

Lent 2019: 40 Days of Prayer

Dear HTR member.

Lent is a wonderful opportunity to give up things that might be distracting us from growing in our relationship with Christ and to get into good habits. This set of daily devotions is aimed to help us all grow in our private and corporate prayer lives. Nothing of great importance will ever happen in God's Kingdom if we do not pray. Prayer underpins everything we do at HTR and it should be a central part in every Christian life.

Often we do not know how to pray, what to say, what to ask for or what to physically do when we spend time with God. There is no set formula for praying. That is why my prayer is that these devotions will help start something sustainable in the way we pray. May we grow closer to God as we explore the immense adventure and power of a life filled with prayer.

You will notice that there are only 40 days' worth of devotions. Traditionally Sunday's doesn't count as fasting days during Lent and so I have adopted this pattern as well. The devotions run from Ash Wednesday and ends on Easter Saturday, with no set devotions for the Sundays in between. I suggest reading and meditating on a psalm in continuation of your quiet time, or spending time in prayer, putting into practice what you've learned and experienced so far.

Every day's devotion has a reading, a short reflection, something to do in response and a quote. You are also encouraged to learn a memory verse every week. Feel free to do as much or as little as you feel comfortable with.

May God ignite in us all a passion for spending time in intimate and sincere prayer this Lent. May His name be glorified above all.

Nico

Week 1: Who are we praying to?

Try and memorise Romans 8:38-39 and repeat it at least once a day to help you remember it.

Day 1 - Wednesday - God the Father (Ash Wednesday)

Read: Romans 8:15-16

Reflect: We are children of the living God. John 1:12 also explain it beautifully. We may have fond memories of our earthly fathers, or we may not have had good relationships with them. Whatever the case may be, God the Father will surpass every expectation of fatherhood. He loves us deeply and dearly.

Do: Read Romans 8:15-16 again. Write down everything the passage says about God. How does this knowledge change the way you pray, or approach God the Father?

Listen: *"Trust is that rare and priceless treasure that wins us the affection of our heavenly Father."*
~Brennan Manning~

Day 2 - Thursday - God the Son

Read: Romans 8:3

Reflect: Jesus is key in the whole story of salvation. In fact, He is key in the whole story of being. John describes it well in John 1. This is not where the story ends, though. We honour Jesus as King, but we also approach Him as a Friend, a Brother. Christ, the sinner's hiding place. Always welcome, always available, always challenging us to be like Him.

Do: Read Romans 8:3-4. What does this passage say about Jesus? Write it down. How does this change the way you pray, or approach Jesus?

Listen: *"The son of God became a man to enable men to become sons [and daughters] of God."*
~C.S. Lewis~

Day 3 - Friday - God the Spirit

Read: Romans 8:26

Reflect: Jesus opened up the way for us to meet with God without any hindrance. He left us His Spirit, so therefore the way is still open to all of us to approach God freely. There's a great sentence in 2 Chronicles 20:12: "We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you." Don't know what to pray? Ask the Spirit to help. He will and He does.

Do: Read Romans 8:26 again. Write down everything this passage says about the Holy Spirit. How does this change the way you pray, or approach God?

Listen: *"O Holy Spirit, descend plentifully into my heart. Enlighten the dark corners of this neglected dwelling and scatter there Thy cheerful beams."*
~St Augustine~

Day 4 - Saturday - The Merciful God

Read: Romans 8:1-4

Reflect: Having mercy means being able and justified to punish, but choosing not to. The Law condemns us, but through Christ's sacrifice, the punishment was put on Him, not us. No condemnation means we're set free to live lives that are healthy, pure and God-honouring.

Do: Read Romans 8:1-4 again. What are the things that stop you from living freely and write them down? What does the passage say about freedom? Pray through the list you wrote down, submitting it to God. Go through the list throughout Lent, giving them to Christ daily.

Listen: *"Where mercy, love, and pity dwell, there God is dwelling too."*
~William Blake~

Day 5 - Monday - The Powerful God

Read: Romans 8:11

Reflect: If God the Father was able to raise Jesus from the dead, thereby saving all of humanity, He is able to help you in every circumstance, however great or small. His presence is the perfect place to be weak. God is strong and powerful enough so we don't have to be.

