



AMUA

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

July - September 2024



AMUA Prayer and Spirituality Coordinator

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Thought for the Week from Mothers Union Australia

Sunday 22nd September 2024

Seasons of peace and conflict

'Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited' *Romans 12:16*

Human beings are far from perfect as you well know. We are prone to break relationships, to nurse malice, to speak ill of one another, to quarrel, to discriminate against others. Being a Christian does not deliver us from such sins. But because we know God our heavenly Father, we are called to a better life and by the Spirit enabled to forgive and to love. In particular our Christian fellowship ought to be like that. It should be open to all people and make everyone welcome. It should be marked by harmony and the love that shows itself in not taking offence. It should be different to the world around us because Jesus is present with us when we meet. We are all responsible for these qualities.

Question for thought:

How does forgiveness make a difference in your life?

Heavenly Father, we pray for the members scattered across the islands in North Eastern Caribbean and Aruba. As they encourage change within their communities may their Christian faith shine through as they share Christ's love with families and those who are struggling to support themselves. Amen.

Thought for the Week from Mothers Union Australia

Sunday 15th September 2024

Serving God in every season

‘So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it’ *2 Corinthians 5:9*

It is wonderful to think that our aim as Christian people in this life and the next is to please the Lord Jesus by doing his will. He is the person above all others that we would wish to please. We are not trying to gain his love, but because we know that he loves us. It is our response to his love. In this life, most people retire from work. But in the Christian life, we never retire. Our retirement from work may give us more opportunities to serve him in the love we have for others. Just as we have been so deeply loved, so we walk by love, the love which inspires the good works which we do as servants of Christ.

Question for thought:

What truly pleases the Lord Jesus?

Gracious Lord, we pray for our sisters in Rumeek, South Sudan. Our hearts are heavy when we hear of continued fighting and persecution of Christians. We give thanks that Mothers Union has been able provide emergency relief and long term development programs. May the light of the gospel shine through all they do. In Jesus' name. Amen

Thought for the Week from Mothers Union Australia

Monday 1st July 2024

Across Generations and Cultures

‘There was before me a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb.’ *Revelation 7:9*

It is all too natural for us to mix only with people we like and people who are like us. Often this means that we neglect people from other nations, or age groups, or education or interests. But from the very beginning of the Bible, we are told that all people are made in the image of God and that we therefore belong to each other, no matter the differences. In particular, our local church should reflect this. Churches help parents raise their children by being a bigger family. I know that we are particularly grateful for youth leaders who taught our children the faith and modelled it. When a stranger enters we should be quick to welcome them and care for them. And we should care for each other in times of crisis or difficulty. That is love in action.

Question for thought: Do I look for people I don't know at church in order to love them also?

Almighty God, we give thanks for the many Mothers Union members in the Diocese of Mombasa and pray that as they seek to meet the many local needs, they will help people to know God's love through the Lord Jesus. May your Spirit give them wisdom as they seek to do the good works you have prepared for them to walk in. Amen.

Thought for the Week from Mothers Union Australia

Sunday 7th July 2024

Relationship with God

‘For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.’ *John 3:16*

To be loved must surely be the most enriching experience of life. But even the greatest human love cannot compare with the love of God for his people. It is no accident that the symbol of Christianity is the cross. As Jesus taught us, there is no greater love than when we lay down our lives for our friend. But we are not merely the friends of God. Our sin has led us to be at enmity with him. And yet, God’s amazing grace, his love for the unworthy, moved him to give his own Son so that we may be reconciled to him. That is love, and it inspires us to love God and to love our neighbour. Out of his love comes our love, even for those who hurt us. God is love.

Question for thought:

How can I be sure that I am loved by God?

Gracious heavenly Father we pray for the Diocese of Montreal in Canada. Due to vast distances it’s not easy to meet with members across the country. We pray that the parenting program will reach out to families who are struggling and challenged by the contemporary values of the west and an ignorance of you and your love for them. In Jesus’ Name. Amen

Thought for the Week from Mothers Union Australia

Sunday 8th September 2024

Seasons of Creation

‘As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease.’
Genesis 8:22

When we walk, or work in the garden or take a trip, we usually see something which delights us in the created world. The variety of animal life, the beauty of the plants, the majesty of the mountains and the sky. When you know that there is one Creator who has made the world and sustains it every day, we thank him in joy. It all testifies to his power and his love for beauty and variety. It testifies to his provision for us in the creation, and hence his love for us. Of course, the tragedy is that human beings have despoiled the world and it groans with longing for God to set things right. The wonder of the gospel is the promise that the return of Jesus will usher in a new heaven and new earth in which righteousness will reign.

