



**TIMES OF THE LITURGY**

**Sunday** - 7.45am - Lauds | 8.15am - Low Mass | 9.15am - Dominican Rite Mass (Extraordinary Form) | 11am - Sung Conventual Mass | 6pm - Low Mass | 7pm - Vespers.

**Monday - Friday** - 7am - Lauds | 7.30am - Conventual Mass | 6.15pm - Devotions and Meditation | 6.30pm - Vespers. [N.B. First Fridays of the month, Vespers in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament with a period of Adoration from 6.15pm.]

**Saturday** - 9am - Lauds | 9.30am - Conventual Mass | 4.30-6pm - Confessions | 6.15pm - Sung Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary | 6.30pm - Vespers.

**THIS WEEK**

Sun 2 **THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD IN THE TEMPLE**

Mon 3 S Blaise

Tue 4 S Catherine de'Ricci

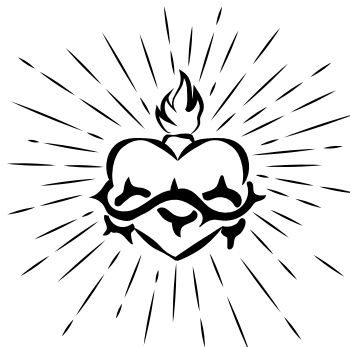
Wed 5 S Agatha

Thu 6 S Paul Miki & Companions

Fri 7 Anniversary of Deceased Parents

Sat 8 Our Lady on Saturday

Sun 9 **V ORDINARY TIME**



**FIRST FRIDAY**

*Friday, 7 February, 2025*

7am - Lauds | 7.30am - Conventual Mass | 6.15pm - Exposition & Adoration | 6.30pm - Vespers in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament & Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

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**NICAEA LECTURES**

**'I BELIEVE IN GOD'**

Professor Eamon Duffy

Thursday 6 February, 6pm at Fisher House.

# AQUINAS ON THE VIRTUES

Sr Magdalene Eitenmiller OP is offering an 8-week course on Aquinas' teaching on the Cardinal Virtues beginning this Tuesday at 4:30 pm. You can register for this online course by going to Margaret Beaufort Institute's home page, <https://www.mbit.cam.ac.uk/> and clicking on "Aquinas & the Cardinal Virtues." The classes will be recorded, so that you can return to them or watch them later, as needed.

## MODERN SLAVERY

On Saturday, 8 February 2025, the Diocese of East Anglia invites everyone to join in prayer for the victims of trafficking and modern slavery. It is estimated that around 5,000 people are enslaved in this diocese, up to 200,000 in the UK, and 50 million globally. To find out what you can do to bring an end to this evil, please take away one of the "Modern Slavery" booklets, and please visit the website <<https://www.rcdea.org.uk/caritas-east-anglia/modern-slavery/>>.

## COURSE ON S TERESA BENEDICTA OF THE CROSS

The Search for Truth: Edith Stein, 14 – 16 March 2025: Fr Matthew Blake, OCD will offer a weekend at the Christian Heritage Centre exploring the life and teachings of Edith Stein/St Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, and her indomitable search for truth that led her to the Catholic faith. For more information and to book please visit <<https://christianheritagecentre.com/events/the-search-for-truth-edith-stein/>>.

## MENS' SPIRITUAL EXERCISES

Mens' Spiritual Exercises, 30 March – 4 April 2025: At the Christian Heritage Centre, a 5-day version of the Ignatian Exercises is being offered specifically for men. One-to-one direction will be offered alongside the talks. For more information and to book please visit <<https://christianheritagecentre.com/events/mens-spiritual-exercises/>>.

## THE LORD'S PRAYER IN THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

### *Lead us not into temptation*

We are looking at the Lord's prayer in relation to the rest of the Gospel of St Matthew. What is meant by temptation? It has a wide range of meanings based on the idea of being subjected to a test. Temptation, which is from the Latin translation, *temptatio*, has come to mean enticement to sin, but this is not the original meaning. It can mean temptation by extension, as in the following quotation from St Paul:

***But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction (1 Timothy, 6:9).***

The same word is used here as in the Lord's prayer, but it is more than a niggling urge to have more that St Paul is speaking about here. It is a trial which is brought about by compulsive desires for wealth, desire in the plural because it manifests itself in many ways and in many circumstances.

