



THY
KINGDOM
COME



PRAYER JOURNAL





This prayer journal uses three different translations of the Lord's Prayer, because our readers in different places and denominations will be familiar with different versions. We trust that the variety will bring blessing and refreshment to everyone.

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INTRODUCTION

This year marks the tenth anniversary of *Thy Kingdom Come* – a worldwide prayer movement inviting Christians around the world to intentional prayer from Ascension to Pentecost.

Since its launch by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York in 2016, Christians from 172 countries and more than 85 different denominations and traditions have taken part in praying for friends and family to come to faith in Jesus Christ.

These days have always been full of expectation and anticipation. As the Lord Jesus ascended, He promised the gift of the Holy Spirit to enable the disciples to be witnesses.

As they waited for the promise to be fulfilled, they devoted themselves constantly to prayer (Acts 1:14). So, the renewed call across the church is to set these days apart to pray, and for each individual to pray for five people to come to know the love and peace of Jesus Christ.

Below is space to write the names of five people that you will be praying for throughout *Thy Kingdom Come*:

1

2

3

4

5

Thy Kingdom Come always focuses on praying for people to know the love of God in Jesus Christ for themselves.

However, this year, fittingly, the focus is on the very prayer our Lord and Saviour, Jesus, taught His disciples to pray: the Lord's Prayer.

The prayer Jesus taught us transcends the ages, uniting people across different denominations, generations and nations. We believe that now, more than ever, we need to pray '*Thy Kingdom Come*' over our homes, communities, nations, and our world.

We are delighted that this year's Prayer Journal features contributions from a range of voices across different denominations and traditions.

Each day's reflection will focus on a line of the Lord's Prayer and include a time to pause and pray for your five, in keeping with that day's theme.

There is also space each day for your own notes. Did a phrase jump out at you? Did God bring something to your mind as you prayed that day? Make a note so that you can remember what God has been saying to you through your reading and your prayers.

Our hopes and prayers are that this year, we will experience more of God's Kingdom coming '*On earth as it is in heaven*': yes, for ourselves, but especially in the lives of those for whom we are praying.



OUR FATHER IN HEAVEN

The Reverend Canon Chris Russell

VICAR OF ST DIONIS, PARSONS GREEN AND THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY'S FORMER ADVISER FOR EVANGELISM AND WITNESS, CHURCH OF ENGLAND

‘Our Father in heaven...’

Of course, life isn't about money, status, influence, or possessions. It's about the relationships that make us. And it's about relationships because of who and how God is.

‘Our Father in heaven...’

To pray is to relate. With these four words, we enter into Christian prayer. With these four words, we state who we are and, most importantly, who God is.

These are the most regularly spoken words every day throughout the world in over 7,000 languages, in over 190 countries, across prisons and palaces, on ships and down mines, by children learning how to speak and those taking their final breath.

And whether amongst thousands, or alone, we begin this family prayer, the prayer Jesus put on our lips, the same way, ‘our Father’.

This is not ‘my’, but ‘our’. This is a relationship we share. We are not alone – but part of a family. We might be on our own, but we are not solitary – we are part of a family, a people who share the same origin, the same blood line.

HALLOWED BE THY NAME

Cardinal Vincent Nichols

*ARCHBISHOP OF WESTMINSTER AND PRESIDENT OF THE
CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF ENGLAND AND WALES*

The first part of the Our Father ends with the words ‘on earth as it is in heaven’.

