

Mears Ashby and Hardwick and Sywell with Overstone



**Prayers and Reflections
for use at home**

**Sunday 1 November 2026
All Saints**

Welcome to this week's prayers and reflections. Today, we are celebrating the unsung heroes of the Christian faith. Over the centuries, there have been countless men, women and children who have lived by faith and by God's love powerfully at work in them. Saints seek to live constantly at one with the God within. Saints seek to encourage others on their journey of life and faith. Saints seek to make a difference. You and I are called to be saints!

Enjoy reflecting on the blessing of being saintly.

Every blessing,

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*As you prepare to celebrate All Saints,
open your heart to Jesus and follow him.*

O happy band of pilgrims,
if onward ye will tread,
with Jesus as your fellow,
to Jesus as your head.

John Mason Neale (1818-1866)

Prayers and Reflections

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Blessed

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 bowl of water ready for the time of letting go. When you are ready, say this opening prayer.

Lord, as I sit and wait in silence,
I place my hopes and dreams,
my fears and concerns,
into your safe and loving hands.
Enfold me with your love,
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, when you are ready, reflect on Jesus as your Saviour King.

The cross that Jesus carried
he carried as your due:
the crown that Jesus weareth
he weareth it for you.

John Mason Neale (1818-1866)



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

Our verse points us to the source of our saintliness: Jesus as our self-giving and self-sacrificing King. It is both a verse that speaks of the forgiveness Jesus offers to us and of the place that he has in our lives. Our hearts should be centred on him. Our lives should be shaped by his earthly life and by his teaching, and by his love for us. Our lives are his, our love is his, our desire to serve is inspired by him.

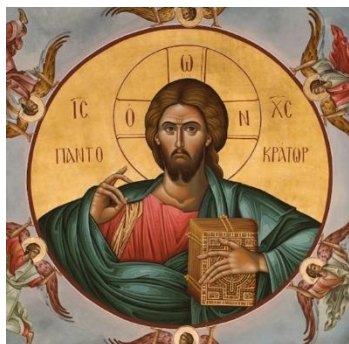
All Saints is a time for re-focusing ourselves on him as Christ our King. Gaze on him in love. Settle into his presence. Receive of his love, forgiveness and grace. You are his. He is yours. Give thanks for this. Feel yourself at one with him.

Praise him in the words of St. Paul's glorious hymn.

In your relationships with one another,
have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:
who, being in the very nature of God,
did not consider equality with God
something to be used to his own advantage;
rather, he made himself nothing
by taking the very nature of a servant,
being made in human likeness.
And being found in appearance as a man,
he humbled himself
by becoming obedient to death –
even death on a cross!

Philippians 2:5-8

It is an invitation to be self-giving in our daily lives. If Jesus could do this, God's own Son, we should seek to do the same.



The faith by which ye see him,
the hope in which ye yearn,
the love that through all troubles
to him alone return.

John Mason Neale (1818-1866)

PRAYING TODAY'S PRAYER

(The Collect)

Today, this prayer is being said across our villages and the worldwide Church. Add your voice to the earthly circle of prayer to our Faithful One.

God of holiness,
your glory is proclaimed in every age:
as we rejoice in the faith of your saints,
inspire us to follow their example
with boldness and joy;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Our prayer for All Saints invites us to think about the everyday saints, God's ordinary heroes, who inspire us. They might be people in our lives who are gentle and selfless, always looking outwards to the needs of others, even when life is a struggle for them. I met one such lady during my time in training in Kingsthorpe. Her life was mostly constrained to the four walls of her home due to the frailties of old age and ill-health. She wasn't one to complain about her pain or about her limitations. She may not have been able to make it to church or to Mothers' Union, but she could still phone her church friends to find out how they were doing. She could still hold her family and friends before God in prayer. She could still notice how her carers were feeling, ask about their day and pray for them. She was such a wonderful soul, a true woman of faith, an inspiration and a lesson to me. I will never forget this beautiful saint on earth who is now one of our Lord's saints in heaven.

Whose way of life inspires you? Pause to give thanks to God for the saintliness of their souls and their daily living.

Ponder too how you are being a source of inspiration to others. What is it about you or about the way that you live that blesses those whose lives you touch? Pause to pray for them as you pray for yourself.



What are they but forerunners
to lead you to his sight,
the longed-for distant dawning
of uncreated light?

John Mason Neale (1818-1866)

LISTENING TO GOD'S WORD

The Beatitudes

Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, and he began to teach them.

He said:

'Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled.

Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

'Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Matthew 5:1-12

Blessed...

'Bless' or 'Blessed' in everyday use is a way of expressing joy and delight, or a happy response to some good news. It is a gentle and heartfelt reaction to something that is emotionally moving. Yet, when we look at our Lord's list of people we should respond to with happiness, these do not look like reasons for rejoicing. Why would we want to be happy for someone who is mourning or for a family are living in poverty or in one of the world's war zones? We wouldn't nor would our Lord be.

So, we have to take a deeper look at the meaning of the word 'Blessed' to understand what Jesus is saying to his disciples and to us. 'Blessed' in biblical times meant being in a state of harmony with God's kingdom – a kind of inner flourishing, rooted in God's grace and love, even in such unexpected circumstances as those listed by Jesus in his Beatitudes.

It is a reminder that true blessedness may not always look like worldly success; instead, we see qualities like the values that we see in Jesus, selflessness and compassion, mercy and peace. The type of qualities that I saw in the lady that I visited regularly during my time at Kingsthorpe.

In sorrow and in joy, we can each experience the blessedness of knowing Jesus is on our side – at our side, of being truly at one with him through his Spirit within us. It is this state of inner blessedness that equips us with the saintly ability to look outwards to the needs of others, rather wallow in our own challenges. Ponder your own experience of blessedness.



The trials that beset you,
the sorrows ye endure,
are known to Christ our Saviour,
whose perfect grace will cure.

O happy band of pilgrims,
let fear not dim your eyes,
remember, your afflictions,
shall lead to such a prize.

John Mason Neale (1818-1866)

OUR PRAYERS

Feel free to use one or more of these prayers and to add your own.

Lord Jesus, it is so wonderful to think that you love me. You invite me to abide in your love and experience the blessedness of being at one with you and your desire for my life. Lord, help me to look outwards...

Lord, hear my prayer.

Lord Jesus, you taught your disciples to display Kingdom values, not worldly ones. You want us to care for those who are struggling, to speak up when we see injustice, to be peacemakers. Lord, bless...

Lord, hear my prayer.

Lord Jesus, you call those with a gift for caring to be doctors and nurses, carers and counsellors. Strengthen all who care for the sick and dying. Bless, Lord, those in their care. In love, I lift up to you...

Lord, 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.

O God, you search me and you know me,
all my thoughts and feelings are open to your gaze,
you see the paths I will take before I take them. Guide my daily living.
Bless me and keep my loved ones safe, I pray. **Amen.**