

SAFFRON WALDEN AND VILLAGES TEAM MINISTRY

PRAYERS FOR SUNDAY 17 MAY 2020 (6TH OF EASTER)

Today is Rogation Sunday, when we pray for God's blessing upon the growing crops: and traditionally, the day to 'beat the bounds' of the parish. As we hear Jesus's words 'If you love me, keep my commandments', we remember that God calls us to love his world, as well as our neighbour: and that current events underline our reliance upon the seasons, the land, and our farmers' hard work.

You might like to light a candle at home while you use this leaflet, symbolising Jesus as the Light of the World: and to say the prayers and readings out loud.

Introduction

We gather together, united in purpose though separate in place, in the name of God, our Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.

*We say together (or why not **sing!**) an opening hymn:*

1. For the beauty of the earth,
for the beauty of the skies,
for the love which from our birth
over and around us lies:
*Lord of all, to thee we raise
This our sacrifice of praise.*

3. For the joy of human love,
brother, sister, parent, child,
friends on earth and friends above,
pleasures pure and undefiled:
Lord of all...

2. For the beauty of each hour
of the day or of the night,
hill and vale and tree and flower,
sun and moon and stars of light:
Lord of all...

4. For thy Church which evermore
lifteth holy hands above,
offering up on every shore
her pure sacrifice of love:
Lord of all....

The Lord is here: Alleluia!

His Spirit is with us. Alleluia!

We have come together as the family of God in this community. And especially we thank you, Heavenly Father, for your family, the Church; and for the plenteousness of the world you have given to sustain us. Help us to pray to you in faith, to sing your praise with gratitude, and to listen to your word with eagerness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Prayers of Penitence

Let us ask God to forgive our delusion of self-sufficiency, so that we may praise him for his provision and his goodness

Lord, you give us this good earth, yet we take your generous gifts for granted.

Lord, have mercy. *Lord, have mercy.*

Lord, you give us this good earth, yet we squander its rich resources.

Christ, have mercy. *Christ, have mercy.*

Lord, you give us this good earth, but we fail to share your bounty with all your children.

Lord, have mercy. *Lord, have mercy.*

Hearing God's forgiveness

May the God of love and power forgive us and free us from our sins, heal and strengthen us by his Spirit, and raise us to new life in Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Readings *We now follow the readings on the Grapevine:*

Collect (the special prayer for today)

First Reading: Acts Chapter 17, verses 22-31

Gospel reading: St John's Gospel, Chapter 14, verses 15-21

Reflection *If you are using this prayer sheet privately, you may wish to read the Reflection on the Grapevine. In a moment of quiet, think what message this may have for you, and ask God to help you live it out in your life this week.*

We declare our faith together

**We believe and trust in God the Father,
from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.**

**We believe in God the Son,
who lives in our hearts through faith, and fills us with his love.**

**We believe in God the Holy Spirit,
who strengthens us with power from on high.**

**This is our faith. We believe and trust in one God;
Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession

Father, we pray for your blessing upon this rich earth you have made. May we, your children, tend the earth in your name, and hallow its resources. Guide us into a sustainable future; and give us the will to share the fruits of the world so that hunger and want may be no more.

Lord, in your mercy *Hear our prayer*

Father, your Son told his disciples to keep his commandments, and promised that you would send them his Spirit of truth. As we recall his ascension into heaven, we too wait for the coming of your Spirit to guide us into all truth. Teach us to love one another, as you and your Son love us: and to care for those in need as if we were caring for him. Give us the strength to comfort the fearful, to tend the sick, and to reassure the isolated, for your name's sake.

Lord, in your mercy

Hear our prayer

Gracious God, give strength and energy to all hospital staff and carers combating the virus, and all key workers and volunteers determined to keep society running. Inspire all who seek a cure. Give wisdom to our government, and all who make decisions which affect our lives. Give us courage and wisdom to live responsibly as lockdown restrictions evolve, and keep us ever mindful of each other.

Lord, in your mercy

Hear our prayer

Loving God, hold in your arms all who suffer in body, mind or spirit, especially*do name those on your own heart.* Comfort and strengthen the weak, the sick and the dying, especially facing death alone. Be with all who fear for their future, and all who miss our normal ways of life. In their loneliness, be their consolation; in their anxiety, be their hope; in their darkness, be their light. May we trust in your Son's promise of eternal life, and unending Easter joy.

Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

Sharing Christ's Peace

The risen Christ stood among his disciples and said, 'Peace be with you.' Then were they glad when they saw the Lord. Alleluia!

The peace of the Lord be always with you. **And also with you. Alleluia!**

As you say this, hold in your mind all who are joining in these prayers today.

If you are joining the Eucharist celebrated live via Zoom, do follow the priest saying the Eucharistic prayer, with the standard responses. While only the priest can physically receive the consecrated bread and wine, all will be invited to say this prayer of Spiritual Communion, inviting Jesus to enter your deepest being.

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.

I love you above all things, and I desire to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace you as if you were already there and unite myself wholly to you. Never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer *Let us pray together as Jesus has taught us*
Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

We ask God's grace for the week ahead

Heavenly Father, sustain us in our joys and in our anxieties. Enfold us in your peace in our waking and in our sleeping, and may we know your presence with us now and always: in the name of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

We say (or sing!) a final hymn:

1. We plough the fields, and scatter
The good seed on the land,
But it is fed and watered
By God's almighty hand;
He sends the snow in winter,
The warmth to swell the grain,
The breezes and the sunshine,
And soft refreshing rain.

*All good gifts around us
Are sent from heaven above,
Then thank the Lord,
O thank the Lord,
For all his love.*

2. He only is the Maker
of all things near and far.
He paints the wayside flower,
He lights the evening star;
The winds and waves obey him,
By him the birds are fed;
Much more to us, his children,
He gives our daily bread.

All good gifts....

3. We thank thee, then, O Father,
For all things bright and good,
The seed time and the harvest,
Our life, our health, and food;
No gifts have we to offer,
For all thy love imparts,
But that which thou desirest,
Our humble, thankful hearts.

All good gifts....

May the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit, be with us all now and evermore: and may we go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

In the name of Christ. Alleluia! Amen.

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