SAFFRON WALDEN AND VILLAGES TEAM MINISTRY
PRAYERS FOR SUNDAY 24 MAY 2020 (SUNDAY AFTER ASCENSION)

Today is a waiting period, between Jesus leaving this world to go to the Father in heaven and the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost. As we too long for God's Spirit to overflow into the troubles of our own times, let us join with the Church throughout the world as it prays ***Thy Kingdom Come.***
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:*

God is love: his the care, tending each, everywhere.
God is love, all is there!
Jesus came to show him, that we all might know him!
Sing a-loud, loud, loud!
Sing a-loud, loud, loud!
God is good, God is truth!
God is beauty, praise him!

None can see God above; we can share life and love;
thus may we Godward move,
seek him in creation, holding every nation. *Sing a-loud, loud, loud….*

Jesus lived on the earth, hope and life brought to birth
and affirmed human worth,
for he came to save us by the truth he gave us. *Sing a-loud, loud, loud….*

To our Lord praise we sing, light and life, friend and King,
coming down, love to bring,
pattern for our duty, showing God in beauty. *Sing a-loud, loud, loud….*

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, Lord, for your family, the Church; and for your Son who lives forever with you in heaven. As we await the coming of your Spirit and long for your Kingdom to come, 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

The Spirit of the Lord fills the world and knows our every word and deed. Let us then open ourselves to the Lord and confess our sins in penitence and faith.
You raise the dead to life in the Spirit.
Lord, have mercy. ***Lord, have mercy.***
You bring pardon and peace to the broken in heart.
Christ, have mercy. ***Christ, have mercy.***
You make one by your Spirit the torn and divided.
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 1, verses 6-14
Gospel reading: St John's Gospel, Chapter 17, verses 1-11

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

We pray to God to fill us with his Spirit: and that his Kingdom may come.

Generous God, we thank you for the *power* of your Holy Spirit. We ask that we may be strengthened to serve you better, and to live out your love in this troubled world. We pray especially for your strength for all hospital staff and carers

combating the virus, all those working to find a vaccine and a cure, and all key workers and volunteers determined to keep society running. Together we pray
Thy Kingdom come ***Thy Will be done***
We thank you for the *healing* of your Holy Spirit. We ask you to bring wholeness wherever there is sickness and sorrow, pain or anxiety, whatever its cause: and we pray especially for those on our own hearts…….. Comfort and strengthen the weak, the sick and the dying, especially facing death alone. Be with the fearful, and reassure the lonely. Together we pray
Thy Kingdom come ***Thy Will be done***
We thank you for the *wisdom* of your Holy Spirit. Inspire and guide all those who make decisions which affect our lives: all in national or local government; all those who organise the many services upon which we depend, and all world leaders. Give them always courage to act for truth and justice. Together we pray
Thy Kingdom come ***Thy Will be done***
We thank you for the *peace* of your Holy Spirit. Keep us confident of your love whatever befalls us, wherever you call us: and hold us now and ever in your arms. Together we pray
Thy Kingdom come ***Thy Will be done***
In a moment of silence, offer to God any other needs on your heart.

Merciful Father, hear our prayers, and make us one in heart and mind to serve you with joy for ever. Amen.

Sharing Christ's Peace

God has made us one in Christ. He has set his seal upon us and has promised us the Spirit to dwell in our hearts. Alleluia!
The peace of the Lord be always with you. **And also with you**. **Alleluia!**
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:

Give me joy in my heart, keep me praising.
Give me joy in my heart, I pray.
Give me joy in my heart, keep me praising,
Keep me praising till the break of day.
Sing hosanna, sing hosanna, Sing hosanna to the King of Kings!
Sing hosanna, sing hosanna, Sing hosanna to the King!

Give me peace in my heart, keep me resting,
Give me peace in my heart, I pray.
Give me peace in my heart, keep me resting,
Keep me resting till the break of day. *Sing hosanna….*

Give me love in my heart, keep me serving,
Give me love in my heart, I pray.
Give me love in my heart, keep me serving,
Keep me serving till the break of day. *Sing hosanna….*

Give me light in my heart, keep me shining,
Give me light in my heart, I pray.
Give me light in my heart, keep me shining,
Keep me shining till the break of day. *Sing hosanna….*

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.

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