



AMUA

AMUA Prayer and Spirituality Coordinator

Christine Jensen OAM

prayer@muaustralia.org.au

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

January - March 2024



Thought for the Week from Mothers Union Australia

Sunday 24th March 2024

Women in Holy Week

‘The women who had come with Jesus from Galilee followed Joseph and saw the tomb and how his body was laid in it’ *Luke 23:55.*

As we think about the death and resurrection of Jesus, it is important that there were witnesses to the treatment of his body and those prepared to look after the body with spices and perfumes. Important because it means that the body of Jesus was not lost. Its whereabouts was known. And it was the women who were able to bear witness to this. Their witness throughout is a key part of the evidence. And it fits completely with the respect that Jesus showed for women and the importance of his encounters with them. He was bearing witness to the great truth of the gospel that the message of Christ is equally for men and women and that we are all one in him.

Question for thought:

What do you owe to the godly women in your life?

Almighty God, Father of all mercies we thank you for the relative stability in Zambia and pray for members in Central Zambia at this Easter time that they will know the hope of the resurrection. May they share your Word with members across the Diocese as they help prepare couples for marriage and campaign against gender-based violence. Amen.

Thought for the Week from Mothers Union Australia

Sunday 17th March 2024

Women Worldwide

‘But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream’ *Amos 5:24*.

Justice is something we all want. We want to live in a just society and we wish to be treated with justice, especially when we are disadvantaged. In the end, we believe that justice is at the very heart of the universe, since God is just, and, as the prophet Amos reminds us, he wishes us to be righteous in our dealings with each other as well. Around the world there are many examples of women facing injustice simply because they are women. It is good to bear witness to the necessity of justice and righteousness and the fact that the Lord will judge us on the basis of our treatment of others. Let us care for those who suffer, and pray that the Lord’s kingdom will come so that all may be set to rights.

Question for thought:

How can I support Mothers Union world wide as it brings literacy and education to women?

Gracious heavenly Father, we pray for members in Antsiranana in Madagascar as they cope with impact of floods and cyclones. We give thanks for their commitment to sharing God’s love in families in their communities so that children might grow up knowing you. We also pray for Brisbane Diocese as they face challenges but continue to reach out to their communities in your name. Amen

Thought for the Week from Mothers Union Australia

Sunday 1st January 2024

Flourishing MU

‘If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. This is my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples’ *John 15:7-8*.

Jesus likens himself to a vine planted by his Father and with his disciples as the branches from which fruit emerges. Every real Christian is committed to the life-time work of trusting Jesus, following Jesus, obeying the words of Jesus. In this way our lives will be filled with good fruit. Sometimes we concentrate on paid employment so much that we sacrifice even our relationships to pursue it. Daily work is important, but it is only part of our chief work in this life. This is following our Lord every day, finding and doing the good works he calls us to. From this work we never retire, and it is work which is deeply satisfying. Furthermore, we do it together with our fellow believers. That is one of the joys of belonging to the Mothers Union. Together we are committed to give Christian care to families and communities. It is a great and fruitful work.

Question for thought?

Can I see the fruit of following Jesus in my own life?

Almighty God as we come to a new year we give thanks for our Worldwide President Sheran Harper and her leadership of Mothers Union. Grant her wisdom in the many decisions she makes and sustain her in her travels. We pray too, for the Worldwide Trustees, particularly Pamela Abana Trustee of Zone C which includes Australia. Uphold Pamela as she supports and encourages the provinces in the Zone. Amen.

Thought for the Week from Mothers Union Australia

Sunday 7th January 2024

Trust and hope in God

‘Blessed are those whose help is in the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord their God’ *Psalms 146:5*

Trust and hope belong together. Hope is faith looking forward. It is our faith in the Lord which gives us hope even in the midst of the most difficult trials. The Apostle Peter speaks of God’s ‘very great and precious promises’, and as we trust his promises, so we see that our future is secure, even if the present is chaotic (*2 Peter 1:4*). Of course, some people are born optimists and always believe in the best. But true Christian hope is for all, the pessimists and even the depressed. It is not merely a feeling. It is a reality, the reality that our future belongs to Jesus. Jesus is real – so then is our hope. Trust God and you will have real hope.

Question for thought:

Do I know what the ‘precious and very great promises’ of God are? Where can they be found?

Gracious Lord we bring before you the Diocese of Ruaha in Tanzania as they face many challenges to family life including unemployment and poverty. We pray that the Credit and Savings group in partnership with Tearfund will continue to fulfil its aim of spiritual and socio-economic transformation across the country. Amen.

Thought for the Week from Mothers Union Australia

Sunday 10th March 2024

Mothering

‘I am reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also’ *2 Timothy 1:5*.

