

JANUARY 2026 PRAYER SERVICE

Prayer Service for Chapter 5 of “Love is Much More Than Love” Study Topic The Chapter focuses on Colossians 3:12-17 By Fr. Eli Lopez, USA-SR Spiritual Counselor

TIME FOR SCRIPTURE:

Colossians 3:12-17 calls believers, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, to actively clothe themselves with Christ-like virtues, fostering unity through forgiveness, love, peace, gratitude, and worship, while doing everything in Jesus' name.

Key Virtues to Embrace (vv. 12-14)

Paul instructs the faithful to **put on** specific virtues that reflect their renewed life in Christ, drawing from the Beatitudes and protecting them in prosperity and adversity:

- **Compassion (heart of mercy), kindness (benignity), humility (lowliness), meekness (modesty), and patience**—these make exterior actions pleasing to God. "As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony."

Love (charity) is preeminent as **the bond of perfection**, uniting all virtues, perfecting the soul, and directing toward eternal glory—like a seamless tunic or cords of compassion.

Peace, Gratitude, and Worship (vv. 15-17)

- Let **the peace of Christ** rule in your hearts (wherein you are called in one body) and **be thankful**—an effect of charity producing joy and harmony.
- Allow **the word of Christ** to dwell richly, teaching and admonishing one another with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with gratitude in your hearts to God.
- **Do everything**—in word or deed—in **the name of the Lord Jesus**, giving thanks to God the Father through him, as the ultimate expression of Christian vocation.

These exhortations form spiritual **armor** (like the "**armor of light**" or "**armor of God**"), essential for resisting evil, embracing good, and living in Christ's peace amid trials.

Complementary Scripture passages to **Colossians 3:12-17** expand on its core exhortation to clothe oneself in virtues like **compassion, kindness, humility, patience, love, and peace**, while letting Christ's peace rule, his word dwell richly, and all deeds done in his name—with gratitude.

The provided sources highlight parallels between **St. Thomas Aquinas's** commentaries and **Pope St. John Paul II's** homilies, particularly in their use of spiritual-armor imagery and similar lists of virtues essential to Christian life amid trials.

Virtues as Spiritual Attire and Armor

- **2 Corinthians 6:6:** Lists virtues manifested in apostolic ministry—"purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love"—directly paralleling Colossians 3:12's compassion, kindness, patience, meekness, and 3:14's love as the "bond of perfection." These form "weapons of righteousness" for right and left hands.
- **The Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-12):** Aquinas connects Colossians 3:12's virtues to the Beatitudes, which promise blessings for the poor in spirit, meek, merciful, etc., protecting the soul in prosperity and adversity, much like clothing oneself for battle.

Peace of Christ and Unity

- **Romans 13:12:** "Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light"—echoing the "clothe yourselves" imagery (Col 3:12,14) as preparation for Christ's peace ruling the heart (Col 3:15) amid moral struggles.
- **Ephesians 6:11-17:** "Put on the whole armor of God"—expands the virtues into a full arsenal (truth as belt, righteousness as breastplate, etc.), reinforcing patience, forgiveness, and peace against evil forces, akin to bearing with one another (Col 3:13).

Love, Gratitude, and Worship

These armor passages integrate with **Colossians 3:16-17's** call to let Christ's word dwell, sing psalms with gratitude, and act in Jesus' name, as seen in homiletic applications to military, rural, and beatified lives.

The sources do not provide an exhaustive list or full texts of these complements, but illuminate their thematic unity through Aquinas's exegesis and papal preaching on living virtuously in community. For deeper homiletic use, these reinforce **Col 3:12-17's** vision of the new life in Christ.

Colossians 3:12-17

Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, bearing with one another and forgiving one another, if one has a grievance against another; as the Lord has forgiven you, so must you also do. And over all these put on love, that is, the bond of perfection. And let the peace of Christ control your hearts, the peace into which you were also called in one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, as in all wisdom you teach and admonish one another, singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or in deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through 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:

Psalms that complement Colossians 3:12-17 emphasize unity, peace, and blessing arising from virtuous communal life, mirroring the call to clothe oneself in compassion, patience, love (the bond of perfection), Christ's peace ruling in one body, and gratitude.

The sources highlight **Psalms 133** as a direct parallel to the harmony and peace of **Col 3:14-15**, portraying fraternal unity as a divine blessing—like anointing oil and life-giving dew—fostered by the virtues Paul urges.

Psalms 133: Unity as Precious Blessing

This psalm celebrates brethren dwelling in unity, akin to the "**one body**" called to Christ's peace (Col 3:15) and bound by love (Col 3:14):

"How very good and pleasant it is when kindred lives together in unity! It is like the precious oil on the head, running down upon the beard, on the beard of Aaron, running down over the collar of his robes. It is like the dew of Hermon, which falls on the mountains of Zion. For there the Lord ordained his blessing, life forevermore."

St. Augustine notes its familiarity and sweetness, underscoring how unity—achieved through bearing with one another and forgiveness (Col 3:13)—is a joyful, quotable ideal for the faithful.

Psalms 119:165: Peace from Loving God's Law

Aquinas links this to the peace of Christ rejoicing in hearts (Col 3:15), an effect of charity that harmonizes wills, contrasting worldly peace:

"Great peace have those who love your law; nothing can make them stumble."

This complements the practice of letting Christ's word dwell richly (Col 3:16), producing gratitude and virtuous living among God's chosen ones (Col 3:12).

These psalms, woven into liturgical and patristic traditions (e.g., Ordo Penitentiae), reinforce the vision of virtues articulated in Col 3:12-17, namely, that they yield eternal harmony and joy in the Church as one body.

Psalms 133:1-3

Response: How good and how pleasant it is, when brothers dwell together as one!

*Like fine oil on the head, running down upon the beard,
Upon the beard of Aaron, upon the collar of his robe.*

Response: How good and how pleasant it is, when brothers dwell together as one!

*Like dew of Hermon coming down upon the mountains of Zion.
There the Lord has decreed a blessing, life for evermore!*

Response: How good and how pleasant it is, when brothers dwell together as one!

CONCLUSION OF PRAYER TIME:

A prayer for married couples inspired by **Colossians 3:12-17** petitions God to clothe spouses in virtues of compassion, kindness, humility, patience, forgiveness, and above all love—the bond of

perfection—while letting Christ's peace rule their hearts as one body, his word dwell richly through grateful praise, and all they do in his name.

ALL:

Heavenly Father, who has called us as your chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe your servants in the garments of compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Grant them grace to bear with one another, forgiving as you have forgiven through Christ our Lord, and above all, to put on love, which binds everything in perfect harmony. May the peace of Christ rule in their hearts, as they are called in one body, filling their home with thanksgiving and the joy of unity. Let the word of Christ dwell richly within them, as they teach and admonish one another in wisdom, singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with gratitude in their hearts to you. Help them, O Lord, to do everything—in word and deed—in the name of our Lord Jesus, giving thanks to you, the Father, through him, so that their faithful married love, bound together in this life, may reflect your charity and unite them for eternity. 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.