Do: Read Romans 8:11 again. Go through the list of the characteristics of God you've written down so far. Do you believe that God is powerful enough to hear and help? How does this change the way you approach God when asking Him for things?

Listen: *"God often showcases His power on the stage of human weakness."*
~Andy Stanley~

Day 6 - Tuesday - The Loving God

Read: Romans 8:38-39

Reflect: Above all things, whether we trust in God or not, whether we know Him well or not at all, we should always, always, always know that He loves every one of us

unconditionally. Nothing can make God love us any more or any less today than He did yesterday. The truth is, and will always be, that you are deeply and truly loved.

Do: Read Romans 8:38-39 slowly. What does the passage say about God's love for us? Ask God to let His truth and love fill your heart and mind. Whenever you feel unloved, repeat the prayer: "Father God, let your truth and your love grow in my heart and dwell in my mind."

Listen: *"The Christian life is not a constant high. I have my moments of deep discouragement. I have to go to God in prayer with tears in my eyes, and say, 'O God, forgive me,' or 'Help me.'"*
~Billy Graham~

Week 2: Ways of praying.

Try to memorise Psalm 46:1 by next Tuesday. Repeat it daily to help you remember it.

Day 7 - Wednesday - Adoration

Read: Psalm 63:2-5

Reflect: There is no set formula to prayer. We should pray how and when we feel led by the Spirit. However, I've found it useful to start off my prayers with praising and worshipping God. Worship and praise, or adoration, is the acknowledgement of who God is and who we are in relation to Him. Praise is remembering who God is. Worship is surrendering to Him. From a place of surrender, reaffirming our weakness, and celebrating His character and strength, we are in a good place to pray.

Do: Slowly read Psalm 63, pausing after each verse. Think about what this psalm says about who God is. Now write down 5 things about God that makes Him worthy of praise and worship. If you're struggling to find things, read Psalm 63 again. Commit to start your prayer time with adoration until Easter.

Listen: *"It is only when men begin to worship that they begin to grow."*
~Calvin Coolidge~

Day 8 - Thursday - Confession

Read: 1 John 1:9

Reflect: Confessing our sins are as important to our spiritual well-being as avoiding poisonous food is to our physical well-being. We serve a God who knows our transgressions already, but waits for us to return to Him, with dirty hands and faces, to clean, forgive and embrace once again. Our lives should be lives of a constant return to Christ. Confession without repentance is rather empty. True repentance brings change in our behaviour.

Do: Read Psalm 139:23-24, then take a couple of minutes to ask the Holy Spirit to lay upon your heart the things you need to confess. Be specific and sincere when confessing. Commit to do this every day until Easter.

Listen: *"The confessional [confessing our sins] is not a torture chamber, but the place in which the Lord's mercy motivates us to do better."*
~Pope Francis~

Day 9 - Friday - Thanksgiving

Read: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Reflect: Being grateful towards God is acknowledging His faithfulness, love and care towards us. It is remembering where we were and seeing where we are now, giving God the glory for the journey, recognising His generosity and remembering how He provides for our every need.

Do: Write down a list of things you want to thank God for. Keep making notes throughout the day, every day, until Easter. They don't have to be big things, just write down anything you feel thankful for.

Listen: *"Real life isn't always going to be perfect or go our way, but the recurring acknowledgement of what is working in our lives can help us not only to survive but surmount our difficulties."*
~Sarah Ban Breathnach~

Day 10 - Saturday - Supplication

Read: Ephesians 6:18

Reflect: We are encouraged to ask God in every circumstance for every need we may have. However, it doesn't stop there. We are also encouraged to ask God for every need that others may have. Let us pray constantly for ourselves and those around us, having faith that God hears us and that He will answer.

Do: Make a list of 3 (or more) people you will commit to pray for daily until Easter. Keep the list somewhere near to remind yourself every day. You can even ask the people you're praying for if they have specific prayer requests, or you can pray as the Spirit leads you.

