



YORK
MINSTER

PRAYERS

FOR

DIFFICULT TIMES

from York Minster

YORKMINSTER.ORG



Prayers for Difficult Times

from York Minster

York Minster has been a place of prayer for many hundreds of years. That tradition of prayer is kept alive at all times, even in the most trying of circumstances. The whole nation currently finds itself journeying through a season of uncertainty in which the world has been turned upside down and the church, as the body of Christ, can no longer physically gather together day by day and week by week.

But the family of church is bound by something stronger than place. The Church is more than a building. We are made one in Christ who is Lord over all things and binds everything together; our life of prayer extends beyond worship on Sundays and we are called always to pray seven whole days, not one in seven, whether we are gathered or dispersed.

Every day, under normal circumstances, hundreds of people make their prayers in this place, offering their concerns to Almighty God. The prayers that follow help us bring our prayers to God in the midst of confusion and chaos, when perhaps we might not be able to find the words ourselves.

These prayers are collected from the wider church and from the clergy team at York Minster. They express our collective fear, our anger, our doubt and importantly our hope in Jesus Christ.

We hope you find them helpful.

A Prayer for strength to continue to live in community

LOVING God, as we live through times when we are asked to physically distance ourselves from others, remind us that this does not mean socially, spiritually or compassionately. Help us to keep connected to others by our prayers, small acts of kindness and thoughtful deeds. When we are tempted to withdraw back into the security of the womb, to recoil in body, mind or spirit, help us to find the strength of the one 'who opened wide his arms on the cross for us' showing us the way of love and life. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Maggie McLean

A Prayer for stillness

COMPASSIONATE God, as our physical freedom is diminished, our activities decreased, and our movements restricted help us to find stillness in our souls and in our bodies. Help us not to be overwhelmed by anxiety and fear of what might be. Still our souls as you stilled the storm and the anxieties of your disciples. Give us courage to stay in the ark of your love until you bring us once more to dry and stable shores. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Maggie McLean

A Prayer for those forgotten

Gentle God, as the world is distracted by our current situation, help us not to forget the plight of those in need. Hear our prayer for those who continue to live in war zones; for those who remain dispossessed; for those who continue to suffer from lack of food and clean water. For those whose tears are not seen and whose cries are not heard: Lord have mercy. Amen.

Maggie McLean

A Prayer for Dark Times

GOD, we are told that you are compassionate,
today this is hard to believe.

God, we are told that you love us,
today we do not feel loved.

God, we are told that we should offer you our praise and thanksgivings,
today all we have to offer is sadness, anger and confusion.

God, despite these feelings we turn to you,
today there is no one else to turn to.

God, hold us until we can believe again.

God, love us until we can feel your love again.

God, accept our sadness, anger and confusion until we can offer you
praise and thanksgivings again.

God, our lives and our feelings rise and fall but you remain constant.

Help us to rest in your eternal changelessness.

Amen.

Michael Smith

A Prayer when the future is unclear

LORD, I do not know where I am going,
how can I know the way?

Everything is so uncertain. Everything has changed.

Lord, guide us and strengthen us. Have mercy upon us.
Lord, let me put my hand into your hand. Show me the way.

Lord, I am confused and upset.
I am disorientated and don't know which way to turn.
How can I know the way?

Lord, let me reach out to you as you reach out to me.

Through every kind word, through every moment of blessing, through
every small thing that normally I do not even notice,
may your compassion shine through
and may hope pervade all my fears and all my doubts.

Lord, in this time of challenge,
when our assumptions and comforts crash to ground,
when we feel lost and disorientated
be the foundation on which we can rebuild,
be the map that shows us the way, and the truth and the life.

Amen.

Victoria Johnson

Prayer during the Coronavirus epidemic

(Based on Psalm 91.1-6)

GOD of love and compassion,
we live in the shelter of your love,
we settle in your beautiful shadow.

We trust that the earth and all that is in it,
is always in your loving embrace.

You deliver us from the traps of our own making;
you sustain us in times of dreadful disease.

You cover us with your great and mighty wings;
you defend us when we are weak and afraid.

In faith, we will put aside our fear;
we will look out for others in daytime and darkness.

We will not give in to hopelessness or despair;
even if we fall ill, your love will support us.

Amen

Anne Richards (and part of the Everyday Blessing Project)

A Prayer for God's blessing

LOVING God, bless and receive all who are affected by
Coronavirus:

Especially:

Those who are sick and afraid
Those who are especially vulnerable
Those for whom home is not safe or available
Those who have lost their livelihoods
Those who have lost their lives.

Bless all people caring for the sick
Give them strength, wisdom, endurance
Grant them healing hands
Surround them with your love.

Spare us in the time of trial
Deliver us from evil.

Amen

Anne Richards (Part of the Everyday Blessing Project)

A Prayer for these strange days

Almighty God,
in a world where 'pause' has been pressed
on so much that is busy, sophisticated and complex,
may we rediscover that true and lasting love, joy and peace
are to be found in the simple things.

May those of us who remain well use this time;
to love more, connecting with family and friends,
to rejoice more deeply in God's creation,
giving thanks for the beauty of the changing seasons and
to discover anew the creative and restorative power
of stillness and silence.

We ask this in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ,
who lived simply, trod lightly and loved deeply. Amen

Michael Smith

LORD Jesus Christ, you said to your disciples,
'I am with you always'.
Be with me today, as I offer myself to you.
Hear my prayers for others and for myself,
and keep me in your care.

Christ be with me, Christ within me,
Christ behind me, Christ before me,
Christ beside me, Christ to win me,
Christ to comfort and restore me.
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ in quiet, Christ in danger,
Christ in hearts of all that love me,
Christ in mouth of friend and stranger.

from St Patrick's Breastplate

I AM giving you worship with all my life, I am giving you obedience
with all my power, I am giving you praise with all my strength, I am
giving you honour with all my speech. I am giving you love with all my
heart, I am giving you affection with all my sense, I am giving you my
being with all my mind, I am giving you my soul, O most high and
holy God. Praise to the Father, Praise to the Son, Praise to the Spirit,
The Three in One.

Adapted from Alexander Carmichael, Carmina Gadelica (1900)

LORD Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

The Jesus Prayer

O GOD, the protector of all who trust in you, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy: increase and multiply upon us your mercy; that with you as our ruler and guide, we may so pass through things temporal that we lose not our hold on things eternal; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Common Worship

BE with us, Lord, in all our prayers, and direct our way toward the attainment of salvation, that among the changes and chances of this mortal life, we may always be defended by your gracious help, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Common Worship

O GRACIOUS and holy Father, give us wisdom to perceive you, diligence to seek you, patience to wait for you, eyes to behold you, a heart to meditate upon you, and a life to proclaim you, through the power of the spirit of Jesus Christ our Lord.

St Benedict

Before going to sleep

GOD our Father, by whose mercy the world turns safely into darkness and returns again to light: we place in your hands our unfinished tasks, our unsolved problems, and our unfulfilled hopes, knowing that only what you bless will prosper. To your love and protection we commit each other and all those we love, knowing that you alone are our sure defender, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Church of South India