

PRAYING

Silence is kept for several minutes, to allow people to pray for the 5 people they have chosen to pray for throughout the Novena. It may be appropriate to invite people to speak those names aloud if they wish to.

We meet your word with gratitude for your unfailing love.

(Pause)

Come Holy Spirit: **Thy Kingdom Come.**

We give you thanks for Jesus' work of redemption that unites us across races and cultures.

(Pause)

Come Holy Spirit: **Thy Kingdom Come.**

We offer to you our prayers for all those who feel orphaned and alone.

(Pause)

Come Holy Spirit: **Thy Kingdom Come.**

We bear before you all who offer gifts of home and family to those who cannot be with their own family.

(Pause)

Come Holy Spirit: **Thy Kingdom Come.**

Heavenly Father, we thank you for your abundant gifts throughout the ages. We pray for an outpouring of your Holy Spirit upon our Diocese in these our own times. As followers of your Son, Jesus Christ, may we be blessed with love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Help us to respond to your gifts with a spirit of gratitude and generosity.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

(Prayer written by Revd Lindsay Yates - Diocesan Generous Giving Advisor)

Come Holy Spirit: **gift us with eagerness to run to your welcoming embrace.**

Come Holy Spirit: **gift us with love that reaches across boundaries of race and culture.**

Come Holy Spirit: **gift us with family.**

Come Holy Spirit: **gift us with yourself.**

DAILY WAITING

Jesus ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father (Acts 1:4).

This service is for use by individuals or groups and can be adapted to suit your context. Hymns, worship songs and additional prayers may be added as you wish. Italic text is intended as an instruction, plain text is to be read by a leader, bold text is to be read together. Since the theme of Thy Kingdom Come 2025 is The Lord's Prayer, these liturgies invite us to pray that prayer immediately after the Scripture reading, rather than during the Intercessions, to allow us to bring it into focus before we meditate on it in the Reflection.

The Reflections are taken from the Thy Kingdom Come 2025 Novena booklet by Archbishop Stephen Cottrell, and the Intercessions include prayers from our June Prayer Calendar, written by people from around the Canterbury Diocese.

GATHERING

As you begin your time of prayer, take a moment of silence to remember and delight in the promise of the Holy Spirit Jesus gives to all his disciples. Read the following from John 14 together:

I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counsellor to be with you forever - the Spirit of truth... On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.

Make a sign of being present to God and one another – light a candle, open a Bible, share the peace...

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your people

And kindle in us the fire of your love.

Come, Holy Spirit, be with us as we pray

And leave us not as orphans.

Come, Holy Spirit, renew us in body, mind and spirit

And send us out to be your presence in your world.

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your people

And kindle in us the fire of your love.

Optional hymn or worship song.

Pause for a few minutes in silence to welcome the leading of the Holy Spirit, and bring to mind the names of 5 people you will commit to praying for over the coming days.

LISTENING : 1 John 3:1-3, NRSV

See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God, and that is what we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is. And all who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.

We wait upon the work of your Spirit as we say the Lord's Prayer together:

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
Now and for ever. Amen.**

REFLECTING

Jesus teaches us to call God 'Father'. Even though we know that God is neither male nor female, and even if some of us have had difficult relationships with our parents or challenging relationships with our father, what Jesus is showing us is that, though human relationships may let us down, God won't. Our relationship with God is the beautiful, intimate relationship that is best understood as like the relationship between a loving parent and a dearly-loved and cherished child. It is all there in the opening word of the Lord's Prayer: Father! Which, by the way, in the Aramaic Jesus spoke and the Greek in which it is written down for us in the New Testament, is the first word. Our English translation is 'Our Father'. But a literal translation of the Greek would be 'Father of ours.' As the first word of the Lord's Prayer tells us about our relationship with God, so the second – or the first in English – tells us about our relationship with each other. It isn't my Father or my God, but ours.

As we say this prayer we declare a deep belonging to one another. In fact, if we change the prayer from the first person plural to the first person singular, the prayer wouldn't just be changed, it would be destroyed. It is only the beautiful prayer it is because it is ours, not mine. I'm not just asking for my daily bread. I'm not just asking for my sins to be forgiven. I do want to pray for what I need.

I do need to be forgiven, but I must not separate out my needs from the needs of my sisters and brothers. The Lord's Prayer is a prayer for everyone to be fed and for everyone to be reconciled to God and to each other. Therefore, in a single word, the radical heart of the Christian faith is revealed. In Christ, barriers of separation and distinctions of race, ethnicity, sexuality, gender, class, caste, and kin are

reconfigured into what the Apostle Paul calls 'a new humanity' (see, for instance, Ephesians 2:15). The Christian Faith always challenges us to welcome strangers, to love one another, to dismantle barriers. As we say even this one word of the Lord's Prayer we commit ourselves to demonstrate on earth the radical hospitality of God. This isn't easy. Loving neighbours includes loving enemies. We don't get to choose who's in and who's out.

Everyone who says this prayer is my sister and my brother. We pray for our five people today. As we do so, let's remember everyone else who is praying Thy Kingdom Come around the world, each with different needs and perspectives. And let's remember the five people that each of them are praying for.

Psalm 103:1-13, NRSV

- 1 Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and all that is within me, bless his holy name.
- 2 Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and do not forget all his benefits—
- 3 who forgives all your iniquity,
who heals all your diseases,
- 4 who redeems your life from the Pit,
who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,
- 5 who satisfies you with good as long as you live
so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.
- 6 The Lord works vindication
and justice for all who are oppressed.
- 7 He made known his ways to Moses,
his acts to the people of Israel.
- 8 The Lord is merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.
- 9 He will not always accuse,
nor will he keep his anger for ever.
- 10 He does not deal with us according to our sins,
nor repay us according to our iniquities.
- 11 For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so great is his steadfast love towards those who fear him;
- 12 as far as the east is from the west,
so far he removes our transgressions from us.
- 13 As a father has compassion for his children,
so the Lord has compassion for those who fear him.

**Glory to the Father and to the Son,
And to the Holy Spirit;
As it was in the beginning, is now
And shall be for ever. Amen.**