

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON (or a hymn) Remember your compassion, O Lord, and your merciful love, for they are from of old. Let not our enemies exult over us. Redeem us, O God of Israel, from all our distress.

Or

Of you my heart has spoken, Seek his face. It is your face, O Lord, that I seek; hide not your face from me.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM (Ps 115)

ANTIPHON: I will walk in the presence of the Lord in the land of the living.

RESPONSE: I will walk in the presence of the Lord in the land of the living.

LECTOR: I trusted, even when I said: "I am sorely afflicted." O precious in the eyes of the Lord is the death of his faithful. **R.**

LECTOR: Your servant, Lord, your servant am I; you have loosened my bonds. A thanksgiving sacrifice I make: I will call on the Lord's name. **R.**

LECTOR: My vows to the Lord I will fulfil before all his people, in the courts of the house of the Lord, in your midst, O Jerusalem. **R.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ! From the shining cloud, the Father's voice is heard: this is my beloved Son, hear him. Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

COMMUNION ANTIPHON (or a hymn) This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.

TODAY'S READINGS Genesis 22:1-2, 9-13, 15-18; Romans 8:31-34; Mark 9:2-10

NEXT WEEK (3rd Sunday Lent, Year B) Exodus 20:1-17; Ps 18; 1 Corinthians 1:22-25; John 2:13-25

*New Majellan
Podcasts on
Prayer*

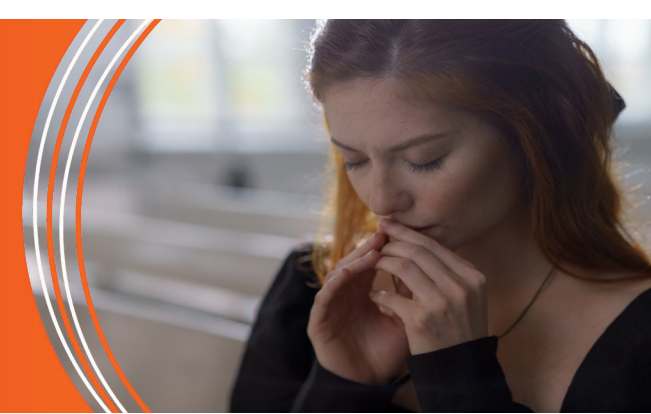
Prayer is Life

Majellan Media has launched a new podcast series on prayer. Prayer is Life is aimed at giving people a better understanding about prayer. The podcasts will be led by Redemptorist priest David Hore CSSR. The new series coincides with the start of a Year of Prayer announced by Pope Francis. For details and to listen go to: <https://majellan.media/prayer-is-life-podcast/>



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Obedience brings the blessing



Abraham is a problematic figure in the biblical story. He lies to Pharaoh about his wife, hanging her out to dry to protect his own skin. He does the same thing a few chapters later to another king, Abimelech. But when push comes to shove, at the moment of the test, he ... 'passed with flying colors' as we used to say in school.

Abraham was not perfect, but he did pass where Adam and Eve failed. The Parents of humanity were called to partnership with God in accomplishing his creation plan. They were given a privileged place of rule in the world; they named the animals; they were fruitful and multiplied. But when push came to shove, at the moment of the test, they took the fruit of the tree and ate it. They failed the test. The serpent deceived them, saying, in effect, that God, in forbidding them access to the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, did not have their good in mind.

They needed to take for themselves the good thing that God held back from them. They decided to determine right and wrong for themselves. Taking the fruit was 'good in their own eyes'. They rejected the only possible path by which they—we—can find the fullness for which we were made. That path is obedience to God's commands. In obedience we are liberated. To ride a bicycle you must obey, so to speak, the law of gravity. You must trust that collaborating with the bicycle's pedals, seat, and handlebars, and through

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them, the wheels, will work. You must submit yourself to be free. Otherwise, you are going to get hurt. The price of being God's (GOD'S!) special collaborator in his creation project is obedience. Trust. We must trust that God has our good in mind, that our Creator is supremely good, even when—we do not see how that can be the case.

Abraham is the Old Testament exemplar of obedience. He was put to the most difficult test imaginable. He trusted God's goodness even through the command to sacrifice his 'one and only son', Isaac. He trusted what God had promised him (through his numerous descendants all nations will be blessed) and what God gifted him to initiate the fulfillment of that promise (a son).

Obedience brings the blessing. For Abraham, this meant being the father of the people Israel, through whom, finally, the Messiah would come to bless all creation, to bring, in Jesus' words, the kingdom of God. Beyond Abraham, the Messiah, Jesus, passed the test. That test reached its make-or-break moment in the Garden of Gethsemane, where he sweated drops of blood, bringing his fully human will to complete transparency with the divine will, obedience to the point of death, death on the cross. In that obedience, Christ Jesus won the ultimate blessing for himself, for humanity, for the world. And he makes us now his collaborators in the project.