

PRAYERS, 16 AUGUST 2020

This weekend, we commemorate the 75th anniversary of VJ Day, and the end of the Second World War.

We know Lord something of the evil of that conflict, the pain and the suffering.
We have seen the pictures, watched the films, listened to the stories.
We cannot really imagine what people went through, nor can we understand how human beings can treat other humans with such cruelty.
We have seen the images of the atomic bombs, the power of destruction.

We pray for those who fought and died. For those from our parishes who went to War, those commemorated on our memorials. For those who died, for those who suffered, for all who served.

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old,
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun, and in the morning
We will remember them.

We will remember them.

God our Father,
in the dying and rising of your Son Jesus Christ,
you have brought life and salvation out of cruelty and death.
We mark Victory in Japan
in gratitude for the courage of the Allied forces
who suffered for freedom in the Far East campaign
and in sorrow for all that hinders the coming of your kingdom of peace.
Give us wisdom to learn from the bitter memories of war,
and hearts that long for the unity of all nations.
We ask all this in the name of Jesus,
in whom there is no east or west, no north or south,
but one fellowship of love across the whole earth.
Amen.

As we pray for them, we remember those who serve today:

O Lord God of Hosts,
stretch forth, we pray, your almighty arm
to strengthen and protect our service men and women.
Support them in times of conflict,
and in their rest and training keep them safe from all evil;
endue them with courage and loyalty;

and grant that in all things they may serve without reproach;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

We pray too for the Royal British Legion, the Burma Star Association, the International Red Cross, charities working with the armed forces and their families, those working with those who have been prisoners of war. We pray for all those who bear the scars of war today. We pray for those who work to bring different communities together, the twinning links that have been established across the world. We know, Lord, there is so much that divides us, so much racial hatred and division. Help us Lord, to work for a better world.

The inscription on the Kohima Memorial reads:

“When you go home, tell them of us and say ‘For your tomorrow, we gave our today.’”

O God, who would fold both heaven and earth in a single peace;
may the design of your great love lighten
upon the waste of our wraths and sorrows
and give peace to your church, peace among nations,
peace in our dwellings and peace in our hearts;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

We pray for our leaders. For Her Majesty The Queen and members of the Royal Family. For the Prime Minister and his government. For our Members of Parliament and those in local government. For leaders across this world, for those working for peace, those working for the future of humanity. For wisdom and vision as we tackle climate change, the virus, the pressures of migration and the flow of people, the economic woes now facing the world. Help us Lord to have strength, to work and to pray.

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

We pray for our young people. For those who received exam results last week, especially if they don't seem to be fair. For those who have decisions to make about their future, and those who are so depressed they can't see any future. Be with them, their parents, teachers, schools and universities, and guide them, we pray. For those who have finished school and university and are struggling to find work, for those who are frightened and bored.

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

We pray for the life of our churches. For friends on holiday, for those who are worshipping at home. For decisions to be made as to our worship in the next few weeks. For Shaun and Georgina as they prepare for their wedding at St Edmund's next Saturday. For all those we love, and hold in our prayers. For those who are ill ...

For those in our continuing prayers ...

For those who have died ...

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

We finish our prayers with the words of Minnie Louise Haskins, a poem used by King George VI in several of his wartime broadcasts

And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year:

“Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown.”

And he replied:

“Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the Hand of God.

That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way.”

So I went forth, and finding the Hand of God, trod gladly into the night.

And He led me towards the hills and the breaking of day in the lone East.

Merciful Father,

accept these prayers, for the sake of your son, our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Amen.