

Praying with St Paul

The Church's Year of St Paul: June 2008 - June 2009

[Brother Nicholas Hutchinson, FSC](#) Pentecost 2008

CHOSEN TO PROCLAIM THE GOOD NEWS

We thank you, Father	Gal 1:15
that each of us is your work of art,	Eph 2:10
chosen specially long ago	
to live through love in your presence	Eph 1:3-4
and be joyful envoys, radiant ambassadors for Christ,	2 Cor 2:17; 2 Cor 5:20
reflecting your brightness like mirrors	2 Cor 3:18
in conveying Good News to the people you love.	1 Thess 2:4; Rom 1:7
May your Spirit enable us	
to shine in the world like bright stars	Phil 2:16
in offering it the word of life.	
We proclaim ' <i>Christ among us, our hope of glory</i> ',	Col 1:27; cf Acts 28:20
appreciating that Jesus fulfilled the scriptures	
as well as people's hopes,	cf Acts 28:20; 1 Cor 15:3
in all that he said and did.	

FREELY-GIVEN GRACE

None of us can 'earn' salvation, Father;	
nobody can 'earn' your healing and forgiveness.	
It is by your freely-given grace that we are saved,	Rom 11:6
and our good deeds are simply a response	
to your loving actions.	
Our relationship with you, Father, is 'made right'	
through the abundant and free gift of your grace	Rom 3:24; 5:15
which you shower upon us, redeeming us in Christ.	Eph 1:7; Rom 3:24

RECONCILED, JUSTIFIED, AT ONE WITH YOU

To be restored, to live 'at one' with you, Father,	
needed the offering of a perfect sacrifice.	cf Eph 5:2
That sacrifice was offered by our brother, Jesus the Lord,	1 Tim 2:5; cf Rom 5:15-19; Gal 1:4
whom Paul also describes	
as the only Son of God.	Acts 9:20; Col 2:9
And so in Jesus - fully human and fully God -	
we are fulfilled and 'justified', Father,	Col 2:9; Rom 3:24-26
made right and reconciled with you.	

BOUGHT AND PAID FOR

Through the life, death and resurrection of your Son	
you have dealt with sin and death, Father,	
taking away the power that they had over us.	Rom 8:14
To you, Father,	
each of us must give an account of ourselves	Rom 14:12
and we thank you for giving us the victory	1 Cor 15:57
through our Lord, Jesus Christ.	
The cross, after all, is your power to save.	1 Cor 1:18
You do not hold our sins against us, Father,	2 Cor 5:19
and Jesus, by nailing them to the cross,	cf Gal 2:19-21
has done away with	
every record of the debt that we owed.	Col 2:14
In a sermon of his,	
St Paul is the only one to mention that Jesus said:	
<i>"There is more happiness in giving than in receiving"</i>	Acts 20:35
– and we rejoice that in Jesus, we gain our freedom,	
the forgiveness of our sins,	Col 1:14
and we acknowledge	
that we have been bought and paid for.	1 Cor 6:20; 7:23

ENCOUNTERING JESUS

Paul declared that nothing can happen
that can outweigh the supreme advantage
of knowing, of relating to, Christ Jesus our Lord.
Christ is our life
and we are called to encounter him personally.
We join Paul in proclaiming
that all we *"want is to know Christ
and the power of his resurrection"*.

Phil 3:8-9

Col 3:4

Phil 3:10

EVERYDAY LIFE

In our everyday life, Father,
we pray for the Spirit to inspire and empower us
that we may show forth our faith in action,
beside all the people you love in our world of today.
It is in our everyday lives
that we are planted in love and built on love,
to follow Christ by loving as he loved us,
and we ask that your Spirit may enable us, Father,
to encourage each other in our common faith,
putting fresh heart into your people.
We are conscious, too,
that your goodness, Father,
is meant to lead us to repentance.
May our minds be filled
with everything that is true and noble, good and pure,
and all that is virtuous and worthy of praise.
We pray that our love may never be a pretence
but that we may have a profound respect for each person,
resisting evil and conquering it with good.
May we be kept firm and strong in the faith.

