



Mark 3:20-35

A kingdom divided against itself cannot stand

Jesus went home with his disciples, and such a crowd collected that they could not even have a meal. When his relatives heard of this, they set out to take charge of him, convinced he was out of his mind. The scribes who had come down from Jerusalem were saying, 'Beelzebul is in him' and, 'It is through the prince of devils that he casts devils out.' So he called them to him and spoke to them in parables, 'How can Satan cast out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot last. And if a household is divided against itself, that household can never stand. Now if Satan has rebelled against himself and is divided, he cannot stand either – it is the end of him. But no one can make his way into a strong man's house and burgle his property unless he has tied up the strong man first. Only then can he burgle his house.

'I tell you solemnly, all men's sins will be forgiven, and all their blasphemies; but let anyone blaspheme against the Holy Spirit and he will never have forgiveness: he is guilty of an eternal sin.' This was because they were saying, 'An unclean spirit is in him.'

His mother and brothers now arrived and, standing outside, sent in a message asking for him. A crowd was sitting round him at the time the message was passed to him, 'Your mother and brothers and sisters are outside asking for you.' He replied, 'Who are my mother and my brothers?' And looking round at those sitting in a circle about him, he said, 'Here are my mother and my brothers. Anyone who does the will of God, that person is my brother and sister and mother.'

Prayer One

The Sign of the Cross

Let us remember that everything we do is
In the name of the Father, and of
the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

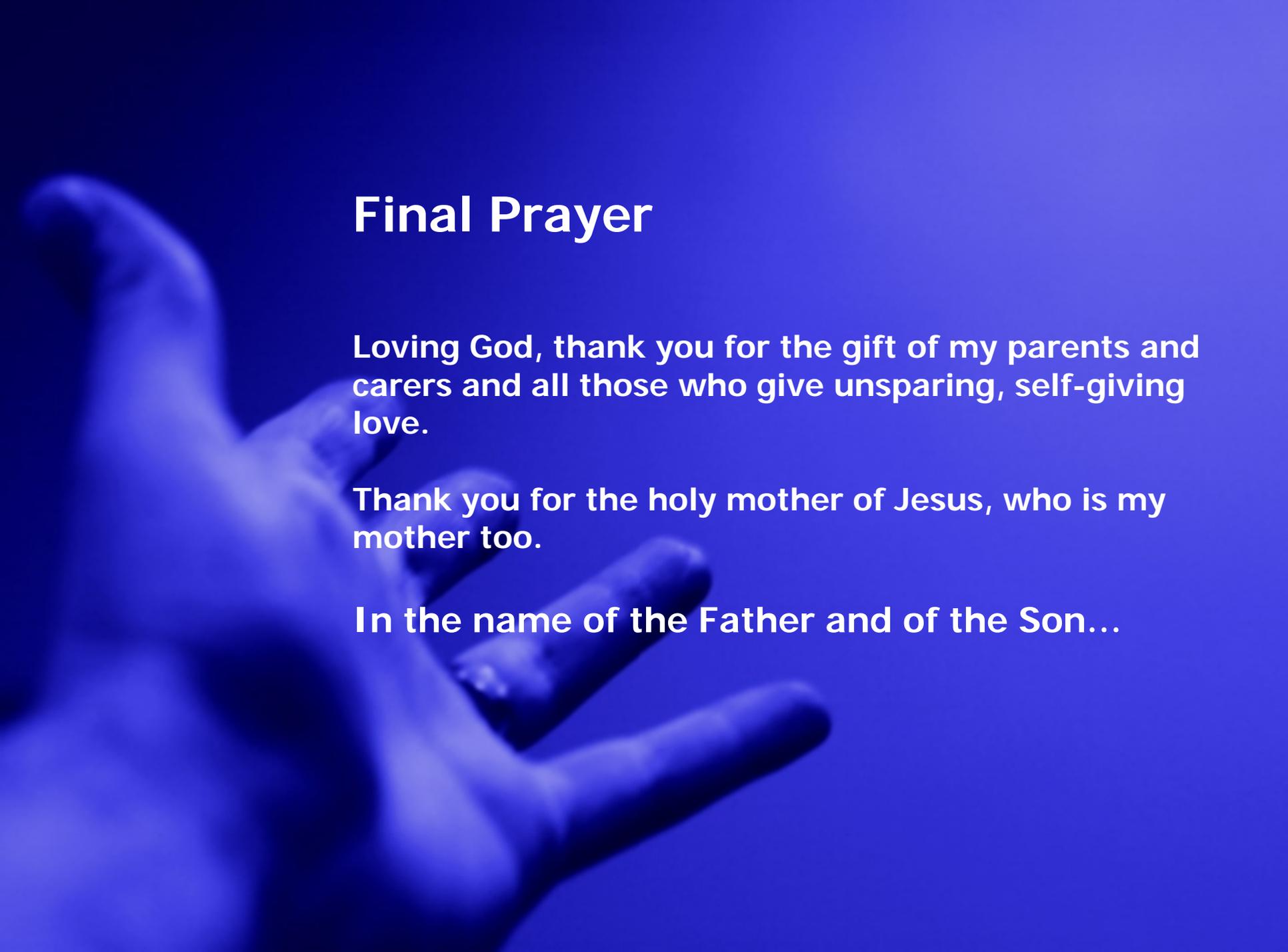
Reflection:

