NOVEMBER 2026 PRAYER SERVICE

Prayer Service for Chapter 3 of "History of Salvation: History of a People, of a Family" Study Topic
The Chapter focuses on Genesis 45:4-15
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READING OF SCRIPTURE:

Genesis 45:4-15

"Come closer to me," Joseph told his brothers. When they had done so, he said: "I am your brother Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. But now do not be distressed, and do not be angry with yourselves for having sold me here. It was really for the sake of saving lives that God sent me here ahead of you. The famine has been in the land for two years now, and for five more years cultivation will yield no harvest. God, therefore, sent me on ahead of you to ensure for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives in an extraordinary deliverance. So it was not really you but God who had me come here; and he has made me a father to Pharaoh, lord of all his household, and ruler over the whole land of Egypt. "Hurry back, then, to my father and tell him: 'Thus says your son Joseph: God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me without delay. You can settle in the region of Goshen, where you will be near me—you and your children and children's children, your flocks and herds, and everything that you own. I will provide for you there in the five years of famine that lie ahead, so that you and your household and all that are yours will not suffer want.' Surely, you can see for yourselves, and Benjamin can see for himself, that it is I who am speaking to you. Tell my father all about my high position in Egypt and all that you have seen. But hurry and bring my father down here." Then he threw his arms around his brother Benjamin and wept on his shoulder. Joseph then kissed all his brothers and wept over them; and only then were his brothers able to talk with him.

A TIME OF SILENT MEDITATION:

SHARED PRAYER ON SCRIPTURAL TEXT:

The intent is reflection in the form of a prayer, not discussion.

PRAYER INTENTIONS:

➢ Pass card or cross, so people can pass gracefully and the team knows when the prayer is complete.
➢ The team should respond at the end of each person's turn, for example, "Lord, hear our prayer".

LITURGICAL PRAYER:

Psalm 105:16-22

Response: He had sent a man ahead of them, Joseph, sold as a slave.

Then he called down a famine on the land, destroyed the grain that sustained them.
He had sent a man ahead of them, Joseph, sold as a slave.

Response: He had sent a man ahead of them, Joseph, sold as a slave.

They shackled his feet with chains; collared his neck in iron,
Till his prediction came to pass, and the word of the LORD proved him true.

Response: He had sent a man ahead of them, Joseph, sold as a slave.

The king sent and released him; the ruler of peoples set him free.

Response: He had sent a man ahead of them, Joseph, sold as a slave.

He made him lord over his household, ruler over all his possessions,
To instruct his princes as he desired, to teach his elders wisdom.

Response: He had sent a man ahead of them, Joseph, sold as a slave.

CONCLUSION OF PRAYER TIME:

This prayer draws on Joseph's movement from truthful acknowledgment of hurt to welcome, provision, and renewed conversation. It also reflects the Church's teaching that married love needs the grace of forgiveness and reconciliation, and that the Teams of Our Lady help couples support one another spiritually.

ALL:

+In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

God of covenant and mercy, you drew Joseph and his brothers toward one another after years of hurt and separation. Give us the courage to come closer to one another with honesty, patience, and love.

When we have wounded each other, help us to speak truth without bitterness, to listen without defensiveness, and to seek forgiveness with humble hearts. When old hurts return, keep resentment from ruling us. Give us the grace to forgive, and the wisdom to rebuild trust with care and sincerity.

Lord, teach us to recognize your presence not by pretending that suffering is good, but by trusting that no hardship is beyond your power to meet with grace and bring toward life. In seasons of strain, provide what we need: strength for today, hope for tomorrow, and companions who help us remain faithful.

Make our homes places of welcome and tenderness. Help us care for one another in practical ways, share our burdens, and receive each other's gifts. When words are difficult, give us the courage to begin again. When we are able to embrace, let our affection speak; when we need to talk, open a path to honest and gentle dialogue.

Bless Teams of Our Lady: make our meetings occasions of prayer, encouragement, and deeper communion. May we support other couples with discretion and compassion, and learn from one another how to live our vocation with fidelity.

Jesus, sustain our marriage by your grace. Draw us to the Eucharist, source of our love, and renew in us the generosity with which you give yourself. May our life together become a place where others encounter your patience, mercy, and hope.

Mary, Mother of the Church, pray with us and help us keep our hearts open to your Son. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

DEEP POOLING:
This is a time to share on more serious matters or when the input of the group is requested. This will not necessarily happen at all meetings.

SHARING ON THE ENDEAVORS:
We join teams in order to enlist the help of others in growing closer to God. The "endeavors" are practices which we voluntarily assume. They have been found to be a means of drawing us closer as a couple and in furthering our spiritual growth. By sharing on the endeavors at the team meeting we seek help and encouragement from our teammates in our journey.

The following is additional context to the Scripture reading and Psalm selected above.

SCRIPTURAL CONTEXT:

Genesis 45:4-15 is the moment Joseph reveals himself to the brothers who sold him into Egypt. The passage moves from recognition of the wrong done to him, through Joseph's interpretation of events in light of God's saving purpose, to gestures of affection and the beginnings of reconciliation. It does not pretend the betrayal never happened; rather, Joseph names it while telling his brothers that their wrongdoing did not have the final word.

Joseph names the truth

Joseph begins by asking his brothers to come closer, then identifies himself plainly: ***"I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt."*** The revelation is intimate and direct: the powerful Egyptian ruler before them is the brother they had betrayed. Naming what happened matters. Joseph does not disguise the past or call the sale harmless; his words preserve the truth about the brothers' action.

