

# **Mears Ashby and Hardwick and Sywell with Overstone**



**Prayers and Reflections  
for use at home**

**Sunday 13 July 2025**

**Trinity 4**

Welcome to this week's prayers and reflections. Our Gospel reading is the best known of all of Jesus' stories - The Parable of the Good Samaritan. It feels such an apt and powerful story for our current times. It speaks to the tragic events taking place in the Middle East as clearly as it spoke to the divisions in Jesus' own time.

May you be moved by our Lord's words.

Every blessing,

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*As you prepare to enter into the story of the Good Samaritan,  
ponder who is calling out for your love and compassion,  
and where you see Christ in them.*



When I needed a neighbour,  
were you there, were you there?  
When I needed a neighbour,  
were you there?

*And the creed and the colour  
and the name won't matter,  
were you there?*

*Sydney Carter (1915-2004)*

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*CCLI reported*

**Prayers and Reflections**  
**for use at home on Trinity 4**  
**Love without Borders**

**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 and chorus.*

I was hungry and thirsty,  
were you there, were you there?  
I was hungry and thirsty,  
were you there?

*And the creed and the colour  
and the name won't matter,  
were you there?*

*Sydney Carter (1915-2004)*

*CCLI reported*



*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.*

*If you sing this verse in the first person - in other words, for yourself - it can become a very personal prayer for help. Picture it as a petition, an outstretched hand to our Lord, 'Lord, I am struggling with... help me!' And, his answer to the question 'Were you there?' is always a gentle, loving, reassuring 'Yes!'. Wherever we are the journey of life and faith, on the sliding scale between wavering doubt to firm hope, Jesus will be there for us and for our family, friends and neighbours. He always listens. He never, ever walks by on the other side of the road or fails to pick up our calls. Ponder his loving faithfulness with the help of this well-known poem of doubting and finding - Footprints.*

One night I dreamed I was walking along the beach  
with the Lord.

Scenes from my life flashed across the sky,  
in each, I noticed footprints in the sand.

Sometimes there were two sets of footprints;  
other times there was one only.

During the lowest times of my life,  
I could see only one set of footprints,  
so I said, "Lord, you promised me,  
that you would walk with me always.

Why, when I needed you most would you leave me?"

The Lord replied, "My precious child,  
I love you and would never leave you.

The times when you have seen only one set of footprints,  
it was then that I carried you."

*Anonymous*

*May you know that when you call out to the Lord thirsty for help,  
hungry for the strength to cope, he will be there.*

## 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 God who loves us with an unbreakable love.*

Gracious Father,  
by the obedience of Jesus  
you brought salvation to our wayward world:  
draw us into harmony with your will,  
that we may find all things restored in him,  
our Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

*As we prepare to step into our Lord's story of the Good Samaritan, today's  
prayer is inviting us to picture God's vision for life on earth. It is a world in  
which all peoples and nations live in peace. There are no divisions - love is  
without any borders. When Jesus died on the cross, he did so for those  
who called him 'Rabbi' and 'Messiah', and for those who nailed his hands  
to its crossbeam. His love was without borders - limitless.*

*Our prayer invites us to be a part of this vision of peace and harmony,  
of living together as one. It is a call to include those who feel left out of  
life's blessings. Who do you know who feels lost? Unwelcome? Needing  
the shelter of your love and kindness, of your prayers?*

*Will you be there for them?*



When I needed a shelter,  
were you there, were you there?

When I needed a shelter,  
were you there?

*And the creed and the colour  
and the name won't matter,  
were you there?*

*Sydney Carter - CCLI reported*

## LISTENING TO GOD'S WORD

### The Parable of the Good Samaritan

On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. 'Teacher,' he asked, 'what must I do to inherit eternal life?'

'What is written in the Law?' he replied. 'How do you read it?'

He answered, "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind"; and, "Love your neighbour as yourself."

'You have answered correctly,' Jesus replied. 'Do this and you will live.'

But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, 'And who is my neighbour?'

In reply Jesus said: 'A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half-dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he travelled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. "Look after him," he said, "and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have."

'Which of these three do you think was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?'

The expert in the law replied, 'The one who had mercy on him.'

Jesus told him, 'Go and do likewise.'

*Luke 10:25-37*

## Love without borders...

*Some of the best Shakespeare plays and the best Verdi operas have been updated and set in modern times. Perhaps, the most famous of these is 'West Side Story' - a retelling of the feud between two families as a battle between two rival New York gangs. The story of the Good Samaritan can so easily be transposed into one of today's conflict zones. Samaritans didn't like or trust their neighbours, the Jewish Judeans, and the leaders and elders of the Jewish faith, plus the people too, treated Samaritans as unclean. They would not want to be seen in a Samaritan home or stop to give them vital first aid. It reminds me of the divisions between Israelis and Gazans.*

*Imagine Jesus re-telling the story today. The wounded man would be, perhaps, an injured soldier from the Israeli Defence Force lying on a road on leading out of Gaza to Israel. The priest could be one of the ultra-Orthodox Jews who strictly keep the Sabbath laws and believe this land is Israel's. The temple servant, I'd like to re-cast him as one of the politicians who believe in the righteous of their actions. Their warmongering places their soldiers as well as Gazan civilians at risk. And, the Samaritan, he is easy to recast. Imagine one of the bereaved dads or starving mums passing by this wounded soldier on their way to get aid. Picture them stopping, tending to this man and lifting him onto their cart and then taking him to one of the last remaining functioning hospitals. It would be a love that crosses the bloodiest of borders. It would be a love that sees the humanity and hurt of those on the other side, and responds with compassion. This is our Lord's call to us - Go and do likewise.*



Wherever you travel,  
I'll be there, I'll be there.

Wherever you travel,  
I'll be there.

*And the creed and the colour  
and the name won't matter,*

*I'll be there. Sydney Carter - CCLI reported*

## OUR PRAYERS

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

Lord Jesus, you are calling me to put no limits on my love, on my compassion. You are inviting me to see the humanity in everyone, both friend and foe. Lord, help me to do this - always.

Lord, hear my prayer.

Lord Jesus, your story of the Good Samaritan speaks to the war in Gaza. If ordinary Israelis could see the Gazans as people like themselves, and Gazans could recognise the fears of the Israelis, peace will begin...

Lord, hear my prayer.

Lord Jesus, I think of the Good Samaritan tending the man's wounds, gently with compassion, and the man letting him. All barriers to love and friendship gone. Lord, I think of those resisting help, and I pray...

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.**