

## Some topics for prayer

That we may be aware of the stumbling blocks in the way of people coming to faith, and act to remove them.

That we may intentionally bring people closer to the kingdom of God.

The fair and just distribution of the covid-19 vaccine across the world.

People who are victim in any way to the pandemic.

People across the world 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 and sharing its resources fairly and sustainably.

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

That we may use what we have learned during the pandemic so far, in order to plan ahead.

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

Gracious God, you call us to fullness of life:  
deliver us from unbelief and banish our anxieties  
with the liberating love of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Almighty God,  
you have made us for yourself,  
and our hearts are restless till they find their rest in you:  
pour your love into our hearts and draw us to yourself,  
and so bring us at last to your heavenly city  
where we shall see you face to face;  
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

**26<sup>th</sup> September  
2021**

**The 17<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:*

## Goals and stumbling blocks

John said to Jesus, "Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he was not following us."

But Jesus said, "Do not stop him; for no one who does a deed of power in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me. Whoever is not against us is for us.

For truly I tell you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you bear the name of Christ will by no means lose the reward.

"If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were hung around your neck and you were thrown into the sea.

If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life maimed than to have two hands and to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire. And if your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life lame than to have two feet and to be thrown into hell. And if your eye causes you to stumble, tear it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and to be thrown into hell, where their worm never dies, and the fire is never quenched.

"For everyone will be salted with fire. Salt is good; but if salt has lost its saltiness, how can you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another."

Mark 9:37-50 (NRSV translation)

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

- ... what your favourite part of this story was?
- ... what the most important part of this story was?
- ... why John and the others wanted to stop the person they found acting in Jesus' name who wasn't in their organisation?
- ... would you - do you - react similarly?
- ... in what ways you speak or act in Jesus' name?
- ... what do you understand by Jesus' graphic language?
- ... where are you in this story?

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