At the same time, Joseph immediately speaks to their distress: ***"Do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves."*** His concern is not limited to announcing who he is; he is also attentive to what the revelation is doing to his brothers. His response suggests a crucial distinction: ***reconciliation does not require pretending that an injury did not occur.*** Joseph acknowledges the injury, yet he does not use the moment to humiliate or threaten them.

Joseph sees God's purpose without denying human responsibility

Joseph gives the central interpretation of the episode:

"And now do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life."

The passage holds two truths together. The brothers sold Joseph, and Joseph says so explicitly; yet he also understands that God brought him ahead of them so that others might survive. Later he intensifies the point: ***"So it was not you who sent me here, but God."*** Read alongside his opening words, this is not a denial that the brothers acted. It is Joseph's way of saying that their act did not exhaust the meaning or outcome of his life.

The immediate circumstances explain why this interpretation matters. Two years of famine have already passed, and Joseph says five more years remain without plowing or harvest. His position in Egypt enables him to provide for his family and preserve survivors. In the passage, providence becomes concrete in preserving life: food, shelter, and a family's survival in a time of scarcity.

This should not be turned into a claim that betrayal or suffering is good in itself. The passage frames the brothers' act as something Joseph can still recall**—"whom you sold"**—while presenting God's purpose as the rescue that emerged despite it. ***Joseph's account is not that evil ceases to be evil, but that it cannot prevent God from bringing about a life-preserving good. That is the meaning he gives his brothers at this moment.***

Providence becomes practical care

Joseph's invitation is specific. His brothers must return to their father, tell him Joseph is alive and honored in Egypt, and bring him down without delay. Joseph promises that the family will settle in Goshen near him, and that he will provide for them through the rest of the famine. His interpretation of events therefore leads not to a private spiritual reflection alone, but to concrete responsibility for those in danger.

The repeated emphasis on preserving life centers the scene. Joseph says God sent him ahead to keep a remnant alive, and he promises to provide so his family will not fall into poverty. His authority in Egypt is tied to this task: ***he can use his position to protect and sustain the people who once rejected him.***

Tears and affection open the way to reconciliation

The passage ends not with an accusation, but with physical gestures of affection. Joseph embraces Benjamin and weeps; then he kisses all his brothers and weeps over them. Only after this do the brothers talk with him. The scene portrays ***reconciliation as more than a change in circumstances: there is an emotional encounter, and conversation becomes possible again.***

The text does not record Joseph saying the words **"I forgive you."** It does, however, show him telling his brothers not to be consumed by distress, making plans to care for them, embracing them, and weeping with them. Those actions powerfully signal welcome and a restored relationship, while the passage leaves the brothers' response largely unstated.

A reflection

The passage invites reflection on how a person may face grave wrong without letting it define the whole story. Joseph neither conceals the betrayal nor lets it stop him from acting for his family's good. He interprets his survival and authority as a responsibility to preserve life, and his first response to his brothers is to draw them near rather than push them away.

For Christian reflection, this passage also cautions against easy explanations of another person's suffering. Joseph speaks about God's purpose in his own story; the text does not give readers permission to tell every sufferer that their pain was necessary or that they should quickly feel reconciled. It shows that harm need not have the final word, and that a life-preserving response can begin when truth, mercy, and practical care meet. The passage's final image is not a neat explanation of every wound, but brothers weeping together and beginning to speak again.

Complementary Psalms to Genesis 45:4-15

The closest psalm to **Genesis 45:4–15 is Psalm 105:16–22** (Psalm 104 in the Septuagint and Vulgate numbering). It explicitly recalls Joseph being sent ahead during the famine. For complementary themes—betrayal, restoration, and God's mercy—**Psalm 41, Psalm 85, and Psalm 86** can also be helpful, though they are thematic companions rather than direct retellings of Joseph's story.

Psalm 105:16–22 — **God sends Joseph ahead to preserve life**

This is the most direct choice. The psalm recalls the famine and Joseph's arrival in Egypt, presenting his suffering and later authority within God's providential care. One early Christian writer cites the psalm's line, "He sent a man before them: Joseph was sold for a slave," linking Joseph's being sold with the later preservation of his family during famine.

That makes **Psalm 105** especially fitting alongside **Genesis 45**. Joseph tells his brothers that although they sold him, God sent him ahead to preserve life; the psalm echoes that interpretation in concise poetry. The two texts should be read together without suggesting that the brothers' betrayal was good: Genesis names their wrongdoing, while Joseph recognizes that it did not defeat God's saving purpose.

Psalm 41 — Betrayal and suffering

Psalm 41 complements the painful side of Joseph's story: being betrayed and wounded by someone close. **Pope John Paul II** explains that Jesus himself recalled the psalm's image of a companion who shared his bread and then turned against him, applying it to Judas.

This is a thematic parallel, not a direct reference to Joseph. It can help a reflection attend to the harm betrayal causes, while **Genesis 45** shows Joseph's response when he meets his betrayers again: he draws them near, makes provision for them, and weeps with them.

Psalm 85 — A prayer for restoration

Psalm 85 is described as expressing a plea for **"restoration and revival."** That makes it suitable for the movement in **Genesis 45** from estrangement toward renewed family life: Joseph's brothers are invited to come close, bring their father, and settle near Joseph.

Psalm 85 does not recount Joseph's reconciliation with his brothers; rather, it can accompany the passage as a prayer for the healing and renewal that fractured relationships need.

Psalm 86 — God's mercy and patience

Psalm 86 offers a fitting prayerful response to the mercy visible in Joseph's welcome. The cited study highlights the psalm's description of God as **"merciful and gracious,"** slow to anger, and abundant in steadfast love and faithfulness. Joseph's actions do not match God's mercy, but the psalm offers language for reflecting on mercy that does not deny wrongdoing while still opening a way to renewed relationship.