

LAUNCH OF LIGHT-A-CANDLE
All Saints Day & All Soul's Day ~ 1st & 2nd November 2020



Sermon on the Mount by Carl Bloch (1877) | public domain

In Matthew's Gospel, after the Beatitudes, Jesus reminded the disciples of their calling to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world.

On light, Jesus says:

***'You are the light of the world.
A city built on a hill cannot be hidden.
No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket,
but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house.
In the same way, let your light shine before others,
so that they may see your good works
and give glory to your Father in heaven.'***

In John's Gospel, Jesus clearly says

"I am the light of the world".

For two thousand years, we, as Christians, remembering the teaching of Jesus, have lit candles at times when we visited a church, or lit candles at home, for special intentions as we prayed to God.

Our parish community today launches a new website dedicated to lighting candles as we pray. Around the world, COVID-19 restrictions vary.

Thank you to those who have spent many hours since August in designing an opportunity for people wherever they live, to light a candle online for themselves, for others, or for our world.

Before launching the new site, let us turn to *The Beatitudes* and reflect on different prayer intentions.

GOSPEL OF MATTHEW 5:1-12

“When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him.

Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

‘Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

‘Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

‘Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

‘Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

‘Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

‘Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

‘Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

‘Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

‘Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.’ ”

We are all familiar with the well-known Beatitudes.

Today we choose three Beatitudes as examples of prayer intentions. Over the next few months, we will look at all the Beatitudes.

MOURNING

With the Feasts of All Saints Day today and All Souls Day tomorrow, we remember those who have died.

One of the Beatitudes says,

‘Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

OUR CANDLE LIGHTING RITUAL

Today, in our church, we have a lighting ritual with three candles. Slowly we take time to pray.

The First Candle, the Memorial Candle,

is lit as we remember people in our families, friends and others we have known in life who have died. We pause to remember them before God.

The Second Candle, the Mourning Candle,

is lit for ourselves who still mourn in our lives for people who have died. Though we have entrusted them to God 's love and peace, we still miss them. We pause to remember ourselves before God.

The Third Candle, the Solidarity Candle,

is lit for those who have died and who have no one to pray for them. We pause to remember them anonymously before God.



Online we are invited to light a candle this week to remember, to mourn and be in solidarity with those who have died.

For people who have been a part of our lives.
For people who have taught us about God.
For people who have influenced us and inspired us.
For people we have accompanied in their palliative care journey.
For people we have loved and who we lovingly remember.
For people who have died and who we still need to forgive.
For people who had doubted God's existence or didn't believe, yet have met God in eternal peace and love.
And many other people.

PURE IN HEART AND MERCIFUL

Two other Beatitudes say:

'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

'Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

We light a candle as we recall a parable that Jesus taught us - the Good Samaritan. And the risk of stopping and caring for the injured man, and the fear and religious and cultural discrimination that the Good Samaritan overcame within himself. We reflect on the Good Samaritan who, in *purity of heart* could see God in someone in need and cared for him in *mercy*.

INSPIRATION

The [dream](#) for our parish online prayer candles is several years old. We sometimes light candles in the church sanctuary at Mass. The dream was to offer this opportunity to people with mobile or computer or other Social Media.

And for those who do not have access to the internet, perhaps a family member or friend or parish member, could go online for them and light a candle.

SOME EXAMPLES OF LIGHTING A CANDLE

Lighting a candle and praying

- for our family
- for neighbours
- for our villages in South Sudan and Blackall/Tambo Parish in Central Queensland
- for Year 12 students doing exams.
- for a school project.
- for people in Australia and overseas during the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- for those currently unemployed.
- for those travelling

Lighting a candle on special feast days, birthdays, anniversaries.

Lighting a candle and

- seeking quiet time with God.
- asking God for guidance.
- discerning a future change in life.
- saying thank you to God.

Concluding a preparation session, saying a prayer and lighting a candle

- Baptismal preparation
- Marriage preparation
- Funeral preparation
- Preparation sessions and workshops for children preparing for the Sacraments for Confirmation, First Reconciliation and First Eucharist

During a parish meeting at an appropriate time

- Parish Pastoral Council
- Liturgy Meeting, Choir practice
- Support meeting for refugee people
- St Vincent de Paul Society meeting
- RCIA meeting, Prayer Groups – Ladies Prayer Group and Men's Group
- Child Safety Meeting
- Care for Creation Group

- School Board, Staff Meeting and P& F
- Parish RAP (Reconciliation Action Plan) Group
- Workplace Health & Safety Review meetings

Lighting a candle and praying before

- attending a work meeting
- an interview
- leaving home for daily work or school
- arriving at a meeting or gathering on an important social justice issue

Earlier we read from Matthew's Gospel.

'No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house.'

Our prayer candle website is not something to hide under the bushel basket.

It is to be shared with friends and other communities, putting it ***'on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house.'***

THE CANDLE ICON

The Candle icon can be found on our parish social media – on the [home page of the parish website](#) and in the footer of every page. [www.stjosephsbrackenridge.com]



Let us share this opportunity with others.
Let us inspire people to light a candle and pray to God.

Beginning today for three Sundays children celebrate ***First Eucharist***.
You are invited to light a candle for them on their special day.

PRAYER CAMPAIGNS

Over the years there have been quite a few prayer campaigns, Each of them invited people to pray for a special intention over a designated period of time.

Recent prayer campaigns include

- for Melbourne during COVID-19
- for areas in Australia affected by drought and bushfires late last year and early this year
- for tragedies overseas and in Australia
- for ethical issues

[[parish Prayer page](#)]

LAUNCH OF LIGHT-A-CANDLE

I invite you to light a candle for a special intention
and say a quiet prayer to God.

We light a candle in our home, classroom, meeting and workplace.

We light a candle for family and friends and neighbours.

For a wedding, baptism, anniversary,

birthday, feast day and celebration,

for someone who has died, for someone sick,

for someone recovering.

For people in urgent need, for people who have helped us.

We light a candle to God for the blessings we have received,

and in saying thanks to God.

May God bless you today.

Fr Gerry

Readings: <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/110120.cfm>