Listen: *"God does say He will graciously entertain our prayers. He says that if we exercise faith, and if our request is in accordance with His will, He will hear us."*
~Walter Martin~

Day 11 - Monday - Waiting

Read: Psalm 27:14

Reflect: In a world of fast food, fast trains, fast internet access and fast banking, it might be a good idea to take some time to wait on the Lord. Do you trust God enough to wait until He reveals Himself? No time waiting on God is wasted time. Slow down.

Do: Commit to make more time for private prayer until Easter, then using the extra time to wait quietly on the Lord, without asking Him for anything. You can repeat the name of Jesus to get your mind focused on Him.

Listen: *"God is mighty slow, but always on time."*
~Unknown~

Day 12 - Tuesday - Listening Prayer

Read: Jeremiah 33:3

Reflect: Many people think that prayer is a one-way conversation. It isn't. Effective communication goes in both directions. God is not only a friendly giant with a notepad to jot down our requests. He wants to share things, new and unimaginable things, with us. We will be foolish to not take Him up on the offer.

Do: Commit to use 5 minutes every day until Easter to do listening prayer. Ask God to show you pictures, remind you of Bible verses, or lead your thoughts to reveal what He wants to say to you. Then wait and listen. It may be that He places someone or something specific on your mind to pray for, or that you get a word of encouragement for someone else. Share what you've heard with someone you trust.

Listen: *"Prayer is not monologue, but dialogue; God's voice is its most essential part. Listening to God's voice is the secret of the assurance that He will listen to mine."*
~Andrew Murray~

Week 3: Good prayer habits.

Try to memorise Proverbs 3:5-6 by next week. Repeat it daily to help remember it.

Day 13 - Wednesday - Remember

Read: Psalm 77:10-12

Reflect: It is important to God that we remember what He has done in the past. This is because it should be important to us. It helps us to pray faith-filled prayers when we bring our requests before God in the future and it culminates within us a heart of thankfulness.

Do: Write a prayer journal until Easter. The easiest way is to divide a page into two columns. On one side you can write the things you're asking God for and on the other side you can write how and when God answered the prayer. If you already do this, the challenge is to read through your previous requests and see how God answered prayer in the past.

Listen: *"The process of learning involves not only hearing and applying, but also forgetting and then remembering again."*
~John Gray~

Day 14 - Thursday - Diary Time

Read: Matthew 6:6

Reflect: We're called to be in relationship with God. Developing a relationship takes time spent together privately. That is why Jesus tells us to go into a quiet, solitary space where we can meet with Him without distractions. Our public life starts with and is formed by prayer in the private place.

Do: Book some time in your diary where you can pray alone every day, until Easter. This can be while walking the dog, alone in your living room, or whatever space you have where it is quiet and where you won't be disturbed. It doesn't have to be long, just do it. And come expectant of meeting with Christ.

Listen: *"Any place may become a closet, an oratory, and a Bethel, and be to us the presence of God."*
~J.C. Ryle~

Day 15 - Friday - Fasting

Read: Matthew 6:16-18

Reflect: Jesus speaks as if fasting is a regular practice for the people who follows Him. It should be a regular practice for us too. He even says that when we do it with the right attitude in our hearts, for the right reasons, God will reward us. We can use fasting to make our prayers more intentional and focused. Fasting should bring us closer to God, not admiration from others.

Do: Try to fast from food or something you use regularly for at least one day before Easter. You can intentionally skip a meal, or all three within one day. Maybe you can give up something for Lent, like social media, coffee, chocolate or anything you use regularly. Every time you feel hungry or a yearning for whatever you gave up, pray for the issues/people foremost in your heart. If nothing comes to mind, just pray to God, thanking Him for His presence and guidance.

Listen: *"Fasting helps express, deepens, confirms the resolution that we are ready to sacrifice anything, even ourselves, to attain what we seek for the kingdom of God."*
~Andrew Murray~

Day 16 - Saturday - Praying Scripture / Meditating

Read: Psalm 19:7-9

Reflect: Using the Bible in prayer is a very helpful way to remind ourselves and each other of God's promises, to encourage our faith while praying and to lead our thoughts to the things from above. The Bible is a wonderful tool with which God decided to speak to us directly. Meditating on and praying through scripture helps us clear our minds of the world and focusing on the reality of Jesus Christ.