*Our theme this week is FAMILY, but in
the Gospel Jesus challenges our concept
of Family...*

In the Gospel this week Jesus is talking to a crowd. The topics are difficult and complex—the Sabbath, the devil, signs, miracles. Out of the blue, someone tells Jesus that his mother and brothers are standing outside waiting to talk to him. Jesus replies, “Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?” He points to the disciples and says, “Here are my mother and my brothers. For whoever does the will of my father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother.”

It seems like Jesus is being really harsh, I wonder if his family felt upset by the comments? The point is that when you follow Jesus everything changes, including and perhaps especially the strongest, most natural ties we can have.

Is Jesus rejecting his own mother and family? I don't think so, but he is reminding his disciples that there is a kinship that takes priority over blood relations. It is centered on a radical call to be like him. Relationship with him brings intimacy, like that of a mother, brother, or sister and links all those that follow him as a type of family



Final Prayer

Loving God, thank you for the gift of my parents and carers and all those who give unsparing, self-giving love.

Thank you for the holy mother of Jesus, who is my mother too.

In the name of the Father and of the Son...

Prayer Two

The Sign of the Cross

Let us remember that everything we do is
In the name of the Father, and of
the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

Reflection

*As we think about this week's theme of
FAMILY, we think about the people
around us. How much do we do for them?
Are we there for them when they need
us?*



As you go through today, think about the people in your life.

Thinking about the people in your life is something you are asked to do a lot of in these prayers, and that's because pretty much everything we talk about to do with God has to then become real in our lives. And especially with the people we love and care for.

Think about a few times when people have been there for you..

..and when you do, give thanks.

Think about a few times when you have failed to be there for somebody else..

..and when you do, give thanks that you'll have a chance to do it better next time.



Final Prayer

God our Father, help us to make the best of every chance to help others, and help us to be thankful for the presence of others in our lives.

Our Father, who art in heaven...

In the name of the Father and of the Son...





The next time that somebody around you talks a bit too much... Give thanks that you have people to talk to.

The next time that somebody asks you too many questions... Give thanks that somebody wants to listen to you.

The next time that somebody criticises you... Give thanks that somebody takes an interest in your life, and cares enough to talk to you.

The next time you fall out with somebody... Give thanks for the fact that you care enough to disagree, and that you have the chance to put it right.

The next time you mess something up with somebody... Give thanks for the fact that you can learn from your mistakes.

The next time somebody really annoys you... Give thanks for the gifts of love and forgiveness. Then, use them!

The next time you miss somebody or wish they were with you... Give thanks for the ability you have to love them in the first place.

..because without all these things, what would life be?



Final Prayer

God our Father, you said in the bible that *you did not leave us orphans*. You created us to search for you, and you created us to love and to be loved by our brothers and sisters. Helps us always and everywhere to give thanks for the great gift of other people in our lives.

Our Father, who art in heaven...

In the name of the Father and of the Son...



Final Thought...



*Next weeks theme: **GROWTH***