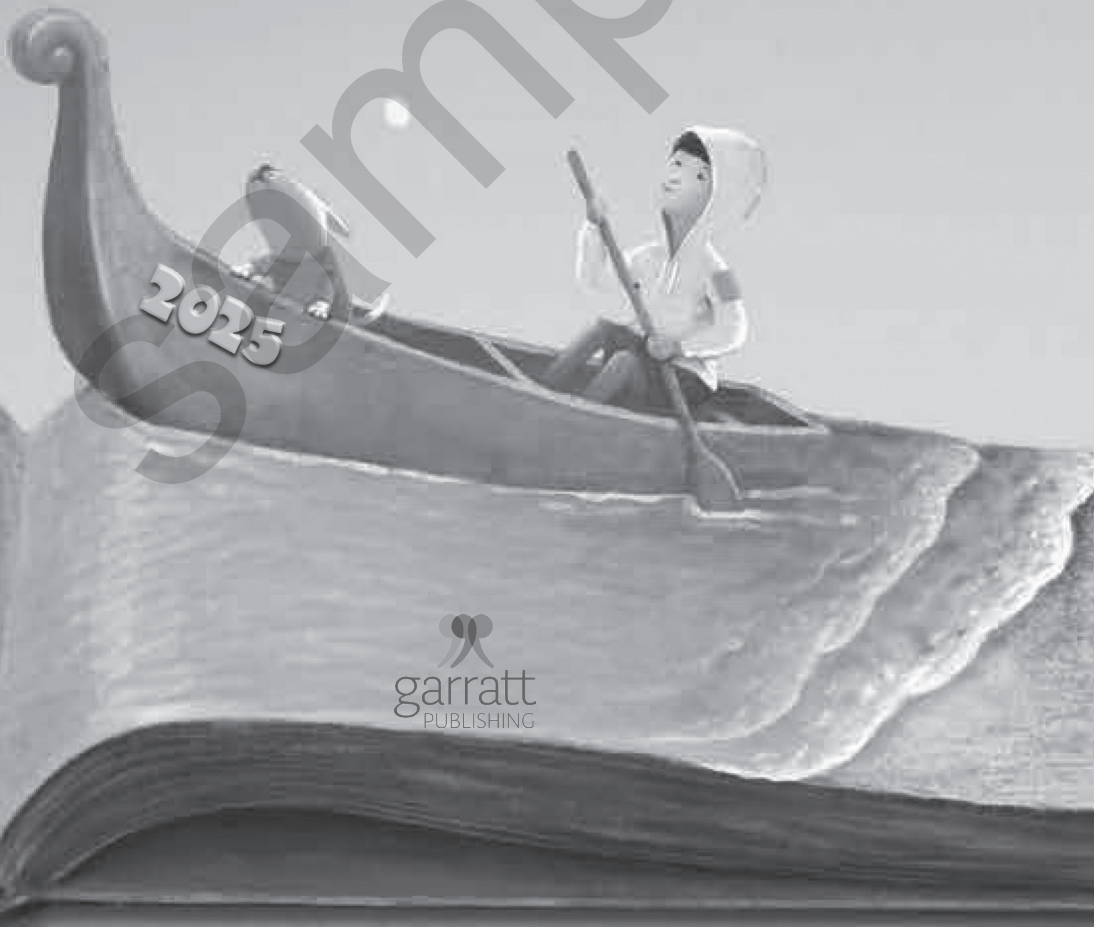


Children's Daily Prayer

Under the Southern Cross

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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Margaret Smith sgs and Associates
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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 2025 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

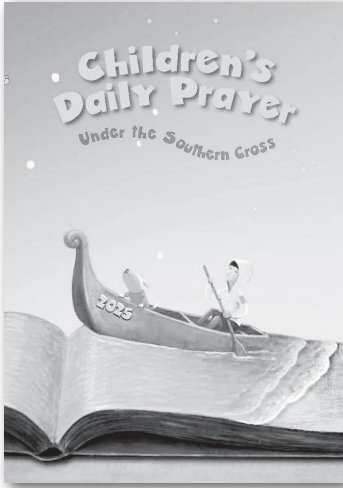
Who else might use this book?

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 2025 is arranged:



1.



By months
(from late January)

2.



By the liturgical seasons

3.



