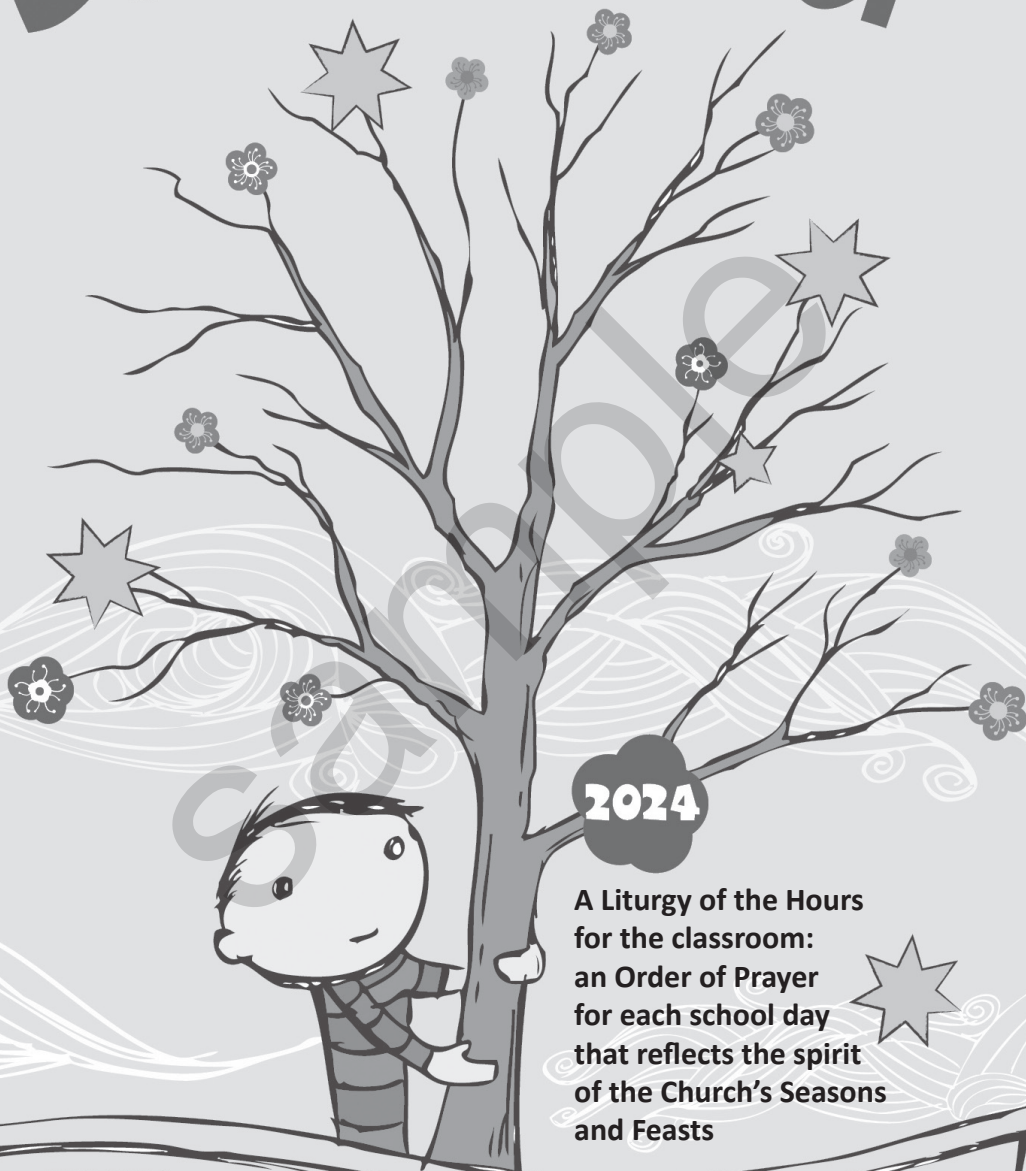


Children's Daily Prayer



2024

A Liturgy of the Hours
for the classroom:
an Order of Prayer
for each school day
that reflects the spirit
of the Church's Seasons
and Feasts


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Under the Southern Cross



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Before you use this book

What is this book and who is it for?

An annual liturgical prayer resource:

- ~ containing day-by-day prayer, Monday – Friday, for the current school year
- ~ for students in parish schools, in parish religious education/sacramental classes or in religious education classes in government schools

What are the features of the 2024 edition?