Question for thought:

Do I constantly thank God for his creation?

Almighty God, we pray for the dioceses of Mable, Namirembe, Sebel and Soroti in Uganda. We thank you for their commitment to you and pray that your Spirit will continue to uphold them and guide them in all they do to your honour and glory. Amen

Thought for the Week from Mothers Union Australia

Sunday 1st September 2024

Peace and Reconciliation

‘Therefore, since we are justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ’ *Romans 5:1*

Peace is one of the greatest of all blessings, whether in family life, the community, the church and in the nation. But the greatest peace of all is peace with God. This comes of course though the work of Jesus in dying for us. When we turn to him and trust him, we are justified and not condemned as we deserve, and are reconciled to God. Such is the love of God for us. Out of this peace comes our own commitment to peace, forgiveness and reconciliation in our daily lives. Also arising from our peace with God is the peace of God, the peace beyond all understanding which guards my heart and turns fear to faith.

Question for thought:

Do I have an assurance of peace with God?

Heavenly Father, we bring before you the dioceses in Southwark and Bristol in the UK. We thank you for the many projects and pray that they will have opportunity to share the reason for the hope they have in you as they care for the many who are in need spiritually and physically. Amen

Thought for the Week from Mothers Union Australia

Sunday 14th July 2024

Support for Relationships

‘Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us’

Matthew 6:12

Some of the most painful fractures of relationships occur in family life. I have known families in which siblings have not spoken to each other for decades, and the hate is still as sharp as it was so long ago. It is no accident that as soon as sin enters the world, we have the epic story of murder within a family. But however terrible the sin is, we are called to forgive the other person as we ourselves have been forgiven. This does not necessarily imply that we take the person back to the place they once occupied, but we will not take revenge and we will seek their good. When there is repentance there can also be reconciliation and peace. This is what God has done for us, and we should be led by him.

Question for thought:

If I have offended, am I willing to humbly seek forgiveness and reconciliation?

Our Father in heaven we pray for the Diocese of Gitega in Burundi as they put peace and reconciliation at the heart of their work. Please answer their prayers to know the best way of addressing domestic violence and other family issues. May the Literacy Program continue to help people as they seek employment and education but especially to know you through your word. Amen

Thought for the Week from Mothers Union Australia

Sunday 21st July 2024

Family Challenges

‘But if anyone does not provide for their relatives, and especially for members of their own household, they have denied the faith and are worse than an unbeliever.’ *1 Timothy 5:8*

When we remember how the Bible urges us to care for people who are not like us, and to be generous, this verse seems strange. But without compromising the teaching on generosity, the Bible is here reminding us of our profound responsibilities to those who are bound to us in family. One of the tragedies of the contemporary world is how individual desires are favoured above families. We are planning the destruction of our own civilisation. It is really important that our churches sustain family life, and offer the strongest support for those who struggle, not least single people and those who have been abandoned by a spouse. I thank God that I have seen this in action in churches and I know how important it is.

Question for thought:

How does AMUA support family life? Could I help?

Gracious Lord, we thank you that Christian missionaries came to Tonga so that now there is a predominance of Christians on the islands. Even though the Mothers Union is small, may members be active in their prayers and outreach so that your word is understood and people come to know our Saviour the Lord Jesus. Amen

Thought for the Week from Mothers Union Australia

Sunday 25th August 2024

The witness of our lives

‘Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer’
Romans 12:12-13

Those who minister amongst the aged testify to the difference they see between those who know the Lord and those who don't. The chief difference is hope. They witness, even in the midst of suffering, to their hope in the Lord Jesus and the future he has promised to those who trust him. This witness, at any point in our lives, is very important as it contrasts with those who do not yet know Christ. Even the very wealthy lack the hope of the gospel. The quiet but true witness of God's people has an impact on those who are hopeless and we need always to be, 'joyful in hope, patient in affliction, and faithful in prayer'.

