

Sunday 25th April – Fourth Sunday of Easter

Prayers written by Ruth Le Poidevin

As we meet this morning Lord, we pray for the Church; for all who minister and teach, giving thanks especially for our ministry team who have guided and cared for us through these last difficult months. We ask that as we begin to meet again face to face you will revitalise us to witness to those we meet of your abiding care and compassion.

Lord, hear us.....Lord, graciously hear us.

We pray for our communities. For all places of work - offices, shops newly reopening, social facilities, public services - and all who work in them as they strive to ease our paths back to some kind of normality. Be with all who work on our councils. We thank you for them and for the time which they give as they plan to ensure the smooth running of all aspects of community life. As elections approach we pray that they may not ask for popularity at all costs, but genuinely seek to live for those they serve both when it is easy but also when it hurts.

Lord, hear us..... Lord, graciously hear us.

As a diocese we are asked to pray this morning for people of other faiths. Nowadays we are so much more aware of the different faith communities in our country: We thank you that we can now work together in many humanitarian causes. Somehow when trouble comes we learn from one other and so we ask that the tolerance and understanding apparent in dealing with so many situations recently may continue to thrive. But we bring before you also the many in our world suffering from the intolerance and harm perpetrated by those whose faith has turned to militancy. We pray earnestly for the victims of wars, for those left hungry and homeless and those living in endless fear and ask that we may all live in faith as we wait for the coming of your kingdom when all nations will be at peace.

Lord, hear us..... Lord, graciously hear us.

We bring before you, Lord, all families represented in our places of worship this morning but along with them every family in our area. We thank you for good neighbours and the gift of friends We think of families - perhaps our neighbours - who are finding life difficult and pray that they may be led to find courage and help from the care of others in the community. We thank you for those who work and contribute to the foodbank. May those families who come to receive practical help be aware that they are loved and valued.

Lord, hear us..... Lord, graciously hear us.

We come thanking you for your many good gifts in the beauty of creation and its rich and varied fruits and for our clean water. Forgive us for the times when we have taken earth's resources for granted and wasted what you have given us. Transform our hearts and minds so that we really learn to care for and share all your good gifts. We pray for all who suffer as a result of our greed and indifference. Help us to respect the rights of all peoples and all species and to willingly share your gifts so that the day will come when everyone has the opportunity to lead healthy fulfilling lives.

Lord, hear us..... Lord, graciously hear us.

We thank you, Lord, for all carers whether in hospitals, care homes, clinics, or in the community. And we ask your blessings on scientists still engaged in finding further vaccines to overcome the variants of covid-19. We think of all for whom illness, injury or age have caused disruption, uncertainty and a feeling that their lives are spinning out of control. May they be aware of your loving and unchanging presence. This morning we hold before you:

Jan Banks, Margaret Wilding, Ken Cathcart, Dorothy Lawrence, Hazel Chapman, John Leaworthy, Pat Bolton, Lisa - and in the silence those known to us personally.

Lord, hear us.....Lord, graciously hear us.

We commend to your love and mercy all those who have made the journey through death, remembering: Carole Ruffle, Jill South, Stanley Winn, Brian Hulquist, Roy Copsey. We pray for all who ache with sorrow at their passing and commend them all to your unfailing care.

From our memorial book we remember: Derek Thompson, Richard Mansfield, John Musselwhite, Robert Guest, Gerald Wigley, and thank you for their lives and the memories which they have left.

Lord, hear us.....Lord, graciously hear us.

Lord, help us to live this day quietly, easily, to lean upon your great strength trustfully, restfully

to await the unfolding of your will patiently, joyfully to face tomorrow confidently, courageously.

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