It's an up-to-date resource that:

- ~ provides a single prayer service for each day
- ~ looks ahead to the Sunday gospel each Friday
- ~ contains five short introductions to the psalms:
 - Psalms are Prayers
 - Psalms are Poems
 - Psalms are Shouts
 - Psalms are Cries
 - Psalms are Cosmic Chants

What is unique about this prayer resource?

It is based on the church's long tradition of praying at certain times of the day – the Liturgy of the Hours. It uses:

- ~ hymns
- ~ psalms
- ~ scripture readings
- ~ reflection on the scriptures
- ~ intercessions (At the beginning of the year, encourage children to write in names on their birth dates and names of deceased relatives and friends on anniversary dates.)

Why use this book?

Children's Daily Prayer Under the Southern Cross:

- ~ is 'all there' and hence, user-friendly
- ~ is led by students
- ~ helps students to pray with the scriptures

- ~ builds familiarity with the saints of our tradition, as well as 'prophets and peace-makers' of our own time
- ~ broadens students' horizons by reference to the important celebrations of other faiths
- ~ enables students to bring together prayer and daily life
- ~ introduces students to a way of praying which might sustain them throughout their lives
- ~ helps students to pray with the mind and heart of the church

Why a new book each year?

Children's Daily Prayer Under the Southern Cross is like a new diary every year. **Right there** on the **right day** and the right date and on the **right page** are the prayers and readings for every day of the school year.

Why a book for each CLASSROOM?

- ~ students can participate in ritual action
- ~ students can take regular turns in leading class prayer
- ~ students can voice their own individual concerns in prayer
- ~ classes can choose their own hymns

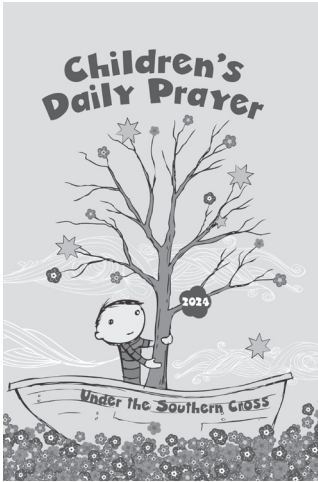
Who else might use this book?

This book can be used:

- ~ to begin staff prayer and other school-based meetings
- ~ by students in any Christian schools
- ~ to begin parish meetings
- ~ by RCIA groups
- ~ by ministers on their visits to the sick
- ~ as a resource for family prayer

Organisation and Content

How the Children's Daily Prayer 2024 is arranged



1



By months
(from late January)

