

Praying with St Paul

(This is one continuous prayer.
Readers might like to personalise this prayer by incorporating in it various texts of St Paul that have particular meaning to them.)

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
that each of us is your work of art,
chosen specially long ago
to live through love in your presence
and be joyful envoys, radiant ambassadors for Christ,
reflecting your brightness like mirrors
in conveying Good News to the people you love.
May your Spirit enable us
to shine in the world like bright stars
in offering it the word of life.
We proclaim '*Christ among us, our hope of glory*',
appreciating that Jesus fulfilled the scriptures
as well as people's hopes,
in all that he said and did.

Gal 1:15
Eph 2:10

Eph 1:3-4
2 Cor 2:17; 2 Cor 5:20
2 Cor 3:18
1 Thess 2:4; Rom 1:7

Phil 2:16

Col 1:27; cf Acts 28:20

cf Acts 28:20; 1 Cor 15:3

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,
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
which you shower upon us, redeeming us in Christ.

Rom 11:6

Rom 3:24; 5:15
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.
That sacrifice was offered by our brother, Jesus the Lord,
whom Paul also describes
as the only Son of God.

cf Eph 5:2
1 Tim 2:5; cf Rom 5:15-19; Gal 1:4

Acts 9:20; Col 2:9

And so in Jesus - fully human and fully God -
we are fulfilled and 'justified', Father,
made right and reconciled with you.

Col 2:9; Rom 3:24-26

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
and we thank you for giving us the victory
through our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Rom 14:12
1 Cor 15:57

The cross, after all, is your power to save.
You do not hold our sins against us, Father,
and Jesus, by nailing them to the cross,
has done away with
every record of the debt that we owed.

1 Cor 1:18
2 Cor 5:19
cf Gal 2:19-21

In a sermon of his,
St Paul is the only one to mention that Jesus said:
"There is more happiness in giving than in receiving"
- and we rejoice that in Jesus, we gain our freedom,
the forgiveness of our sins,
and we acknowledge
that we have been bought and paid for.

Col 2:14
Acts 20:35
Col 1:14
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.

Phil 3:8-9

Christ is our life
and we are called to encounter him personally.

Col 3:4

We join Paul in proclaiming
that all we *"want is to know Christ
and the power of his resurrection"*.

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.

1 Thess 1:3

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.

Eph 3:17
Eph 5:2

We are conscious, too,
that your goodness, Father,
is meant to lead us to repentance.

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

May our minds be filled

Rom 2:4

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

APPRECIATION

We pray that, for each of us, our attitude may always be that of appreciation and thankfulness.	Col 1:3; 3:16; Eph 1:16; Phil 1:3; 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: showing love, joy and peace, patience, kindness and goodness, trustfulness, gentleness and self-control.	Gal 5:21-22

MESSENGERS OF THE GOOD NEWS

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

*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
Nicholas@prayingeachday.org*

SIX BOOKS **by Nicholas Hutchinson**

To look at the author's six books,
go to the publisher's website at
www.matthew-james.co.uk

Click on 'Catalogue'
Against 'keyword' type in the word '**praying**'.
There, amongst others, the author's six books
can be viewed:

'Lord, Teach us to Pray'
'Praying Each Day of the Year' – 3 volumes
'Walk In My Presence' – 2 volumes.

A BOOK ABOUT LIVING WITH TERMINAL ILLNESS **AND ACCOMPANYING LOVED ONES** **WHO ARE DYING**

In late 2008 or early 2009 Dominican Publications in Ireland will be printing a resource book to which Brother Nicholas Hutchinson and others will have contributed. The book explores living with terminal illness and accompanying loved ones who are dying. Queries can be made at
www.dominicanpublications.com

This text was found at the homepage of www.prayingeachday.org
where there are also texts and prayers regarding being terminally ill
as well as prayer and educational resources.
