

### A prayer for Community by Richard Rohr

O great Love, thank you for living and loving in us and through us. May all that we do flow from our deep connection with you and all beings. Help us become a community that vulnerably shares each other's burdens and the weight of glory. Listen to our hearts' longings for the healing of our world (Add your own special prayers for anyone particularly known to you)... Knowing you are hearing us better than we are speaking, we offer these prayers in your holy name, Lord Jesus. Amen.

### Loneliness as a gift by Henri Nouwen

Therefore I would like to voice loudly and clearly what might seem unpopular and maybe even disturbing: The Christian way of life does not take away our loneliness; it protects and cherishes it as a precious gift. Sometimes it seems as if we do everything possible to avoid the painful confrontation with our basic human loneliness, and allow ourselves to be trapped by false gods promising immediate satisfaction and quick relief.

But perhaps the painful awareness of loneliness is an invitation to transcend our limitations and look beyond the boundaries of our existence. The awareness of loneliness reveals to us an inner emptiness that can be destructive when misunderstood, but filled with promise for those who can tolerate its sweet pain.

*Depression is not the same as loneliness so please talk to someone you trust or send a message to [parishoffice@str.org.za](mailto:parishoffice@str.org.za) if you would appreciate some companionship and support during this difficult time of lockdown, illness and challenge. Please do not suffer in silence. Many people understand your pain and suffering.*

### The Prayer of Unveiling

Monday, January 4, 2021

*For now we see through a glass, darkly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know fully, as I am fully known. —1 Corinthians 13:12*

When we celebrate the beginning of a new year, we celebrate the rebirth of time. We wait for God to do new things. We wait for who we are. We wait for the coming of grace, for the revelation of God. We wait for the truth. We wait for the vision of the whole. But we cannot just wait. We must pray. We say that prayer is not primarily words. Yet prayer can be words, and if the words come out of that empty contemplative place, then we can trust that we really mean them. Contemplative prayer is a form of unveiling, because it reveals what is going on beneath the polished and busy surfaces of our minds, our hearts, and our bodies. When we finally get still enough, contemplation can live within us in pure, open moments of right here, right now. This is enough, this is fullness. If it is not right here, right now, it doesn't exist. If we don't know God now, how would we know God later? The mystics say we won't. We will not recognize God later if we cannot recognize God now. It is a matter of seeing God now through the shadow and the disguise.

Contemplative prayer lives in a spacious place, free of personal needs or meanings or even interpretations. Life does not care what I like or don't like. It doesn't matter a bit. If we stay in the world of preference, we keep ourselves as the reference point. Does it really matter what color I like best or what my current favorite movie is? It changes from moment to moment. No wonder people have identity crises. No wonder people have a fragile self-image; they have nothing solid to build on beyond changing opinions and feelings. If formerly we said, "I think therefore I am," now it might be "I choose therefore I am." That's not a solid foundation to build on.

The real question is "What does this have to say to me?" Those who are totally converted come to every experience and ask not whether or not they liked it, but what does it have to teach them. "What's the message or gift in this for me? How is God in this event? Where is God in this suffering?" This is a prayer of unveiling, asking that the cruciform shape of reality be revealed to us within the very shape and circumstances of our own lives.

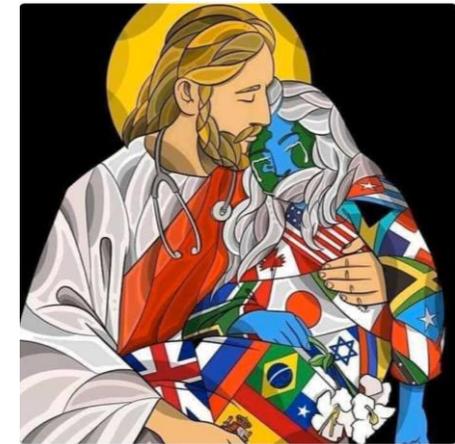
#### Reference:

Richard Rohr, *Everything Belongs: The Gift of Contemplative Prayer* (The Crossroad Publishing Company; 2003), 90-91, 154.  
<https://cac.org/the-prayer-of-unveiling-2021-01-04/>

