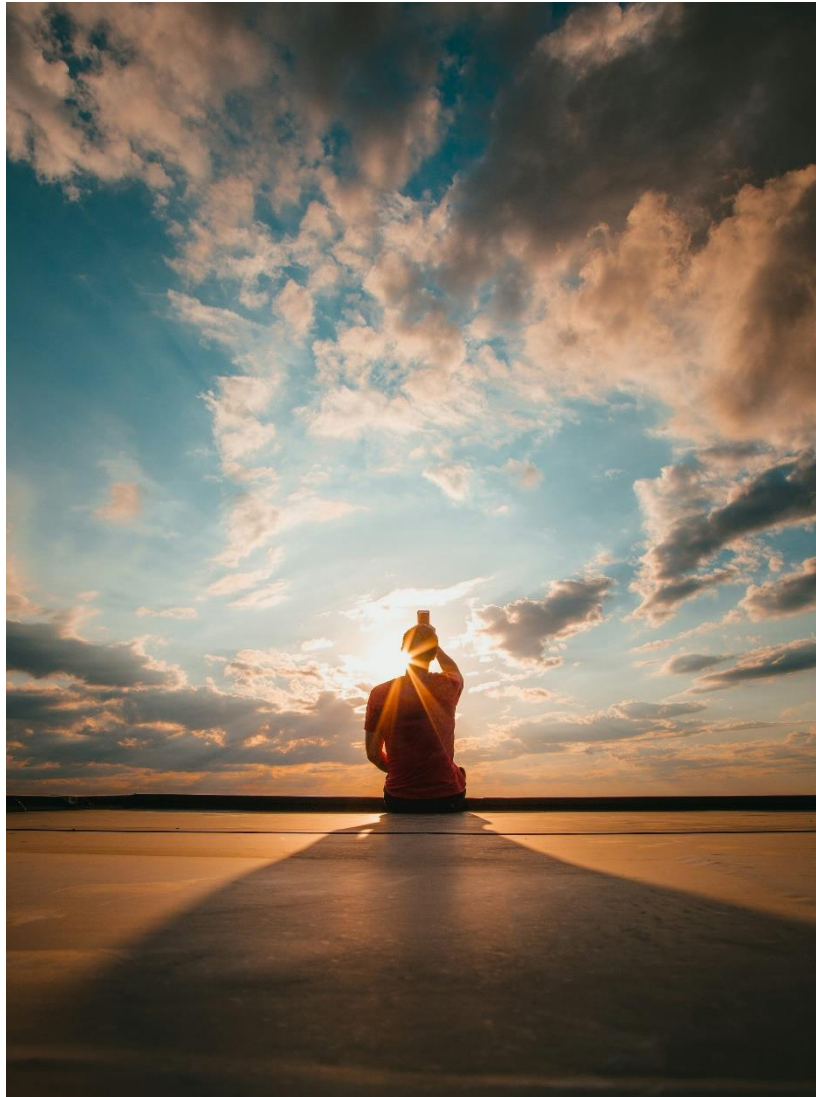


Mears Ashby and Hardwick and Sywell with Overstone



**Prayers and Reflections
for use at home**

**Sunday 7 September 2025
Trinity 12**

Welcome to this week's prayers and reflections. In our Gospel Reading Jesus tells the crowds how challenging it will be to follow him. To be one of his followers is to let go of so much in their lives and to risk everything for him and for his kingdom of love and peace. Do they have the courage to do this? Is the prize worth the price?

Enjoy reflecting on the cost of being one of our Lord's disciples.

Every blessing,

Revd Katrina

Vicar

Phone No. 01604 812907

Mobile No. 07710 464675

E-mail: katrinahutchins94@yahoo.co.uk

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As you prepare to reflect on the challenge of our Lord's call on your life, allow him to stir your heart.



Christ is the one who calls,
the one who loved and came,
to whom by right it falls
to bear the highest name:
and still today
our hearts are stirred
to hear his word
and walk his way.

