

Marking Lent

SPRING 2013

- Bible Study
- Sacred Space, Time & Things
- Palm Prayers
- The Jesus Prayer
- Scripture Reading
- Thoughts
- Centering Prayer
- Finger Labyrinth

For God and Country

IMCOM-Europe
Religious Support



The Gospel According to Mark

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|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Day 1: Mark 1:1-11 | Day 21: Mark 9:30-37 |
| Day 2: Mark 1:12-34 | Day 22: Mark 9:38-50 |
| Day 3: Mark 1:35-2:12 | Day 23: Mark 10:1-16 |
| Day 4: Mark 2:13-28 | Day 24: Mark 10:17-31 |
| Day 5: Mark 3:1-35 | Day 25: Mark 10:32-52 |
| Day 6: Mark 4:1-34 | Day 26: Mark 11:1-11 |
| Day 7: Mark 4:35-5:20 | Day 27: Mark 11:12-25 |
| Day 8: Mark 5:21-43 | Day 28: Mark 11:27-33 |
| Day 9: Mark 6:1-6a | Day 29: Mark 12:1-12 |
| Day 10: Mark 6b-13 | Day 30: Mark 12:13-27 |
| Day 11: Mark 6:14-29 | Day 31: Mark 12:28-34 |
| Day 12: Mark 6:30-56 | Day 32: Mark 12:35-44 |
| Day 13: Mark 7:1-23 | Day 33: Mark 13:1-37 |
| Day 14: Mark 7:24-37 | Day 34: Mark 14:1-11 |
| Day 15: Mark 8:1-10 | Day 35: Mark 14:12-31 |
| Day 16: Mark 8:11-21 | Day 36: Mark 14:32-52 |
| Day 17: Mark 8:22-33 | Day 37: Mark 14:53-72 |
| Day 18: Mark 8:34-9:1 | Day 38: Mark 15:1-32 |
| Day 19: Mark 9:2-13 | Day 39: Mark 15:33-47 |
| Day 20: Mark 9:14-29 | Day 40: Mark 16 |

The Gospel According to Mark has been called the MAVERICK Gospel. In it, Jesus is a man of mystery, on the move, working miracles, inspiring the crowds and discipling his followers. As told by Mark, Jesus and his disciples experience mountain-top highs together, but Jesus alone experiences an agonizing death on the Cross.

Mark this Lenten season by reading a part of the story each day. After each day's reading ask the following questions. Discuss with friends or keep a journal.

1. Where is Jesus?
2. Who is with him?
3. What's happening?
4. How do people react?
5. Who are you most like in the story? Why?
6. What is Jesus showing you?

Other Ways to Mark the Season



Inside are some prayer/meditation practices for you to try during Lent at home and in the field. Some of these ideas may be familiar to you, others brand new. All of them have brought strength, hope and comfort into people's lives. As a Soldier or Family Member, you have a lot on your mind

and more than enough to do. So, don't try to add all these practices at once. Instead.....

- Try centering prayer when you need feel the need to reconnect or develop a closer relationship with God.
- Read scripture in a new way when you have

some quiet time and want to fill it with words of assurance.

- Use a finger labyrinth when you'd like to take a brief spiritual journey.

If you have any questions about these or other prayer practices, contact a Chaplain.

Good If You Can Get It Sacred Space, Time & Things



Make Sacred Space

Just about anywhere you find yourself, you can make a sacred space for yourself. Look around for a place that you can set apart for refueling and resting. It could be a corner in your room or the foot of your bed. If possible, have a place to go where you can say

"In this place I can be me."

Gather Sacred Things

If you like being hands-on, then gathering a few sacred things for your sacred space may be in order. Remember, there is nothing magical about things in themselves, but some well-chosen things can help you to develop a stronger spiritual life. Below are some ideas for things that you can gather and use.

Find Sacred Time

What is it about time? There never seems to be enough of it! Now that you have a sacred space and you've gathered some sacred things, remember that any time can be God time. Even if you only set aside a moment, or a few minutes every day, taking time with God is worth it.

Sacred.....
set apart and
dedicated to one
purpose

SOME

"Sacred Things"

Bible

Cross

Memory Stone

Water Fountain

Pray Palms Up, Palms Down

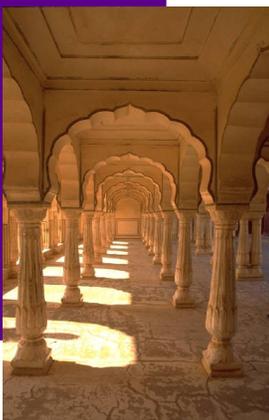
Step 1: Place your palms face down as a sign of your desire to turn over any concerns you may have to God. Whatever it is that is bothering you or weighing you down, silently turn it over to God.

Step 2: Turn your palms face up as a sign of your desire to receive God's blessing. Ask for whatever you think you need.

Step 3: End with a time of inner silence. Let God be with you, let God love you.