2



By the liturgical seasons

3



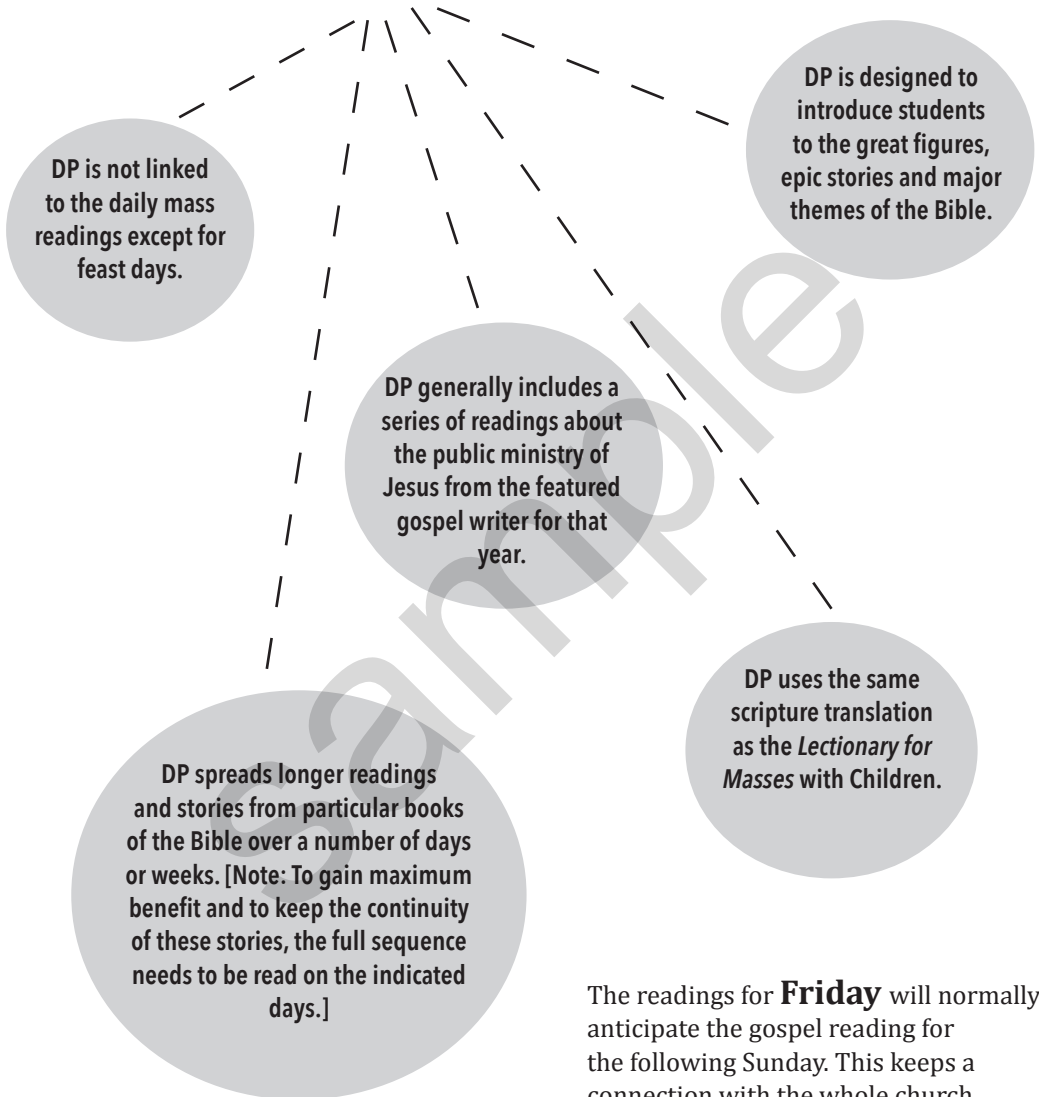
For each month or liturgical season, there is an introduction called **Looking Ahead** and a psalm for the month or season.

On each daily entry you will find:

1. An **Introduction** to help focus the prayer for the day
2. A **Hymn** to begin the prayer
3. A **Psalm** for the month or season
4. A **Scripture Reading**
5. A **Reflection** on the scripture reading
6. A time for **Prayers of Intercession**
7. A **Closing Prayer**

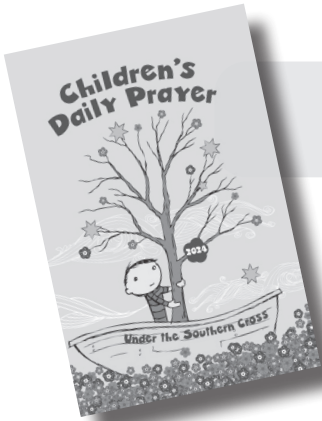
How are the Scriptures organised?

Daily Prayer (DP) for **Monday to Thursday** has its own schema of readings.



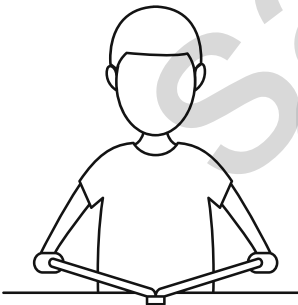
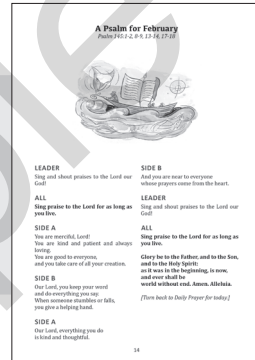
The readings for **Friday** will normally anticipate the gospel reading for the following Sunday. This keeps a connection with the whole church hearing the same gospel on the actual Sunday.

For the Teacher or Catechist



One book for each classroom, shared by the leader and reader

Copies of the Psalm for the month or season for each student. (Do these copies in seasonal colours and have students insert them into prayer folders, which they might make at the beginning of the year.)



Student leadership – leader and reader.

Familiarity with the **Looking Ahead** pages.



Use regularly!

For the Student Leader and Reader

When leading or reading:

- ~ **Stand up straight.**
This gives the prayer dignity and establishes a student's ministerial role
- ~ **Slow everything down.**
Including the pace of reading, walking, lighting the candle
- ~ **Emphasise everything a bit.**
When reading, bowing, signing, blessing.