Do: Commit to read one Psalm every day until Easter. Read it, pausing after every verse, then think about what the psalm means to you in your current situation. Which verse(s) stood out for you? Write it down and what it means to you on the day.

Listen: *"The most promising method of prayer is to allow oneself to be guided by the word of the Scriptures, to pray on the basis of a word of Scripture."*
~ Dietrich Bonhoeffer ~

Day 17 - Monday - Praying specifically / Particularity

Read: Philippians 4:6-7

Reflect: It should not be enough to confess we are sinners; we should name the sins of which our conscience tells us we are most guilty. It should not be enough to ask for holiness; we should name the graces in which we feel most deficient. It should not be enough to tell the Lord we are in trouble; we should describe our trouble and all its peculiarities.

(Excerpt from J.C. Ryle)

Do: Make a point of it to, when you pray, pray very specifically. Leave out no detail. Write down what, specifically, you prayed for. When you pray for someone, ask him or her what specifically you can pray for. When you pray for yourself, be honest about the smallest detail. When praising God, tell Him exactly why you are praising/adoring Him.

Listen: *"Christ is the true bridegroom of the soul, the true physician of the heart, the real father of all his people. Let us show that we feel this by being unreserved in our communications with him. Let us hide no secrets from him. Let us tell him all our hearts."*

~J.C. Ryle~

Day 18 - Tuesday - Praying For The World / Intercession

Read: 1 Timothy 2:1-4

Reflect: Praying for others. This is the highest charity. He loves me best who loves me in his prayers. This is for our soul's health. It enlarges our sympathies and expands our hearts. This is for the benefit of the church. The wheels of all machinery for extending the gospel are moved by prayer. This is to be like Christ. He bears the names of his people, as their High Priest, before the Father. Oh, the privilege of being like Jesus! *(Excerpt from J.C. Ryle)*

Do: Commit to pray for someone/something other than yourself until Easter. Read a newspaper or watch the news. What are the things that you feel most drawn to or passionate about? Pray for those things or people. Maybe sign up for a newsletter from a missionary like Sarah Casson or Open Doors.

Listen: *"We should study to be of a public spirit. We should stir ourselves up to name other names besides our own before the throne of grace."*

~J.C. Ryle~

Week 4: Persistence in prayer.

Try and memorise Jeremiah 29:11 by next week. Repeat it daily to help you remember the verse.

Day 19 - Wednesday - The Persistent Widow

Read: Luke 18:1-8

Reflect: Jesus encourages us to keep praying and never give up. The widow in this story was faced with a mighty adversary, but she persisted. How much more will our Father who loves us be willing to listen to our prayers, however feeble or clumsy. We are persistently loved, therefore we can be persistent in our prayers.

Do: Ask God to place things on your heart, in other words, to draw your attention to and make you passionate about the things that He wants you to pray for. Commit to pray for those things until you see change happening.

Listen: *"When we become too glib in prayer we are most surely talking to ourselves."*
~A. W. Tozer~

Day 20 - Thursday - The Persistent Friend

Read: Luke 11:5-13

Reflect: How much do you want to see change in the world, in your life, in the lives of others? How important is it to you that things change for the better? What if the change we'll see in the world is directly proportionate to the amount of sincere prayers we pray? D.L. Moody kept a list of 100 names of people he wanted to see saved. He prayed for them constantly throughout his whole life. Whenever one of them would give their life to Christ, he would take the name off the list. At the time of his death in 1899, 96 of the names on the list were saved. The last four gave their lives to Christ at his funeral. The power of persistent prayer.

Do: Think of one person you want to see come to Christ. Commit to pray for that person daily until he/she meets Jesus.

