

Reading for Weekday in the First Week of Lent

24th February 2026

First reading

Isaiah 55:10-11

‘The rain makes the earth bring forth and sprout.’

Thus says the Lord:

‘For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven
and do not return there but water the earth,
making it bring forth and sprout,
giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,
so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth;
it shall not return to me empty,
but it shall accomplish that which I purpose,
and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.’

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 34(33):4-5. 6-7. 16-17. 18-19. R18b

God rescues the just one in all his distress.

Glorify the Lord with me;

together let us praise his name.

I sought the Lord, and he answered me;

from all my terrors he set me free.

Look towards him and be radiant;

let your faces not be abashed.

This lowly one called; the Lord heard,

and rescued him from all his distress.

The Lord turns his eyes to the just one,

and his ears are open to his cry.

The Lord turns his face against the wicked
to cut off their remembrance from the earth.

When the just one cries out, the Lord hears,

and rescues him in all his distress.

The Lord is close to the broken-hearted;

those whose spirit is crushed he will save.

Gospel Acclamation

Matthew 4:4b

Glory and praise to you, O Christ.

One does not live by bread alone,

but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God.

Glory and praise to you, O Christ.

Gospel**Matthew 6:7-15****‘Pray then like this.’**

At that time: Jesus said to his disciples: ‘When you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. Pray then, like this: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

‘For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.’

Short reflection on the reading for today

The evangelists show Jesus at prayer many times, and sometimes they give us the content of his prayer. However, only once is he presented as teaching his disciples a specific prayer, which is known to us as the Lord’s Prayer. It has had a privileged place in the Christian tradition because it is the only prayer explicitly taught by Jesus. Despite all differences of denominations, this prayer is one that all Christians have in common. In giving us this prayer, Jesus was also giving us a lesson on how to pray. He urges us to focus on God’s will above our own preferences. We adore God’s name, God’s kingdom, God’s will. Prayer is first a letting go to God, a yielding to what God wants for his world and for us. Only then do we focus on our own needs. The Lord’s Prayer encourages us to pray about fundamental needs, our need for sustenance, both material and spiritual, our need for forgiveness, our need for God’s deliverance in times of crisis.

In those second set of petitions, the Lord’s Prayer teaches us to focus on ourselves not as individuals but as members of a community. It is a prayer that speaks of ‘our’ needs rather than just ‘my’ concerns. In praying those petitions, I pray not just for myself but for others. We pray the Lord’s prayer as members of a community of faith. True prayer is always a going out of ourselves towards God and towards others.