The power of a mother’s (and grandmother’s) faith and prayers must never be underestimated. The great scholar of the early Church, Augustine, had strayed a long way from the Christian faith of his mother, Monica. She agonised in prayer over him, even pleading with the famous Bishop of Milan, St Ambrose for help. He said to her these famous words, ‘It cannot be that the child of such tears should perish.’ St Augustine came to know the Lord, and is today remembered as one of the greatest thinkers and writers of all Christian history. He likened his mother to the widow of Nain in the gospel story, whose son was dead until Christ raised him to life. Such is the way that the Lord uses the prayers of the faithful, and not least mothers and grandmothers.

Question for Thought:

Do I pray earnestly for my children and for the families around me?

Lord of all, we pray for relief from suffering and war in Aweril in South Sudan. Help members as they seek to improve the spiritual growth of women refugees. We thank you for their commitment to evangelism in the refugee camps as well as sharing practical skills for poverty eradication. Amen.

Thought for the Week from Mothers Union Australia

Sunday 3rd March 2024

Women of Influence

‘She speaks with wisdom and faithful instruction is on her tongue’ *Proverbs 31:26*.

Some of the greatest rulers in English history have been the Queens – Elizabeth I, Victoria and in our own time Elizabeth II. The impact for good of Elizabeth II was obvious in the sorrow surrounding her passing. Each of these women was a force for good, surrounded by a Court, clothed in riches, housed in palaces. But ordinary people, and especially women, are also a force for good in the key influence that we have in the lives of others. Especially those who fear the Lord will speak with wisdom and faithful instruction and so shape the lives of many others with whom they come into contact. But the key to this success and influence is our fear of the Lord, our faithful submission to him. Then he will gift us with wise speech if we follow his ways.

Question for thought:

Do I ask the Lord for wisdom in my speech?

Almighty God, we bring before you members in Bujumbura, Burundi as they seek your heavenly wisdom as to how to address domestic violence and other family issues. May peace and reconciliation be at the heart of what they do and may they know the peace which passes all understanding. We pray for our members in Grafton Diocese NSW as they serve you and do the good work you’ve prepared for them to walk in. Amen.

Thought for the Week from Mothers Union Australia

Sunday 14th January 2024

MU Global Mission

Jesus said, ‘All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations. *Matthew 28:18-19*.

Christians are meant to be global people. Of course we belong to families, tribes and nations, but we also believe that all people, wherever they are from, are born in the image and likeness of God and are equally precious in his sight. Racial discrimination is abhorrent. We are also all sinners and need equally to hear the gospel message that Jesus came to reconcile us to his Father and so save us. In fulfilling this great summons of Jesus, Mothers Union sees the fruit of the gospel in transformed lives as the disciples of Jesus do all he has commanded us. His special command is to show love to all and care for others in need, whether material or spiritual.

Question for thought:

Has following Jesus helped me to be a loving person?

In 2024 Mothers Union Mauritius will celebrate its centenary. Although its membership is small, at just over 250, members are very engaged in their communities reaching out to the vulnerable and those in need. We pray as members support prison ministry, counselling centre, parenting skills programs, marriage preparation and care for the elderly that they will share God’s love with those they contact. Amen.

Thought for the Week from Mothers Union Australia

Sunday 21st January 2024

The Church United

‘There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male or female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus
Galatians 3:28

As the Apostle Paul shows us in this verse, the prayer of Jesus, ‘that all of them may be one’ has been fulfilled in the way in which Christians are fundamentally united in the Lord Jesus Christ. We have the same heavenly Father and are indwelt by the same Spirit. Now, however, we need to act on that oneness. And this is a summons to us all, for our local congregations must show forth the unity which God has given us. According to *Ephesians 4:2-3*, we must all ‘be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace’. How very sad it is to see a church divided and quarrelling. Isn’t it better to recognise that we are all sinners and so to forgive one another, as God has forgiven us?

Question:

What do I do for the sake on the unity of the church?

Heavenly Father, we pray for members in the Diocese of Butare in Rwanda as they are actively engaging in initiatives to transform the lives of individuals, families and whole communities with the gospel of Jesus. We also pray for members in Bathurst Diocese in NSW that they will continue to encourage Christian family life in their churches. Amen.

Thought for the Week from Mothers Union Australia

Sunday, 25th February 2024

Fair Trade Matters

‘The Lord detests dishonest scales, but accurate weights find favour with him’ *Proverbs 11:1*.