Question for thought:

Would those around me know that I have a real hope in Jesus?

Lord, we pray for our sisters in Harare Zimbabwe. Grant them wisdom as they cope with unemployment and poverty. May the hope of the gospel give them wisdom and courage as they help rebuild relationships, self esteem and belonging. We pray too for our members in Wangaratta that as they encourage prayer amongst members that they will know your hand of blessing upon them. Amen.

Thought for the Week from Mothers Union Australia

Sunday 18th August

The prayers we breathe

'For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God has prepared for us to walk in' *Ephesians 2:10*

I know a married couple who have incorporated this text into their daily prayers, asking that the Lord will help them find and do the good works which he has prepared for them to walk in. This is an illustration of the riches of the Christian life. We know that God is Almighty and we know that he loves us. We know these things for sure because of Jesus and the gift of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, we can bring every aspect of our lives to him in trusting prayer. Not only that, we can constantly pray for others, even for strangers we may see in the street or sit next to on the bus. Our God hears our prayers, though they may be silent to the rest of the world.

Question for thought:

Is prayer my frequent habit?

Gracious Heavenly Father, we give thanks for the stability and democracy in Ghana and pray for the diocese of Tamale as they support the needs of local communities. As they share your love and compassion may your name be honoured and glorified. Amen.

Thought for the Week from Mothers Union Australia

Sunday 28th July 2024

Love One Another

'Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God.'

1 John 4:7

One of the easiest of all things to carry is a grudge. I have noticed that I more easily forget the kindness of people than their criticisms or disloyalty. Years can pass and we still remember. But this is not from God. God is love, and love is from God. Especially when we remember how God has loved us, unworthy as we are, we are moved to love others, to forget their mistakes and to care for them. One of the best ways in which we can practice love is to pray for others. This is a very practical work of love. But there are many other ways, especially within the Christian fellowship that we are to care for the needs of our brothers and sisters in the family of God. Just listening to each other is a good start! So few people learn the art of listening.

Question for thought:

Do I listen well? Or am I better at talking?

Lord God, we pray for members in India but especially in the Diocese of Rayalaseema as they support those struggling with poverty. May there be an end to human trafficking and gender based violence. We also pray for the Diocese of Melbourne as they seek to reach out to people to support Christ's teaching on marriage and family life. Amen

Thought for the Week from Mothers Union Australia

Sunday 4th August 2024

Bless the work of Mothers Union

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

Through much experience in talking to believers, I have become aware of just how important mothers and grandmothers are to faith. This is through words spoken, the life of love, but also (and not least) the prayers of intercession. Of course, fathers matter also in their own way, not least with boys. But there seems to be something deeply significant in the mother's care for her children and grandchildren. At its very heart, the work of Mothers Union is to encourage Christian family life, so that, under God, the faith is passed on and shared, and our children live to please Jesus. This task is at the heart of our prayers for the blessing of God upon our fellowship.

Question for thought: How can MU best help today's parents to follow the example of Lois and Eunice?

Gracious Lord, we thank you for the recent parenting seminars on technology in three centres in North West Australia. May those who attended be equipped to face the challenges of technology in their family life but also to consider knowing you. We pray for Jenny Jamieson as she encourages members across this vast diocese. Amen

Thought for the Week from Mothers Union Australia

Sunday 11th August 2024

The words we speak

'Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry' *James 1:19*

You only have to be deaf to realise how powerful words are. They are the very means of our relationships and virtually every human being has this power in their possession. The Bible says a lot about our speech. The quotation from James is very interesting. It is easy to be quick to speak – we all do that. But we are encouraged here to be 'quick to listen', to take the speech of the other person seriously and to exercise discipline over our own words. What we need to avoid is slander and gossip, destructive criticism, immoral speech and the like. The essence of our speech is to love for the other person as we seek to bless them and to build them up. All this comes from the Holy Spirit who gifts us with self-control.

Question for thought:

Is my speech motivated by love for others?

Almighty God, we bring before you the diocese of Kansai in DR Congo and the many people displaced through violence. May there be an end to fighting and members be comforted knowing you are in charge of all things and are faithful to your promises. We thank you for Viv Feltham as she leads the diocese of North Queensland and encourages members to talk and share about the future as they share the hope of the gospel of the Lord Jesus. Amen