Instructions for the Leader

- ~ **Find the page** with the correct date and mark it with a ribbon of the seasonal colour.
- ~ **Turn to the Psalm.** There is always a page reference that tells you where to find it. Mark it also with a ribbon.
- ~ **Practise** the Introduction and the Closing.
- ~ **Check with the teacher** to see if you will read and discuss all or particular Reflection questions.
- ~ **Practise** the parts of the Psalm marked 'Leader' and 'Side A'.
- ~ **To begin**, announce the hymn if there is to be one, and any acclamations, and say where they will be sung. Then start with the Introduction.
- ~ **Practise** giving blessings.

Instructions for the Reader

- ~ **Find the page** with the correct date.
- ~ **Practise** the reading on that page.
- ~ **Turn to the Psalm.** You will lead the parts marked "Side B."
- ~ **Practise** the parts of the Closing in heavier print. You will lead them.
- ~ **Indicate** to the class with your arm when to say the parts in heavier print.



February Ordinary Time

Tuesday 30 January to Tuesday 13 February





Ordinary Time ~ February 2024

Looking Ahead

About the Month

For students, families, teachers and all concerned with education, the end of January means 'back to school'. While summer holidays are over, summer continues. Days are hot and daylight hours long and still call us to beaches, rivers and pools. The weather is still warm enough for us to eat outside and to enjoy barbecues. In some parts of the country, trees are starting to look tired and are beginning to lose their leaves. This first term of the school year lasts right through to the middle of Autumn.

At the beginning of this new school year, you may feel excited or perhaps a little bit anxious. You will be in a higher year. Are there new teachers? New students? New buildings or new things in the building? Do you have new things for school—uniforms, books? Who made sure you got those new things and made sure you were ready for the new school year? Those people deserve your thanks.

Going back to school is a time of hard work and preparation for your teachers. They might also be a little bit anxious and wonder what their new classes will be like. Teachers also deserve our thanks.

Someone else deserves our thanks. God has provided the wonderful months of summer and the holidays that summer brings. God has also protected us over this time. It is good to give God thanks and praise for all the love poured out on us and for all the good days to come.

During February, there is still a feeling of 'New Year' in the air. The church's 'New Year' began in Advent last year. The season of Christmas followed and closed on January 7. Until Lent begins we are in the first part

of Ordinary Time; the second part will begin after Pentecost. This does not mean that the season is 'ordinary' but simply that each week will be counted in order, beginning with the first week of Ordinary Time. It is precious time for exploring the good news more fully as each week passes. This year there are just over two more weeks of Ordinary Time before Lent.

Children's Daily Prayer under the Southern Cross 2024 is one of our new books. It is a guide for your prayer for every day of the school year. Some prayers change each day. Some stay the same. This is the way the church prays.

Directions for using this book for prayer are on pages i–v of the Introduction. When it is your turn to lead the prayer, you can read those instructions again. Attach ribbons to the book to mark your place—different colours for different liturgical seasons.

Readings

For the first days of the school term, our readings for Daily Prayer remind us that God has created us and loves us and is always present with us. The readings urge us to always turn to God in prayer, and they remind us to care for one another.

Each year in Ordinary Time we read in turn from one of three gospels: Matthew, Mark and Luke. This year we will read a lot from Mark because in the church's three-year cycle of readings, 2024 is Year B, the Year of Mark. That means Mark will be telling us his story of the life and work of Jesus. The gospel of Luke will be read next in Year C and Matthew will be read in Year A.

Our readings for each Friday will normally look ahead to the following Sunday's gospel. This keeps us connected

with the whole church who will hear the same gospel on the Sunday.

Learn the correct responses to the readings. After a gospel reading, the reader says, 'The gospel of the Lord', and everyone responds, 'Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ'. If the reading is not from one of the gospel writers, then the reader says, 'The word of the Lord', and everyone responds, 'Thanks be to God'.

Feasts

February 2

The Presentation of the Lord. The proper date for this important feast is February 2, but we will remember it on February 1. Mary and Joseph brought Jesus to the temple 40 days after he was born. Jesus was greeted there by the prophets Simeon and Anna. They knew that he was the Messiah, the light of the world.

Commemorations

February 6

Waitangi Day (*WHY-tung-ee*) in Aotearoa New Zealand. This day commemorates the treaty made with the Maori people in 1840. For those who wish to use it, there's a special prayer for Waitangi Day on page 5.