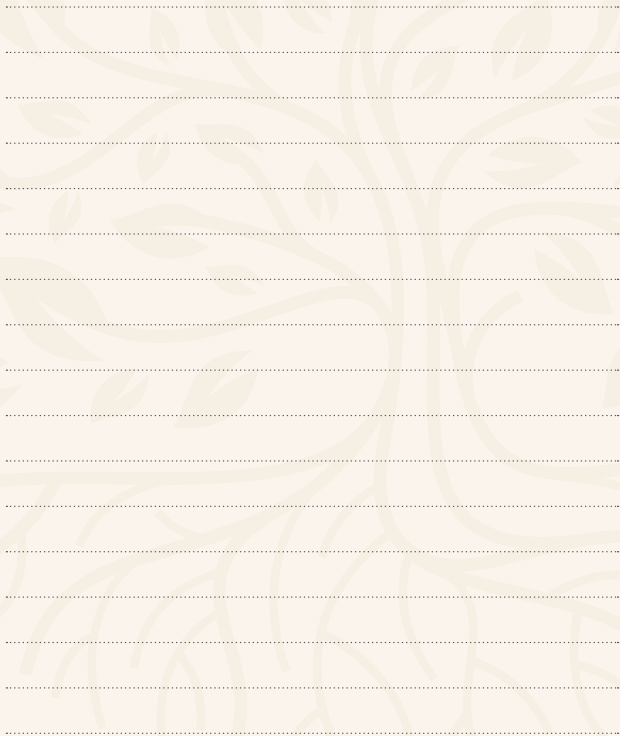
Try adding these words to each of the opening phrases of the prayer. So, today’s prayer will read: ‘**Hallowed be thy name on earth as it is in heaven.**’

This can help us to know what it is we are praying for today.

As far as we can understand, heaven is the reality of total prayer and praise of God. In heaven, God’s name is held holy. The angels sing ‘**Holy, holy, holy!**’ Every notion and image of heaven is centered round the all-encompassing holiness of God in whom everything is fulfilled.

So, we strive, as best we can, to make the praise of God the centre of our lives, the most important thing we can secure. We have been created to praise God, to hallow His name. This is the greatest source of joy: to bow in humble adoration and proclaim: ‘My God how great Thou art.’

To profane the name of God is to denigrate ourselves and each other. It undermines the very dignity of each person. Life is harsher when the name of God is used casually or even aggressively.



A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing, set against a background of stylized leaves and branches.

Pray for Five:

Today, let's pray for an increasing reverence for God's name, for a recognition that God is at the heart of everything that is good in this life. Especially, let's pray these things for our five people. Hallowed be Thy name.

THY KINGDOM COME

The Rt Reverend Rose Hudson-Wilkin

THE BISHOP OF DOVER, CHURCH OF ENGLAND

When we think of ‘Kingdom’ we might picture rulers: Kings, Queens, Presidents, someone who is in charge with a domain to rule over. But Jesus is showing us through The Lord’s Prayer something different and truly transformational.

The words, ‘Thy Kingdom Come’ are about each one of us acknowledging that this is a work of faith that we seek to live. It is not about us and our human efforts. It is about the divine God working in us, by the Holy Spirit, to bring about transformation of our world and renewal of our communities. To bring about a new Kingdom, in which God is the true ruler, the real King who is in overall charge of the world.

In many ways, those of my ancestors who were enslaved were right. They suffered greatly, but in their suffering, they looked up. They saw and believed that ultimately, God was in charge, and one day His justice would reign on earth as it reigns in heaven. In their living out of the faith, they were witnessing to their friends and family about the God who truly reigns.

‘Thy Kingdom Come’ is about the new hope that the prophet Isaiah spoke about: ‘*God is doing a new thing ... He will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert*’ (Isaiah 43:19). In other words, unlike the promises of too many in our society who often

THY WILL BE DONE, ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN

Helina Huskha Yeptho

*THE COMMUNITY OF ST ANSELM**

‘Thy will be done, on earth as in heaven’ is a prayer for God’s Kingdom to be experienced on earth. It expresses both a longing for and submission to God’s overarching plan. It cries out for that plan to unfold for us to know His love and share it with those who have yet to hear the gospel. This petition calls us to live Christ-like lives in our daily living and to continue Jesus’ mission of spreading the good news.

