

# Praying for the Sick, Dying, Departed and Bereaved



*Some prayers and reflections for  
November and throughout the year from  
The Guild of All Souls*

## INTRODUCTION

November is traditionally the month of prayer for the dead. Hence members of the Council of The Guild of All Souls have been invited to produce this booklet, which contains some prayers and reflections included in their various publications. It is especially pertinent this year when the Covid-19 pandemic has brought the reality of death to so many people.

The Guild was founded nearly 150 years ago to encourage prayer for the repose of the souls of the faithful departed and to provide clergy with support and guidance on conducting funerals.

Prayer for the departed remains one of The Guild's most important functions but its scope has widened to include prayer and care for the sick, dying and bereaved.

Walsingham pilgrims will be familiar with The Guild's Chantry Chapel of St. Michael, but may not be aware of its purpose. In normal times Mass is offered there daily and departed Guild members remembered in prayer on the anniversary of their death (it is the only society where membership never ceases!). Their names are printed in the Chantry List displayed in the chapel and on the website. The Guild's Chantry Priest, Fr Andrew Greany, is available to listen to and pray with those who are bereaved.

Annual events include a day conference at Walsingham on a subject within the remit of The Guild and a Requiem – this year broadcast on All Souls' Day from Walsingham via the website of the Shrine OLW, from which it may still be accessed.

Publications have become an important part of The Guild's mission. These are freely available in the Chantry Chapel or from the General Secretary through the website, which contains more information and further resources, such as links to various bereavement support organisations.

## For the Sick

May the Healing of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is here present with us now, enter your soul, your mind and your body and heal you from everything that harms you and bring you His joy and His peace. Amen

### ***Prayer at bedtime for healing***

Jesus, through the power of the Holy Spirit, go back into my memory as I sleep.

Heal every hurt done to me; heal every hurt I've caused ...

But Lord, if there is anything that I need to do - if I need to go to someone who is suffering because of me - make me aware of it.

I choose to forgive, and I ask to be forgiven.

Remove any bitterness in my heart - and fill the empty spaces with your love. Thank you, Jesus. Amen



*Christ in Glory:  
St Stephen, Gloucester  
Road, Kensington – of  
which The Guild is patron*

## For the Dying

○ Lord support us all the day long through this troublous life till the shades lengthen, the evening comes, the busy world is hushed, the fever of life is over and our work is done.

Then, Lord, in your mercy give us a safe lodging, a holy rest, and peace at the last. Amen

**O** Lord Jesus Christ,  
in your last agony you committed your spirit  
into the hands of your heavenly Father;  
have mercy on all sick and dying people;  
may death be to them the gate of everlasting life;  
and give to them the assurance of your presence  
even in the dark hour of their passing,  
for you are the resurrection and the life;  
and to you be the glory for ever and ever. Amen

**Lord**, before the mystery of death I am silent  
and I do not know what to say or do.  
I am empty and drained of feeling.  
Accept me as I am, for this is all I have to give,  
and help me to learn stillness as I hold the hand of.....  
So s/he knows s/he is not alone. Amen

**Lord**, thank you for.....,  
for the good times we have shared  
and for the difference s/he has made to our lives.  
Forgive whatever wrongs there have been  
and drive out oppressive guilt and fear.  
Help us trust your all-embracing love,  
and know, when we lose sight of one another,  
that we will meet again  
where there is no more sadness, pain or death,  
in the brightness of your eternal kingdom. Amen

**Go** forth, Christian soul, from this world,  
in the name of God the almighty Father, who created you,  
in the name of Jesus Christ, Son of the living God,  
who suffered for you,  
in the name of the Holy Spirit, who was poured out upon you,  
go forth, faithful Christian.

May you live in peace this day; may your home be with God in Heaven,  
with Mary, the virgin Mother of God,  
with Joseph, and with all the angels and saints.

I commend you, my dear brother/sister, to almighty God,  
and entrust you to your Creator.

May you return to Him who formed you from the dust of the earth.

May holy Mary, the angels and all the saints  
come to meet you as you go forth from this life.

May Christ who was crucified for you  
bring you freedom and peace.

May Christ who died for you  
admit you into His garden of paradise.

May Christ, the true Shepherd,  
acknowledge you as one of His flock.

May He forgive all your sins,  
and set you among those He has chosen.

May you see your Redeemer face to face,  
and enjoy the vision of God for ever. Amen.



