

## **Berrow with Pendock, Eldersfield, Birtsmorton and Hollybush**



### **A Service for the Sixth. Sunday after Trinity**

**Welcome - *do have a candle, glass of juice/wine and cracker/piece of bread ready***

The Lord be with you  
and also with you

#### **OPENING PRAYER**

**Almighty God,  
to whom all hearts are open,  
all desires known,  
and from whom no secrets are hidden:  
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts  
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,  
that we may perfectly love you,  
and worthily magnify your holy name;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.**

#### **PRAYERS OF PENITENCE AND ABSOLUTION**

God so loved the world that he gave his only  
Son Jesus Christ to save us from our sins,  
to be our advocate in heaven, and to bring us to  
eternal life.

Let us confess our sins, in penitence and faith,  
firmly resolved to keep God's commandments  
and to live in love and peace with all.

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**Almighty God, our heavenly Father,  
 we have sinned against you and against our neighbour,  
 in thought and word and deed,  
 through negligence, through weakness,  
 through our own deliberate fault.  
 We are truly sorry, and repent of all our sins.  
 For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, who died for us, forgive us  
 all that is past;  
 and grant that we may serve you in newness of life to the glory of  
 your name.  
 Amen.**

Almighty God,  
 who in Jesus Christ has given us  
 a kingdom that cannot be destroyed,  
 forgive you your sins,  
 open your eyes to God's truth,  
 strengthen you to do God's will  
 and give you the joy of his kingdom,  
 through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

## **THE COLLECT**

Merciful God,  
 you have prepared for those who love you  
 such good things as pass our understanding:  
 pour into our hearts such love toward you  
 that we, loving you in all things and above all things,  
 may obtain your promises,  
 which exceed all that we can desire;  
 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 for ever. **Amen**

## **READING : Romans 8: 12-25**

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**(At home, please read Matthew 13: 24-30, 36-43)**

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## REFLECTION

Paul focuses on the labours of a mother as an image to explain how God is at work in the world. Labours that promise the Kingdom of God coming closer to us and Jesus Christ's promises come closer to fulfilment. Any experience of sheer hard physical and mental work, whether in the job you do, or something that took a lot of effort to achieve, and if you have been through childbirth, you will recognise the force of this analogy.

"I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us," but what has your attention--your present sufferings, today's anxiety, or the promise of something miraculous that will be revealed."

But where is our focus today?

Should we be working harder or seeing better results of our work? Have we laboured very hard?

Is the kingdom of God in our midst?

In our Christian faith, we hear that we are children of God, heirs to eternal life. Do we think about that deeply and with conviction?

Do we feel adopted and part of a loving family? We are very blessed in the way our Berrow Benefice works together and for each other. We pool our gifts and talents and support one another in many different ways. At times, the sheer effort of just maintaining our precious Grade 2\* listed buildings may feel like a burden of our labours.

We human beings are spiritual; there is a spiritual component in all human beings throughout the globe, and when Christ's spirit touches our spirit, our spirit comes alive. When the Spirit of Christ is poured into our spirit, when Christ's love is poured into my love, it changes everything about you and me. That spirit has been very much alive and evident over these last few months especially. That aspect of our lives also can cost a great deal of effort and labour to maintain a freshness and desire to continue the journey with God and to seek God's Kingdom on earth.

In Romans reading, our defects of character are considered by Paul. When God's Spirit is alive in us, we are motivated to change those pieces of our personality. We look to the Spirit to motivates us to have

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“the courage to change the things we can”. We hear the prayer, “Grant us the serenity to accept the things we cannot change; the courage to change the things we can; and the wisdom to know the difference.”

We have an inheritance that cannot be destroyed with Jesus Christ, that we can enjoy the security, happiness and hope given to us.

Do you allow the Holy Spirit to guide your decisions?

When the Spirit of God gets inside of you, you become convinced you are a deeply loved child of God and that fans the fires of hope and douses the ashes of doubt and despair. We can get behind those decisions that may be difficult but have widely consulted and carefully considered.

When we are close to God and comfortable in being close with God, we know He knows your name and knows the numbers of hairs in your head. Paul is clear that when we are led by the Spirit of Christ, we *know* we are children of God and therefore we *know* we are God's heirs.

“Provided that we suffer with him and therefore are glorified with him.” Genuine love always suffers with and for people in the family. The love of Christ poured into our hearts transforms the kind of love that we have inside of us and our love now begins to reach out to people in their suffering.

Romans 8:26, The Spirit intercedes deeply for us and teaches us to pray, to converse with God. When you know that you are a child of God, you learn to talk with God as a close friend. We learn how to pray and we learn to talk with God often, just as we would with a close friend.

In the weeks and months ahead, we'll face many challenges. Paul talks as forthrightly as possible about the suffering of humanity and creation as together we await the revealing of what we are in Christ, that is, children of God.

This "eager expectation" Paul refers to in 8:19 indicates the tension between the two experiences of hope and the state of the world we live in. The state of our faith, our churches, our Diocese and how we feel at this time.

We may have to suffer from knowing what the world could be, even as we live in the world as it is. In Matthews Gospel parable, the field was planted with good seed. It was going to be so beautiful as it grew to maturity, but an enemy sowed weeds among the wheat, and even as the crop matured, the field was a mess; the crop was threatened, and the workers nearly made things worse by trying to take control of the situation. At the owner's insistence, the field hands endure the wait between weeds appearing and a crop maturing. We often have to keep hold of hope and know that one day things will sort themselves out.

In the parable of the weeds and wheat, we are assured that God will judge all of us one day. How will you and I be judged on what we have achieved?

