

Daily Spiritual Reflection and Prayer during the Coronavirus

The Church is not defined by the walls of a building but by the Body of Christ of which we are members. In making our Reflection spiritually, we are joining with Christians everywhere to be nourished by the one who tells us, 'I am the Bread of Life'. For some there will be the habit of having a time of Daily Devotions for others they use the Daily Offices in the Prayer Book. Such practice has sustained the church for centuries and is one we would do well to rediscover in this hour of need.

You may wish to commence by listening to some of your favourite worship music.

Every Day: In the evening, sometime between 5pm – 7pm. Light a candle. Play some music, reflect on the day, and say an evening prayer as provided below. Keep the candle alight for a time, but go about normal evening activities.

Evening Prayer:

You may wish to pray: Lord, have mercy, Christ, have mercy, Lord, have mercy. Come Holy Spirit and kindle in me the fire of your love. Fill my heart with your presence that I might be ever wise and faithful and truly enjoy God's consolation, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Reflect on the day and on your relationships. When was I most aware of the presence of Christ today? What good things have come from God today? Where have I fallen short? What might I do tomorrow? If you are doing this with another person you may care to share your answers with each other as encouragement.

Reflect on the following words from Scripture. Jesus said, 'I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.' John 6.35 What have you studied or observed this day that will help you to know and love God better?

Pray: for the needs of the world, for your local community, and for those close to you. A selection, varied each day, of these prayers may assist you if needed.

- Father, in this hour, turn the hearts of the parents to their children and the hearts of the children to their parents that both may honour and worship you. Malachi 4: 6
- Give thanks for the saving death and resurrection of Jesus and ask him to be with you now. O God, help me to trust you, help me to know that you are with me, help me to believe that nothing can separate me from your love revealed in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
- Lord, in these days of mercy, make us quiet and prayerful; in these days of challenge, make us stronger in you; in these days of isolation, take possession of us; in these days of waiting, open our hearts to the mystery of your cross. Amen.
- Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your disciples, 'I am with you always'. Be with me today, as I offer myself to you. Hear my prayers for others and for myself, and keep me in your care. Amen.
- Lord at this dark moment keep our eyes focussed on the light of Christ that a hope for the world may well up within each of us and overflow in prayer and generosity for our neighbours. As borders close may hearts be opened. We thank You Lord for inspired random acts of kindness that encourage us and remind us that you are our anchor in all storms.
- We pray Lord that You order the affairs of nations so that the resources needed to mitigate the effects of the Corona Virus pandemic are in place when and where they are needed, especially the medical resources such as ventilators. We pray that the virus does not take hold in places such as the African nations that are not well equipped to face this challenge.
- We pray for those cities being ravished by the outbreak that Your presence be manifested in your people as a transcending peace.

- We pray for the leaders of our nation, and of all nations, that they would have courage and hold the path for the best outcome for each nation. Lord give to them the wisdom of Solomon for these days.
- Gracious God give to Your church and its leaders a patience in this time of challenge and take our focus from things internal to things external - to the communities in which you have placed each church so that they may find new, effective and power filled ways of bringing the good news of Christ to a world in this Easter season. Give to your church a renewed boldness to speak of what we know but to do so with gentleness, respect and humility.
- Father watch over each one of us, keep us safe in our isolation, heal those known to us who are sick, meet our needs and remind us that even though we are on our own that when we pray we are never alone.

THOSE SEEKING PRAYER: Phillipa Shepherd, Veronica Newson, Judy Charman, Dora Coma, Michael Kovacs, Harry Lewis, John Steendam, Ian Oliver, Hilary Smillie, Leslie Austin, Lyn Sarah, Wendy Berger, Noreen Ralston-Birchall, Yvette Parsons, Natasha, Geoffrey Parsons, Annette Corrigan, Jay Stewart, Helen Plumb, Lillian Geatches, Ken Ferguson, Marina Vander-Burgh, Geoff Vollmer, Ian Overy, Keith Sutherland.

Christ in Action: Each week try to think of, and undertake, an action of Christian love that will encourage someone else to know of God's love for them. This may be as simple as texted and encouraging verse to 3 or 4 people, making some phone calls or even writing letters of prayerful encouragement. You may, if you are able, even assist older friends by doing their shopping (as some people are) or collecting parcels for them. Be inventive and creative.

End with 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, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Sunday Morning: At the time you would normally be at Church sit with your household at the dining room table; decorated with cloth, candle, piece of bread and glass of wine. Have some of your favourite spiritual music playing in the background. In a moment of silence recall the faces and names of those with whom you would normally be at Church. You can use the liturgy sent out weekly with the Scattered Flock News or if that is not available you could follow the simple service outline below:

- Say the prayer of preparation: **Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name, through Christ our Lord. Amen.**
- Perhaps with the help of news stories share amongst yourselves the pain and brokenness of God's world and our share in it. Remind yourselves of God's grace, forgiveness and His intention to redeem all things.
- Read the Psalm of the day from the News letter
- Read the Gospel for the day and, if possible, reflect on it. The reflection and liturgy from the Scattered Flock News can be used if available.
- Pray for one another, the world the Church and especially for those in front-line health services.
- Remind each other of Jesus feeding the five thousand and his actions at the last supper. Share the food.
- Pray Lord's Prayer and remind each other that we are commissioned to act in this world and to be neighbour in every way that is possible in the coming week.

Remember that Doug speaks briefly on 2 EAR FM radio on 107.5 FM each Sunday morning at 9.30am.