

SUNDAY PRAYERS

26th April 2020



St Nicolas
NEWBURY

Being Good News. Bringing Good News.

Faithful one, whose word is life:
come with saving power
to free our praise,
inspire our prayer
and shape our lives
for the kingdom of your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord.

PRAYER FOR THE DAY

We praise you and we bless you, our risen Lord Jesus, King of glory,
for your resurrection is a revelation to the whole world.
As you revealed yourself powerfully to so many,
reveal yourself now as the hope for our world.
To you, Lord Jesus,
going beyond the limits of our understanding,
be honour and glory, now and for ever.
Amen.

PSALM 121

I lift up my eyes to the mountains –
where does my help come from?
My help comes from the LORD,
the Maker of heaven and earth.
He will not let your foot slip –
he who watches over you will not slumber;
indeed, he who watches over Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep.
The LORD watches over you –
the LORD is your shade at your right hand;

the sun will not harm you by day,
nor the moon by night.
The LORD will keep you from all harm –
he will watch over your life;
the LORD will watch over your coming and going
both now and for evermore.

CONFESSION

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.
In your mercy, forgive us.

We have lived by the light of our own eyes,
as faithless and not believing.
In your mercy, forgive us.

We have lived for this world alone,
and doubted our home in heaven.
In your mercy, forgive us.

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.

JOHN 21:1-19

Afterwards Jesus appeared again to his disciples, by the Sea of Galilee. It happened this way: Simon Peter, Thomas (also known as Didymus), Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples were together. 'I'm going out to fish,' Simon Peter told them, and they said, 'We'll go with you.' So they went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

Early in the morning, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not realise that it was Jesus. He called out to them, 'Friends, haven't you any fish?' 'No,' they answered. He said, 'Throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some.' When they did, they were unable to haul the net in because of the large number of fish.

Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, 'It is the Lord!' As soon as Simon Peter heard him say, 'It is the Lord,' he wrapped his outer garment round him (for he had taken it off) and jumped into the water. The other disciples followed in the boat, towing the net full of fish, for they were not far from shore, about a hundred metres. When they landed, they saw a fire of burning coals there with fish on it, and some bread.

Jesus said to them, 'Bring some of the fish you have just caught.' So Simon Peter climbed back into the boat and dragged the net ashore. It was full of large fish, 153, but even with so many the net was not torn. Jesus said to them, 'Come and have breakfast.' None of the disciples dared ask him, 'Who are you?' They knew it was the Lord. Jesus came, took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. This was now the third time Jesus appeared to his disciples after he was raised from the dead.

When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?' 'Yes, Lord,' he said, 'you know that I love you.' Jesus said, 'Feed my lambs.'

Again Jesus said, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' He answered, 'Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.' Jesus said, 'Take care of my sheep.' The third time he said to him, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, 'Do you love me?' He said, 'Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you.'

Jesus said, 'Feed my sheep. Very truly I tell you, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go.' Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, 'Follow me!'



To listen to Joy Mawdesley's sermon on this passage [click here](#).

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

(There is an alternative prayer activity on page 6 of this booklet)

Father in heaven,

Thank you that while so much around us is changing, you are constant. Your love, care and forgiveness are the same today as they have always been.

Thank you for speaking to us through your word. Whether familiar to us or new, break through by your Holy Spirit to teach us what we need to know you better and to live our lives more effectively for you.

Just as Jesus commissioned Peter to feed your lambs and care for your sheep, show us how in these times of social distancing we can care for our families, our church family, friends and neighbours. May we be creative in finding ways to encourage one another. Help us look beyond our own circumstances to show your love and compassion to others.

Forgive us when we are critical of others. Remind us that we are called to be good news and to be bringers of good news to our town. Guide our prayers for those in authority, in local and national government and the police. Grant them wisdom as they carry out their responsibilities. May they recognise their need of You, the King of kings and Lord of lords.

We pray for nations where poverty, famine and war make the battle against the coronavirus even harder. We bring to you our mission partners in Lesotho, Uganda and Turkey, asking you to keep them safe and to bless them as they bless others.

Turning to our own land, we recognise that fear and anxiety overwhelm many. Comfort those who mourn and draw near to those who suffer. Thank you for frontline workers in the NHS, care and other vital areas of work, seen or invisible. Help those involved in making supplies of essential equipment available. May we put our trust in you and experience your peace that is beyond understanding.

Finally, we bring to you our families, praying that you would give:

- your peace to those who feel trapped indoors
- your hope to those who are lonely, through distance or the need for self-isolation
- your joy as we grow to know you better and to celebrate our oneness in You

We ask your blessing on Will and Joy, and the whole St Nic's staff team and their families, as they find new ways to communicate with us and care for us.

We bring our prayers in the powerful name of the risen Lord Jesus.
Amen.

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.

THE GRACE

May the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore. Amen.

ALTERNATIVE PRAYER ACTIVITY

Peter's life was turned upside-down when he met Jesus.

1 – he was called away from his profession as a fisherman to become one of Jesus' disciples (John 1:35-42)

2 – he became fearful and denied knowing Jesus when things got tough (John 18:15-27)

3 – once Jesus had died and risen again, he went back to his fishing, back to his old calling (John 21:1-14)

4 – he was restored by Jesus and called to not just follow Jesus but build his church (John 21:15-25)

What is your calling? What gifts do you have and how have you been called to use them for God's glory?

Have you discovered new gifts during this time of social distancing and lockdown? Has this changed the way you see yourself being called to serve God?

Have you struggled to see how you can use your gifts during this time?

What does this mean for your sense of calling to serve God when restrictions and protective measures are lifted?

As you think about these questions, reflect on the prayer below. You might want to illustrate this prayer, as you think about your own calling to serve.

Lord Jesus:

I give you my hands to do your work

I give you my feet to go your way

I give you my eyes to see as you do

I give you my tongue to speak your words

I give you my mind that you may think in me

I give you my spirit that you may pray in me

Above all:

I give you my heart that you may love in me,
your Father and all mankind.

I give you my whole self that you may grow in me,

So that it is you, Lord Jesus,
who live and work and pray in me.