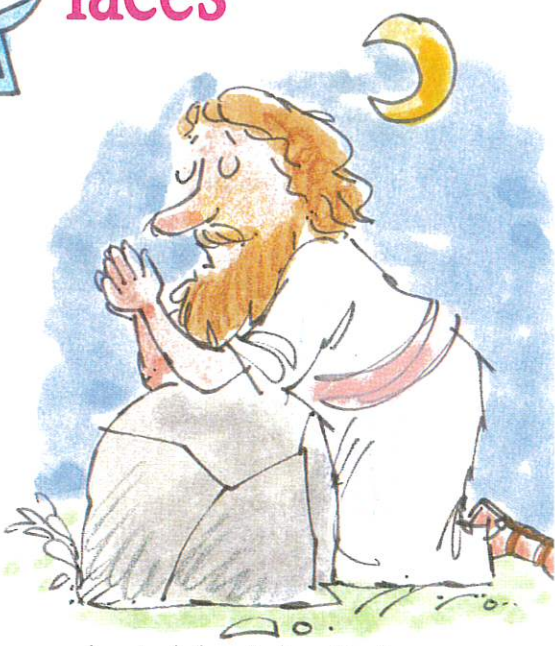


**THE GOOD NEWS**  
**WEEKLY**  
 Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)  
 Mark 1:29-39 • February 7, 2021

**D**eserted **P**laces

Today's gospel contains only one sentence attributed to Jesus: "Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do." But it is filled with stories of people being healed, demons being silenced, and the good news being preached. This, indeed, is what Jesus "came out to do."



The gospel also contains one sentence that tells us how Jesus was able to keep up his frantic pace: "In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed."

and pretend they don't matter in your relationship with God. You don't tune out the rest of your life — yesterday's events, today's plans, tomorrow's dreams. Those people and those events may be exactly what you pray about! But the conversation is strictly between you and God.

You too need to pray personally to God. Public prayer, in which you use the words and thoughts of others, is fine, but private prayer is necessary if you are to find the strength and courage you need to be a Christian.

(Adapted from *10 Ways to Meet God* by Jim Auer)

Private prayer doesn't mean that you block out the other people in your lives

**GOSPEL THEME**  
 Jesus found his strength to heal and proclaim the good news through prayer.

**SAVED  
 • TO •  
 SERVE**

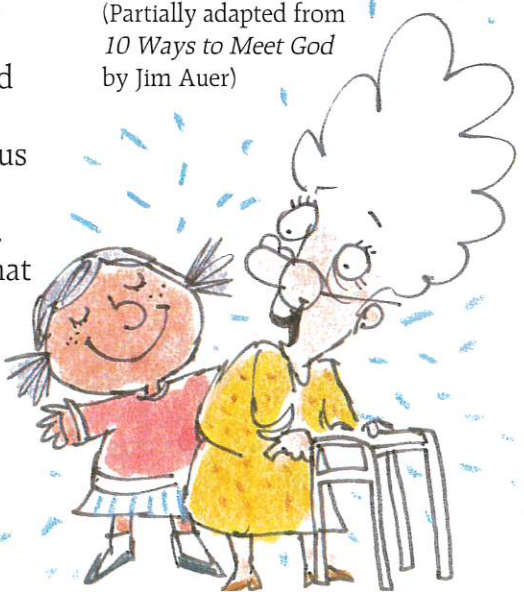
don't necessarily inspire prayer. That makes it awfully easy to end the day without having spent much — or any — time with God in prayer.

Jesus saved us from death through his own passion, death, and Resurrection. And Jesus told us we must do as he did. And Jesus served. But not even Jesus could do it alone. Jesus "went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed."

But suppose you had been saved from death, like Simon's mother-in-law was. Or all the sinful thoughts within you had been silenced, banished from your life. How would you spend the rest of your life then?

(Partially adapted from *10 Ways to Meet God* by Jim Auer)

All through the gospels, Jesus cures people of blindness, deafness, paralysis, even death. We don't always hear about what happens *after* these people are healed. Today's gospel tells us about one of them: "Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them."



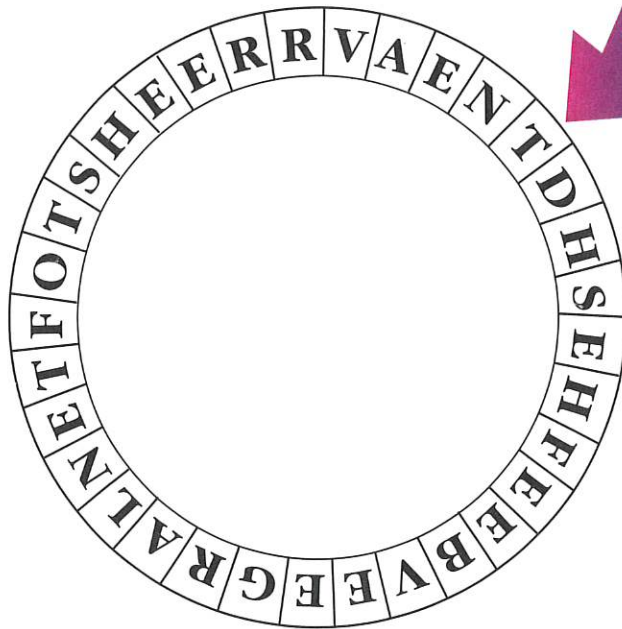
You don't need to pray in order to make God happy. God is already happy! You need to pray because you *need* prayer. It's as simple as that.

Sure, prayer doesn't always *feel* necessary. You can go for days, weeks, months, even years without checking in with God. Most of your life is full of ordinary events and routine duties that

We are *all* saved to serve.

# Simon's mother-in-law

Starting at the arrow, read every other letter in the circle to see what Simon's mother-in-law did after Jesus cured her of the fever.



**SHARING**  
the  
**GOOD NEWS**  
Activity for Class  
or Family

Discuss these topics:

- 1** One special way that I know I am of service to others is... (helping with chores, visiting old people, babysitting, listening well, and so forth).
- 2** People tell me I am really good at... (singing, painting, reading, spelling, pitching, punting, ... whatever).
- 3** How could I use my "talents" to serve others — in healing and proclaiming the good news of God?
- 4** Do I believe that prayer helps me? Why or why not?

**F**o focus in on living out this week's gospel message, spend some time alone — in prayer with God. At a pre-arranged meeting time, gather together as a group.

