

Mears Ashby and Hardwick and Sywell with Overstone



**Prayers and Reflections
for use at home**

Sunday 7 June 2020

Trinity Sunday

Welcome to this week's Prayers and Reflections. Today marks the start of Ordinary Time. Although, with God things are never ordinary, boring or mundane, so the season begins with a celebration of who God is to us, his relationship with us. Of course, it's Trinity Sunday, when we explore and give thanks for our Three-in-One God who loves us.

On the front cover is a copy of Rublev's icon of the Holy Trinity sitting together under the Oaks of Mamre having a meal. They are abiding in each other's presence. God the Father is on the left of the photo, dressed in gold as he is the source of all holiness and in blue as a sign of his divinity. In the centre is God the Son, dressed in blue like his Father and in brown, for he's human, like us. And finally, God the Spirit is on the right, dressed in blue like the other persons of the Trinity, and in green as a sign of his life-giving nature.

In the centre of the icon, there is a space at the table, an invitation to you to join them in silent and loving contemplation.

May you find space each day this week to pause in their loving presence, and abide in their love. May this give you the peace and calm, the joy and hope that you are craving.

God bless,

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Prayers and Reflections for use at home at Pentecost Relating

PREPARING OURSELVES

Take a moment to be still in God's presence, and feel his love.

If you are indoors, you may wish to light a candle as a sign of God's love, here, in your room. You may also wish to have a cross in your palm, or on the table, and a bowl of water ready for the time of confession.

Lord, as I sit and wait in silence,
I place my hopes and dreams,
my fears and concerns,
into your safe and loving hands.
Pour your love upon me,
make my heart beat in time with yours;
in Jesus' name,
I pray. **Amen.**

LETTING GO

If you come to this time of prayer and reflection with any regrets, with things that you wish you had not said, done or been, offer them to God in the silence of your heart. And then, reflect on the opening words of this well-known hymn.

Dear Lord and Father of mankind,
forgive our foolish ways!
Re-clothe us in our rightful mind,
in purer lives thy service find,
in deeper reverence praise,
in deeper reverence praise.

If you wish, dip your finger into a bowl of water and make the sign of the cross on your palm.



Feel God's forgiveness. You are his beloved child, nothing can separate you from his love. May this thought inspire you in the week ahead to speak words of love and peace and hope.

PRAYING TODAY'S PRAYER **(The Collect)**

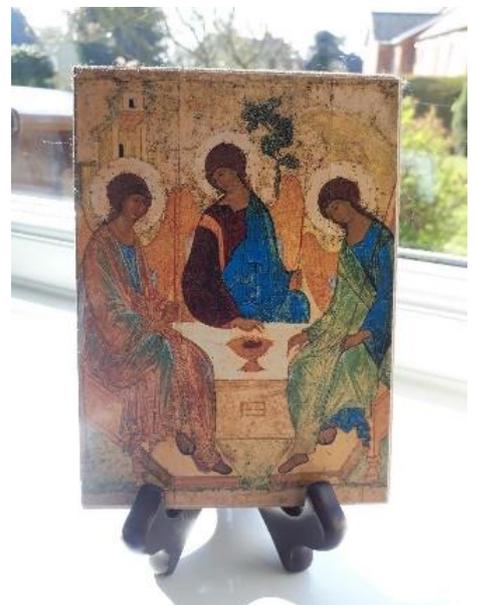
Across our villages and the worldwide Church, this prayer is being said today. Add your voice to this earthly circle of prayer to our loving Father.

Almighty and everlasting God,
you have given us your servants grace,
by the confession of a true faith,
to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity
and in the power of the divine majesty to worship the Unity:
keep us steadfast in this faith,
that we may evermore be defended from all adversities;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Read through this prayer again. It looks rather long and, yet, it is simple and beautiful in its longing plea. It celebrates God's generosity to us in giving us three glorious ways to relate to him, as Father - Son - and Spirit. And yet, they are absolutely as one in their desire for us. For us to love as they love us and, which is so key in our times, for us to stay steadfast in our faith. Nothing can throw us off course if we keep our gaze on God and trust in his love.

Pause for a moment to contemplate this desire, as you imagine yourself sitting at the table with the Holy Trinity. Join in their loving gaze. And, seek what you need from them.



LISTENING TO GOD'S WORD

God's relationship with us - Part One

Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand and marked off the heavens with a span, enclosed the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance?

Who has directed the spirit of the LORD, or as his counsellor has instructed him? Whom did he consult for his enlightenment, and who taught him the path of justice? Who taught him knowledge, and showed him the way of understanding?

Even the nations are like a drop from the bucket, and are accounted as dust on the scales; see, he takes up the isles like fine dust.