Growing up in a Baptist church in Nagaland, a small state in the North-East of India, I was keenly aware of belonging to a minority faith in a country where Christians make up about 2.3% of the population. The vision of the Nagaland Baptist Church Council, encapsulated in the slogan ‘Nagaland for Christ,’ birthed in me a profound desire to know Christ deeply and share His love with others. My great-grandparents were animists, worshipping nature, but Christian missionaries brought the gospel to my people, introducing us to the love of Christ and transforming our lives. Today, Nagaland stands as a Christian-majority state, a testament to their prayers and faithful mission.

‘Thy will be done, on earth as in heaven’ echoes this calling to

GIVE US TODAY OUR DAILY BREAD

The Reverend Canon Jean Kerr

THY KINGDOM COME TEAM, CHURCH OF ENGLAND

The bread was in my hand ready to pop into the toaster on a wet grey morning when I paused and silently gave thanks to God for His provision.

I went to move on when one of those spiritual nudges happened and the almost-whisper of God could be heard, 'Our daily bread: not yours but ours'.

And the bread was laid back on the table:

Bread for the day and bread for the journey.
Bread for our yearning that others might eat.
Bread for the needy and bread for the friend.
Bread for the anxious, longing it would end.
Bread for the dying so grace-filled and sweet.
Bread for the starving, those merely surviving.
Bread for the migrant, a new world in sight?
Bread for the war zone and places of plight.
Bread on our streets where knives now bring fright.
Bread in the boardroom with power and might.
Bread in the prison often hidden from sight.
Bread in our families, though not all will eat.
Bread in our lives now so ready to share.

FORGIVE US OUR SINS

His Eminence Archbishop Angaelos

*COPTIC ORTHODOX ARCHBISHOP OF LONDON AND
PAPAL LEGATE TO THE UNITED KINGDOM*

One of the greatest problems that we encounter in the world today is guilt: whether it's guilt that is placed upon us; guilt that we place on ourselves; or, even more tragically, guilt that we burden others with. God knew this. He knew that, when we fell as humanity in Adam and Eve, that we would be carrying guilt, and that guilt deprived us of His kingdom. There was no way back for us. There was nothing we could do, and the only way to remove that was for Him to come in the Incarnation, to reclaim us, to restore us, to renew us, and to bring us back to Himself.

One of the major Sacraments we have in the Coptic Orthodox Church is that of repentance and confession. And that is comprised of three components:

We confess to ourselves that we have made a mistake.

We pray to our holy blessed and loving Father, and say to Him, as the prodigal son did, 'I have sinned against you. I am repenting. I am returning. I need my sins to be forgiven'.

We go to a father of confession to confess and, through that, receive an absolution.

Through this process He forgives us, and that is the beautiful gift of God to us. It is forgiveness.

AS WE FORGIVE THOSE WHO SIN AGAINST US

Ray and Vi Donovan MBE

*FOUNDERS OF THE CHRIS DONOVAN TRUST**

God is crying out for everyone to be saved; He even sent His son Jesus to die on a cross so we can be forgiven, be set free from sin and have a wonderful relationship with our loving heavenly Father.

A lot of people say, 'I can never forgive... you don't know what that person did to me.' It's easy to feel that by not forgiving them you have some kind power over them. That may make you feel good at that time. It can feel like forgiving is to minimise what has happened.

However, not forgiving is like drinking a glass of poison in the hope it will kill the person that hurt you, but you are actually only destroying yourself and your relationship with our loving God.

God gives us a choice – and like all His choices, there are consequences to them. We can forgive and live in peace and have a stronger love for Him, or not forgive and live in anger, rage and hatred. These feelings can put a blockage between us and our Lord.

It is like wearing a lead plate apron like those that are used to stop X-rays in hospitals. Our unforgiveness will become a blockage between us and the freedom God wants us to live in.

It's not Christ-like or healthy to live like this.

To forgive is not saying that what they did is ok, it's saying: 'I hand

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over the bad feelings that I am holding against this person at the foot of the cross.’ That is how we start to set ourselves free from bitterness and hatred. It’s not easy. It’s not a one-off action. It’s a process – which God enables at every step.

However, our experience is that forgiveness is setting the prisoner free ... and then discovering that the prisoner was ourself.

