

Mears Ashby and Hardwick and Sywell with Overstone



**Prayers and Reflections
for use at home**

Sunday 9 August 2026

Trinity 10

Welcome to this week's prayers and reflections. Having fed the 5,000 on the shores of the Sea of Galilee, Jesus spends a night alone on a hillside overlooking Galilee. His team battle the stormy seas. Peter tests his faith. Where will you find yourself in this powerful story?

Enjoy pondering where God is.

Every blessing,

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As you prepare to experience the prayerfulness of Jesus, the fears of the disciples and the limitations of Peter's faith, open yourself to his Father in heaven. Offer your praise.

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.

John Greenleaf Whittier (1807-1892)

Prayers and Reflections for use at home on Trinity 10 Finding

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, reflect on the words of this second verse.

In simple trust like theirs who heard,
beside the Syrian sea,
the gracious calling of the Lord,
let us, like them, without a word,
rise up and follow thee,
rise up and follow thee.

John Greenleaf Whittier (1807-1892)



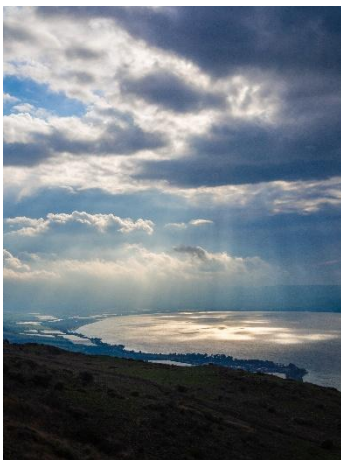
If you wish, dip your finger into a bowl of water and make the sign of the cross on your palm.

Feel God's forgiveness.

Our verse is an invitation to re-dedicate ourselves to following Jesus. It is all too easy in our daily lives to forget to listen out for him. His Spirit's voice – our still small voice – is there within us. He speaks to us more than we listen to him. What messages might you be missing? Take a moment to think about how you pay attention to him. What times of the day are you most attentive? When do you – almost – forgot that he is there? Ponder how he might be nudging you to notice him. To listen to him.

When Jesus called his twelve apostles, he asked them to step away from their daily lives – give up their jobs – leave home, and follow him. They dedicated the whole of their lives to him. That is our calling too but, thankfully, Jesus is not asking us to leave home to do this. He wants us to live the whole of our everyday lives for him. Every aspect of our lives should be shaped by his teaching and guided by his Spirit's voice.

Sometimes, we do need to stop to remember our Lord's call on our lives, and retune ourselves into him. Just as Jesus will do at the start of this week's Gospel reading, when he tunes himself into his Father in heaven and recharges his spiritual batteries.



Pause to prepare to enter this thin place.

O Sabbath rest by Galilee!

O calm of hills above,

where Jesus knelt to share with thee

the silence of eternity,

interpreted by love!

Interpreted by love!

John Greenleaf Whittier (1807-1892)

PRAYING TODAY'S PRAYER

(The Collect)

Today, this prayer is being said across the benefice and the globe.

Add your voice to this earthly circle of prayer to our God of love.

Lord of heaven and earth,
as Jesus taught his disciples to be persistent in prayer,
give us patience and courage never to lose hope,
but always to bring our prayers before you;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Our prayer reminds us that we have to work at finding this thin place where earth touches heaven and we feel held by God's love. Sensing God's presence or tuning into the Spirit's still small voice can involve us try, try, trying again. Our prayer says, 'Don't give up!' God will find us even when we are not sure where he is. Do ponder this.

Do ask for the patience to keep trying and/or the courage to keep believing. God is there. Always.

He is listening. He answers our prayers – every single one of them – even when we are too distracted or too doubting or too anxious to hear him, to see what he is doing for us. Praying is not just about praising, asking, thanking. It is also about finding – finding where God is, what he is doing, how he is speaking to us. It works best when we stop what we are doing, still our minds, hide away from all that might interrupt us and enter into the silence which is prayer's gateway.



Drop thy still dews of quietness,
till all our strivings cease;
take from our souls the strain and stress,
and let our ordered lives confess
the beauty of thy peace,
the beauty of thy peace.

John Greenleaf Whittier (1807-1882)

A Stormy Night

Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd. After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. Later that night, he was there alone, and the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it.

Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. 'It's a ghost,' they said, and cried out in fear.

But Jesus immediately said to them: 'Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid.'

'Lord, if it's you,' Peter replied, 'tell me to come to you on the water.'

'Come,' he said.

Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came towards Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, 'Lord, save me!'

Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. 'You of little faith,' he said, 'why did you doubt?'

And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. Then those who were in the boat worshipped him, saying, 'Truly you are the Son of God.'

Matthew 14:22-33

Finding...

This is one of my favourite stories of Simon the fisherman learning to be Peter the Rock. As all teachers would say, 'Mistakes help us to learn.' And he does make a mistake in this passage. He forgets to trust in Jesus, forgets to keep going when it feels impossible to carry on.

BUT! At least he had a go. He had the courage to ask for the impossible, to walk on the stormy sea to Jesus. He had the courage to accept Jesus' call and step out of the boat. He had the courage to take those first steps towards Jesus. I don't know about you, but I don't think that I could do any of these three things. I wouldn't have the courage.

BUT! His courage failed him. He started to think about what he was doing – walking on water in a storm – and the doubts set in. Peter panics! The invisible cord which had connected Peter to Jesus snaps. He sinks. With an outstretched arm, Peter calls out to Jesus, 'Save me!' His courage may be gone. His faith may not be strong enough to stop him sinking. YET! Peter believes that Jesus is the one who can save him. There is faith, a faith built on a desperate hope. He finds Jesus.

Jesus does not give up on Peter being the Rock even though his courage was not bold enough and he wobbled in his faith. Peter's faith in Jesus and his power to save did not dissolve. His hope was in Jesus alone.

It is a powerful lesson in reaching out to Jesus – seeking him – when life's chips are down and we feel like we are sinking. Turning to him in hope, rather than in certainty, is enough. Jesus will not give up on us when hope is all that we have. A small faith is still faith. We will find Jesus because he will find us – strengthen us – calm us – save us.

Where did you find yourself in this story? With Jesus on the hillside, praying at one with his Father? With the disciples who battled on alone, forgetting what God can do? With Peter who learnt that Jesus saves?



Breathe through the heats of our desire
thy coolness and thy balm;
let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;
speak through the earthquake, wind, and fire,
O still small voice of calm!
O still small voice of calm!

John Greenleaf Whittier (1807-1882)

OUR PRAYERS

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

Lord Jesus, you teach me how to pray in tune with your still small voice, your Spirit within me. He connects me to you, you to me. Thank you! Thank you for this precious gift. Lord, may I always listen...

Lord, hear my prayer.

Lord Jesus, your disciples were out in a boat in a storm. Frightened, they battled against the wind and waves. When life feels overwhelming, help me to remember your power to still my fears. Lord, calm I pray...

Lord, hear my prayer.

Lord Jesus, you allowed Peter to test his faith. You invited him to walk to you on the stormy waters. He did so but his courage failed him. You saved him. Lord, may those who are sinking call out in hope...

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.**