

Lent Day 38  
Thursday March 24, 2016

**Reading:** Mark 14:43-52

**Reflection**

Now I lay me down to sleep/I pray the Lord my soul to keep  
If I die before I wake/I pray the Lord my soul to take

Prayer has become pretty cutesy. And if it's not cutesy, it's quick. We don't have much of a place for prayer these days. Maybe it just doesn't seem as necessary to us in these modern times. We don't have to pray for food — we just go shopping and stock up. We don't have to pray for health — we just go to the doctor and get a prescription. We don't have to pray for safety — we just go to the police. Prayer has become a covering measure; a nod to Scripture's funny little requirement.

But look at the difference it makes. Jesus spends the night in earnest prayer. Like Jacob wrestling with the angel, Jesus has been wrestling with the Father over the next BIG step. As a result when the hour comes Jesus stands unflinchingly before his pending death. The disciples on the other hand, despite Jesus' warning, have spent no time in prayer. As a result they are totally unprepared when the soldiers come. Not only do they flee, but they flee naked a deeply shameful state.

If prayer has become cutesy and quick for us, if it has become unnecessary, and so, only done ritually then is it any wonder why were not prepared when crisis comes? Being a Christian does not guarantee peace, safety and a happy life. In fact, it might mean just the opposite — just ask Jesus here. Crisis will come into our lives. We will lack resources, we will lose loved ones to illness, and we will struggle with insecurity. In those moments will we stand trusting God and bearing witness or will we flee confused, naked and ashamed?

**Prayer**

God, who wrestles with his creatures, help us to embrace a deep life of prayer. Help us to limp, relying on you so we might stand firm in the face of adversity. Amen.