Listen: *"If you find your life of prayer to be always so short, and so easy, and so spiritual, as to be without cost and strain and sweat to you, you may depend upon it, you have not yet begun to pray."*
~Alexander Whyte~

Day 21 - Friday - Persistent Abraham

Read: Genesis 18:23-33

Reflect: Abraham did not try to “strong-arm” God into submission to do as he pleased. He had a very real sense of who he was, who God is and what the relationship between them were. That is the only reason Abraham had the courage to plead for the lives of a city. It wasn’t a negotiation between equals, but a request from a servant to his Master.

Do: Take stock of the things you persistently pray for. Are they things that will honour God? Are they things that might be harmful to you or others? Are they within God’s will? Ask God to help you change your prayers to be more in line with His good and perfect will.

Listen: *“We can do nothing without prayer. All things can be done by importunate [persistent] prayer. It surmounts or removes all obstacles, overcomes every resisting force and gains its ends in the face of invincible hindrances.”*
~E.M. Bounds~

Day 22 - Saturday - Persistent Hannah

Read: 1 Samuel 1:10-11

Reflect: When we persist in prayer, it will cost us something. Are we willing to take the time, energy and effort to keep at it, even when we don’t see immediate results? How important is what you’re asking God for to you? Important enough to carry on asking?

Do: Go through the list of requests you have written down so far. Which of these are so important to you that you’re willing to pray and ask God for them for the rest of the year?

Listen: *“God loves importunate [persistent] prayer so much that He will not give us much blessing without it.”*
~Adoniram Judson~

Day 23 - Monday - Persistent David

Read: Psalm 40:1

Reflect: David was a “man after God’s own heart” and even he had to wait patiently for the Lord. However, David never gave up while waiting, because he knew God. David knew Whom it was he was waiting on. David knew that persistence in prayer would pay off in the end. He was not disappointed.

Do: Remind yourself constantly of who God is. Read through the things you’ve written down in week 1 of these devotions and search for some more. When reading a Bible passage, ask yourself three questions: What does this passage say about God? What does this passage say about people? What is this passage saying to me today?

Listen: *“When praying for the Lord’s will about something questionable, don’t give up if you don’t receive clear leading after one prayer; just keep on praying until God makes it clear.”*
~Curtis Hutson~

Day 24 - Tuesday - Persistent Jesus

Read: Luke 22:42-44

Reflect: Sometimes God says no. We may not always have all the answers every time, but one thing we can hold on to is the comfort of knowing we are loved. When this is our starting point, we can know that when God says no to our persistent prayers it’ll be because He loves us. Jesus didn’t get everything He wanted, and yet He remained faithful, knowing He is, above all, loved by the Father.

Do: Use the words “Not my will, but Your will be done,” when you ask for things. Think through what these words mean and whether you are willing to trust God’s will rather than your own.

Listen: *“Beware in your prayers, above everything else, of limiting God, not only by unbelief, but by fancying that you know what He can do.”*
~Andrew Murray~

Week 5: Corporate prayer.

Try to memorise 2 Corinthians 9:7 by next week. Read and repeat it to yourself daily to help remember it.

Day 25 - Wednesday - Encouragement

Read: 1 Corinthians 12:25-26

Reflect: We are part of the body of Christ. Everyone has a specific role to play, but two things are the same for all of us: We should love one another and we should support one another. One of the ways we can support one another is by praying with and for each other. To do that effectively, we need to share prayer requests, hardships and triumphs, i.e. we need to be involved with one another.

Do: Ask someone to pray with you and pray for that person in return. Share requests and pray for one another. It might be a bit uncomfortable for some, but it will be worth it.

Listen: *"A helping word to one in trouble is often like a switch on a railroad track an inch between wreck and smooth, rolling prosperity."*
~Henry Ward Beecher~

Day 26 - Thursday - Unity Of Purpose

Read: Matthew 18:19-20

Reflect: When we pray together, we can pray for and support one another, but more than that, we can stand together behind a certain issue or prayer point. We can say yes and amen to what is being prayed for and we can confirm words of knowledge we might receive from God. There is power in united prayer

Do: There are many prayer meetings at Holy Trinity Church. Pick one (or more) and join us in prayer.

