

Welcome to a short time of prayer and reflection for the eleventh Sunday after Trinity. Let us be still and recognise we are in the presence of God: Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, Amen

The Lord be with you

Today those who can gather in St Mary's church will be sharing in the first celebration of the Eucharist in the Mission Community since late March. The penitential rite and the intercessions in this reflection will be the same as those used in church, and I have added a prayer of spiritual communion to our prayers here so that those unable to get to church may participate as members of the Body of Christ through our shared baptism.

In today's gospel Jesus responds to Peter's affirmation that he is the Messiah with the promise that the church that will be built on the foundation of his faith will survive all that can be thrown at it. We are that church, and through all the challenges of change and the distress of these times, we can trust in that promise. Trusting in that promise we can bring to God all the feelings we have now, especially those feelings that can make God feel distance. We take a moment honestly to offer to God all that needs healing and forgiveness:

Out of the depths have I cried to you, O Lord hear my voice Lord have mercy

If you Lord, were to mark what is done amiss, Lord who could stand?  
Christ have mercy

But there is forgiveness with you, so that you may be revered. Lord have mercy

I wait for the Lord, my soul waits for him: in his word is my hope.

May Almighty God have mercy upon you, forgive you your sins and bring you to everlasting life Amen

Let us pray:

O God, you declare your mighty power most chiefly in showing mercy and pity: mercifully grant to us such a measure of your grace that we, running the way of your commandments, may receive your gracious promises, and be made partakers of your heavenly treasure; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

We listen to a reading from the Gospel of Matthew 16:13-20

The Gospel of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Sermon : see additional attachment

Let us pray:

Father, your Son promised: "On this rock I will build my church and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it" Bless your church throughout the world and in this place. Guide her leaders with compassion and wisdom to meet this time and inspire us, with all our brothers and sisters, to be witnesses of your saving love in all that we say, do and are.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer

Your prophet says of you: "My justice...will go out from me..for a light to the peoples". Bless all the peoples of your world with freedom from injustice and violence, famine and poverty, illness and fear. Guide all who towards decisions that lead to these freedoms and inspire us all to respect the earth and all with whom we share it.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

St Paul says: "we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us" Bless all those with whom we share our lives: families, friends and neighbours. Guide us to use all that we have been given to contribute to the common good and inspire us all to recognise and value the gifts of all those around us.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Your steadfast love, O Lord, endures forever. Bless with the comfort of your presence and such healing that is according to your will all those who we know to be suffering at these time, and those whose pain is known only to you. We pray for all who are ill, injured or in any kind of distress today.....

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Eternal God, we commend to your everlasting love all who have died: those we love and see no longer; those who have died recently and those whose anniversary of death falls around now. Especially today we remember with thanksgiving and love those from our own fellowship who have died since we last worshipped in church and whose life is now in your closer presence.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We gather all these intercessions in the prayer Jesus gave us:

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. Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory. Forever and ever, Amen.

Giving thanks for the communion we share through baptism with one another and with God in Christ Jesus our Lord we make an act of spiritual communion in the words of this prayer:

Thanks be to you, Lord Jesus Christ, for all the benefits you have given me, for all the pains and insults you have borne for me. As I cannot receive you sacramentally today, I ask you to come spiritually into my heart. O most merciful redeemer, friend and brother, may I know you more clearly, love you more dearly, and follow you more nearly, day by day. Amen.

And we pray for God's blessing on each other and all who we love and pray for:

The peace of God which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord: and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. Amen