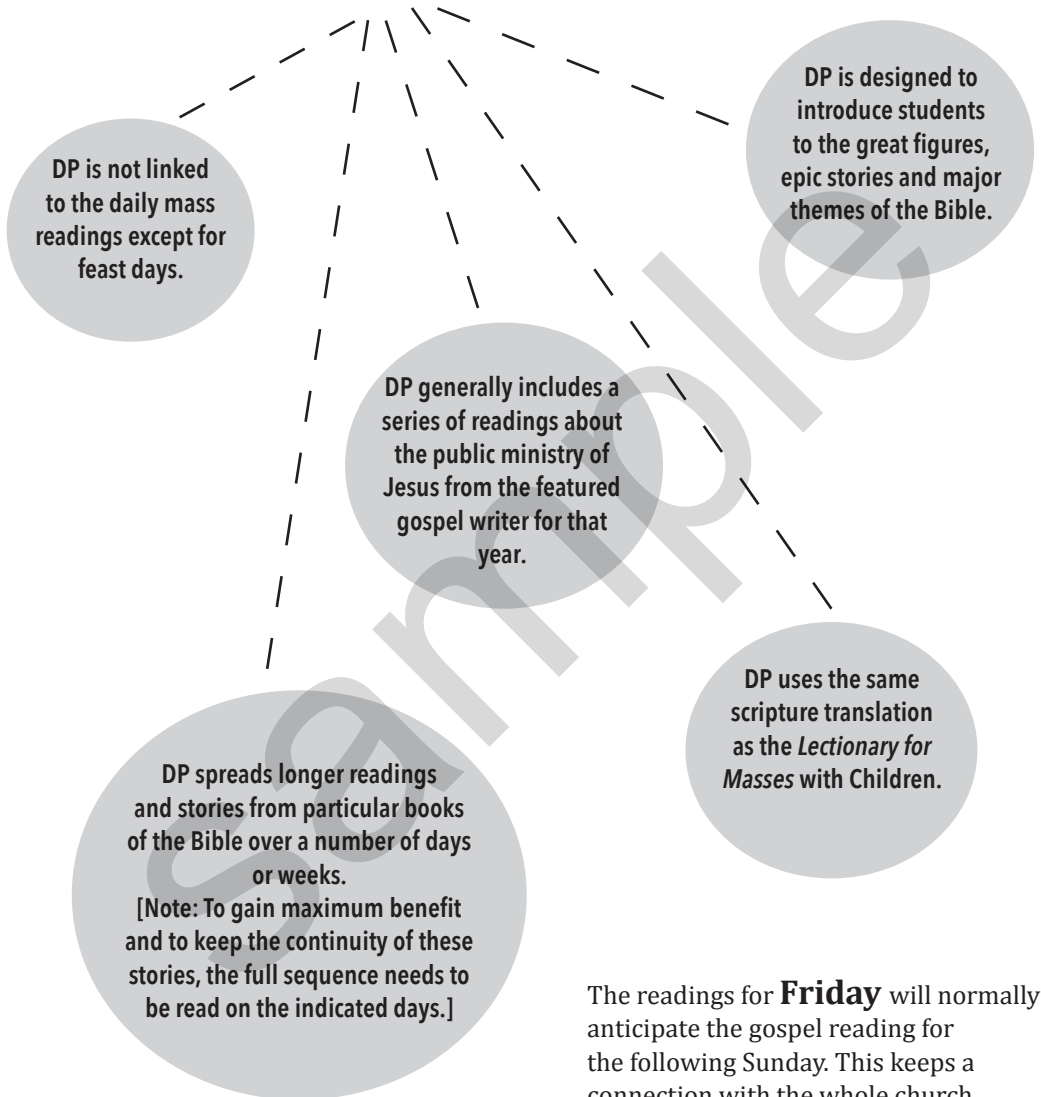
For each month or liturgical season, there is an introduction called **Looking Ahead** and a psalm for the month or season.

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

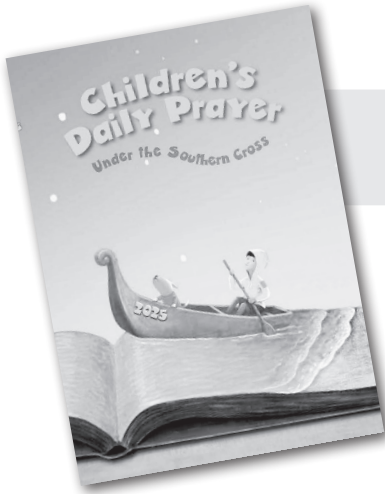
How are the Scriptures organised?

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
- ~ **Exaggerate 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.



What about music?

Sung prayer is at the heart of our Christian tradition. Children's Daily Prayer will be enhanced when song is an integral part of it – hymns, chants, short refrains. A hymn can be sung to open the prayer. An 'Alleluia' can always conclude the prayer except during Lent. Settings of 'Lord, have mercy' or 'Kyrie eleison' are suitable for Lent.