- Pre-service prayer meetings (9:30 am and 6:00 pm on Sundays)
- Prayer Space (8:00 pm every Monday)
- Early morning prayer (7:30 am every Thursday morning)
- Praying for the world (3:30 pm every Friday afternoon)
- Prayer chain (the number for prayer requests is 07590664819)
- Joint churches meeting (every third Wednesday of every other month, listen for announcements)

Listen: *"The union of Christians to Christ, their common head, and by means of the influence they derive from him, one to another, may be illustrated by the magnet. It not only attracts the particles of iron to itself by the magnetic virtue, but by this virtue it unites them one to another."* [paraphrased]

~Richard Cecil~

Day 27 - Friday - Worship

Read: Hebrews 10:24-25

Reflect: Worshipping together is a special gift from God. We were never designed to be lonesome entities, but to be individuals that are part of a larger body. It reminds me that the church is bigger than myself, but that the church is also incomplete without me. We are all in this together, thankfully. A coal pulled from the fire will cool and die on its own, but together, we can keep the fire burning by God's Spirit fanning the flame.

Do: Commit to pray for the services at Holy Trinity Church. We need a continuous revelation of God's love and presence that we may be a place for all people to meet with God freely.

- 10:00 am Sunday Morning Service
- 6:30 pm Sunday Evening Service
- 11:30 am Wednesday Morning Service

Listen: *"To gather with God's people in united adoration of the Father is as necessary to the Christian life as prayer."*
~Martin Luther~

Day 28 - Saturday - Support In Numbers

Read: Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

Reflect: It's a Biblical principle to stick together. It just makes sense. Safety in numbers. What then makes us shy away from corporate prayer? I think there are two main reasons: pride and fear. Pride tells us that we're good enough on our own when we're not. Fear tells us we might not be welcome if we become vulnerable in front of others. Both are lies. Let us live in the acceptance and love of Christ. Let us create a safe space for others to feel God's love and acceptance when we meet together.

Do: Take some time to think through these questions:

1. Are the prayer meetings or services at Holy Trinity Church somewhere you would invite a friend to?
2. If so, why? If not, why not?
3. What can you do to make the meetings/services easier to invite people to?

Listen: *"The more genuine and the deeper our community becomes, the more will everything else between us recede, the more clearly and purely will Jesus Christ and His work become the one and only thing that is vital between us."*
~Dietrich Bonhoeffer~

Day 29 - Monday - Ministry

Read: 1 Peter 4:10-11

Reflect: All of us have been given gifts, talents, passions and an opportunity to use them. Paul writes about the gifts of the Spirit in Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12. Do you know what your spiritual gifts are? Do you know what your talents are? Why not find out and start using them. No one is too young or too old.

Do: Read 1 Corinthians 12 and Romans 12. Are there any of these gifts you feel that God has given you? Find ways of finding out what your spiritual gifts are. There are great resources online or available at bookstores. The best way is to start serving. More questions? Ask one of the members of staff.

Listen: *"In the New Testament, we don't find our gift through self-examination and introspection and then find ways to express it. Instead, we love one another, serve one another, help one another, and in so doing we see how God has equipped us to do so."*
~Russell Moore~

Day 30 - Tuesday - Teaching

Read: Colossians 3:16

Reflect: None of us can say we know all there is to know about God, life, loving, etc. We learn lessons until the day we leave this mortal coil behind us. The surest way to learn is by learning from someone else. The only way we can learn from someone else, or teach someone else is by being with someone else. Be sure not to stay solitary, for solitude alone stops us from growing. Find the balance between praying with fellow believers and solitary prayer.

Do: Find three persons in your life: A mentor (someone to learn from), a peer (someone to learn with) and a pupil (someone who can learn from you). Commit to meet with them regularly for at least 3 months.

Listen: *"We must be ready to allow ourselves to be interrupted by God. God will be constantly crossing our paths and canceling our plans by sending us people with claims and petitions."*
~Dietrich Bonhoeffer~

Week 6: Faith filled prayers.

Try to memorise Philippians 4:6 by next week. Read and repeat it to yourself daily to help remember the verse.

