

Some topics for prayer

How we tell people about the importance of the coming of Jesus.
The political institutions of our own country and the world.
The Brexit agreement.
The distribution of the covid-19 vaccine.
People who are worried or frightened because of covid-19.
People who have to make decisions about how to manage the pandemic.
The street you live in and individuals in it.
Members of your family. Friends. Not-so-friends.
Our town, our nation and our world.
Our NHS. Our schools and care homes.
People who work in our public services.
Our economy.
People living anywhere in the world where there is famine, war, poverty, pandemic, hopelessness ...

Two prayers ('collects') set for today

Lord Jesus Christ,
your birth at Bethlehem
draws us to kneel in wonder at heaven touching earth:
accept our heartfelt praise
as we worship you,
our Saviour and our eternal God. Amen.

Almighty God,
who wonderfully created us in your own image
and yet more wonderfully restored us
through your Son Jesus Christ:
grant that, as he came to share in our humanity,
so we may share the life of his divinity;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen.

*Please take this leaflet home with you.
May God bless you and everyone you love and pray for.*

Welcome to private prayer

for

**27th December
2020**

**The 1st Sunday of
Christmas**



A detail from our Crib scene

This sheet offers you one of the readings set for today, together with a structured way of reading it prayerfully. It also offers you prayers set for today, some other prayers, and ideas for topics for prayer.

But first and foremost, let us 'Be still and know that I am God'
(Psalm 46:10)

The Lord's prayer

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name, your kingdom come,
your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and for ever. Amen.

The Grace

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
be with us all evermore. Amen.

***You can hear our weekly audio service -
around 20 minutes - on our website***

<https://standrewswatford.org.uk/>

A reading set for today

Here is a suggestion for a structured way of reading prayerfully. It is based on an ancient practice called Lectio Divina.

First, breathe slowly and deeply.

Ask God to speak to you through the passage that you are about to read.

1st reading of the passage: listen.

Read through the passage once, silently, but 'saying each word out loud in your mind', and listening.

Allow a word or phrase to attract your attention. Let it arise naturally from the passage as if it were God's word for you today, however unexpected.

Say it to yourself a few times, or underline it with a pen.

2nd reading of the passage: ponder.

Read the passage a second time. As you read and listen, ask how and why this word or phrase is speaking to you.

Summarise what it means for you.

3rd reading of the passage: pray.

Read the passage a third time, prayerfully asking Christ what he is saying to you in this word or phrase, and listen.

What is it that you need to do - or consider - or relinquish - or take on - as a result of what God is saying to you?

Talk to God about it in prayer.

Here is space to jot things down, to take away and to return to later:

Shepherds visit Mary and her new baby

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us."

So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.

The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

Luke 2:15-21 (NRSV translation)

I wonder ...

... what it was that Mary especially treasured in her heart?

... why the shepherds wanted to everyone what they had heard and seen?

... what those people felt and thought, when they heard what had happened?

... where you are in this story?

... if you were in the shepherds' position today:

- who would you tell?

- why?

- using what words?

... and why?