

**An Order for Night Prayer (Compline) —
led by Wendy Curto**
**The responder on behalf of all is Sylvia
Williams**

The Lord almighty grant us a quiet night
and a perfect end.

Amen.

Our help is in the name of the Lord
Who made heaven and earth.

*A period of silence for reflection on the
past day may follow.*

*The following or other suitable words of
penitence may be used*

Most merciful God, we confess to you, be-
fore the whole company of heaven and one
another, that we have sinned in thought,
word and deed and in what we have failed
to do. Forgive us our sins, heal us by your
Spirit and raise us to new life in Christ.
Amen.

O God, make speed to save us.
O Lord, make haste to help us.

**Glory to the Father and to the Son and to
the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning
is now and shall be for ever. Amen.**

Alleluia.

The following or another suitable hymn
may be said or sung

Before the ending of the day,
Creator of the world we pray,
That with thy wonted favour thou
Wouldst be our guard and keeper now.

From all ill dreams defend our eyes
From nightly fears and fantasies;
Tread underfoot our ghostly foe,
That no pollution we may know.

O Father, that we ask be done,
Through Jesus Christ, thine only Son;
Who, with the Holy Ghost and thee,
Doth live and reign eternally.

The Word of God
**Psalmody - One or more of the following
psalms may be used.**

Psalm 4

1 Answer me when I call, O God of my
righteousness; ♦
**you set me at liberty when I was in trou-
ble; have mercy on me and hear my
prayer.**

2 How long will you nobles dishonour
my glory; ♦
**how long will you love vain things and
seek after falsehood?**

3 But know that the Lord has shown me
his marvellous kindness; ♦
when I call upon the Lord, he will hear me.

4 Stand in awe, and sin not; ♦
**commune with your own heart upon your
bed, and be still.**

5 Offer the sacrifices of righteousness ♦
and put your trust in the Lord.

6 There are many that say, 'Who will
show us any good?' ♦
**Lord, lift up the light of your countenance
upon us.**

7 You have put gladness in my heart, ♦
**more than when their corn and wine and
oil increase.**

8 In peace I will lie down and sleep, ♦
**for it is you Lord, only, who make me
dwell in safety.**

Psalm 91

1 Whoever dwells in the shelter of the
Most High ♦
**and abides under the shadow of the Al-
mighty,**

2 Shall say to the Lord, 'My refuge and
my stronghold, ♦
my God, in whom I put my trust.'

3 For he shall deliver you from the snare
of the fowler ♦
and from the deadly pestilence.

4 He shall cover you with his wings and
you shall be safe under his feathers; ♦
**his faithfulness shall be your shield and
buckler.**

5 You shall not be afraid of any terror by
night, ♦
nor of the arrow that flies by day;

6 Of the pestilence that stalks in darkness, ♦
nor of the sickness that destroys at noon-day.

7 Though a thousand fall at your side and ten thousand at your right hand, ♦
yet it shall not come near you.

8 Your eyes have only to behold ♦
to see the reward of the wicked.

9 Because you have made the Lord your refuge ♦
and the Most High your stronghold,

10 There shall no evil happen to you, ♦
neither shall any plague come near your tent.

11 For he shall give his angels charge over you, ♦
to keep you in all your ways.

12 They shall bear you in their hands, ♦
lest you dash your foot against a stone.

13 You shall tread upon the lion and adder; ♦
the young lion and the serpent you shall trample underfoot.

14 Because they have set their love upon me, therefore will I deliver them; ♦
I will lift them up, because they know my name.

15 They will call upon me and I will answer them; ♦
I am with them in trouble, I will deliver them and bring them to honour.

16 With long life will I satisfy them ♦
and show them my salvation.

Psalm 134

1 Come, bless the Lord, all you servants of the Lord, ♦
you that by night stand in the house of the Lord.

2 Lift up your hands towards the sanctuary ♦
and bless the Lord.

3 The Lord who made heaven and earth ♦
give you blessing out of Zion.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning is now and shall be for ever. Amen.

