

Mears Ashby and Hardwick and Sywell with Overstone



**Prayers and Reflections
for use at home**

Sunday 21 June 2026

Trinity 3

Welcome to this week's Prayers and Reflections. Our Gospel reading follows on from last week's sending of the Twelve. Jesus offers some closing words of warning to his team as they prepare to go in his name. Their mission is not going to be an easy one. Like him, they will face opposition. What choices will they make?

Do ponder your own choices and challenges.

Every blessing,

Revd Katrina

Vicar

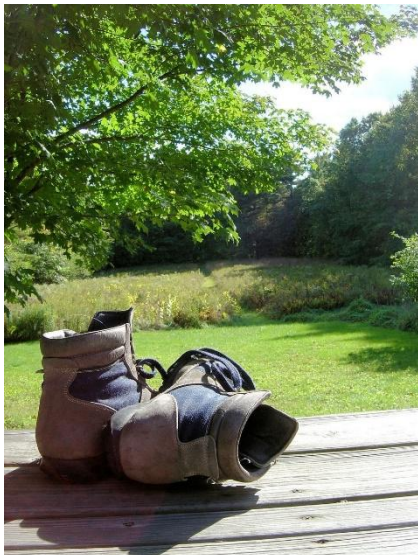
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*As you prepare to enter these prayers and reflections,
renew your promise to follow in our Lord's footsteps
and accept his call on your life.*



O Jesus, I have promised
to serve thee to the end;
be thou for ever near me,
my Master and my Friend:
I shall not fear the battle
if thou art by my side,
nor wander from the pathway
if thou wilt be my guide.

John Ernest Bode (1816-1874)

Prayers and Reflections for use at home on Trinity 3 Choices and Challenges

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 next verse.

O let me feel thee near me;
the world is ever near;
I see the sights that dazzle,
the tempting sounds I hear;
my foes are ever near me,
around me and within;
but, Jesus, draw thou nearer,
and shield my soul from sin.

John Ernest Bode (1816-1874)



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.

Jesus' parting words to his team as he left them in charge were, 'And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.' Comforting words to a team about to set out to build his worldwide Church.

Whatever difficult choices or dangerous challenges they will face in the coming months and years, Jesus will be with them. God's Spirit will be their guide, and he is our guide too.

Our verse is a prayerful reminder to seek our Lord's help when we face life's choices and challenges as well as its options and opportunities. He can give us what we need to select the right path: courage, strength, wisdom, patience, peace, hope, joy, love. The list is endless. He can bless and support us, in so many ways. If you are facing choices or challenges, consider how Jesus can shield you and support you as you try to take life one painful step at a time.

If you are filled with joyful options and opportunities, consider how Jesus can guide your decision making. How will you bless others as God is blessing you?

May you feel that Jesus is on your side.



O let me hear thee speaking
in accents clear and still,
above the storms of passion,
the murmurs of self-will;
O speak to reassure me,
to hasten or control;
O speak and make me listen,
thou guardian of my soul.

John Ernest Bode (1816-1874)

PRAYING TODAY'S PRAYER

(The Collect)

Today, this prayer is being said across our villages and the worldwide Church. Add your voice to this earthly circle of prayer to our God who loves us with an unbreakable love.

God our saviour,
look on this wounded world
in pity and in power;
hold us fast to your promises of peace
won for us by your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

When we listen to the news – the atrocious attack in Belfast and the subsequent rioting, the wars in Lebanon and Gaza, Iran and Ukraine, Myanmar and Sudan, which seem endless, the impact of climate change on farmers and families across the globe – our hope can drain from us. We can wonder why God doesn't stop people – especially leaders – from making such cruel or damaging decisions. Our prayer invites us to look to God and trust in his powerful love for his creation.

For God sees what is happening in our world today. He sees the loving kindness and the compassion in the hearts of our world's ordinary heroes. Daily, he sees the brave actions of those living through challenging times. Daily, he witnesses the courageous choices made by those who could so easily have joined in with the prejudice and the persecution but didn't. Instead, they chose the path of love and peace.

God knows who are responsible for all the world's suffering. Our future is in his hands, and he can see when our world will be as it should be. Jesus, our Prince of Peace, will return to judge and to rule as our Saviour King. Until then, this week's prayer invites us to trust in his Father's promise and hold onto the hope of peace for our world's troubled places and peoples. For our God sees, our God listens. Our God cares, our God acts. Our God will perfect our world when his Son comes as judge and king.

As you ponder your hope in God's power and his promise of perfect peace, renew your promise to trust in him, especially when life is tough.



O Jesus, thou hast promised
to all who follow thee,
that where thou art in glory
there shall thy servant be;
and, Jesus, I have promised
to serve thee to the end:
O give me grace to follow,
my Master and my Friend.

John Ernest Bode (1816-1874)

LISTENING TO GOD'S WORD

Jesus briefs the Twelve

Jesus said, 'The student is not above the teacher, nor a servant above his master. It is enough for students to be like their teachers, and servants like their masters. If the head of the house has been called Beelzebul, how much more the members of his household!

'So do not be afraid of them, for there is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs. Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father's care. And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.

'Whoever acknowledges me before others, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven. But whoever disowns me before others, I will disown before my Father in heaven.

'Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to turn

“a man against his father,
a daughter against her mother,
a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law –
a man’s enemies will be the members of his own household.”

‘Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves their son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. Whoever does not take up their cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it.’

Matthew 10:24-39

Choices and Challenges...

Jesus’ pep talk to his team is drawing to a close. Their mission will not be an easy one. Like Jesus, they will face the opposition of religious leaders who do not believe that he can be God’s promised one – the Messiah. Jesus tells them to have the courage to proclaim his good news even when they are told to shut up. And, if the worst happens – which it will do in the early decades of the Church – then they are to place their trust in God’s promise to them. The authorities can imprison – torture – kill them but the prize will still be theirs – eternal life. Their souls will be safe even if their bodies aren’t.

It is a beautiful message. One to hold onto in life’s stormy passages. It is a call to keep the faith – let our faith guide us – let God’s still small voice strengthen and reassure us, as we find our way through each storm.



O let me see thy foot-marks,
and in them plant mine own;
my hope to follow duly
is in thy strength alone:
O guide me, call me, draw me,
uphold me to the end;
and then in heaven receive me,
my Saviour and my Friend.

John Ernest Bode (1816-1874)

OUR PRAYERS

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

Lord Jesus, you encourage me to keep the faith, keep on believing, even when life is challenging. Help me to trust that my soul will be safe, whatever happens to me. Lord, walk with me, guide my choices...

Lord, hear my prayer.

Lord Jesus, you look forward to the day when everyone across the globe accepts you as their king. Your truth can lighten the world's darkness, bring hope to the despairing. Lord, walk with those living in...

Lord, hear my prayer.

Lord Jesus, you know each one of us by name. You join in our joys, you share in our struggles and in our sadness. You offer hope, when all seems hopeless. Lord, walk with those living with...

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.**