

## Monday of Holy Week

### A House of Prayer

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#### Scripture Luke 19:45-46

Jesus entered the temple area and began driving out those who were selling. “It is written,” he said to them, “My house will be a house of prayer, but you have made it a den of robbers.” (NIV)

#### A hand when it comes to prayer

The Monday of Holy Week is the day when Jesus overturned the money stalls in the Temple; drove out all those who were buying and selling there, upturned the stools of those who sold pigeons, telling folks it was to be a house of prayer for all nations and not a den for robbers!

Following on from the shouts of hosanna and waving of palm branches on the Sunday, the events of Monday definitely heightened the dramatic start to a life changing week.

No one likes to be chastised. To become aware of having done something wrong, is not just awkward it can be downright embarrassing, more so if you are unaware of the fact that what you did was wrong. If, however, you are deliberately doing something you know is wrong, then of course you should be chastised, but usually with some form of constructive criticism and encouragement rather than outright rage.

The temple was not to be a thoroughfare for buyers and sellers to take advantage of, nor was it to be place where people opened their purses to exploiters. It was to be a place where they opened heir hearts to God. Jesus’ rage is perhaps understandable. Time was running out and still the folks did not understand why he had come or what he had to do.

## A House of Prayer

Do we give prayer a high priority in our lives?

How should we pray and what should we pray for?

When I was a little girl, like many of you, I was always told, “close your eyes and clasp your hands” when praying. It was a way of shutting out distractions and helping me to look beyond myself.

We can of course pray - that is talk to God and listen to God; share our concerns with God, express our thanks and indeed confess our faults to God - with our eyes open. But I think many of us still need a hand when it comes to prayer.

Take a moment, wherever you are, and look at your hands.

Draw them together, as you do so think about drawing close to God and God drawing closer to you. God is not distant but near—very near, as close as a breath. As you touch your fingers with your lips, imagine God touching you with forgiveness and compassion.

Look more closely at your hands as you come to God in silent prayer.

The fingers are indeed pointing upwards—beyond ourselves, helping us to think about others. We are, allowed to pray for ourselves too. The fact that the thumbs are pointing towards us, reminds us of this fact. Use your hands to help you pray.

Thumb                      Pray for those closest and dearest to you...

Time of silence

First finger              Pray for those who seek to point us in the right direction

Time of silence

Middle finger            Pray for those in positions of authority that they might wield it well..

Time of silence

Fourth finger            Pray for those who care for us and those we care for too...

Time of silence

Little finger              Pray for those who are sick, unemployed, anxious, bereaved, weak or vulnerable at this particular time...

## Prayer based on Psalm 36: 5-10

Your love, O Lord, reaches to the heavens, your faithfulness to the skies.

Forgive us, when we take your love for granted or fail to see it in our lives

Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains, your justice like the great deep

Forgive us when we fail to trust your incredible power or doubt your word and way

How precious is your unfailing love, both high and low among us find refuge in the shadow of your wings

May this remind us, Lord, that we are precious in your sight

With you is the fountain of life, in you we see light, from you we become beacons of that light as you continue your love to those who know you.

Lord, let the light of hope shine in our hearts, in our homes and in every dark corner of the world, and let that hope bring us peace and reassurance in these trying times.

These things we pray in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord . Amen

### **O Lord hear my prayer**

Words and music from the Taize  
Community

**O Lord hear my prayer**

**O Lord hear my prayer**

**When I call answer me**

**O Lord hear my prayer**

**O Lord hear my prayer**

**Come and listen to me**