Reading -

The Commentary from "Lent with St. Augustine" for today - From the book: Lent with Saint Augustine
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday of the Fifth Week of Lent

Reflections including personal responses from watching "The Restless Heart" and reading "Lent with St. Augustine."

Monday of the Fifth Week of Lent 44
"Could you rebuff her for your aid?" Confessions 5.9.17

Augustine sailed from Carthage to Rome, leaving his mother behind. She prayed fervently and complained to God, believing that it was not only her son who left her but the Lord himself. The poor soul was not aware how much joy God had prepared for her in the form of her son's departure. Despite this difficult separation from her child, not only did she not stop praying but did so ever more passionately and entrusted her physically distant son to the merciful God.

Some of the most moving fragments of the Confessions are devoted to her prayer, perseverance, trust, and patience. Monica's style of prayer, her pleas to God, and her ways of dealing with painful experiences are worth a closer look.

"Would you, O God of all mercy, spurn the broken, humbled heart of a chaste and temperate widow who was untiring in her acts of charity, attentive to the needs of your saints and faithful in serving them? Never a day would pass but she was careful to make her offering at your altar. Twice a day, at morning and evening she was unfailingly present in your church, not for gossip or old wives' tales but so that she might hearken to your words, as you to her prayers. Could you, then, whose grace had made her what she was, disdain those tears and rebuff her plea

for your aid, when what she tearfully begged from you was not gold or silver, not some insecure, ephemeral advantage, but the salvation of her son?"

Penitence, humility, prudence, and attention to the voice of God—these are some of the characteristics of Monica's prayer in which she pleaded with God for the salvation of her son's soul. She was also known to give out alms and visited the church twice daily.

At the time of the Confessions, Augustine's mother had already been dead for more than a decade, yet she was still very much present in his mind and heart. As he progressed in the spiritual assessment of his life, he realised more and more how much he owed to her prayer. And yet he did not know everything about Monica and her faith—some things she told him herself, others he understood on his own, and more still were related by friends.

While reading St. Augustine's words on this day, how can we not think about our own mothers, both alive and those who are already with the Lord? As the years go by, we understand more and more how important it is to have a believing and loving mother, one willing to sacrifice everything for the good of her children. From our own experience and observations we know that mothers like that are not only a thing of the remote past. In these times, too, God gives to the world mothers of heroic faith, patient, penitent, and trusting prayer, and big, loving hearts.

On June 14, 1987, during his third pilgrimage to Poland, Saint John Paul II prayed at the grave of Fr. Jerzy Popiełuszko alongside his parents. "Mother, you have given us a great son," John Paul II said to Marianna Popiełuszko. "It was not I," she replied. "God gave him through me to the world."

Tuesday of the Fifth Week of Lent 45

"I hung keenly upon his words, but cared little for their content." —Confessions 5:13.23

Augustine's stay in Rome was indeed very short. The students in that city have proven to be no more diligent and honest than their Carthaginian counterparts. Augustine was quickly disappointed with teaching them and realised that such a place and position would not give him

true happiness. Unexpectedly, he received an offer of assuming the prestigious post of rhetoric teacher in the imperial capital of Milan through Symmachus, the prefect of Rome. He accepted gladly and soon set out from Rome heading north. The pious Bishop Ambrose was diligently performing pastoral duties in the city of Milan and would later play an important role in Augustine's conversion. Toward the end of the fifth book of the Confessions, he describes his first impression of the famed priest and preacher:

"This man of God welcomed me with fatherly kindness and showed the charitable concern for my pilgrimage that befitted a bishop. I began to feel affection for him, not at first as a teacher of truth, for that I had given up hope of finding in your Church, but simply as a man who was kind to me. With professional interest I listened to him conducting disputes before the people, but my intention was not the right one: I was assessing his eloquence to see whether it matched his reputation. I wished to ascertain whether the readiness of speech with which rumour credited him was really there, or something more, or less. I hung keenly upon his words, but cared little for their content, and indeed despised it."

