



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. On Fridays in Lent, Stations at 6.50pm. [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 **VIII ORDINARY TIME /
QUINQUAGESIMA**

Mon 3 *feria*

Tue 4 *feria*

Wed 5 *Ash Wednesday*

Thu 6 *feria*

Fri 7 *feria*

Sat 8 *feria*

Sun 9 **LENT I**

**THE PERSONAL MEANING OF MERCY:
OUR FINAL HOPE**

Dr Robert McNamara,

Associate Professor of Philosophy, Franciscan University of Steubenville.

To celebrate the Jubilee Year 2025, we will be holding a series of half-hour talks on mercy and hope. The first of these talks will take place next Sunday 9th March immediately after the Latin Mass, around 10:15am.



ASH WEDNESDAY

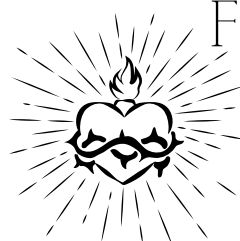
A DAY OF FASTING & ABSTINENCE

MASS WITH THE BLESSING & DISTRIBUTION OF
ASHES - 7.30AM

FIRST FRIDAY - 7 MARCH

7am Lauds | 7.30am Mass | 6.15pm Adoration
6.30pm Vespers & Benediction, followed by

Stations of the Cross



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cambridge.bursar@english.op.org



BECAUSE OF THE CAMBRIDGE HALF MARATHON NEXT SUNDAY (9TH MARCH), SEVERAL ROADS NEAR THE PRIORY WILL BE CLOSED THAT MORNING (SEE [HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/4TU79FMT](https://tinyurl.com/4TU79FMT) FOR A MAP), SO PLEASE ALLOW EXTRA TIME TO GET TO MASS.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Every Friday in Lent after Vespers (at around 6.50pm), the community at Blackfriars will have Stations of the Cross.

MARCH MAGNIFICATS

We have a lot of March Magnificats to give a way, so please take one.

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/>.

RETREAT ON EDITH STEIN

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. For more information and to book visit the Christian Heritage Centre website.

SEARCH FOR MEANING

This Conference is inspired by the life and work of Edith Stein (St Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, OCD), with a team of speakers, including Prof Peter Tyler, Professor of Pastoral Theology and Spirituality at St Mary's Catholic University, Twickenham, and author of *The Living Philosophy of Edith Stein*. Open to All. 9 - 11 May 2025. Attendance can be full residential, daily attendance, or online. £250 for full Residential attendance (includes Friday dinner and overnight stay until Sunday). NB: If NOT able to attend in person, or online, or are contacting us from abroad, beyond our own UK time-Zone, you will be sent recordings of the Talks.

PRAYER & FORGIVENESS

There is a term in liturgy, embolism, which is rather unfortunate now due to its present day meaning in medicine, where it means a blockage of a blood vessel. In liturgy it refers to the explanation, or perhaps better the expansion of the last verse of the Lord's prayer. In the current rite of the Eucharist, it is translated as follows.

'Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil, graciously grant peace in our days, that, by the help of your mercy, we may be always free from sin and safe from all distress, as we await the blessed hope and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.'

This expansion has been used in liturgy for a long time, with some forms including intercessions to certain saints, such as St Andrew. It is an expansion of the last words of the Lord's prayer, 'deliver us from evil'. We would call this an expansion because it is still a prayer that we are making, developing the meaning of these last words. There is no expansion of the prayer in the Gospel of St Matthew, but we do have an explanation of the contract we make in the prayer, when we say, 'forgive us our debts as we forgive those who are in debt to us', (6:12). Our Lord says this after the Lord's prayer,

For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses (Matthew 6:14-15).