Timothy Dudley-Smith (1926-2024)

CCLI reported

Prayers and Reflections
for use at home on Trinity 12
Price of the Prize

PREPARING OURSELVES

Take a moment to be still in God's presence and feel his love. If you are indoors, you may wish to light a candle as a sign of God's love - here, in your 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 loving hands.
Enfold me with your love,
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 then, reflect on the words of this next verse.

Christ is the one who seeks,
to whom our souls are known.
The word of love he speaks
can wake a heart of stone;
for at the sound
the blind can see,
the slave is free,
the lost are found.

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 forgiveness.*

Our verse reminds me of two key bible passages: a prophecy in Ezekiel, and an answer to a question put to Jesus. God speaks to his people in exile in Babylon. Their suffering is drawing to a close. Freedom is coming and they will be his people once more. They will love him with every fibre of their being. You can really sense God's deep love for his wayward ones, and how he can transform their hearts and souls.

*I will give you a new heart
and put a new spirit in you;
I will remove from you your heart of stone
and give you a heart of flesh.*

Ezekiel 36:26

This is the transformation that Jesus is seeking to make in the hearts of those who are wondering whether to follow him. We can experience this change through the gift of his Spirit within us. Pause to ponder your own experience of this.

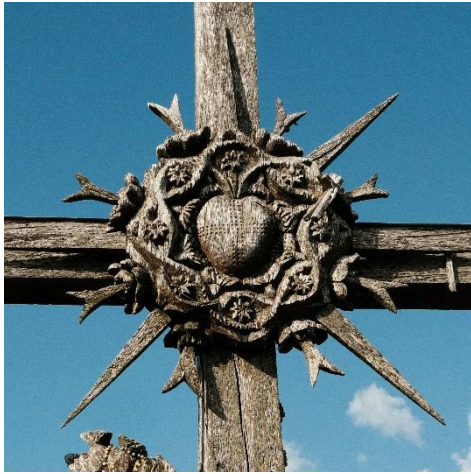
For this is a sign that Jesus is the one - the Messiah - that the crowds were seeking as well as John the Baptist too. John is in prison and sends two of his disciples to ask this vital question:

*When the men came to Jesus,
they said, 'John the Baptist sends us to you to ask,
"Are you the one who is to come,
or should we expect someone else?"'*

Luke 7:20

Jesus replies by sending them to tell John what they have seen, namely, the blind see, the lame walk, etc. Yes, he is the one! You can tell this by what he does. This is who we are following! The one would can do all of these amazing things as a sign of God's love and compassion. Pause to say sorry for the times when you failed to trust in him.

May you feel the love which freely forgives those who deny him, who slip up in their following of him, who forget - at times - to love, welcome and build up others as he does. The power of the cross, the power of his love heals us and frees us.



Christ is the one who died
forsaken and betrayed;
who, mocked and crucified,
the price of pardon paid.
Our dying Lord,
what grief and loss,
what bitter cross,
our souls restored!

Timothy Dudley-Smith (1926-2024)

CCLI reported

PRAYING TODAY'S PRAYER (The Collect)

Across our villages and the worldwide Church, this prayer is being said today. Add your voice to this earthly circle of prayer to our God whose love is unbreakable.

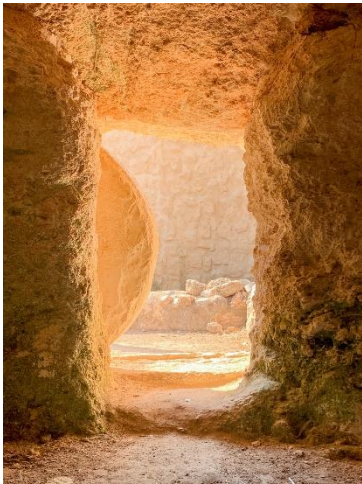
God of constant mercy,
who sent your Son to save us:
remind us of your goodness,
increase your grace within us,
that our thankfulness may grow,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Our prayer asks God to recharge our spiritual batteries. Which of these do you need God to grow within your heart?