When Augustine met Ambrose for the first time in his life, he was stricken above all by his human virtues: openness, kindness, and a good heart. The bishop of Milan must have had those in abundance, since Augustine was not afraid to state that he was welcomed like a son.

Ambrose did not immediately try to convert the young but already famous rhetoric teacher or touch upon subjects directly relating to faith and the church. For Augustine's idea of faith then was very different from the one he presented in his theological dissertations years later after his conversion. At the time, he was convinced that faith is above all the result of one's own examinations, efforts, work, and philosophical inquiries. It took a lot of effort, wisdom, and patience on Ambrose's part to convince Augustine that faith is primarily a gift from God, who kindly regards those who open their hearts and minds. It is not man who is supposed to find the Truth, Ambrose said to him once, but simply allow the Truth to find him.

Wednesday of the Fifth Week of Lent 46

"I listened to him straightforwardly expounding the word of truth" —Confessions 6.3.4

Augustine's mother Monica surprised him with a visit in Milan. Her son informed her that he had left the ranks of the Manicheans and was still searching for truth and happiness. She intensified her prayers and listened to Ambrose's sermons with utmost piety while her son became more interested not only in the bishop's eloquent speech but also his personal lifestyle. He admired Ambrose's methodical style of work and devotion to the people. Augustine craved long and calm discussions with the bishop, but because of the large numbers of faithful waiting for their chance to meet the priest, he had to settle for brief, albeit very rewarding, encounters.

"At most, I could only put a point to him briefly, whereas my inner turmoil was at such a feverish pitch that I needed to find him completely at leisure if I were to pour it all out, and I never did so find him. Nonetheless I listened to him straightforwardly expounding the word of truth to the people every Sunday, and as I listened, I became more and more convinced that it was possible to unravel all those cunning knots of calumny in which the sacred books had been entangled by tricksters who had deceived me and others."

Augustine was lucky to have the pious Monica as his mother and the devout and enlightened Bishop Ambrose as his spiritual guide. It seems that in the matters of faith, he owed the most to those two persons. His mother was always with him in prayer, and Bishop Ambrose interpreted the most profound passages from the Holy Bible, expounded the truths of faith, and explained moral principles.

But is it that these kind of people were given by God only to Augustine and a handful of other chosen people? Lent is an opportunity to look back at our spiritual history and gratefully remember those who selflessly offered us help and kindness and shone light on our dark paths. Some among them surely were clergymen, our parish priests, vicars, catechists, confessors, and nuns. We must remember them, especially now, when the negative conduct of so many clergy is paraded in the media.

I believe that after some time of honest introspection, we can all recall our own Ambrosias—surely less outstanding than the bishop of Milan, less proficient in explaining the Holy Bible, and less talented at preaching. But it is they whom God chose to put before us on our spiritual paths, despite their weaknesses. We might reproach ourselves for not loving them enough, for being self-centred, and for not thanking them while we could still stand up and defend their names. But all that will become possible if we apply, even partially, what they taught and encouraged us to do in our lives.

The following responsory may be said
Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.
Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.

For you have redeemed me, Lord God of truth.
I commend my spirit.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.
Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.
Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.

Alleluia, alleluia. Keep me as the apple of your eye.
Hide me under the shadow of your wings.

Gospel Cantic

The Nunc dimittis (The Song of Simeon) is said or sung
Save us, O Lord, while waking, and guard us while sleeping, that awake we may watch with Christ and asleep may rest in peace.

- 1 Now, Lord, you let your servant go in peace: ♦ your word has been fulfilled.
 - 2 My own eyes have seen the salvation ♦ which you have prepared in the sight of every people;
 - 3 A light to reveal you to the nations ♦ and the glory of your people Israel.
- Luke 2.29-32

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning is now and shall be for ever. Amen. Save us, O Lord, while waking, and guard us while sleeping, that awake we may watch with Christ and asleep may rest in peace.

