

1 On the 21st of December 1968, the Apollo 8 spacecraft blasted off on its 6-day mission. It was the first manned flight to leave Earth's orbit. The mission was successful because of the hard work and co-operation of many people with skills in maths, science and technology.

2 Apollo 8 travelled to the Moon, making 10 orbits, taking many photos of the surface of the Moon. Frank Borman, one of the astronauts, said:

*"The more we learn
about the wonders of our universe,
the more clearly we are going to perceive
the hand of God."*

3 As the spacecraft began to orbit the Moon, it lost radio contact with Earth each time it travelled around the far side of the Moon. Coming back into radio contact, the craft was facing the Earth, and the astronauts referred to *"the good Earth"*. They said that they wished to send a Christmas greeting to all who were listening. Then the astronauts took it in turn to read the opening verses of the Bible from the Book of Genesis. They are a poem about God's goodness and blessing in creating the world.

4 Frank Borman then read a prayer - now called *"the Astronauts' Prayer"*. As we pray those same words, we ask for vision and inspiration:

5 *Let us pray:*

**"Give us, O God, the vision
which can see your love in the world
in spite of human failure.**

**Give us the faith, the trust,
and the goodness
in spite of our ignorance
and weakness.**

**Give us the knowledge
that we may continue to pray**

**with understanding hearts,
and show us
what each one of us can do
to set forth
the coming of the day
of universal peace.
Amen."**

This is an excerpt from the page of this date in
'Praying Each Day of the Year',
a 3-volume book
by Nicholas Hutchinson, FSC.

For details:

<http://www.matthew-james.co.uk/>

Could make use of a search engine
to research this topic further.

This material is part of
the prayer and education website
of the De La Salle Brothers
in Great Britain:
www.prayingeachday.org