

**Mears Ashby and Hardwick  
and Sywell with Overstone**



**Prayers and Reflections  
for use at home**

**Sunday 30 March 2025  
Mothering Sunday**

Welcome to this week's Prayers and Reflections. Today, we pause our Lenten pilgrimage to give thanks to God for our mums and, also, for all who have been like a mum to us. It might be a special day when you are showered with gifts. For some of us, it's a day full of joy and love, and happy memories. For others of us, perhaps, it can be a difficult time, we still miss our mum... we would have loved to have been a mum... we know the unbearable pain of losing a child... there are so many reasons why this day can be overshadowed with sadness.

May these prayers and reflections meet you where you are, and also help you to hold all mums and would-be mums on your heart as God holds you on his.

God bless,

**Revd Katrina**

**Vicar**

Phone No. 01604 812907

Mobile No. 07710 464675

E-mail: [katrinahutchins94@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:katrinahutchins94@yahoo.co.uk)

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*As you set out into these Mothering Sunday prayers and reflections, I invite you to recall those - past and present - who have blessed your life with their love.*



Fathers and mothers,  
sisters and brothers,  
all those who love us,  
for whom we care:  
help and befriend them,  
keep and defend them,  
Jesus our Saviour,  
this is our prayer.

*Timothy Dudley-Smith (1926-2024)  
CCLI reported*

**Prayers and Reflections**  
**for use at home**  
**Loving**

**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.*

Lord, as I sit and wait in silence,  
I place my hopes and dreams,  
my fears and concerns,  
into your safe and caring hands.  
Pour out your love upon me,  
make my heart beat in time with yours;  
in Jesus' name,  
I pray. **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 our hymn. Feel God's call to be loving, caring for those who are craving love and kindness.*

And for those others,  
fathers and mothers,  
children who hunger,  
they must be fed:  
we would be caring,  
readily sharing,  
one with another  
our daily bread.

*Timothy Dudley-Smith (1926-2024)*

*CCLI reported*



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

*Feel God's love and forgiveness. You are one of his beloved children. You are always on his heart.*

*Our Mothering Sunday hymn takes us on a journey of love. Verse one, on the inside cover, invited us to look inwards to our own lives. Who has blessed us, who is blessing us, with their love and care? We offer them our love and our thanks. Verse two, invites us to look outwards to those who are in need of our caring love. Who do you know or see in the news who is starved of love? Who cannot provide for their children? Our verse encourages us to find ways to share our daily bread - God's provision - with those who are hungry for love, hungry for food, hungry for peace.*



*Gently pause to hold them before God in love.  
Listen, as God receives your gift of love,  
what is he saying to you?*

*You can trust in his love and in his loving response. Here are his words of enduring love spoken as the long exile in Babylon drew to a close. God's people felt that they had been forgotten. Of course, as with today's suffering parents and children and childless ones, no one is lost to his love.*

But Zion said, 'The LORD has forsaken me,  
the LORD has forgotten me.'

'Can a mother forget the baby at her breast  
and have no compassion on the child she has borne?

Though she may forget,  
I will not forget you!

See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands;  
your walls are ever before me.'

declares the LORD.

*Isaiah 49:14-16*

*Imagine the parents and children you have lifted up to our Lord in love hearing God's timeless words. May they feel his love and yours.*

## PRAYING TODAY'S PRAYER

### (The Collect)

*Today, this prayer is being said across the globe. Add your voice to the earthly cycle of prayer to our Father who loves and listens.*

God of love,  
passionate and strong,  
tender and careful:  
watch over us and hold us  
all the days of our life;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*Flowing beautifully on from this image of God as our loving parent who writes our names on the palms of his hands so that he never forgets us, we have this prayer for Mothering Sunday. It is a prayer that directs our thoughts upwards to the God who love us.*

*What aspect of his love are you seeking? His strong side - where he holds you safe in your life's storms? Where he gives you the courage, strength and/or hope to live with what is?*

*Or, his gentle side - where he holds you as you sob out your struggles, your fears and frustrations? Where he listens to your past regrets, your recent failures, and freely forgives your mistakes?*

*You are and you will be his beloved child always. As you hold on to this, offer him your love and your praise. It is what every loving parent wants. Our final verse lifts our love upwards to our Father in heaven.*



Sisters and brothers,  
fathers and mothers,  
we who together  
offer our praise:  
hear our thanksgiving,  
God ever living,  
may we walk with you  
all of our days.

*Timothy Dudley-Smith*

*CCLI reported*

# LISTENING TO GOD'S WORD

## **Clothed in Love**

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

*Colossians 3:12-17*

## **Be loving...**

*This is such a perfect reading for Mothering Sunday. As we give thanks for our mothers who love us or have loved us, as we receive the love of our children and the children in our lives, we are invited to share this - God's greatest gift to us - in our daily lives. Echoing our Lord's parting command to his team on the eve of the cross, it closes with a message which should inspire every aspect of our lives.*

Whatever you do,  
whether in word or deed,  
do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus,  
giving thanks to God the Father  
through him.

*Colossians 3:17*

*It is a command to love as our Lord loves. Whoever you are with, whatever you do or say or think, this week, try to do it with love because, like you, the person you are with is one of God's beloved children.*



*Take a moment to contemplate this. Love is God's desire for our lives, love, unity and peace are his vision for our planet home. Imagine... a world where we are all one family - God's family - his loving family. Each day, we are given countless opportunities to offer little glimpses, glorious slices of his kingdom of love.*

*I wonder how God is inspiring you afresh this Mothering Sunday?*

*You may wish to ponder this with the help of this chorus from a song that we used to sing in family services at St. Benedict's. We sang it recently at Sywell Primary.*

Love is something if you give it away,  
give it away, give it away.

Love is something if you give it away,  
you'll end up having more.

*Malvina Reynolds (1900-1978)*

*Most of the time - I'm sure - it is easy to act with love in our hearts. BUT... and there is always a but... there can be seasons in our lives when this is so very hard to do. Very few of us are immune from becoming angry, frustrated or impatient, and speaking before we take the time to re-clothe ourselves in love. Sometimes, life at home can be tough. For example, living with someone who has memory loss, confusion or depression can be so very demanding. Think about your own pressure points. How can you turn to God at such times for help to find peace and to respond with love?*

*You may wish to say this verse as a prayer for love.*



Father, I place into your hands  
my friends and family.

Father, I place into your hands  
the things that trouble me.

Father, I place into your hands  
the person I would be,  
for I know I always can trust you.

*Jenny Hewer (b. 1945)*

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## OUR PRAYERS

*Feel free to use these prayers and to add your own.*

Heavenly Father, you love me as only a perfect parent can, with strength and with gentleness. I am ever in your care.

Lord, I thank you. I love you. I will love you always.

Father, hear my prayer.

Father, love is your greatest gift to me. You have filled my life with the love of family and friends. Thank you for their love and care.

Love inspires love. Help me, Lord, this week, to act with love.

Father, hear my prayer.

Father, your greatest gift comes at a price. Grief is the cost of love.

I lift up to you the sadness of children who have lost their mum, of mums who have lost a child. Hold them, Lord, in your tender love.

Father, hear my prayer.

*Offer your own heartfelt prayers and yearnings, praise and thanksgivings.*

### **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.*

O God, you search me and you know me,

all my thoughts and feelings are open to your gaze,

you see the paths I will take before I take them. Guide my daily living.

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