Day 31 - Wednesday - Help Me Believe

Read: Mark 9:24

Reflect: What an amazing story of a father who realised that even his own faith is a gift from God. The beauty of it is that we will not be turned away or disappointed if we ask: "Lord, help me believe." The key is to be honest in asking, acknowledging the size of our faith and letting God change and amaze us. It won't always be easy, but it will definitely be worth it. Growing in faith is a constant process.

Do: Ask God to give you bigger faith. You will see that He gives you opportunities to trust in Him more. In trusting Him more, your faith will grow. Remind yourself constantly of how God helped you in the past. Listen to other believers who went through tough times. Be encouraged by the Spirit.

Listen: *"Faith don't come in a bushel basket, Missy. It come one step at a time. Decide to trust Him for one little thing today, and before you know it, you find out He's so trustworthy you be putting your whole life in His hands."*
~Lynn Austin~

Day 32 - Thursday - Praying In The Name Of Jesus

Read: John 14:12-14

Reflect: Saying "we ask this in the name of Jesus," at the end of a prayer is not enough. Praying in the name of Jesus is the key. This means that our whole prayer (and prayer life) should be done in the name of Jesus. We adore Him in the name of Jesus. We confess our sins in the name of Jesus. We give thanks in the name of Jesus. We ask things in the name of Jesus. Jesus is key. Without Him, our prayers are empty poems spoken to ourselves. There is a difference between saying our prayers and truly praying.

Do: Make a point of directing your heart and mind towards Jesus in the time of adoration. When you start praying, go at it in the name of Jesus. What does this mean for you? How does this change the way you pray?

Listen: *"I know of a world that is sunk in shame,
Where hearts oft faint and tire;
But I know of a Name, a precious Name,
That can set that world on fire:
Its sound is sweet, its letters flame.
I know of a Name, a precious Name,
'Tis Jesus."
~J. Wilbur Chapman~*

Day 33 - Friday - Praying For Healing

Read: James 5:14-16

Reflect: Praying for someone to be healed is a very scary thing at times. What if it doesn't work? What if I offend the person I'm praying for? What if I do more damage than good by asking God for healing? These are very real doubts and questions I am confronted with when praying for healing. Then I am reminded that it is only my job to ask, it is God who heals.

Do: Start praying for people to be healed. Ask God for discernment in how, when and where you pray, but start praying for the miraculous. If you already do this, why not join the prayer team?

Listen: *"It is not our ability to believe that made the sickness to go but rather the faith which God imparted to us through his mercy."
~Kathryn Kuhlman~*

Day 34 - Saturday - Spirit Led Prayers

Read: Ephesians 6:18

Reflect: How do we know what to pray for? We can take comfort in the fact that Jesus left us the Holy Spirit to guide us. There is no set formula for being led by the Spirit, apart from allowing Him to lead us. We also don't have to get it right all the time. Being human means, unfortunately, being fallible. We do, however, follow the God who is not.

Do: Ask the Holy Spirit to lead your thoughts during your prayer time. What are the things you start thinking of? Write them down. What are the pictures you see? Write them down. What are the issues and emotions that rise in your heart? Write them down. Now ask the Spirit to help you make sense of it and to show you how to pray for these things. Write it down.

Listen: *"The gospel portrait of the beloved Child of Abba is that of a man exquisitely attuned to His emotions and uninhibited in expressing them. The Son of Man did not scorn or reject feelings as fickle and unreliable. They were sensitive antennae to which He listened carefully and through which He perceived the will of His Father for congruent speech and action."*
~Brennan Manning~

Day 35 - Monday - Remember

Read: Psalm 105:5-7

Reflect: One of the biggest challenges we as Christians face is forgetting about the things God has done in the past. It is of the utmost importance to remind ourselves and each other of who God is, what He did and where He is leading us. The mere act of remembering builds our faith in the almighty God.

Do: Use a prayer journal to keep track of ways that God has provided, saved or healed in the past. Write down promises He made. How about starting your day by reading one of the manifold promises God gives us in His Word?