Love for Jesus
as God's Son and our Saviour King
Your awareness of your need for his saving love,
and the freedom his forgiveness gives

Your thankfulness for all that he has done
through the power of the cross and the empty grave,
and his gift of eternal life

Prayerfully seek what you need of his Father in heaven. Open your heart, ask for an outpouring of his Spirit, so that you have the love and grace to live each day of your life with a full and generous heart. Our next verse contains echoes of that great Easter hymn - Thine be the glory.



Christ is the one who rose
in glory from the grave,
to share his life with those
whom once he died to save.
He drew death's sting
and broke its chains,
who lives and reigns,
our risen King.

Timothy Dudley-Smith (1926-2024)

CCLI reported

LISTENING TO GOD'S WORD

The cost of being a disciple

Large crowds were travelling with Jesus, and turning to them he said: 'If anyone comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters – yes, even their own life – such a person cannot be my disciple. And whoever does not carry their cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.

'Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Won't you first sit down and estimate the cost to see if you have enough money to complete it? For if you lay the foundation and are not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule you, saying, "This person began to build and wasn't able to finish."

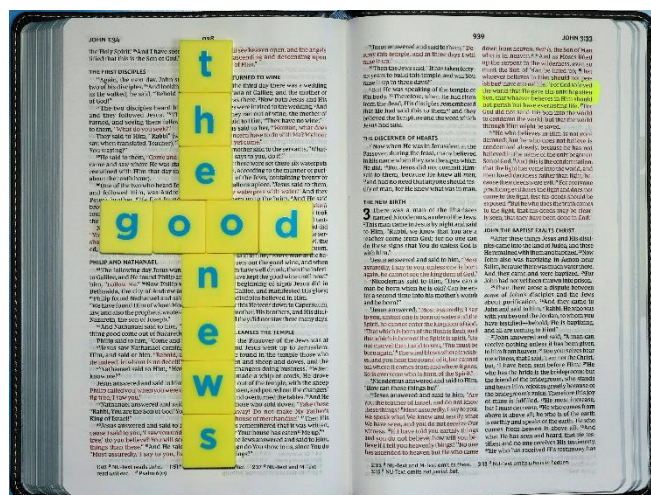
'Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Won't he first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to

oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand? If he is not able, he will send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for terms of peace. In the same way, those of you who do not give up everything you have cannot be my disciples. Luke 14:25-33

Price of the Prize

Jesus is inviting his hearers to think about the challenge of following him, and why they would want to do this. Is the price that they are likely to pay in this life worth the prize of eternal life? He is saying, 'Do not set out on this path if you aren't able to commit yourself to the whole journey.' One of his examples invites us to think of Ukraine today. When the Russian forces amassed on Ukraine's borders invaded in February 2022, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and the people had a choice - stand up to the Russian army and fight to retain their freedom or, recognising how massively outnumbered they are, give in and seek to negotiate a painful peace. As we know, as a nation, courageously they decided and continue to believe that the sovereign prize was worth the costly price.

How is this true for your journey of life and faith? When you chose to follow Jesus and apply his teaching to your daily life, you said 'Yes' to weaving a positive path through life. You rejected all that is selfish or hurtful to others. You rejected the force of public opinion and chose to see the world's problems through our Lord's eyes. You offer hope to those who feel hopeless. All because our Lord's promise of an even more glorious life beyond this life. Think about how the prize is worth the price.



Christ is the one who sends, his story to declare; who calls his servants friends and gives them news to share. His truth proclaim in all the earth, his matchless worth and saving name. Timothy Dudley-Smith

OUR PRAYERS

Feel free to use one or more of these prayers and to add your own.

Lord Jesus, you call me afresh to follow you in my daily life,
to apply your teaching to every single aspect of my life. Your values are
the ones that I try live by. Yet, there are times when I struggle...

Lord, hear my prayer.

Lord Jesus, you invited the people in the crowd to look at their lives
through God's eyes. What aspects would they have to change or give up
if they chose to follow you? Lord, may our world's leaders ponder this...

Lord, hear my prayer.

Lord Jesus, your prize is a life set free from guilt and shame,
a life lived with the glorious hope of a life beyond this life. Dying,
you destroyed our fear of death. Lord, may this prize strengthen...

Lord, 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.**