

# Wednesday Prayers

## 25<sup>th</sup> March 2020



Thank you for joining us in especially praying for our land today. We shall be praying in our homes from 1 – 1.30pm and we would love for you to join us. If you would like to fast over lunchtime as you pray, please feel free, but only if it is not medically unwise to do so. Either way, please keep drinking fluids! Again, thank you and let us pray in faith together

### Opening Reflection

**Reading:** John 20v19-23

**Reflection:** In recent days, Social Media has allowed local health professionals to release very poignant and heartfelt pleas for us to stay at home. On Monday, those pleas were enforced by the Prime Minister's statement placing us in what is almost a national 'lock down'. How do we feel? Are we afraid?

When Jesus met with His followers, they were afraid. In the light of Jesus death, they feared for their lives as His friends. They were also probably quite confused because some of their number were claiming that Jesus was alive. Afraid and confused. Does this feel very familiar right now?

Even though the disciples were in 'lock down' Jesus appeared despite the solid obstacles, reassured His friends and blessed them through His Spirit. In this place in our lives of fear and confusion, may we recognise His Spirit blessing our lives, helping us amidst this time of fear and confusion.

We are not alone! He is with us. To Him we can pray, the One who heals, who gives life and always is the giver of hope.

Today, let us especially pray for our vital workers as they seek to help us all amidst this crisis, as well as those who are especially fearful

Those to pray for include :-

- Our medical staff, that they may have the resources that they need and that they, and their families, will be protected from infection as they seek to care for us all amidst very concerning circumstances
- Those who have underlying medical conditions and are especially fearful of what infection of Covid-19 might mean for them. Pray also for those suffering from various condition and will experience significant delays in receiving the specialist care that they require
- For all working in the provision of food and essential supplies, whether on farms, in factories, in transportation or in shops, that they might be able to manage provision for especially those who need it most
- For all whose businesses have had to close in recent days. At every level, may they receive support and understanding and be enabled to reopen in the not too distant future. May the government, banks, suppliers, staff and customers encourage conditions for businesses to be able to weather this storm and be able to trade again and offer continued employment

Some prayers which you may find helpful :-

Gracious God, keep us under the shadow of your mercy in this time of uncertainty and distress. Sustain and support the anxious and fearful, and lift up all who are brought low; that we may rejoice in your comfort knowing that nothing can separate us from your love in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

Gracious God, give to our NHS staff the protection, skill, strength, sympathy and resilience that they need at this very difficult time when their already stretched resources are required even more. Give patience to those awaiting treatment and a sense of calm in busy areas of our hospitals. May you work through our doctors, nurses and care workers, and may many be restored to health. Give wisdom beyond their own to all medical researchers at this time, as they seek to find a vaccine. This we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

Gracious God, be close to all who manage businesses amidst this complex and incredibly difficult time. May those which remain in operation for the well being of our community be enabled to offer what is required to help all, including the vulnerable of our society, have what they need. May businesses that have had to close receive the grace and support required to prevail, and one day open closed doors again. Amen.

Gracious God, as you are compassionate to us, may we exercise selfless care towards one another. Help us not to prioritise ourselves, but look beyond. Help us to do our very best to restrict avenues of infection and always be mindful of the impact of our actions on others. Save us from selfishness. Amidst the fear and confusion, help us to trust you.

**A Prayer for Ireland** *from the Book of Common Prayer (p145)*

Almighty and merciful God, who in the days of old didst give to this land the benediction of thy holy Church; Withdraw not, we pray thee, thy favour from us, but so correct what is amiss, and supply what is lacking, that we may more and more bring forth fruit to thy glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Gracious God, help me in the midst of this situation in which I find myself to trust you, to know that you are with me and that I can lean on your everlasting arms. Thank you for being here for me when fear threatens my resolve. Your strength is made perfect in my weakness and I turn afresh to you this day, knowing that you bring calm to my soul, in Jesus' name, Amen.

Please do pray all week long, but feel free to especially join us again in prayer next Wednesday when a new Prayer Sheet will be available for use. Also please know that on Sunday a recorded service will be available for download on YouTube (search St Marks Armagh) and can also be found on our Parish Website. Also available will be Monday Devotions and a Friday Reflection.

Please know our continued prayers. Malcolm Kingston & Geoff Hamilton.