

## Some topics for prayer

To be able to speak out the truth against power and influence.

To be able to discern the truth against the prevailing thinking.

The distribution of the covid-19 vaccine across the world.

People who are victim in any way to the pandemic.

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.

Caring for our planet which is our family home.

People living anywhere in the world where there is famine, war, poverty, pandemic, depression, hopelessness ...

That we may begin to learn from what the pandemic has exposed in our society that needs healing, and to plan what to do about it.

## Some prayers ('collects') set for today

Creator God,  
you made us all in your image:  
may we discern you in all that we see,  
and serve you in all that we do;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Merciful God,  
you have prepared for those who love you  
such good things as pass our understanding:  
pour into our hearts such love toward you  
that we, loving you in all things and above all things,  
may obtain your promises,  
which exceed all that we can desire;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
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

**11<sup>th</sup> July 2021**

**The 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday  
after Trinity**



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 or watch our weekly  
services - around 20 minutes - on our  
website***

## 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.

1<sup>st</sup> 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.

2<sup>nd</sup> 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.

3<sup>rd</sup> 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:*

## The death of John the Baptist

King Herod heard of the healings and other miracles, for Jesus' name had become known. Some were saying, "John the baptizer has been raised from the dead; and for this reason these powers are at work in him." But others said, "It is Elijah." And others said, "It is a prophet, like one of the prophets of old." But when Herod heard of it, he said, "John, whom I beheaded, has been raised."

For Herod himself had sent men who arrested John, bound him, and put him in prison on account of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, because Herod had married her. For John had been telling Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife." And Herodias had a grudge against him, and wanted to kill him. But she could not, for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he protected him. When he heard him, he was greatly perplexed; and yet he liked to listen to him. But an opportunity came when Herod on his birthday gave a banquet for his courtiers and officers and for the leaders of Galilee.

When his daughter Herodias came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his guests; and the king said to the girl, "Ask me for whatever you wish, and I will give it." And he solemnly swore to her, "Whatever you ask me, I will give you, even half of my kingdom." She went out and said to her mother, "What should I ask for?" She replied, "The head of John the baptizer."

Immediately she rushed back to the king and requested, "I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter." The king was deeply grieved; yet out of regard for his oaths and for the guests, he did not want to refuse her. Immediately the king sent a soldier of the guard with orders to bring John's head. He went and beheaded him in the prison, brought his head on a platter, and gave it to the girl. Then the girl gave it to her mother.

When his disciples heard about it, they came and took his body, and laid it in a tomb.

Mark 6:14-29 (NRSV translation)

### ***I wonder ...***

- ... what the most important part of this story was?
- ... on what occasions you have had to speak out the truth bravely?
- ... how John's disciples felt when they laid his body in a tomb?
- ... what parallels there are between John the Baptist's death and that of Jesus?

***... and why?***