February 10

The **Lunar (or Chinese) New Year** begins on February 10.

February 11

World Day of Prayer for the Sick. We will remember and pray especially for all who are sick the following day.

Preparation for February

Children's Daily Prayer Under the Southern Cross includes a Psalm to be prayed each day. Psalms are very ancient songs from the Bible. To learn more about them, turn to the pages that explain how psalms are prayers, poems, shouts, cries and cosmic chants (see the Table of Contents or the Subject Index). Many psalms are prayers of praise

or thanksgiving but others help us bring our worries to God. The Psalm will change each month or season.

The Psalm for February, Psalm 145, is on page 4. We praise God who is patient and loving and who cares for all of creation. Students will need their own copies for each day. Make special 2024 prayer folders in which to keep them. You can add to these as the year goes on.

The Closing for Daily Prayer includes prayer for special intentions. Intentions are things we wish to pray for. Students celebrating birthdays can be remembered in the intentions. Then there are other happy or sad events that happen—the birth of a new brother or sister, the sickness or death of a family member of a student or teacher. It is good to remember the people we love and people in need in our intentions.

Encourage children to simply name the person or group for whom they wish to pray rather than enter into long stories. Examples might be: 'For Sam on his birthday', 'For people who have died in the earthquake', 'For N. who is sick'.

Suggested Hymns

See the hymn chart on pages vi–ix. Throughout the year, sing a hymn to begin Daily Prayer. In February, Daily Prayer concludes with an *Alleluia*. Sing this until Ash Wednesday.

For the feast of the Presentation, *Praise to you, O Christ* or *Christ be our light* would be good choices.

A Psalm for February

Psalm 145:1-2, 8-9, 13-14, 17-18



LEADER

Sing and shout praises
to the Lord our God!

ALL

**Sing praise to the Lord
for as long as you live.**

SIDE A

You are merciful, Lord!
You are kind and patient and always loving.
You are good to everyone,
and you take care of all your creation.

SIDE B

Our Lord, you keep your word
and do everything you say.
When someone stumbles or falls,
you give a helping hand.

SIDE A

Our Lord, everything you do
is kind and thoughtful.

SIDE B

And you are near to everyone
whose prayers come from the heart.

LEADER

Sing and shout praises to the Lord our God!

ALL

**Sing praise to the Lord for as long as you
live.**

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now,
and ever shall be
world without end. Amen. Alleluia.**

[Turn back to Daily Prayer for today.]

Tuesday Daily Prayer



[Reminder: The Psalm for February is on page 4. Make a copy for each member of the class.]

Introduction

As we begin a new school year, we want to be friends with each other and with God. Today our reading reminds us that God wants us to love each other as he loves us. This is not always easy. We may be in class with others who are not yet our friends. John gives us a goal for our new school year!

One person who loved others well was Caroline Chisholm (*CHIZ-um*). She was born in England on this day in 1808. She came to Australia with her husband and spent her life finding homes and work for women who migrated here alone. When she died in 1877, the words on her grave called her 'the emigrant's friend'.

✠ **All make the Sign of the Cross.**

🎵 **Hymn**

A Psalm for February

[Turn to page 4.]

📖 **Reading**

1 John 4:7, 16, 19-21

Listen to the words of the first letter of John:

My dear friends, we must love each other. Love comes from God, and when we love each other, it shows that we have been given new life. We are now God's children and we know him.

God is love. If we keep on loving others, we will stay one in our hearts with God and he will stay one with us.

We love because God loved us first. But if we say we love God and don't love each

other, we are liars. We cannot see God. So how can we love God, if we don't love the people we can see?

The commandment that God has given us is: 'Love God and love each other!'

The word of the Lord.

Reflection

How do you feel about being in a new class? Are you ready to be loving to everyone? How can you show love to new students who might be feeling lonely?

Closing

Blessed be God, Creator of days and seasons.

Let us all say: Blessed be God for ever!

Blessed be God for ever!

Let us bring our hopes and needs to God, as we pray: **God, our companion, hear our prayer.**

[Pause for students to name their prayer wish. All join in the response each time.]

Let us pray with the words that Jesus taught us:

Our Father ...

Loving God, you give us this new school year and new friends with whom to share it.

Bless all who pray

and work and learn together.

May this year bring peace and harmony throughout the world.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

[Sing 'Alleluia!']

✠ **All make the Sign of the Cross.**