*Jesus' body is taken down  
from the Cross.  
13<sup>th</sup> Station of the Cross  
St Stephen, Gloucester  
Road*



*The Guild of All Souls' Chantry Chapel of St Michael at Walsingham*

### **For the Departed**

The souls of the righteous are in the hands of God.

No torment shall ever touch them.

In the eyes of the unwise they did appear to die.

Their going looked like disaster,

their leaving us like annihilation.

But they are in peace.

*(Wisdom 3: 1-3)*

Remember, O Lord, all your servants who have departed this life,  
especially ..... and all others to whom remembrance is due.

Give them eternal rest and peace in your heavenly kingdom

and to each of us such measure of communion with them

as you know to be best for us, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

**R**est eternal grant to them O Lord,  
and let light perpetual shine upon them:  
May their souls, and the souls of all the departed,  
through the mercy of God rest in peace. And may they rise in glory.

**O** eternal God, whose mercies cannot be numbered,  
accept our prayers for your servants ..... and grant them an entrance  
into the land of light and joy in the fellowship of your saints,  
through Jesus Christ your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you  
and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen

**We** give them back to You, O Lord,  
Who first gave them to us; and as You did not lose them in the giving,  
so we do not lose them in the return.

Life is unending because love is undying, and the boundaries of this life  
are but a horizon, and the horizon is but a limit of our sight.

Lift us up, strong Son of God, that we may see further.  
Strengthen our faith, that we may see beyond the horizon.

### **For those tempted to assist in the suicide of others**

**Al**mighty God, have mercy on all who, in great distress,  
are tempted to assist in the suicide of those whom they love.  
Grant them courage, patience, understanding, and wisdom;  
lighten their burden and restrain their hand,  
for the sake of your Son, who underwent suffering and death  
to bring us to life everlasting - Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

## **For those who have committed suicide**

Almighty God, Father of all,  
have mercy on the souls of those who,  
in their darkness, have thrown away their mortal lives;  
grant them light and salvation  
that they may find life in your love  
and glorify your Holy Name,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen



*Calvary in the grounds of the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham*

## For the bereaved

Heavenly Father, give us the certainty  
that beyond death there is a life  
where broken things are mended and lost things are found.  
Where there is rest for the weary and joy for the sad,  
Where all that we have loved and willed of good will exist  
and we will meet again our loved ones.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen *(Flor McCarthy)*

Jesus said:

Do not let your hearts be troubled.  
Trust in God still, and trust in me.  
There are many rooms in my Father's house.  
If there were not, I should have told you.  
I am going now to prepare a place for you,  
and after I have gone and prepared you a place,  
I shall return to take you with me;  
So that where I am, you may be too. *(John 14: 1-3)*

Let nothing disturb you, let nothing frighten you.  
All things pass away, God never changes.  
Patience obtains all things.  
He who has God finds he lacks nothing;  
God alone suffices. *(St Teresa of Avila)*

**D**o not hurry as you walk with grief;

it does not help the journey.

Walk slowly, pausing often: do not hurry as you walk with grief.

Be not disturbed by memories that come unbidden.

Swiftly forgive; and let Christ speak for you unspoken words.

Unfinished conversation will be resolved in Him. Be not disturbed.

Be gentle with the one who walks with grief.

If it is you, be gentle with yourself.

Swiftly forgive; walk slowly, pausing often.

Take time, be gentle as you walk with grief.

**G**od, grant me the Serenity

to accept the things I cannot change,

the Courage

to change the things I can and

the Wisdom

to know the difference.

**L**ord, I seem to have all the things which don't matter

and lost all the things which do.

I'm alone and sometimes I feel nothing can make up for that.

Lord, help me to see the meaning of my faith and life;

To realise that I have hope as well as memory;

That the unseen cloud of witnesses is around me;

That You meant it when You said You would always be with me;

That as long as I'm here there is something I'm meant to do;

And in doing it, help me to find the comfort and courage I need to go on.

I am standing on the sea shore.

A ship at my side spreads her white sails to the morning breeze  
and starts for the blue ocean.

She is an object of beauty

and I stand and watch her until at last she fades on the horizon.

Then someone at my side says, "There, she's gone!" –

Gone where?

Gone from my sight – that is all.

She is just as large in the mast, hull and spars

as she was when she left my side....

The diminished size and total loss of sight is in me and not in her,

and just at that moment when someone at my side says,

"She's gone,"

others take up the glad shout, "There she comes!"

