



**Thursday Prayer for 19<sup>th</sup> September 2024**

**In Ely Cathedral and on Zoom 10.30am**



**LIVING  
IN LOVE  
& FAITH**

**Zoom link:**

**<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85209298628?pwd=VDTrciGq12BVz8luyEa34M6BRLZDIK.1>**

**or if it has to be written in :**

**Meeting ID: 852 0929 8628**

**Passcode: 080127    The service starts at 10.30am**

**Our Focus this month: 'Nurturing Faith'.**

**Opening Prayer:**

**Father, we pray for Hazel and all the members in Ely. May your light shine on us, in our lives and the work we do in the Diocese. We pray for all members around the world. Lord be with each one of us in every part of our lives, encouraging us and leading us, sheltering us and nurturing us so we may work to your praise and glory. We reach out as your hands across the world. We thank you Lord. Amen.**

**Our Reading is 'Mark 8:27-38'**

<sup>27</sup> Jesus and his disciples went on to the villages around Caesarea Philippi. On the way he asked them, "Who do people say I am?"

<sup>28</sup> They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets." <sup>29</sup> "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" Peter answered, "You are the Messiah." <sup>30</sup> Jesus warned them not to tell anyone about him.

<sup>31</sup> He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again. <sup>32</sup> He spoke plainly about this, and Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him.

<sup>33</sup> But when Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, he rebuked Peter. "Get behind me, Satan!" he said. "You do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns."

<sup>34</sup> Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. <sup>35</sup> For whoever wants to save their life<sup>[b]</sup> will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it. <sup>36</sup> What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? <sup>37</sup> Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul? <sup>38</sup> If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels."

## Reflection



The 2024 symbol for  
Creationtide

This month is marked as Creationtide in the church calendar, when one of the things we are asked to think about is the nurture of our world. We are all aware of the care and nurture needed to allow seedlings, such as the one in the picture, to grow to maturity. It will need water, food, love and protection. Note the shape of the hands creating a protective heart shape around the tiny plant. Our theme this month is **Nurturing Faith**, but how can we do that? It will be much like the nurturing care needed for that young seedling.

You have each been given a bulb. Hold it in your palm as you listen as a reminder of nurturing something.

In the Bible passage I guess Jesus is “nurturing” his followers, by feeding them with His teaching. He wants first his disciples, then the crowd as a whole, to understand. A tough lesson for most I am sure. How many would be willing to loose their lives for Jesus and the gospel! As it turned out in those early days, not many. But later, after the shock of Jesus’ death, the lessons that he had taught during his life began to be understood, and many were ready to give their lives for the message because of the nurture of the fledgeling church by the early disciples, particularly Paul.



How can we help others to grow their faith?

Encouragement is very important so they don’t feel alone. And patience to answer truthfully when they ask questions.

Many new to faith have not had personal experience in praying and may have all sorts of hang-ups about what they should say in a prayer and the correct posture for prayer. They may have the Victorian vision of a child kneeling beside the bed, saying prayers by rote, or in church kneeling with head bowed to pray. Releasing them from such stereotypes can be very liberating.

There is absolutely nothing wrong with those ideas as long as a person is comfortable, but I remember, probably about 40 years ago, hearing about “kitchen sink” prayers – freedom to talk to God whenever and wherever you are, and whatever you are doing – and just talking to Him!

They may also need encouragement to read the Bible by showing different versions that can speak to an individual – even perhaps using such as a graphic Bible for young teenagers. They are not a totally new idea. My father was in the printing trade and I have copies of the four gospels in pictures that he printed when I was about 10 or 12, 60 or more years ago!

As Mothers' Union members much has been done to show God's love for everyone by putting our "Faith into Action". We reach out through Mother & Toddler groups, in prisons, parenting courses and when we welcome new members into our Branches in this country. The global work that goes on in our name, helping women to reach their true potential with literacy groups, and raising awareness of the damaging effects on society of violence against women through the "Rise Up" campaign, all show the world how we "cherish" all people equally – showing that all are equal in the sight of God.

