

Mears Ashby and Hardwick and Sywell with Overstone



**Prayers and Reflections
for use at home**

**Sunday 27 September 2026
Trinity 17**

Welcome to this week's prayers and reflections. Today, we are thinking about doing what the Lord asks of us. It is prompted by a challenging question put to Jesus by those who should have been the very first to accept him as the Messiah: the chief priests and elders. Instead, it is left to those who feel unworthy of God's love to heed his call on their lives. Jesus turns our world's expectations upside down!

Enjoy listening out for the Lord's words of love and challenge.

God bless,

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As you prepare to ponder the Lord's words, contemplate his authority to speak in God's name with the help of this image of Jesus as Christ our King.



Lord, enthroned in heavenly splendour,
first begotten from the dead,
thou alone, our strong defender,
liftest up thy people's head.
Alleluia, alleluia,
Jesu, true and living bread.

George Hugh Bourne (1840-1925)

Prayers and Reflections
for use at home on Trinity 17
God's will be done

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.

Here our humblest homage pay we,
here in loving reverence bow;
here for faith's discernment pray we,
lest we fail to know thee now.
Alleluia, alleluia,
thou art here, we ask not how.

George Hugh Bourne (1840-1925)



*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 invites us to picture ourselves in our Lord's presence. Gazing into his eyes of compassion and seeing his hands and feet wounded for us, we are filled with love and praise and thankfulness. Humbly and gently, we bow our head or get down onto our knees in homage to the one who gave his life that we might be forgiven. By his death, we were set free to live life in all its fullness – an eternal life. Like the crusaders of old who pledged to serve their Lord and their King and, if need be, give their lives for him, our verse calls us to renew our promise to Christ our King.

*At our baptism, we received the sign of our cross with these words.
Contemplate how you are honouring this whole-life promise to serve.*

Christ claims you for his own.

Receive this sign of the cross.

Do not be ashamed of Christ.

You are his for ever.

Stand bravely with him,
against all the powers of evil,
and remain faithful to Christ
to the end of your life.

Church of England's

Baptism Service

Offer your love and devotion to Christ our King.



Thou the lowliest form doth veil thee
as of old in Bethlehem,
here as there thine angels hail thee,
Branch and Flower of Jesse's Stem.
Alleluia, alleluia,
we in worship join with them.

George Hugh Bourne (1840-1925)

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 who calls us to do his will in our daily lives.

Gracious God,
you call us to fullness of life:
deliver us from unbelief
and banish our anxieties
with the liberating love of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Our prayer opens with a reminder of the Easter life Jesus calls us to live. Speaking of the alternative to the rules based life that the people were living, Jesus said to his hearers, 'I have come in order that you might have life - life in all its fullness.' A life like the one that he was living – trusting and abiding in his Father's love, aligning his will to his Father's. Jesus truly lived as he taught his disciples to pray.

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.

Our prayer is a call to renew our trust in God's promise to forgive us when we let him down. He will set us free to try again when we turn to him in regret and remorse. It is also a call to trust in our Lord's promise of a life beyond this life – a life made so real for us by his rising to new life on Easter morn. In his risen life, we see the depth of his love for his friends, who let him down so badly on the eve of the cross. Nothing can stop him loving us as he loved them. His love sets us free to love.

Ponder how Jesus, God's Son, can strengthen your belief in God's love, banish or diminish your anxieties, and free you to live as God would love you to do. You are loved and forgiven.



Paschal Lamb, thine offering, finished
once for all when thou wast slain,
in its fullness undiminished
shall for evermore remain.
Alleluia, alleluia,
cleansing souls from every stain.

George Hugh Bourne (1840-1925)

LISTENING TO GOD'S WORD

Whose authority?

Jesus entered the temple courts, and, while he was teaching, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him. 'By what authority are you doing these things?' they asked. 'And who gave you this authority?'

Jesus replied, 'I will also ask you one question. If you answer me, I will tell you by what authority I am doing these things. John's baptism – where did it come from? Was it from heaven, or of human origin?'

They discussed it among themselves and said, 'If we say, "From heaven", he will ask, "Then why didn't you believe him?" But if we say, "Of human origin" – we are afraid of the people, for they all hold that John was a prophet.'

So they answered Jesus, 'We don't know.'

Then he said, 'Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.'

'What do you think? There was a man who had two sons. He went to the first and said, "Son, go and work today in the vineyard."

"I will not," he answered, but later he changed his mind and went.

'Then the father went to the other son and said the same thing. He answered, "I will, sir," but he did not go.

'Which of the two did what his father wanted?'

'The first,' they answered.

Jesus said to them, 'Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you to show you the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes did. And even after you saw this, you did not repent and believe him.

Matthew 21:23-32

Whose authority?

Daily, we pray 'thy will be done.' It is a pledge to put God's plans for today before our own desires. If we were to rank the key people in our lives, each and every time, God should come out as No. 1. For he has complete authority over our lives. He gave us the gift of life. Our overriding desire is to be as true to him – as loyal – as Jesus was during his earthly ministry. It is a huge, huge, huge ask of us. As a single person, it can – perhaps – be easier for me to live by this pledge. Even so, there are times when family needs me. If you have a husband or wife, children or grandchildren or other relatives who depend on your love and care, it can be harder to put God's call before your love for them. Maybe, his call is to care for them.

Ponder how God's call to love him with all that you are and to love others as you love yourself, and our Lord's teaching, shape the way that you live – the choices that you make on a daily basis. Contemplate God's authority over your life. Renew your pledge to him.

The chief priests and elders failed to recognise that Jesus had been given full authority to act in his Father's name. Doing his will was to do God's bidding. Thankfully, for us, Jesus is Lord! Alleluia!



Life-imparting heavenly manna,
stricken rock with streaming side,
heaven and earth with loud hosanna
worship thee, the Lamb who died.
Alleluia, alleluia,
risen, ascended, glorified!

George Hugh Bourne (1840-1925)

OUR PRAYERS

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

Lord Jesus, you are my Lord and my King. Daily, I will try to place you first in my life. I am willing to do what I can to serve you in my everyday life. Lord, I pray that your will be done in and through me. Lord, hear my prayer.

Lord Jesus, you call everyone to do your Father's will and love as he loves. Every time we do this, we fill our homes and communities with love and peace and hope. Lord, I pray for those are failing in this. Lord, hear my prayer.

Lord Jesus, you love those who feel unlovable – outcasts who are on society's margins. You offer them forgiveness – a fresh start in life. You call them into your kingdom. Lord, I pray for those you are calling. 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.**