"You show me the path of life. In your presence there is joy."
Psalm 16:11



Try the Jesus Prayer

Throughout history Christians have found comfort and strength in the name of Jesus.

Somewhere along the way **The Jesus Prayer** developed as a way to focus

on His name. When you are in a tight spot, the Jesus Prayer may be just what you need to help you focus, calm your soul, and summon the strength to carry on. Here is the prayer. Slowly repeat the words as you breathe in and breathe out.

(breathe in)

**Jesus Christ,
Savior of the world.**

(breathe out)

Have mercy on me.

Read Scripture in a New Way

One of the oldest, most tried and true ways of reading scripture can bring you new insights. It's called *lectio divina* which means spiritual reading. The steps to spiritual reading are easy, but they can change your life. You can use any passage of scripture, but if you don't know where to start, try the Psalms.

Step 1: READ

Read the passage slowly and carefully. Listen for a word or phrase or sentence that really

speaks to you. Begin to repeat that word/phrase/sentence over and over until it begins to settle into your heart. *Be silent for a minute or two.*

Step 2: REFLECT

Read the passage again slowly. This time, as you read, begin to reflect on how these words connect with you and your life. What touches you? What is meaningful to you? *Be silent for a minute or two.*



Step 3: RESPOND

Read the passage again. This time, as you read, listen for your own words rising up as a prayer to God in response to what you have been reading. *Be silent for a minute or two.*

Step 4: REST

Read the passage a final time and rest in the words. Allow God to enter your rest. *Be silent for three to five minutes.*

Think On These Things

"...whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things."

Philippians 4:8

Soldiers see all of the good, the bad, and the ugly that there is to see. Dark thoughts can begin to enter your head and take a foothold. A quick way to fight back is to "think on these things." Whenever you need to shed a little light on your life, take a few moments to identify someone or something around you that is honorable, just,

pure, pleasing, commendable, excellent and/or worthy of praise. If you can't identify any of these qualities anywhere, you may want to think about how you could be one of these things for someone else.

Pray

Soldiers are action-oriented people. It's all about "doing the mission." The challenge of centering prayer is that it is less about **DOING** something and more about **BEING** somewhere, being in the presence of God. Centering prayer is about the process of opening your mind and heart to God who is beyond all thought and feeling. Practicing this prayer form may help you

to break through cycles of compulsive thinking and/or painful feeling into a new and refreshing relationship with God.

Step 1: CHOOSE

Choose and use a word of 1-2 syllables throughout your prayer. Suggestions include: God, Jesus, Peace, Trust, Be Still, Let Go get the idea?

Step 2: BREATHE

Sit comfortably and breathe freely. Close your eyes and let go. Let God begin to move in

your mind and heart. Slowly, in your mind, begin to speak your centering word over and over again. Breathe in the presence of God. Breathe out God into the world around you.

Step 3: Re-Focus

As things come into your mind...and they will... return to your centering word.

Step 4: Stay

At the end of your time, stay quiet. Just **BE** for another minute or two. **REFRESHED**

Psalm 121

*I lift up my eyes to the hills -
From where does my help come?
My help comes from the Lord, Who made heaven and earth.*

*He will not let your foot be moved;
He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.*

*The Lord is your keeper;
The Lord is your shade at your right hand.
The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night.*

*The Lord will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life.
The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in
From this time on and forevermore.*

Psalm 139:1-6

*O Lord, you have searched me and known me.
You know when I sit down and when I rise up;
You discern my thoughts from far away.
You search out my path and my lying down,
And are acquainted with all my ways.
Even before a word is on my tongue,
O Lord, you know it completely.
You hem me in, behind and before,
and lay your hand upon me.
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;
It is so high that I cannot attain it.*

Use a Finger Labyrinth

If what is going on inside of you is deeper than words, you may want to use a finger labyrinth instead of praying or reading.

A labyrinth is a path of prayer with many turns or circuits. It is different from a maze because a labyrinth has no dead ends. Instead it has a single path that leads to a center. Think of using this finger labyrinth as following a path to spiritual resilience.

**Lent last for 40 days.
Sundays don't count!
Lent Begins
Wednesday 13 February
Lent Ends
Saturday 30 March**

The Path In

Begin by quieting your mind. Take a few deep, cleansing breaths. When you are ready to begin, set your finger at the opening of the labyrinth and begin to move it slowly along the path...no rush. Continue to breathe slowly and deeply as your finger moves.

At the Center

When your finger reaches the center take some time to focus on your mind, body and spirit. What has been happening to you along the path? Keep your finger resting quietly in the center.

The Path Out

When the time feels right, begin to exit the labyrinth. Follow your same path in reverse. Keep your pace slow and steady. Don't forget to breathe. Once your finger leaves the labyrinth at the spot where it entered, your journey is complete. Take any new insights about yourself back into your daily life.



Try an online labyrinth

Created by Youth for Christ. **CLICK ICON HERE**
OR VISIT www.labyrinth.org.uk/online labyrinthpage1.html

