

## Introduction

Abba was the name that Jesus used when he prayed to his Father

- Listen to the short reflection – track 2 on the CD – click the link on the website
- Read the Bible passages
- Have a go at answering the questions – if you would like to discuss your answers please phone Mary German on 01562 720393.

### Mark 14:32-36

<sup>32</sup> They went to a place called Gethsemane, and Jesus said to his disciples, “Sit here while I pray.” <sup>33</sup> He took Peter, James and John along with him, and he began to be deeply distressed and troubled. <sup>34</sup> “My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death,” he said to them. “Stay here and keep watch.”

<sup>35</sup> Going a little farther, he fell to the ground and prayed that if possible the hour might pass from him. <sup>36</sup> “Abba, [\[a\]](#) Father,” he said, “everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will.”

### Romans 8:12-17

<sup>12</sup> Therefore, brothers and sisters, we have an obligation—but it is not to the flesh, to live according to it. <sup>13</sup> For if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live.

<sup>14</sup> For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. <sup>15</sup> The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. [\[a\]](#) And by him we cry, “Abba, [\[b\]](#) Father.” <sup>16</sup> The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children. <sup>17</sup> Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

### Galatians 4:4-7

<sup>4</sup> But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, <sup>5</sup> to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship. [\[a\]](#) <sup>6</sup> Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “Abba, [\[b\]](#) Father.” <sup>7</sup> So you are no longer a slave, but God’s child; and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir.

## Questions

1. We all pray and listen to others praying. What are the titles most frequently used when addressing God in prayer? What do these titles tell us about our praying?
2. No earthly father is perfect but we can see in some of them glimpses of what a perfect father might be like. Try describing a perfect earthly father. How does that make you think of your heavenly father?
3. Jesus' instruction was to use the term *Abba*. How can we ensure we retain reverence and respect before God while enjoying the intimacy of *Abba*.
4. Think about these three settings
  - a. Prayer in church as part of worship – wide mix of people present including non-Christians
  - b. Prayer at a Home Group or Bible study group
  - c. Your own personal time of prayer

What approach to praying might be suitable in each setting and why?

5. Many people have had bad experiences of an earthly father, and so find it particularly difficult to approach God as *Abba*. What could we say or do to help such people?
6. How might you change the way you pray?

## Further Thoughts

Jesus commanded us to use *Abba* when we pray. God wants us all to have the same level of intimacy with him as Jesus. How might this affect the way you approach Jesus in prayer? Ask the Holy Spirit to guide and help you as you pray.