Why do you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel, 'My way is hidden from the LORD, and my right is disregarded by my God?' Have you not known? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the faint, and strengthens the powerless. Even youths will be faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted; but those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

Isaiah 40:12-15, 27-end

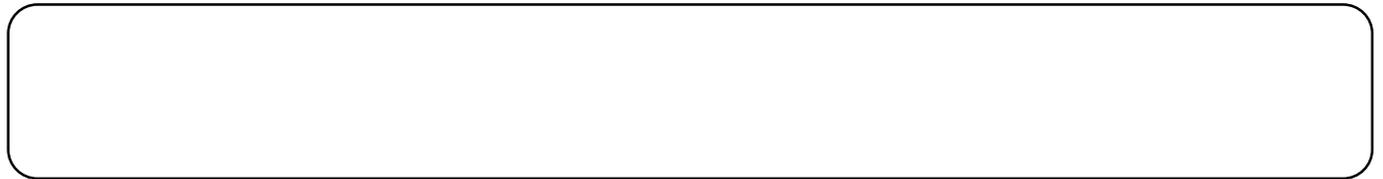
God gave this prophecy to Isaiah at a time when his people were living in a strange land, in exile in Babylon. Far from home, far from God's temple, it must have been so hard for them to sustain their faith in God's coming to save over fifty long years. It was tough to live day in, day out with this sense of separation from him. And so, he invites them to look at the world around them - the gardens and streams, the mountains and hills - to look with their hearts as well as their eyes, and to ask themselves, 'Who made all of these?' To which, of course, the answer is God. If he has the power to speak all this into life, nothing is too difficult for him, nothing tires him. I love his invitation to them, and to us, 'Place your trust in me, your life in my hands, and I will renew your strength.'

Take a moment to look at the world around you - your garden, and what lies beyond, and at the sky above. All of this and more is God's creation - the work of his hands - his gift of life. A life he sustains.

If it is cloudy outside, picture in your mind's eye a clear blue sky, like recent days, and a bird soaring effortlessly in the unseen thermals, flying tirelessly. It has the stamina to continue for hours, for miles.

Say what is on your heart to our Creator God, who can renew your strength like an eagle's and make your heart soar with joy and praise.

He is God the Father to us.



A Hymn of Praise

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God almighty!
All thy works shall praise thy name,
in earth and sky and sea;
holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty!
God in three persons,
blessèd Trinity!



In our first reading, we also catch a glimpse of the Holy Spirit who's been at work in our world before time began, and who is our inner conscience and our life coach. We would be lost without his presence.

God's relationship with us - Part Two

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.'

Matthew 28:16-20

Jesus is about to leave. He sends his team out into the world to act in the name of the Holy Trinity. It is a big ask as they will face much opposition, danger and persecution. And so, he makes a limitless, endless promise - 'I am with you always.' When they face a crowd baying for their blood, a chilly judge wishing to condemn them, a raging storm threatening to overpower their ship, he will be with them. What more could you ask of a lifelong friend, a loving brother?

In this promise, we see who Jesus is to us, and how much we mean to him. What does he mean to you?

A Hymn of Praise

As the deer pants for the water,
so my soul longs after you.

You alone are my heart's desire
and I long to worship you.

You're my friend and you are my brother,
even though you are a king.

I love you more than any other,
so much more than anything.



Martin Nystrom

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OUR PRAYERS

Here are some prayers for Trinity Sunday. Feel free to use one or more of these prayers, and to add your own.

Creator God, our eternal strength,
as I look on the world you made with love,
and the life you have given me,
I am filled with hope for the future,
and with strength to live through the pain and sadness
of these challenging times. When I grow weary, Lord, lift me up.

Creator God, hear my prayer.

Redeeming God, our loyal companion,
you love our world so much that you died for us,
and rose again, to give us new life.

You want us to live in peace and love,
and care as you care. My heart is breaking for...

Reconcile and heal these differences, tend and heal their suffering.

Redeeming God, hear my prayer.

Life-giving God, our inner compass,
you are always with us; you know how we are feeling.

Even before a word is on my lips,
you know that my heart is aching for...

Comfort them in their unbearable pain and devastating loss,
give them the strength to journey on. May they know you are with them.

Life-giving God, hear my prayer.

Offer your own heartfelt prayers and yearnings, praise and thanksgivings.

The Lord's Prayer

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.**

PRAYER OF BLESSING

A closing prayer of blessing for this week.

Lord, bless and guide me,
whatever I do, whether at home or outside.

Go before me, watch over me,
and keep me, and my loved ones, safe in your love. **Amen.**