*Below is a chart with some hymns. Hymns are mainly from the collections **As One Voice (AOV)** which is readily available, and **Gather Australia (GA)**. Many will also be found in the compilation, **Catholic Worship Book II (CWB2)**. You will note that the suggestions are usually hymns of praise or suited to the seasons and feasts of the church year, rather than Eucharistic hymns.*

The church's Daily Prayer is of a different form from Eucharist. The basis of selection is the liturgical season, suitability for students and what they are likely to hear in their parish Sunday assemblies.

- AOV** *As One Voice (Vol 1 & 2), Combined People's Edition, Willow Publishing Pty Ltd, Manly Vale, NSW, 1992.*
- GA** *Gather Australia, NLMC Publications, Melbourne, 1995.*
- CWB2** *Catholic Worship Book II, Morning Star Publishing, Northcote, Vic, 2015.*

*For other useful collections of music for the liturgy, see **Helpful Resources** on page 267.*

	AOV	GA
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LENT <i>(Alleluia is not sung during Lent)</i>		
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Come as you are	1-031	212
Come to set us free	1-039	277

February

Thursday 30 January to Tuesday 4 March





Ordinary Time ~ February 2025

Looking Ahead

About the Month

For students, families, teachers, and all concerned with schooling, the end of January means 'back to school'. While holidays are over, summer continues. Days are hot and daylight hours long. They 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, it won't be long before trees start to look tired and begin to lose their leaves. This first term of the school year lasts through to the beginning of Autumn.

As this new school year gets under way, 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. That was followed by the season of Christmas which ended on January 12. Until Lent begins, we are in the season of Ordinary Time. This does not mean that it is 'ordinary', but simply that each week will be counted in order, one after the other.

There are two parts to Ordinary Time. The first and shorter one is between Christmas and Lent; the second and longer one is between Pentecost and Advent. As school starts, we are in Week Three. We will get to Week Eight before Lent.

Ordinary Time is precious time for exploring the good news more fully week by week.

Children's Daily Prayer under the Southern Cross 2025 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 iv–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. After that we will have nearly four weeks of readings from the gospel of Luke.

Each year in Ordinary Time we read from one of three gospels: Matthew, Mark, and Luke. The church reads each one in turn over three years, Years A, B and C. This year we will read a lot from Luke because 2025 is the Year of Luke (Year C). We will hear Luke's story of the life and work of Jesus. The gospel of Matthew will be read in 2026 (Year A) and Mark will be read in 2027 (Year B).

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

An important feast at this time is the **Presentation of the Lord**. We will remember it on January 31. Mary and Joseph brought Jesus to the temple 40 days after he was born. The child Jesus was greeted there by the prophets Simeon and Anna. They saw that he was the Messiah, the light of the world.

Commemorations

January 29

The **Lunar (or Chinese) New Year** began on January 29. It is the year of the snake, known for wisdom, charm and style.

February 6

This is **Waitangi Day** (*WHY-tung-ee*) in New Zealand. This day commemorates the treaty made with the Maori people in 1840. There is a special prayer for Waitangi Day on pages 11–12.

February 11

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

February 20

World Social Justice Day. During the year we will note many days that have a special theme chosen by the United Nations. These are meant to bring the whole world together. World Social Justice Day is one of these.

February 28

Ramadan. Moslem people around the world begin a month of fasting from the evening of February 28. They call this very special and holy time *Ramadan*.

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, read 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 2025 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. These can be happy things like a birthday, or sad things like someone's sickness or death, or some trouble in the world. 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'.

The next section in *Children's Daily Prayer Under the Southern Cross* is Early Lent. There is a prayer for the Preparation of Ashes on page 35. Preparations for this would need to be made in advance. Ask students to bring the palms from last year's Palm Sunday service to make the ashes.

Suggested Hymns

See pages vi–ix of the hymn chart. 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!

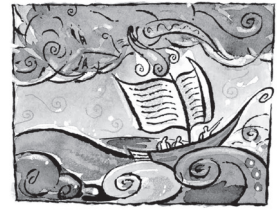
ALL

**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.]

Thursday 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. Our Daily Prayer will help us be good friends. Each day there's a short reading from the Bible, either the Old Testament or the New. We read today from a letter in the New Testament. It reminds us that God wants us to love each other as much as he loves us. This is not always easy. At school we are often in class with others who are not yet our friends. Let's make John's teaching our motto as we begin our new school year!

Yesterday was the first day of the New Year for Chinese and other Asian people. It is a special day for them to come together with family and friends. They look ahead happily to the blessings of the year ahead. We can celebrate with them.

✠ **All make the Sign of the Cross.**



A Psalm for February

[Turn to page 4.]



From 1 John 4:7-21

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, and anyone who doesn't love others has never known him.

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

he will say one with us.

We love because God loves 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? Are there any new students in the class who might be feeling lonely? How can I love them?

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.**