Listen: *"Never forget what Jesus did for you. Never take lightly what it cost Him. And never assume that if it cost Him His very life, that it won't also cost you yours."*
~Rich Mullins~

Day 36 - Tuesday - Stepping Out

Read: Hebrews 11:1

Reflect: The very definition of faith in Hebrews 11 shows us that there is an element of insecurity to trusting God. We do not see the things we hope for yet. However, faith is putting our trust in the almighty God who loves us, rather than in what we see.

Do: Read Hebrews 11 slowly. What does the passage say about God? What does the passage say about people? What does this passage say to you now, in your current circumstances?

Listen: *"You can never leave footprints that last when you are always walking on tiptoe."*
~Leymah Gbowee~

Week 7: Now what?

Try and memorise Ephesians 4:32 by Sunday. Read and repeat it daily to help you remember it.

Day 37 - Wednesday - Thanks-giving

Read: Acts 2:42-47

Reflect: Have you ever seen a miracle happen? If you have been saved, you have! For we were dead, but now we are alive. Think about that for a minute. We were dead, but now we live. How should we respond? By being thankful and showing the world how thankful we are.

Do: Read Psalm 116. Which verse(s) stand out for you? What do you feel most thankful for? How can you express your gratitude towards God in a tangible way? What can you give as part of your *thanks-giving*?

Listen: *"It is possible to give without loving, but it is impossible to love without giving."*
~Richard Braunstein~

Day 38 - Thursday - Plug In (Maundy Thursday)

Read: John 13:12-17

Reflect: The word Maundy is derived from the Latin words *mandatum* or *mendicare*, which translates to *mandate* or *beg* respectively. Traditionally Maundy Thursday commemorates Jesus' washing of the disciples' feet. It's all about serving. Jesus says: "You've seen Me do it, now you go and do it." There are many ways to serve at HTR. One of the easiest and most powerful ways we can get involved and serve is by praying for the church. We desperately need the Holy Spirit to move in and through us all and He will do this, if we ask, keeping in mind that we are often the answer to our own prayers.

Do: Start praying for the different ministries at church. Take the first step and get information on how to pray for the ministries you feel most drawn to. Commit to pray for these ministries/people for at least 3 months and see how God uses your prayers. You may also want to start serving by getting involved in the ministries themselves.

Listen: *"This is to be a true helper to ministers. If I must choose a congregation, give me a people that pray."*
~J.C. Ryle~

Day 39 - Friday - Help Others (Good Friday)

Read: John 19:25-27

Reflect: Jesus sacrificed His life so that we can have life in abundance. However, the story doesn't stop there. We were never called from darkness to be saved for our own sake alone. It has always been to the glory of God and for the sake of others. Let us help and encourage and motivate fellow believers to grow in their prayer lives by being an example, by teaching the young ones to pray and by modeling lives surrendered to Christ. We are the physical manifestation of Christ in this world.

Do: Invite friends to prayer meetings at church, or home groups, or church services. Find three people you will invite to get involved with the prayer life of the church.

Listen: *"It is one of the most beautiful compensations of life, that no man can sincerely try to help another without helping himself."*
~Ralph Waldo Emerson~

Day 40 - Saturday - Carry On!

Read: Hebrews 12:1-3

Reflect: In the last 40 days we've gone through some topics regarding prayer. The main goal, however, is to grow in our personal relationship with Christ and have that spill over into the lives we live everyday. You may have made some commitments to pray for people, for the church, or even to get more involved with the activities at HTR. Don't stop now. If we do these things often and long enough, they become habits that become a part of our lives and the life of the church. Carry on what you've started!

Do: Now that you've come to the end of this devotional, look to see where and how you can carry on the principles and habits you've started during Lent. Maybe you want to carry on praying for people, or maybe you want to find a new way of giving time, money or resources. Keep in mind that the aim should always be to glorify God and no one else.

Listen: *"Do you wish to grow in grace and be a devoted Christian? Be very sure, if you wish it, you could not have a more important question than this - Do you pray?"*
~J.C. Ryle~



One last thing...

How many of the 7 memory verses do you still remember?
Why not try and memorise a new Bible passage every week?