To pray, ‘forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us’, is to join in with God’s work of setting us free.

Amen.

Pray for Five:

Please pray for your five people today – that they will discover God’s forgiveness in their own lives and be enabled to forgive others.

*In 2001 Ray and Vi’s son, Chris was murdered in an unprovoked attack. They knew they had to forgive the people that killed him, and by God’s grace, in their own words, they ‘made the right choice’ and were able to forgive the people that killed him and to walk in freedom. www.chrisdonovantrust.org

AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION

The Reverend Canon Kate Wharton

VICAR OF ST. BART'S CHURCH ROBY, LIVERPOOL,
CHURCH OF ENGLAND

When we think of 'temptation', we often think of an advert for ice cream, or expensive shoes. 'Temptation' has morphed into a word for all things 'naughty but nice': less about the avoidance of sin and more about a little treat because I'm worth it.

When Jesus taught us to pray the words, '*and lead us not into temptation*', this was not exactly what He had in mind.

Hebrews 4:15 says: '*For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathise with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are – yet he did not sin.*'

I find it extremely comforting to be reminded that Jesus was tempted. He is human as well as divine, and that means that He understands our human struggles. He knows what it is to feel that pull towards things that aren't good or healthy for us. And yet: Jesus never sinned, and He shows us what a sinless human life can look like.

This petition in the Lord's Prayer earths this in reality. We pray that God will lead us away from temptation; that when it comes our way, as it surely will, we will have the strength to turn away and turn to Him.

BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL

The Most Reverend Andrew Chan

ARCHBISHOP OF HONG KONG, ANGLICAN COMMUNION

‘But deliver us from evil’, ends the Lord’s Prayer in some traditions, before the commonly used doxology in praise of God. This is the last actual petition in the Lord’s Prayer, the last thing that we ask for after the first ‘Hallowed be thy name’.

It is apt that we end our petitions with this line, because no matter how much goodness we pray for, evil only has to appeal to our old fallen nature to undo all of it, often with such speed that the goodness seems insignificant in hindsight. This fickleness and ease for things to decay is readily seen with human endeavours: what goodwill and trust took generations to build can be wasted away with a few years of scandals; entire cities can be swept away in floods or flames within days; and even the church, with its seed of holy goodness, has often, over the centuries, fallen far short of God’s way and will.

‘But deliver us from evil’ is the acknowledgement that we, as humans, are still constantly in danger from the evil one, and that it is in God that we find our deliverance. ‘But deliver us from evil’ as the final petition of the Lord’s Prayer, asks for God’s mercy on us, that we may reject our old fallen nature, and turn towards Christ and be renewed. For it is by Christ, not our own power, that we can truly be transformed from our fallen death to a renewed life.

FOR THINE IS THE KINGDOM, THE POWER AND THE GLORY, FOR EVER AND EVER. AMEN.

Bishop Mike Royal

GENERAL SECRETARY, CHURCHES TOGETHER IN ENGLAND

Before Jesus ascended to heaven His disciples asked Him ‘*Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?*’ He said to them: ‘*It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by His own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.*’ (Acts 1:6-8 NIV)

His disciples were consumed by their nation being restored to freedom from Roman tyranny. Jesus invites them to discover the authority they have as citizens of ‘the Kingdom’, one that’s not maintained by armies or dictators. The ‘upside down’ kingdom where the last are first, the weak are made strong and the lost find purpose.

He invites us not to seek human power but rather the power of the Holy Spirit that was promised to the church. A movement that literally turned Jerusalem upside down. A ‘power’ that He gave them and gives us a fresh boldness to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ.

PENTECOST – COME HOLY SPIRIT.

