

SAFFRON WALDEN AND VILLAGES TEAM MINISTRY

PRAYERS FOR SUNDAY 3 MAY 2020 (4TH OF EASTER)

Today we recall the first disciples forming a new community of hope and mutual love: and Jesus, the gate of the sheepfold, coming to bring us life in abundance. May their example inspire us: and his life grow within us.

You might like to light a candle at home while you use this leaflet, symbolising Jesus as the Light of the World: and to say the prayers and readings out loud.

Introduction

We gather together, united in purpose though separate in place, in the name of God, our Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.

*We say together (or why not **sing!**) an opening hymn:*

This joyful Eastertide

Away with sin and sorrow!

My love, the Crucified,

Hath sprung to life this morrow.

Had Christ, who once was slain,

Ne'er burst his three-day prison,

Our faith had been in vain:

But now hath Christ arisen, arisen, arisen;

Arisen!

My flesh in hope shall rest

And for a season slumber;

Till trump from east to west

Shall wake the dead in number.

Had Christ....

Death's flood hath lost its chill

Since Jesus crossed the river;

Lover of souls, from ill

My passing soul deliver.

Had Christ....

The Lord is here: Alleluia!

His Spirit is with us. Alleluia!

We have come together as the family of God in this community. And especially we thank you, Heavenly Father, for your family, the Church; and for your Son Jesus, the good shepherd of the sheep. Help us to pray to you in faith, to sing

your praise with gratitude, and to listen to your word with eagerness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Prayers of Penitence

Jesus Christ, risen Master and triumphant Lord, we come to you in sorrow for our sins, and confess to you our weakness and unbelief.

We have lived by our own strength, and not by the power of your resurrection.

Lord, have mercy. ***Lord, have mercy.***

We have lived by the light of our own eyes, as faithless and not believing.

Christ, have mercy. ***Christ, have mercy.***

We have lived for this world alone, and doubted our home in heaven.

Lord, have mercy. ***Lord, have mercy.***

Hearing God's forgiveness

May the God of love and power forgive us and free us from our sins, heal and strengthen us by his Spirit, and raise us to new life in Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Readings *We now follow the readings on the Grapevine:*

Collect (the special prayer for today)

First Reading: Acts Chapter 2, verses 42-end

Gospel reading: St John's Gospel, Chapter 10, verses 1-10

Reflection *If you are using this prayer sheet privately, you may wish to read the Reflection on the Grapevine. In a moment of quiet, think what message this may have for you, and ask God to help you live it out in your life this week.*

We declare our faith together

We believe and trust in God the Father,

from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.

We believe in God the Son,

who lives in our hearts through faith, and fills us with his love.

We believe in God the Holy Spirit,

who strengthens us with power from on high.

This is our faith. We believe and trust in one God;

Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

God our Father, your Son came to bring us life in all its fullness. Keep us under the shadow of your mercy as this long time of uncertainty continues, and be with those we love, but cannot see. Give us courage; give us generosity; give us the

strength to love and to care for all your people, that we may bring your light to others, and follow wherever you call us.

Lord, in your mercy

Hear our prayer

God our creator, look with compassion on your needy world. Hear our prayers for peace; for an end to oppression and injustice and natural disaster. Give hope to the hungry, the homeless and the refugees; inspire your human family to bond together as one; and help us to work with you for the good of your creation.

Lord, in your mercy

Hear our prayer

Gracious God, give your strength and energy to all hospital staff and carers combating the virus, and all key workers and volunteers determined to keep society running, and inspire all who seek a cure. Give wisdom to our government and all who make decisions; and keep us ever mindful of each other.

Lord, in your mercy

Hear our prayer

Loving God, hold in your arms all who suffer in body, mind or spirit, especially*do name those on your own heart.* Comfort and strengthen the weak, the sick and the dying, especially facing death alone. Be with all who fear for their future, and all who miss our normal ways of life. In their loneliness, be their consolation; in their anxiety, be their hope; in their darkness, be their light. May we trust in your Son's promise of eternal life, and unending Easter joy.

Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

Sharing Christ's Peace

The risen Christ stood among his disciples and said, 'Peace be with you.' Then were they glad when they saw the Lord.

The peace of the Lord be always with you. **And also with you.**

As you say this, hold in your mind all who are joining in these prayers today.

If you are joining the Eucharist celebrated live via Zoom, do follow the priest saying the Eucharistic prayer, with the standard responses. While only the priest can physically receive the consecrated bread and wine, all will be invited to say this prayer of Spiritual Communion, inviting Jesus to enter your deepest being.

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.

I love you above all things, and I desire to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace you as if you were already there and unite myself wholly to you. Never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer *Let us pray together as Jesus has taught us*
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.

We ask God's grace for the week ahead

Heavenly Father, sustain us in our joys and in our anxieties. Enfold us in your peace in our waking and in our sleeping, and may we know your presence with us now and always: in the name of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

We say (or sing!) a final hymn:

1. The King of love my shepherd is,
whose goodness faileth never.
I nothing lack if I am his,
and he is mine forever.
2. Where streams of living water
flow,
my ransomed soul he leadeth;
and where the verdant pastures
grow,
with food celestial feedeth.
3. Perverse and foolish, oft I strayed,
but yet in love he sought me;
and on his shoulder gently laid,
and home, rejoicing, brought me.
4. In death's dark vale I fear no ill,
with thee, dear Lord, beside me;
thy rod and staff my comfort still,
thy cross before to guide me.
5. Thou spreadst a table in my sight;
thy unction grace bestoweth;
and oh, what transport of delight
from thy pure chalice floweth!
6. And so through all the length of
days,
thy goodness faileth never;
Good Shepherd, may I sing thy
praise
within thy house forever.

May the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit, be with us all now and evermore: and may we go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ. Alleluia! Amen.