We don't know what the long-term future holds for anyone. In this present time, with an ageing and declining congregation in the Worcester Diocese, plus the financial challenges, we may have to see more changes than we ever envisaged in the way we structure our churches, our mission in the parishes and our deaneries. In seeking a healthy and sustainable church, many things may have to be transformed and as we journey on as disciples of Jesus Christ, working together as Kingdom People, we may have to be prepared for innovation, and experimentation. Rooted in our faith in God, we step out with hope.

Even so, we people of faith wait with a mixture of eagerness and sheer endurance, we hope for what we do not see.

**Amen.**

## **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Let us pray to our loving and merciful God.

Lord our God, we pray to you, joining the cycle of prayers said throughout the world. We rejoice in your upholding, your mercy and forgiveness. May we learn to look with your vision and act with your deep compassion.

*(pause)*

Lord in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer**

Lord our God,  
Be present in all our meetings, discussions and negotiations, where feelings may feel injured and lives profoundly affected by decisions made. We pray for good communication, to feel listened to and an understanding that hard decisions are being made because of the difficulties faced.

*(pause)*

Lord in your mercy,  
**Hear our prayer**

Lord our God,  
We pray for our community and the problems families are facing at this present time. We pray for any wounds of conflicts to be healed, and people not to be crushed by tragedy; we pray for any seeking justice in court or through the law. May the decisions made be just and fair, with the principles of justice and mercy upheld.

*(pause)*

Lord in your mercy.  
**Hear our prayer**

Lord our God,  
We pray for those who feel they have a raw deal in life; for those with ongoing health problems, and any caught up in war, tensions within nations and difficult times which challenges their courage. We pray for a just and realistic outcome, where support is given and healing offered for those who suffer.

*(pause)*

Lord in your mercy  
**Hear our prayer**

Lord our God,  
We pray for those who have died, and for those who are mourning. Give each a sense of comfort and send people to come alongside them in their hour of need. We give thanks for all who have died and the good they achieved in their lives.

*(pause)*

Lord in your mercy,  
**Hear our prayer.**

***Please ask for any additional prayers***

**Merciful Father,  
accept these prayers for the sake of your Son,  
our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen**

## **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

Gathering our prayers and praises into one,  
let us pray with confidence as our Saviour taught us.

**Our Father,  
which art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name;  
thy kingdom come;  
thy will be done ;  
in earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation;  
but deliver us from evil;  
for thine is the kingdom,  
the power and the glory,  
for ever and ever. Amen.**

## **THE PEACE**

We are all one in Christ Jesus.  
We belong to him through faith,  
heirs of the promise of the Spirit of peace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.  
**and also with you.**

## **THE APOSTLES' CREED**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.  
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.**



On the third day he rose again;  
 he ascended into heaven,  
 he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
 and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
 the holy catholic Church,  
 the communion of saints,  
 the forgiveness of sins,  
 the resurrection of the body,  
 and the life everlasting.  
 Amen.

### THE THANKSGIVING PRAYER

The Lord be with you.  
**And also with you.**  
 Lift up your hearts  
**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
**It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

Father, you made the world and love your creation.  
 You gave your Son Jesus Christ to be our Saviour.  
 His dying and rising have set us free from sin and death. And so we  
 gladly thank you,  
 With saints and angels praising you, and saying:

**Holy, holy, holy, Lord,**  
**God of power and might,**  
**heaven and earth are full of your glory.**  
**Hosanna, in the highest.**  
**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**  
**Hosanna, in the highest.**

We praise and bless you, loving Father,  
 Through Jesus Christ, our Lord;  
 And as we obey his command,  
 Send your Holy Spirit that broken bread and wine outpoured  
 May be to us the body and blood of your dear Son.



Here is the table set for a special meal.

On the night before he died he had supper with his friends  
And taking bread, he praised you.  
He broke the bread, gave it to them and said:  
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;  
Do this in remembrance of me.

When supper was ended he took a cup of wine.  
Again he praised you, gave it to them and said:  
Drink this all of you;  
This is my blood of the new covenant,  
Which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.  
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.  
So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did, in him we plead with  
confidence his sacrifice  
Made once upon the cross.  
Bringing before you the bread of life and cup of salvation,  
We proclaim his death and resurrection  
Until he comes in glory.  
Great is the mystery of faith

**Christ has died:**  
**Christ is risen:**  
**Christ will come again.**

Lord of all life,  
Help us work together for that day  
When your kingdom comes  
And justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth.

Look with favour on your people,  
Gather into your loving arms with St Faith, St John the Baptist, St  
Thomas of Canterbury with St Peter and St Paul and all the Saints to  
feast at your table in heaven.  
Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ,  
In the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
All honour and glory are yours, O loving Father,  
For ever and ever.  
**Amen.**

**Jesus, Lamb of God  
have mercy on us.  
Jesus, bearer of our sins,  
have mercy on us.  
Jesus, redeemer of the world,  
grant us peace.**

**Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.  
Therefore let us keep the feast**

**(consume)**

### **POST COMMUNION PRAYER**

**God of our pilgrimage,  
you have led us to the living water:  
refresh and sustain us  
as we go forward on our journey,  
in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.**

**We thank you, Lord, that you have fed us in this physical and  
spiritual sacrament,  
united us with Christ,  
and given us a foretaste of the heavenly banquet prepared for all  
peoples. Amen.**

### **THE GLORIA IN EXCELSIS**

**Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth.  
Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father,  
we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,  
Lord God, Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world:  
have mercy on us;  
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:  
receive our prayer.**

**For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father.  
Amen.**

## **THE BLESSING**

May the father from whom every family  
in earth and heaven receives its name  
strengthen you with his Spirit  
so that hrist may dwell in your hearts;  
and the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you, and remain with you always.  
**Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.  
**In the name of Christ. Amen**