Jonathan Bryan

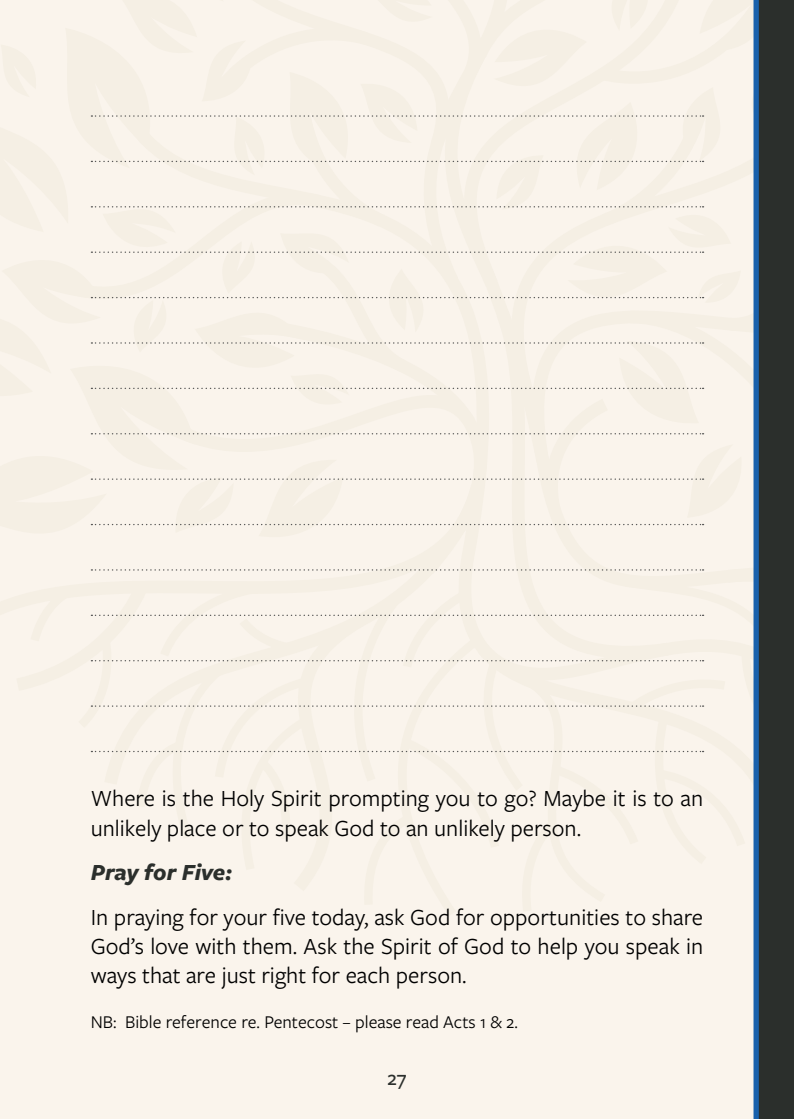
AUTHOR OF 'EYE CAN WRITE' AND FOUNDER OF TEACH US TOO

Happy birthday to the church!

The good news of Pentecost is that everyone is invited to the party. When the Holy Spirit came, people were gathered from all over the known world, 'both Jews and converts to Judaism'; in other words, people who were born Gentiles. Through enabling the disciples to speak the different languages of the people there, the Holy Spirit was including those on the margins and propelling them as the first converts to following Jesus.

Who is unlikely in your community? As a non-speaking disabled person, I know first-hand the beauty of being included in Jesus' church, and that God uses everyone to further His kingdom. The Holy Spirit speaks our language, and then uses us to reach out and communicate God to others.

At that first Pentecost, none of it happened in a vacuum. For the days previously the disciples had been devoting themselves to prayer and waiting. Having been taught the Lord's Prayer by Jesus, this would surely have been the bedrock on which Pentecost was founded. The Holy Spirit fills us up and sends us out of the comfort and security of our metaphorical upper room and expands our horizons.



A series of 20 horizontal dotted lines for writing, set against a background of a faint, stylized tree with leaves.

Where is the Holy Spirit prompting you to go? Maybe it is to an unlikely place or to speak God to an unlikely person.

Pray for Five:

In praying for your five today, ask God for opportunities to share God’s love with them. Ask the Spirit of God to help you speak in ways that are just right for each person.

NB: Bible reference re. Pentecost – please read Acts 1 & 2.



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