

- 1 Late one afternoon the composer Beethoven visited a shoemaker. Standing in the shop, waiting to have his shoes mended, Beethoven heard some music being played on a piano in the back room of the shop. Beethoven smiled, knowing that the music was one of his own compositions. *"It's my daughter who's playing"*, said the shoemaker, *"but she can't play very well because she is blind and has to play from memory."*
- 2 *"May I play the piano for your daughter? I am a musician myself,"* asked Beethoven. *"Certainly"*, said the shoemaker, not knowing who his customer was. Beethoven slowly rehearsed the music with the girl, and they began to practice other pieces he had written (although the girl was not aware that her teacher was, in fact, the composer). The time went quickly, and Beethoven didn't realise that hours had passed. Then he noticed the way that the moonlight had begun to stream its gentle light through the window of the room.
- 3 Beethoven returned home. He couldn't get to sleep, but thought of how the girl was disabled by blindness, struggling to do her best, whilst others took sight and talents for granted. He thought of the great joy that music brought her, and he remembered the room in which they had played the music, and the way in which the moonlight streamed through the open window. He knew that whilst he could see the moonlight, she could not. Beethoven got out of bed and started to play the piano, expressing his feelings through music.
- 4 What he produced is thought by many to be one of the most touching pieces of music. In memory of the girl, he called this new piece *"The Moonlight Sonata"*.

On this day in 1802, the music of Beethoven's *"Moonlight Sonata"* was published.

5 *Let us pray:*

**Lord, you have watched me grow
in my mother's womb,
and I know that you love
all that you have made.
Help me to transform
my difficulties and disabilities
into opportunities for growth.
Shine the light of your Spirit on me
that I may grow
as the person you are calling me to be.
Inspire me
to develop the talents
you have given me
for the benefit and the service
of those people
you have placed in my life.
May each of us
become a blessing for others.
Amen.**

 *Today is the anniversary in 1996 of the murder of 16 primary school children and their teacher, Gwen Mayor, in Dunblane, near Stirling, Scotland.*

This is an excerpt from the page of this date in
'Praying Each Day of the Year',
a 3-volume book
by Nicholas Hutchinson, FSC.

For details:

<http://www.matthew-james.co.uk/>

Could make use of a search engine
to research this topic further.

This material is part of
the prayer and education website
of the De La Salle Brothers
in Great Britain:

www.prayingeachday.org