The word, both as a verb and a noun means to be tested in the sense of being tried out. In Attic Greek, the word usually means to try to do something. It is a New Testament usage to apply the verb to try someone, rather than something, translating a Hebrew word, *nissah*. This might sound close enough to the modern meaning of temptation, but the temptation is not purely from inside ourselves. Someone or some circumstance is testing us. So, Jesus is brought out to the desert in Matthew to be tested by the devil. It is not the devil who brings him into the desert, but the Spirit. The synoptic Gospels agree on this. This gives an opportunity to the Devil, but the temptation is in the desert, because the desert is the place where the Israelites were tried. In Deuteronomy, it is God who tries his people, (13:3), rather than Satan. Now we pray to the Father not to be led into temptation and in the other use of the word in the Gospel of St Matthew at Gethsemane, Christ says to St Peter, St James and St John:

***Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak (Matthew 26:41).***

In that injunction we have part of the answer. The flesh is weak so that we might fail when we come into a time of trial. Christ, as the perfect man can resist temptation, so that his being allowed to be subject to temptation will not endanger him. Instead, it enables him to win his first victory over the devil. In winning this victory, he is also showing us what we are to try to be in this world, and even more so, what we will be if we enter into the kingdom. The victory of Christ is only given to us through grace, but while we live in this world, it will always be true that even if the spirit is willing, itself hardly a given, the flesh is weak. 'Lead us not into temptation' is therefore the safest prayer, especially as we see often enough, as suggested in the above quote from 1 Timothy, that we may manufacture our own times of trial.

When we pray to avoid some evil, and the testing is undoubtedly an evil since it comes from Satan, we are not always certain that these evils will not come. This does not make a prayer to avoid evil useless. By asking God to keep us from evils, we prepare ourselves to face these evils. If we have prayed, but the evil still comes, the fact of our prayer makes us see that there must be some greater purpose in what we are to endure. We can see this in Gethsemane, where Our Lord is praying. This is what he prays for:

***And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will" (Matthew, 26:39).***

It is a prayer which asks to be spared the greatest of all trials, his passion and death on the Cross, but it is a request which accepts the will of the Father as paramount. Prayer to avoid the time of trial will not necessarily save us from some such trial, but it will make us stronger to bear what we must. It will certainly give greater meaning to our trials, though it is a meaning shrouded in mystery. The three disciples fall asleep, and they are told to stay awake to 'watch' as it is often translated, so that they too may be ready to enter into their own trials. Peter and James will, of course, fail when that first great trial comes, abandoning Our Lord, though if John is the beloved disciple of the Gospel of St John, then he, at least would have stayed at the foot of the cross.

There are various parables in the Gospel of St Matthew which make use of the image of staying awake or its opposite, sleeping, where the failure to stay awake is disastrous. The parable of the five wise and the five foolish virgins is a good example (25:1-13). This is an eschatological parable, about the end of the world, but it is also about how our relationship with each other is affected by our failure to stay awake. It is because all the virgins fall asleep that the foolish ones run out of time and the wise virgins who also fall asleep are unable to help them. The parables are not just about the end times but about living our lives well because we never know when either our individual lives, or the life of humanity itself, will come to an end. Sleep is a metaphor for not being ready for God, but it is also a metaphor for allowing evil to sleep into the world, as in the parable of the tares and the wheat, where an enemy, the devil, is able to sow the tares among the wheat. This happens while men slept, (13:25). Staying awake for the end times, for the ultimate trial, means being aware of what is happening now. It does not stop us paying attention, quite the reverse, if we remember that all our lives will be subjected to judgement. It is worth adding that although sleeping is a metaphor for inattention and unpreparedness, actual sleep is valuable in itself. The Apostles sleep in Gethsemane where they shouldn't but Our Lord is asleep in the boat during the storm. A good sleep pattern is an essential part of a good and healthy life. Sleeplessness is not a good sign of a well lived life, so we should fit our prayer into a balanced life with adequate sleep. Special vigils are permissible but should be properly organised and would be best done on a communal basis. The prayer to not be led into temptation is therefore a prayer to be aware that trials may come, to never lightly test ourselves, but to accept the trials that the Father may allow us, for the sake of his kingdom.

*fr Euan Marley, OP*

## SAINT CATHERINE DE' RICCI

Saint Catherine was born in 1522 of a noble family. To the distress of her mother she burned from an early age with great love for Christ crucified. At the age of twelve she entered the Sisters' convent of St Vincent at Prato, taking the name of Catherine. Burning with love for the Holy Spirit and incessantly seeking the glory of the Lord, she promoted the regular life under the inspiration of Girolamo Savonarola. She was favoured with extraordinary mystical experiences and, from the age of twenty, she began to experience the sacred stigmata and weekly ecstasies of the passion. These phenomena continued for twenty years. She served twice as prioress, governing the community with exemplary prudence and kindness. She left behind spiritual writings, notably letters to St Philip Neri, St Charles Borromeo, and St Mary Magdalen de' Pazzi. She died at Prato on 2 February 1590, and was canonised by Benedict IX on 29 June 1746.

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## THE PRIORY OF ST MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL

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