The expansion picks up this idea of forgiveness or remission but there is a different word used, not debt but a word which means sin, or trespasses. This is a different word from the more usual word for sin, used in the Gospel of Luke in its version of the Lord's prayer (Luke 11:2-5). The word used by Matthew for sin in the coda to the Lord's prayer also occurs in St Paul, used to contrast the sin of Adam against the grace of Christ in the Letter to the Romans, a sin which led to all the other sins of humanity. Paul is concerned with the effect of sin on humanity, as the sin of Adam brought death into the world, but for Matthew the emphasis is on personal sin in the relationship of each person to others. All prayer is personal, since while we can pray for each other, no one can do our praying for us, but the whole of the sermon on the Mount is in the plural form. Unfortunately, since in English 'you' is both plural and singular, we are liable to miss this. It is in the plural, but the logic of forgiveness is that it must be done by individuals. That does not mean that we cannot by our individual choice to forgive, contribute to a culture of forgiveness. In the Gospel of St Mark, we have a passage that is very similar to the 6:14-15 but in a surprising context.

And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses (Mark 11:25).

Despite the similarity of these words, they are said to the disciples after they have seen that the fig tree which Our Lord cursed had withered. Firstly, Christ explains about the power of prayer,

Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours (Mark 11:24).

Then he adds that when we pray, we must forgive, precisely because prayer is so powerful. This does not mean that God will listen to us if we were to curse in prayer, but that we would be failing to understand God if we thought that he would hear any prayer which sought some evil to come upon any person.

In Luke's version of Our Lord's prayer, which is given to the disciples request to be taught how to pray, there is no expansion of the notion of forgiveness after the prayer but a parable about perseverance. It is a parable about a man asking a friend for bread in the middle of the night to help another friend who has arrived in the middle of the night. This might be said to be an expansion of the daily bread which we ask for in both Matthew and Luke's version of our Lord's prayer. In the Lucan version of the Sermon on the Mount, the so-called Sermon on the Plain, bearing in mind that the Lord's prayer in Matthew is in the Sermon on the Mount, we see prayer as an act of forgiveness, and a way of responding to the cursing of others, 'Bless them that curse you, pray for them that mistreat you' (Luke 6:28). In Chapter 18 of Luke there is another parable about prayer, which is the story of the tax collector and the Pharisee who go up to the temple to pray. The Pharisee boasts of his virtue, although he does thank God for it, acknowledging grace, while the tax collector seeks mercy because he is a sinner. The tax collector goes home justified, while the Pharisee does not. We see then that prayer has three aspects of forgiveness. In prayer we ask to be forgiven, and in prayer we may offer forgiveness. Prayer is a force which counteracts the hatred of those who curse us and enables us to share something of God's goodness by praying for our enemies. That is two aspects of forgiveness but there is also a third which is that when we approach prayer, we must first prepare ourselves by our actions. For Matthew the emphasis is on what we do before prayer, so in Chapter five of the Sermon, he speaks of those who approach the temple with a gift but remember that their brother has something against them, they must first go and be reconciled with them. This may not be possible since not every person is willing to forgive, but this is where the universality of prayer comes in. We can always pray for those who are our enemies, whether or not there is a good reason for them to hate us. What is important is that prayer does not become a substitute for doing what we can to find reconciliation.

Do we make a contract with God when we pray for forgiveness? Forgive us our trespasses or our debts as we forgive those who trespass against us sounds like an agreement between ourselves and God. Yet when we consider that this forgiveness is what we find in prayer, we can see that we would not understand that we had been forgiven if we felt no need to forgive others. This is why we must not forget the collective nature of guilt. We seek forgiveness for the whole of humanity, a place where all are forgiven, which is how the Lord's prayer begins. 'Your kingdom come'. We must choose to be part of that forgiveness, which is an individual choice, but it is never about just our own forgiveness. We say in the Lord's prayer, forgive us, not forgive me, and we seek not just to forgive but to live in a world of mercy. Only at the end of time will that world come into being, and there will be those who will not be part of it, as the last judgement tells us. While we live we can, as individuals, choose to spend time in prayer, but it is always a prayer for that world which is to come. Meanwhile, we say, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven, and prayer will tell us that the will of the Father is a will to forgive.

fr Euan Marley, OP

THE PRIORY OF ST MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL

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