

Mears Ashby and Hardwick and Sywell with Overstone



**Prayers and Reflections
for use at home**

Sunday 17 May 2026

Easter 7

Welcome to this week's Prayers and Reflections. As we come to the Sunday after Ascension, we will be thinking about Jesus praying for us, and for his Church. His prayer is that we glorify his Father in heaven by the way that we live by faith.

May his prayer inspire you in your praying.

God bless,

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*As you prepare to contemplate the Lord's prayer for his friends,
praise him as Christ your King.*



All hail the power of Jesus' name!
let angels prostrate fall;
bring forth the royal diadem
and crown him,
crown him, crown him,
crown him Lord of all.

Edward Perronet (1726-1792)

Prayers and Reflections
for use at home on Easter 7
Keep on praying!

PREPARING OURSELVES

Take a moment to be still in God's presence, and feel his love. You may wish to light a candle as a sign of God's love - here, in this room. You may also wish to have a bowl of water ready for the time of letting go. When you are ready, say this opening prayer.

Risen Lord Jesus,
as I prepare to spend this time in worship,
I invite you to come and fill this space,
and my inner stillness,
with your presence.

Amen.

LETTING GO

If you come to this time of prayer and reflection with any regrets, with things that you wish you had not said, done or been, offer them to God in the silence of your heart. And, when you are ready, reflect on the second verse of this week's hymn.

Crown him, ye martyrs of your God,
who from his altar call;
praise him whose way of pain ye trod
and crown him,
crown him, crown him,
crown him Lord of all.

Edward Perronet (1726-1792)



If you wish, dip your finger into a bowl of water and make the sign of the cross on your palm.

Feel the Father's forgiveness.

Our verse speaks of the praise of those who died defending their faith, dying rather than denying Jesus. This includes many of the eleven who listened as Jesus prayed for them before setting out for the Garden of Gethsemane. In the decades to come, they will follow in his footsteps, his painful footsteps. They will face opposition and oppression, prison, trial and torture, and death for standing up for Jesus. In heaven, Christ is still their Saviour King where they sing his praises.

It is an invitation to contemplate their example. Do you have the strength of faith to keep on believing in Christ's kingship even when life is tough, full of challenges? Do you have the courage to be open about your faith when the majority in today's society are not open to him?

As you journey through this season of waiting on God's Spirit, ponder how he can help you on your journey of life and faith. What do you need of him at this time? Offer this in prayerful stillness.

When you are ready, join in with our next verse.



Ye prophets who our freedom won,
ye searchers, great and small,
by whom the work of truth is done,
now crown him,
crown him, crown him.
crown him Lord of all.

Edward Perronet (1726-1792)

This verse of seeking God's presence and truth reminds me of this prayer by Catherine of Siena (1347-1380).

Eternal Trinity, you are a deep sea,
into which the more I enter the more I find,
and the more I find the more I seek.
The soul ever hungers in your abyss, Eternal Trinity,
longing to see you with the light of your light,
and as a deer yearns for the springs of water,
so my soul yearns to see you in truth.

PRAYING TODAY'S PRAYER

(The Collect)

Today, this prayer is being said across our villages and the worldwide Church. Add your voice to the earthly cycle of prayer to our risen and ascended Lord who always listens to our prayers.

Risen, ascended Lord,
as we rejoice at your triumph,
fill your Church on earth with power and compassion,
that all who are estranged by sin
may find forgiveness and know your peace,
to the glory of God the Father. **Amen.**

Our prayer both glorifies Jesus as Christ our King and seeks his help in making his Church attractive to those who are seeking him and to those who are still distant from him. It is a prayer for power but not in a worldly sense. It is for us to trust that what we ask in his name his Father will do. The power we are seeking is his not ours. Ponder this as you contemplate these words of St. Paul.

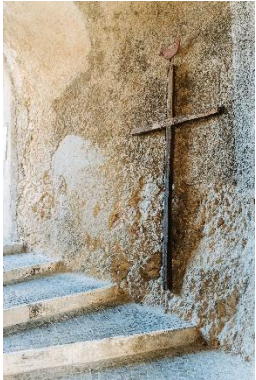
I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth,
So neither the one who plants
nor the one who waters is anything,
but only God who gives the growth.

1 Corinthians 3:6-7

God does what feels impossible to us.

It is a prayer for compassion; a compassion that wants others to have what we have, namely a living faith in Jesus like our own. It is for us to be so filled with his Spirit that we have the courage to speak of our Lord's saving love. It is for the desire to spread the good news because we know how valuable this is. Truly valuable.

Take a moment to think about the difference that faith in Jesus makes to your outlook on life (and death). Imagine being without this. This is why we are drawn to share our Lord's good news.



Ye seed of Israel's chosen race
ye ransomed of the fall,
hail him who saves you by his grace,
and crown him,
crown him, crown him.
crown him Lord of all.

Edward Perronet (1726-1792)

LISTENING TO GOD'S WORD

Jesus prays...

After Jesus said this, he looked towards heaven and prayed:

'Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do. And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.

'I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word. Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you. For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me. I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours. All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. And glory has come to me through them. I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one.

John 17:1-11

Praying with purpose...

Events in the upper room are drawing to a close. It is nearly time to leave. Jesus prays. Prays deeply. Two words stand out in these verses which come from a much longer prayer: glorify and protect. The hour has come; our Lord's earthly ministry is about to come to a dramatic close. In what's to come, our Lord's one desire is to glorify his Father in heaven. This can only happen if the cross is seen to be a gateway to greater things: dying he will destroy our death, rising he will give us life. Both events pointing to God's powerful nature.

Think about this word 'glorify' and how our Lord's earthly life and death, and resurrection, lead you to believe in God and fill you with praise.

Think of the apostles – the eleven – who have witnessed our Lord at work, felt the power of his words and actions. Recall how they went out into village and towns to do the same in his name. Their ministry glorifying both the one who sent them (the Son) and the one who sent him (the Father). How does the way that you live out your faith point to God? Glorify him? For this is our calling as followers of Jesus.

The second word is 'protect'. Jesus knew that his team would face dangers similar to his own: opposition and challenge, trials and torture, and even – for some – death for speaking in his name. He prays for them, prays for protection. He wants them to stay as one rather than give up when the going gets tough. God's Spirit will give them this courage.

Our Lord's powerful praying is encouraging us to keep on praying – praying that we will glorify God by our daily living out of our faith in him, praying that God will protect our faith when doubts arise.



Let every tribe and every tongue
to him their hearts enthrall:
lift high the universal song
and crown him,
crown him, crown him,
crown him Lord of all.

Edward Perronet

OUR PRAYERS

Here are some Ascension season prayers. Feel free to add your own.

Risen and ascended Lord, thank you for your prayer for me,
your desire to keep me safe in life's trial and temptations,
so that I glorify you and your Father by what I say and do and be...

Risen Lord, hear my prayer.

Risen and ascended Lord, thank you for your prayer for your Church,
your followers, who have the courage to keep on worshipping,
praising in the face of deep opposition. Keep safe, I pray...

Risen Lord, hear my prayer.

Risen and ascended Lord, thank you for your prayer for your team,
your closest friends, who were about to witness your capture and death;
you felt for them. Lord, I pray for those who are struggling with life...

Risen Lord, hear my prayer.

Offer your own heartfelt prayers and praise.

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

PRAYER OF BLESSING

A closing prayer of blessing for this week.

Risen Lord, come and meet me where I am,
as I reflect on your Ascension. Fill me with love and joy and peace,
so that I may offer your hope to others.

Bless me and keep my loved ones safe, I pray. **Amen.**