational knowing.

- *The Universal Christ*, Richard Rohr, page 44

## WE RESPOND

Silence is where we best discover the fire that dwells inside us, this inner light that makes us feel at home. When we sense this light, fears disappear. In the silence of prayer, we are able to sense the intimate presence of God who dwells in our hearts.

- *Homes of Light*, page 21

## CLOSING PRAYER

God of love and light, relationship and mercy,  
may we look with eyes of love at all that this world offers.  
May we understand that we are children of the Cosmic Christ.  
And may we come to know ourselves and each other with  
infinite compassion.  
Amen.

Saint Marcellin Champagnat  
Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop  
Mary Our Good Mother  
And let us always remember

*Pray for Us*  
*Pray for Us*  
*Pray for Us*  
*To Pray for One Another*

<sup>1</sup> Jennifer Wagner, 2020

<sup>2</sup> *Homes of Light: Caring for Life. Generating New Life. Circulars of the Superiors General of the Marist Brothers. Vol XXIII - Circular 420, 8 September 2020. H. Ernesto Sanchez Barba, Superior General*

<sup>3</sup> *The Universal Christ: How a Forgotten Reality Can Change Everything We See, Hope For, and Believe. Richard Rohr. Convergent Books. 2019.*



And the world came together as the people stayed apart. <sup>1</sup>

*We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of this land and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.*



## INTENTIONS

*We pray for the medical staff and others who have died due to the COVID-19 virus.*

*We pray for our deceased relatives and friends.*

*We pray for the heroes, saints and angels who bring care and comfort to others.*

*For what else shall we pray...*

*Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.*

## OPENING PRAYER

We pray that, according to the riches of God's glory, we be strengthened in our inner being with power through the Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in our hearts through faith that is grounded in love. Together with the angels and saints, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

*(Adapted from Ephesians 3:14-21).*

## WE LISTEN

*Speak Lord, your servant is listening...*

### ***A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew 5:1-10***

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

"Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

"Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

"Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

## WE REFLECT

The Beatitudes are sometimes referred to in parallel with the Ten Commandments. However, the Beatitudes are not 'rules' or 'instructions' for life as the Commandments are. They are more in line with a strategy that today we would call 'positive reinforcement'. They celebrate those who respond to God's call through particular attitudes towards life and towards others. Jesus presents them to the disciples and the crowd as images to inspire imitation. They're not hard and fast rules for life, but attitudes for life; the Be-Attitudes, so to speak. Those who live with these attitudes in this life are to be celebrated – 'Happy are you' – for they will be saints. They will be welcomed into communion with God in heaven.

- Greg Sunter, *Liturgy Help* - 1/11/2020

## WE RESPOND

In this extraordinary year we have seen over and over that caring is not just the work of "superheroes, canonised saints and angels in heaven"! We've come to know more than ever that our nurses, childcare workers, doctors, paramedics, teachers, social workers and parents are our everyday heroes, saints and angels. These are the people who do the care work of sustaining human wellbeing: the washing, cleaning, feeding, comforting and supporting of human lives in a myriad of ways.<sup>2</sup>

*During this pandemic year, who are the 'heroes, saints and angels' for you?*

**Spend a silent moment prayerfully thanking them.**

## CLOSING PRAYER

O Great Love, thank you for living and loving in us and through us. May all that we do flow from our deep connection with you and all beings. Help us become a community that vulnerably shares each other's burdens and the weight of glory. Listen to our hearts' longings for the healing of our world. Knowing you are hearing us better than we are speaking, we offer these prayers in all the holy names of God. Amen.

Saint Marcellin Champagnat  
Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop  
Mary Our Good Mother  
And let us always remember

***Pray for Us***  
***Pray for Us***  
***Pray for Us***  
***To Pray for One Another***

Our world and its peoples always need hope. Living as sisters and brothers offers a hopeful and caring means by which our differences enrich our communion.

- *Water From the Rock #120*

<sup>1</sup> Jennifer Wagner, 2020

<sup>2</sup> Adapted from, *The Invisible Heart*, Madeleine Bunting, *The Tablet*, 24 October 2020 pp 4,5

<sup>3</sup> *Prayer for Our Community*, Richard Rohr ofm, *Daily Meditations*, Center for Action and Contemplation. [Meditations@cac.org](mailto:Meditations@cac.org)