1 Thess 1:3

1 Cor 16:14

Eph 5:2

Rom 1:12; 1 Thess 5:11
Acts 14:22; Phlm 1:7,20

Rom 2:4

Phil 4:8ff

Rom 12:9

2 Cor 1:12; Rom 12:10-13

Rom 12:21

1 Thess 3:2

JESUS IS LORD; RESURRECTION; WE ARE HEIRS

We proclaim the Good News, Father,
that Jesus is Lord,
and that you raised him from death.
He is the first-fruits of all who 'fall asleep'
– and so each of us can consider Jesus
as our eldest brother:
the one to lead us through what he first experienced.
Being heirs to an inheritance reminds us
of so much that really matters, that is precious,
of pride in heritage,
of treasuring family love and memories,
of us belonging to something greater
which, at the same time, belongs to us.
And so we are proud to say, Father,
that we are your heirs,
called to inherit great riches
and have promises fulfilled:
for no reason except your own compassion!

Rom 10:9; Acts 23:6

1 Cor 15:20

Rom 8:29

Rom 8:16-17

cf 2 Cor 4:14; Rom 8:34

Titus 3:5-8

THE SPIRIT IN US

We rejoice that your love, faithful God,
has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit,
who has made his home in each of us,
enabling us to turn to you and pray intimately:
"Abba, Father".
It is by co-operating with your Spirit,
that we can put to good use
the various gifts with which you have lovingly graced us.
You lavish us with your riches, Father,

cf 2 Thess 3:3

Rom 5:5

Rom 8:9

Gal 4:6-7

Rom 8:15, 26-27

cf 1 Cor 7:7; 12:11; 2 Cor 6:1

Phil 4:19; 1 Tim 6:17

and there is no limit to the blessings you send,	2 Cor 9:8
enabling our witness to Christ to be strong.	1 Cor 1:6
There are times, in fact,	
when the love of Christ overwhelms us,	2 Cor 5:14
and we remain convinced	cf Rom 8:28-39
that nothing can ever come between us	
and your love, Father,	
made visible in Christ Jesus, our Lord.	
Many are the trials through which we triumph	Rom 8:37-39
by the power of him who loved us.	

SUFFERING

Each of us knows, Father, that your power	
is at its best when our own weakness is evident,	2 Cor 12:9-10
and we pray that we may retain the lived conviction	
that to suffer in your way	2 Cor 7:10
means changing for the better,	
and leaves no regrets.	
Paul reminds us that what we suffer in this life	Rom 8:18; 2 Cor 4:17
can never be compared	
to the glory which is waiting for us	
and adds that, if we have hope	
– if we truly have conviction –	Rom 12:12; cf Titus 2:13-14
then that will make us joyful.	
In all our sorrows, Father,	
there can be benefit for other people:	
you give us inexhaustible comfort	2 Thess 2:16-17
and such sure conviction	
that we are enabled	
to bring your own comfort and consolation to others.	2 Cor 1:4

APPRECIATION

We pray that, for each of us,	
our attitude may always be	Col 1:3; 3:16; Eph 1:16; Phil 1:3;
that of appreciation and thankfulness	1 Thess 1:2; 5:17; 2 Thess 2:13
We thank you	
that you have enriched us in so many ways,	
especially in those people	
who have embodied qualities of the Spirit:	Gal 5:21-22
showing love, joy and peace,	
patience, kindness and goodness,	
trustfulness, gentleness and self-control.	

MESSENGERS OF THE GOOD NEWS

Bless, Father,	
the people to whom we hand on your Good News	2 Tim 2:3
that they may have much joy and peace in their faith	Rom 15:13
so that they in turn	
will be able to proclaim to others	
that the Good News is <i>'the power of God</i>	
<i>saving all who have faith'</i>	Rom 1:16
Then the message of Christ in all its richness	Col 3:16
will find a home, Father,	
in all those for whom you have created a place	Col 1:13
in the Kingdom of your dear Son. Amen.	

Prayer written for the Church's 'Year of St Paul' (June 2008 – June 2009)
by Brother Nicholas Hutchinson, FSC:
written for the Diocese of Salford
at the request of the Diocesan Centre for Evangelisation.

A free electronic version of the prayer is available on request by writing to
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