

SAFFRON WALDEN AND VILLAGES TEAM MINISTRY

PRAYERS FOR SUNDAY 19 APRIL 2020 (2ND OF EASTER)

Today we continue to hold to the wonderful message of Easter: that God's new creation endures not just for one day in the year, but for all eternity. Even as we are confined to our homes, may we, like the disciples, know his power to break through our locked doors and hear his message to us all: 'Peace be with you.' 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:*

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| 1. Love's redeeming work is done,
Fought the fight, the battle won.
Lo, our Sun's eclipse is o'er!
Lo, he sets in blood no more! | 4. Soar we now where Christ has led,
Following our exalted Head;
Made like him, like him we rise,
Ours the cross, the grave, the skies. |
| 2. Vain the stone, the watch, the seal!
Christ has burst the gates of hell;
Death in vain forbids his rise;
Christ has opened paradise. | 5. Hail the Lord of earth and heaven!
Praise to thee by both be given:
Thee we greet triumphant now;
Hail, the Resurrection thou! |
| 3. Lives again our victorious King;
Where, O death, is now thy sting?
Dying once, he all doth save;
Where thy victory, O grave? | |

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 love in sending us your Son Jesus who brings us his peace wherever we may be. 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

Christ died to sin once for all, and now he lives to God. Let us renew our resolve to have done with all that is evil, and confess our sins in penitence and faith.

Like Mary at the empty tomb, we fail to grasp the wonder of your presence.

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

Like the disciples behind locked doors, we fear being seen as your followers.

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

Like Thomas in the upper room, we are slow to believe.

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 14a and 22-32

Gospel reading: St John's Gospel, Chapter 20, verses 19-31

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

Father of all, we thank you for offering us your new life through your gift of your Son. May our risen Saviour fill us now and always with the joy of his glorious and life-giving resurrection, as we trust in your good purposes for your creation.

Lord in your mercy

Hear our prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, you suffered and gave your life that we might live. You taught us to love our neighbour, and to care for those in need as if we cared for you. Give us strength to comfort the fearful, to bring help to the sick, and to reassure the isolated. May we and your whole Church throughout the world stand as a beacon of your love.

Lord in your mercy

Hear our prayer

God of compassion, be close to those who are ill, afraid or in isolation, especially*do name those on your own heart.* Comfort and strengthen the weak, the sick and the dying, especially those who are dying alone. Be with all who are worried about their work or food or shelter. In their loneliness, be their consolation; in their anxiety, be their hope; in their darkness, be their light.

Lord in your mercy

Hear our prayer

Gracious God, we thank you for the skill and dedication of all who care for the sick, and of all key workers and volunteers who sacrifice their comfort and take risks to keep our society running. Give them all your strength, your energy, your sympathy and resilience, 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.

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 in the Eucharist being celebrated live via Zoom, do follow the Eucharistic prayer being said by the priest with the standard responses.

While only the priest will be able to physically receive the consecrated bread and wine, you will all be invited to join in 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, may your strength sustain us in joy and in sorrow. May your peace enfold us in our waking and in our sleeping, and may your presence be 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 day of resurrection!
 Earth, tell it out abroad;
The passover of gladness,
 The passover of God.
From death to life eternal,
 From earth unto the sky,
Our Christ hath brought us over,
 With hymns of victory.

2. Our hearts be pure from evil,
 That we may see aright
The Lord in rays eternal
 Of resurrection light;

And, listening to his accents,
 May hear so calm and plain,
His own 'All hail!' and, hearing,
 May raise the victor strain.

3. Now let the heavens be joyful!
 And earth her song begin!
The round world keep high triumph,
 And all that is therein;
Let all things seen and unseen
 Their notes of gladness blend,
For Christ the Lord hath risen,
 Our joy that hath no end.

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.