Prayers led by Robin Crowther

Lord God, Jesus gave a second chance to a woman whom others had judged and condemned. In the same way, you open new paths for us and make new beginnings possible. Today, we bring before you people who need our care and our prayers. Lord hear us....[Lord graciously hear us](#)

We continue to pray for an end to the war in Ukraine and the wasting of life, communities and homes. May God touch the hearts of peacemakers and bring about just solutions to the crisis facing so many innocent people. Lord hear us....[Lord graciously hear us](#)

While we pray for peace between Russia and Ukraine, we also remember the people of Syria, Lebanon, Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan and all places of conflict and suffering. May Jesus, the Prince of Peace, bring peace to our troubled world. Lord hear us....[Lord graciously hear us](#)

Many families are struggling to cope with rising prices and job insecurity. May they find the security and stability for which they long so that they can grow together in confidence and love. Lord hear us....[Lord graciously hear us](#)

Our media often focuses on the bad news and overlooks the good news stories. May we see the signs of new life and hope in our daily life and count our blessings. Lord hear us....[Lord graciously hear us](#)

Holy Week and Easter are fast approaching. May we open our hearts and minds to their message of complete and totally generous love. Lord hear us....[Lord graciously hear us](#)

Lord God, be with us. Stay with us. Walk with us as we try to walk with you. We make our prayer through our loving Lord who showed us the meaning of forgiveness.

Lord hear us....[Lord graciously hear us](#)

We pray for those recently departed: Francienne Vaughan

We pray for those whose anniversaries of death occur this month:

Thomas William Barker, Olive Fitzpatrick, Breda Bladon, Jimmy Dunlop, Edwin Manser, Roger Smith, Richard Hunt, Eileen Sheldon, Lydia Harttrup, Dick Howarth, Elijah Towner, Sheila Radford, Rebecca Barker, Thomas Heady, Elsie Dodson, Anna Towner. Lord hear us....[Lord graciously hear us](#)

We pray in silence for our own personal needs
Lord hear us....[Lord graciously hear us](#)

The Collect

Most merciful God, who by the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ delivered and saved the world: grant that by faith in him who suffered on the cross we may triumph in the power of his victory; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. [Amen](#)

St. Augustine's Prayer

Watch, O Lord, with those who wake, or watch, or weep tonight, and give Your Angels and Saints charge over those who sleep. Tend Your sick ones, O Lord Christ. Rest Your weary ones. Bless Your dying ones. Soothe Your suffering ones. Pity Your afflicted ones. Shield Your joyous ones. And all for Your love's sake. [Amen](#)

For people of our nation

Lord Jesus Christ, in these dark and difficult days, we turn our hearts to you. In ages past, you have delivered our nation from disaster. Do it again, we pray. Give wisdom beyond human wisdom to our leaders, Give strength beyond human strength to the NHS and all our frontline workers. Give comfort beyond human comfort to the elderly and all who grieve. Lord Jesus Christ, in these challenging and fearful days, turn your face towards us,

have mercy upon us, and heal our land, we pray. **Amen.**

Visit our homes, O Lord, we pray, and drive far from them all the snares of the enemy; may your holy angels dwell with us and guard us in peace, and may your blessing be always upon us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever.

Amen.

The Conclusion

In peace we will lie down and sleep;
For you alone, Lord, make us dwell in safety.

Abide with us, Lord Jesus,
For the night is at hand and the day is now past.

As the night watch looks for the morning,
So do we look for you, O Christ.

Come with the dawning of the day
And make yourself known in the breaking of the bread.

The Lord bless us and watch over us;
the Lord make his face shine upon us and be gracious to us;
the Lord look kindly on us and give us peace. **Amen.**