The Lord calls us to justice in all our dealings with our fellow humans, whether in the home or in the workplace or in the marketplace. Unfortunately, you may have noticed farmers and other workers are not always paid what they deserve for their labours. As we are able, we need to redress this balance and ensure that justice is done. Certainly, one of the key things we can do is pray for the disadvantaged. But it is also good to support those who are working to serve the interests of the poor by selling their goods at a fair price. We need to remember the words of the prophet Micah, ‘What does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God’ *Micah 6:8*

Question for thought:

In what way am I walking with justice and mercy?

Merciful Lord, we pray for the political situation in Myanmar that there will be an end to injustice. We bring before you the Diocese of Mandalay and pray for members that they will continue to have courage and perseverance in spite of opposition to the Christianity. As they care for their communities may they show forth your love. Amen

Thought for the Week from Mothers Union Australia

Sunday 18th February, 2024

Serving our Communities

‘Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven’ *Matthew 5:16*

As Christians, we are committed to serve our church family, but also the wider community. It is no accident that the care for the poor and weak is so often done by our Christian organisations. But as individuals we are called to share the good news about Jesus and to look after the needs of those around us, especially the sick, homeless and the elderly and the disadvantaged. But notice what Jesus says in *Matthew 5:16*. Whatever we do individually and as members of Mothers Union it is to be done in such a way that people will give glory to God and not to us. We always need to point to Jesus.

Question for thought:

How am I serving those around me so that they give thanks to God?

Amare – Agrupación de Mujeres Anglicanas Renovadas en el Espíritu (Anglican Women Renewed in the Spirit) is the local expression of Mothers Union in Latin America. Lord, we pray as Amare in Argentina and Uruguay cares for the needs of women they will share the hope of knowing you which gives meaning and purpose in life. Amen

Thought for the Week from Mothers Union Australia

Sunday 28th January 2024

Faith for the Future

‘Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not your life more than food, and your body more than clothes?’ *Matthew 6:25*

Those who have faith in Jesus also have hope for the future. As Jesus tells us in this passage, we have a Father who is in charge of all things and feeds the birds and clothes the flowers. Therefore, he says, we are not to allow our lives to be dominated by concerns of this world, but to ‘Seek first God’s kingdom and his righteousness’ and all these things will be ours as well. As we look to the year ahead, although there may be things which worry us, let us have faith for the future. The words of Jesus, when we trust them, give us a quiet confidence, and fill our lives with the meaning and purpose we need. Whatever happens, put your future into the hands of God. He cares for you.

Question for thought:

What is the aim of my life?

Gracious God, we pray for the nation of Zimbabwe and particularly the Diocese of Masvingo as they cope with unemployment and poverty and political tensions continue to impact daily life. We pray that as members purposefully seek out to engage with those less privileged and most vulnerable they will be able to encourage their faith and trust in you. Amen.

Thought for the Week from Mothers Union Australia
Sunday 4th February, 2024
Faith in Action

'So faith comes from hearing, and hearing from the word of Christ' *Romans 10:17*.

Coming to know Jesus is a matter of hearing the word about him, the gospel, and turning to him in repentance and faith. We put our trust in him. As we do, we are aware that the aim of our life from then on must be to please him (see *2 Corinthians 5:9*). How do we do those? We do this by listening to his word, trusting it, and obeying it. Faith is dynamic. It actually changes things. Again and again it is the women and men of faith who sacrifice in order that others will be helped and so change the world for good. Faith in action is powerful.

Question for thought:

Is the reality of my faith seen by my obedience to Jesus?

Gracious Lord, we give thanks for the many women in Nigeria who are members of Mothers Union and especially pray for the Diocese of Eha - Amufu as they encourage women to reach their potential. May their outreach in hospitals, prison ministry and parenting programs bring honour and glory to you. We also pray for the Diocese of Ballarat and for Jillian Gale as President. Pray that all their activities will show your love and mercy. Amen

Thought for the Week from Mothers Union Australia
Sunday 11th February, 2024
Sharing God's Love

'Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another' *John 4:11*.

When we appreciate all that God has done for us in sending his Son into the world 'as an atoning sacrifice for our sins' (*1 John 4:10*), we will also love others. And just as God's love was demonstrated to the unworthy and sinful, so we also are called to love all people, and especially our family and fellow Christians. We can easily feel drawn to those who love us or from whom we think we can gain something or people we admire. But as believers we are summoned to care for the poor and dispossessed and lonely and disabled. It is a love which down through the years has transformed lives all around the world. See how much you are loved by God and be transformed so that you love others.

Question for thought:

Has the love of God transformed me to love others?

Heavenly Father may members in the Diocese Karnataka in North India be strengthened as they care and support the many vulnerable women and girls in their community. We pray for an end to human trafficking and an end to injustice as we are all one in Christ Jesus. Amen