The Away From It All holiday schemes reach out to families who are struggling with everyday life and who will benefit from doing something together that they usually have never done before.

We tend to the needs of others through our work to support the various "refuges" in practical ways such as providing the basics to make life more liveable for mothers and children escaping dangerous situations in their homes, and providing gift vouchers etc at Christmas for prisoner and refuge families. And there are our many knitting projects that produce items to bring comfort to the elderly, premature babies and teddies for children who have faced difficult circumstances.

We are an organisation founded on prayer and through prayers we ask God to send His promised "water of life" through the Holy Spirit to all those who seek to follow the teaching of Jesus. It won't be easy for them. We would hope that by our actions they will feel safe to ask questions and that the Holy Spirit will also help each one of us in our work.

To close our reflection time, take the bulb you have been given and hold it in your hands like the illustration, creating a heart shape around it, and hold it as we say together the prayer for our Focus this month – Nurturing Faith:

**'Our Heavenly King, may we treat those for whom we care as though we were serving Christ. We thank you for the nurturing of faith in families and individuals by Mothers' Union throughout the world. We pray for those with questions of faith; whose lives are dry without God. Make us eager to offer the water of life that many may drink and be refreshed by the Spirit. May we see the image of God in the face of our neighbour and lovingly care for their needs as though we were serving Christ. Amen'**

In our hymn today, I translate the words "Tell out" as "shout out" to pass on the message about God.

## Hymn

**1. Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord!  
Unnumbered blessings give my spirit voice;  
Tender to me the promise of His Word;  
In God my Saviour shall my heart rejoice.**

**2. Tell out, my soul, the greatness of His  
name!  
Make known His might, the deeds His arm  
has done;  
His mercy sure, from age to age the same;  
His holy Name, the Lord, the mighty One.**

**3. Tell out, my soul, the greatness of His  
might!  
Powers and dominions lay their glory by;  
Proud hearts and stubborn wills are put to  
flight;  
The hungry fed, the humble lifted high.**

**4. Tell out, my soul, the glories of His Word!  
Firm is His promise, and His mercy sure.  
Tell out my soul, the greatness of the Lord  
To children's children and forevermore!**

### **We end our time together in prayer.**

We pray for the worldwide work of the Mothers' Union; Sheran Harper our Worldwide President; Our Chief Executive, Bev Jullien; and all who work in Mary Sumner House; Also we pray for our President Hazel, the Trustees in our Diocese and all the Task Group Leaders. In our Province of Canterbury we pray for Kathryn Anderson, our Provincial President, and Julia Jamieson our Zonal Trustee.

We remember and pray for our Worldwide Links:

Lusaka in Zambia; Shyogwe in Rwanda; Sokoto & Ikka in Nigeria; Karimnager in India;  
Plus the Diocesan Links with Kigali & Vellore

In our Wave of Prayer for today we pray especially for Buye in Burundi; Sebei in Uganda; Abakaliki & Ekiti-Oke in Nigeria; Southwell & Nottingham in England and Belize

### **We say together The Mothers' Union Prayer**

**Loving Lord, We thank you for your love so freely given to us all.**

**We pray for families around the world.**

**Bless the work of the Mothers' Union as we seek to share your love through the encouragement, strengthening and support of marriage and family life.**

**Empowered by your Spirit, may we be united in prayer and worship, and in love and service, reach out as your hands across the world. In Jesus' name. Amen**

### **We say together The Thursday Prayer**

**Heavenly Father, you have called us apart to share in a worldwide fellowship of Christians united in prayer. Take our prayers we humbly ask, fill them with your love and power, and use them in the cause of your glorious kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen**

**Let us close by saying the Grace**

**May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy spirit, be with us all this day, and evermore.**

**Amen**