*(Bishop Charles Brent of the Philippines)*



*Crucifix above the Altar in the Chantry Chapel*

## Weekly Bidding Prayers

### Week 1

- We pray for the dying; for those who have terminal illness; for all who feel forsaken and afraid; for those who are in the darkness of despair.
- Loving Father, as we celebrate your sacred gift of life, we pray for those who are tempted to assist or encourage others to take their own lives.
- Let us pray for all families caring for terminally ill children.
- We commend to God all who are concerned with the dying and the bereaved, especially nurses, doctors, undertakers, registrars and priests, that they may find words and actions that are truly comforting.
- Lord, we pray for those who have been forgotten and have no-one to pray for them; for the thousands throughout the world who die from malnutrition, neglect, disease or because of war.
- We pray for all the dead. Jesus said to the penitent thief: "Truly, I say to you, this day you will be with me in Paradise." May these words be heard by all our departed brothers and sisters, especially .....

## Week 2

- Each night the Church's prayer is: "May the Lord grant us a quiet night and a perfect end." Let us pray that we may be delivered from sudden and unprepared death and for hope and confidence at the moment of our death.
- We pray for the dying; for those dying in pain; for those dying alone and unloved; for those dying with little or no faith; for those dying receiving the last rites of the church.
- Let us pray for all who work in chapels of rest, mortuaries, churchyards, cemeteries and crematoria and all who visit them; may their reverence and care reflect hope in the Resurrection of the body and everlasting life.
- Lord, we pray for all who have experienced sudden, violent or accidental death and all those affected by it in any way, especially those who work in the police, ambulance and fire services and road, rail, sea and mountain rescue services.
- We pray for all the dead, especially ..... and those remembered by the Guild of All Souls; may they experience the joys of Heaven in the company of all the saints.



*The Risen  
Christ:  
St Stephen,  
Gloucester  
Road*

### Week 3

- We pray for the dying; may death be to them the gate of everlasting life.
- Let us pray for all who care for the dying; may they see in their dying brothers and sisters the person of Christ Himself and continue their ministry of care with compassion and love.
- We pray for all the bereaved, especially those suffering from distress, guilt, lack of forgiveness, sleeplessness, depression, loneliness, anger or lack of purpose; may they experience the love of Christ.
- We pray for all who have taken their own lives; that in the life of the world to come they may be released from the prison of despair and suffering that they endured before death and experience the joy of the Resurrection.
- Lord, we pray for all the departed, especially .....  
Grant them rest and peace, and to each of us such a measure of communion with them as you know to be best for us.



*The Risen Christ: greets his  
disciples by the Sea of  
Galilee:  
St Stephen, Gloucester Rd*

## Week 4

- We pray for all who will die today; that they may hear those words of Christ, "Today you will be with me in paradise."
- Loving Heavenly Father, we pray for all children who have died; for those miscarried or aborted and those who have been stillborn. May they be freed from any pain they have experienced and be at peace in your kingdom.
- Christ, our Loving Lord, in your kindness be with all the bereaved and bring them your comfort and peace. May our concern for them be a reflection of your love.
- Let us commend to God the unrested dead. May they go their way to their everlasting home assured that our prayers follow them. May all harmful influence be removed from any people who have been disturbed.
- We pray for our departed brothers and sisters .....; all the dead in Christ and all the dead whose faith is known to God alone. May they share in eternal life with Him.



St Michael casting Satan out of Heaven. Relief on Exterior of Chantry Chapel



# The Guild of All Souls

*praying and caring for the sick, dying, departed and bereaved*

The Guild, founded in 1873, is one of the Catholic Societies of the Church of England, but is happy to welcome as members any who share its objects.

## **The Guild's Objects**

1. Prayer for the dying and for the repose of the souls of the departed.
2. To promote two great doctrines of the Christian Creed: "the Communion of Saints" and "the Resurrection of the Dead".

### **The following are particularly commended to the prayers of all members:**

- a) The restoration of the scriptural rite of anointing the sick with holy oil, called Holy Unction;
- b) The restoration of the primitive custom of reserving the Holy Eucharist for the sick and dying.

### **To pray must also mean to care.**

As members of this devotional Guild we must care for the dying, the dead and the bereaved.

To join The Guild or to discover more, please visit its website:

**[www.guildofallsouls.org.uk](http://www.guildofallsouls.org.uk)**