



Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Prayer for the African American and African Family

Feb. 4, 2018

The first Sunday in February is the National Day of Prayer for the African American and African Family.

Our God of Mercy and Love,
We place our African American and African Families before You today. May we be proud of our history and never forget those who paid a great price for our liberation. Bless us one by one and keep our hearts and minds fixed on higher ground.

Help us to live for you and not for ourselves, and may we cherish and proclaim the gift of life. Bless our parents, guardians and grandparents, relatives and friends. Give us the amazing grace to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Help us, as Your children, to live in such a way that the beauty and greatness of authentic love is reflected in all that we say and do.

Give a healing anointing to those less fortunate, especially the motherless, the fatherless, the broken, the sick and the lonely. Bless our departed family members and friends. May they be led into the light of Your dwelling place where we will never grow old, where we will share the fullness of redemption and shout the victory for all eternity.

This we ask in the Precious Name of Jesus, our Savior and Blessed Assurance. Amen.

Holy Mary, Mother of Our Families, pray for us.

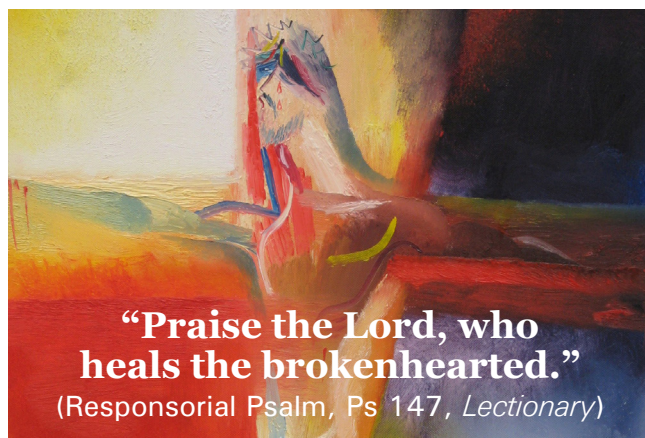
Prayer composed by Fr. Jim Goode, OFM, who in 1989 founded this National Day of Prayer for the African American and African Family.

Saint of the Week

Paul Miki and Companions
1562–1597
Memorial—February 6

Toyotomi Hideyoshi, ruling Japan in the name of the emperor, became alarmed at the growth of Christianity resulting from St. Francis Xavier's mission, begun in 1549. Because of Hideyoshi's orders, 26 Christians were arrested, had their left ears cut off as a sign of disrespect, were marched through towns, and were crucified and pierced with lances on a hill outside Nagasaki on February 5. While the public procession and execution was meant to instill fear in Japanese Christians, the joyful witness of the soon-to-be martyrs—who sang hymns on arriving to the hill where their crosses awaited them—evoked compassion and conversion instead. The martyrs were Franciscans, Jesuits, Japanese laymen, and one Korean. Paul Miki, a distinguished preacher, who was the son of a samurai, was the most prominent of the Japanese Jesuits. The martyrs were canonized in 1862; their feast was added to the General Roman Calendar in 1969.

—CNS/USCCB



**“Praise the Lord, who
heals the brokenhearted.”**
(Responsorial Psalm, Ps 147, Lectionary)