# PRAYER DIARY

St Thomas Church

RONDEBOSCH



The Lord Jesus Christ with us in a time of pandemic

January  
2021

<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Sunday</b>
<p>11 The Holy Innocents  <b>Ps 97 Eph 1:1-14 Jn 6:15-27</b>            Pray for all those who consider abortion and for alternatives and better support for those with unwanted pregnancies.</p>	<p>12  <b>Ps 8 Eph 1:15-23 Mk 1:14-28</b>            Pray earnestly for an end to the corona virus pandemic and for all those suffering from the virus and it's after effects.</p>	<p>13  <b>Ps 105:1-15 Eph2:1-10 Mk 1:29-45</b>            Pray for all leaders to be blessed with extra wisdom and discernment with all the decisions that constantly need to be made.</p>	<p>14  <b>Ps 95:6-11 Eph 2:11-22 Mk 2:1-12</b>            Pray for the parish of St Thomas to remain faithful and connected during this unusual time. Pray especially for those who are lonely.</p>	<p>15  <b>Ps 78:3-8 Eph 3:1-13 Mk 2:13-22</b>            Pray for our new Rector Rev Claire and her family on holiday that they will have a refreshing time.</p>	<p>16  <b>Ps 19:7-14 Eph 3:14-21 Mk 2:23-3:6</b>            Give thanks for Rev Leslie and his wonderful care of us during the interregnum. Pray that he has a lovely weekend away with his wife Alma.</p>	<p>17  <b>Ps 139:1-6, 13-18 1 Cor 6:12-20 Jn 1:43-51</b>            Pray for Rev Mike Keggie and his wife Lynne that they would keep well and strong. Give thanks for his ministry to us today. (Actual only– if possible)</p>
<p>18 Confession of St Peter  <b>Ps 110 Eph 4:1-16 Mk 3:7-19a</b>            Pray for a renewal in our witness to Christ and to know that we are never beyond God's forgiveness.</p>	<p>19  <b>Ps 111 Eph 4:17-32 Mk 3:19b-35</b>            Pray for Jeremy, Robyn and Riley Smith as they settle into their new home at St Thomas's. Pray for Jeremy as he prepares for the new term.</p>	<p>20  <b>Ps 110 Eph 5:1-14 Mk 4:1-20</b>            Pray for a new determination to reduce our footprint and live more consciously about our impact on the earth in all that we do.</p>	<p>21  <b>Ps 40:8-14, 20-22 Eph 5:15-33 Mk 4:21-34</b>            Pray for our President and the enormous responsibility on his shoulders. Pray for great strength and wisdom in all his negotiations and meetings.</p>	<p>22  <b>Ps 85:7-13 Eph 6:1-9 Mk 4:35-41</b>            Pray for those being trained for the ministry and all those nominated for elective assemblies this year. Pray for God's guidance.</p>	<p>23  <b>Ps 47 Eph 6:10-24 Mk 5:1-20</b>            Pray for the youth leaders at St Thomas's and their faithfulness. May they know they are planting or watering seeds that will bear fruit one day.</p>	<p>24  <b>Ps 62:5-12 1 Cor 7:29-31 Mk 1:14-20</b>            Pray for the elderly in our parish, especially those that are very frail and vulnerable. May they find sustenance in their faith, family and friends.</p>
<p>25 The conversion of St Paul  <b>Ps 98 Gal 1:1-17 Mk5:21-43</b>            Pray for all those dear to you that do not yet know Jesus as their savior. Pray for the Holy Spirit to convict and draw them to God's love.</p>	<p>26  <b>Ps 40:1-13 Gal 1:18-2:10 Mk 6:1-13</b>            Pray for Archbishop Thabo and Bishop Joshua to work well as a team in the Diocese of Cape Town</p>	<p>27  <b>Ps 110:1-4 Gal 2:11-21 Mk 6:13-29</b>            Pray for all those who have suffered financial difficulties during the pandemic and that God would restore what the "locust has eaten."</p>	<p>28  <b>Ps 24:1-6 Gal 3:1-14 Mk 6:30-46</b>            Pray for victims and perpetrators of abuse that they would find the help they need and stop they cycle of this harmful behaviour.</p>	<p>29  <b>Ps 37:1-6 Gal 3:15-22 Mk 6:47-56</b>            Pray for our Premier Alan Winde and all those who advise and help him to have divine wisdom and support in governing our province.</p>	<p>30  <b>Ps 89:19-29 Gal 3:23-29 Mk 7:1-23</b>            Pray for the poor who are dear to the Lord. Pray for guidance as to how you can help those who have less than you and pay your blessings forward.</p>	<p>31  <b>Ps 111 1 Cor 8:1-13 Mk 1:21-28</b>            Pray for all our former rectors and priests and their families and pray for the retired clergy living in Sandown Close. Give thanks for their wonderful witness and teaching.</p>
<p>1 February  <b>Ps 31:21-27 Gal 4:1-11 Mk 7:24-37</b>            Pray that God will help us welcome the Hunter family well to our parish and prepare our hearts to receive Revd Claire's teaching.</p>	<p>2  <b>Ps 22:24-32 Gal 4:12-20 Mk 8:1-10</b>            Give thanks for all those who care for our grounds and gardens and buildings.</p>	<p>3  <b>Ps 103:1-2, 13-18 Gal 4:21-31 Mk 8:11-26</b>            Give thanks for the parish council who are faithfully overseeing the running of the parish so selflessly and willingly.</p>	<p>4  <b>Ps 48:1-3, 8-10 Gal 5:1-15 Mk 8:27-9:1</b>            Pray for those who have covid-19 and for those who are finding it difficult to breath. Pray for all Drs and Nurses who are so valiant and caring.</p>	<p>5  <b>Ps 27:1-12 Gal 5:16-24 Mk 9:2-13</b>            Pray for all those who have lost loved ones and whose hearts are breaking and very sore, that they will find comfort in God's compassion and mercy.</p>	<p>6  <b>Ps 23 Gal 5:25-6:10 Mk 9:14-29</b>            Pray for all young people and unemployed people who are seeking jobs. Think how you might be able to assist and network for anyone you know in this position.</p>	<p>7 <b>EDUCATION SUNDAY</b>  <b>Ps 147:1-11 1 Cor 9:16-23 Mk 1:29-39</b>            Pray for all school teachers and learners, for their protection and a positive attitude that they can achieve more than one can think or imagine in our nations classrooms with God's help.</p>