

# Scripture Prayer For The Week

"Once...  
when Jesus...  
was praying alone..." (Luke 9:18)



Artwork Dorothy Woodward

## Ordinary Time – Yr A Week 7

**We Gather:** Green is the current liturgical colour. In the prayer space, have the bible opened at the Gospel reading. On the stand, a shirt and cloak (shawl) could be draped. A small bowl with prayer slips- "I will pray for....."- could be placed for people to take. Add more slips during the week.

**Leader:** God, who is perfect, all-loving and compassionate.

**All:** Strengthen us to be as you are, to think as you do, to love as you do.

**We Listen:** The Gospel. Matthew 5:38-48

Read the gospel passage reflectively. After a time of silent reflection, the line from scripture below could be repeated and the short commentary read.

**"Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."**

### **Commentary:**

Jesus is the radical Word of a radical God. We cringe when we read this passage, because the new rules Jesus puts on us are frightening in their uncompromising nature. Offer the other cheek, give not just the shirt but the cloak, walk two miles not just one and love your enemy. Whew! Blood and tribal feuds over history clearly mark out as "enemy" those who are different culturally, religiously, politically, economically. It is hard to break the chains which secure us to *traditional* enemies. The hurts that caused the division are hidden in the shadows of history, but the power they have to control and disorder our minds and hearts continues. Even in our domesticated Australian setting, we find it much easier to criticise those we dislike and condemn, rather than pray genuinely for them.

**We Respond:** "Pray for those who hurt you."

In silence, reflect on the questions below? Take a prayer sip and pray for someone/ a group OF whom you are critical, whom you dislike.

- Will it be a new experience to pray with love for –politicians, terrorists, colleagues?
- How easy is it to fall into the habit of "making enemies"- in my mind and heart?
- Do I want to be "perfect as God is perfect"?

**Song:** Prayer of St Francis(S Temple-AOV2) or Mercy, Lord (M Avolicino-Spirit & Song-OCP)

**We Go Forth:** Give time to pause and savour each sentence of this prayer.

God, you see every human being, with eyes of understanding and tenderness. Yet, we who are surely made in your image, are often blinded by our tunnel vision and meanness of heart. Give us the joy and peace that comes with being able to let go of hurts and accept others with respect and graciousness. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.