

THIS IS AVAILABLE AS A VIDEO [HERE](#)

PART 1 – OPENING PRAYERS

GREETING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Christ is risen, alleluia

He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

SENTENCE OF SCRIPTURE

‘Those who love me will keep my word,’ Jesus promises, ‘and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them.’

John 14.23

PRAYER OF PREPARATION

Let us pray

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 Christ our Lord. Amen.**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Christ the Son of God has been revealed as a light to the nations.

Let us bring our darkness to his light, confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

Merciful God,

**our maker and our judge,
we have sinned against you
in thought, word, and deed,
and in what we have failed to do:
we have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves;
we repent, and are sorry for all our sins.**

Father, forgive us.

**Strengthen us to love and obey you
in newness of life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Almighty God,

who has promised forgiveness to all who turn to him in faith:

pardon you and set you free from all your sins,

strengthen you in all goodness

and keep you in eternal life,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

THE APOSTLES CREED

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father;
from there 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.****

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God,
you have prepared for those who love you
joys beyond our understanding;
pour into our hearts such love for you,
that, loving you above all else,
we may obtain your promises
that exceed all we can desire;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

PAUSE VIDEO

PART 2 CHILDREN'S STORY AND 2 VIDEOS, ONE FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN, AND ANOTHER FOR OLDER CHILDREN AND ADULTS BY Sam White AND DOWNLOADABLE MATERIAL [HERE](#)

PART 3 LOOK UP AND READ THROUGH THE READINGS, LISTEN TO THE SERMON PODCAST (READ ALONG IF YOU WISH) BYF REV JENNIE, AND PRAY THE INTERCESSIONS, TODAY BY PAM TAYLOR.

READINGS

Acts 17:22-31
Gospel: John 14:15-21

*Let us pray
Through the written word,
and the spoken word,
may we know your Living Word
Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen*

I am on your side

One Mum got tired of nagging her teenage son about the state of his room.
So she left a note on his pillow one day.
The note read: 'Dear Mike, I hate being in a mess like this all the time.
Please tidy me up. Signed, Your Room.'

She found a reply on the pillow next day,
'Dear Room, I've tidied you up.
Now please shut up because you're beginning to sound just like my Mum.'

Personal relationships become complex where both sides are not equal.
And not all personal relationships are equal,
like a parent and child as the parent has more power in their roles of being leader or guide.

In vexatious situations, it may seem that you are on opposing sides when the child does not want to hear what counsel the parent has to offer.
The parent's words sound like a criticism, or rejection, when what they are trying to say is
I am on your side, and I want to see you thrive.

I am on your side.
Powerful words, if they are true, if we believe them amid a vexatious situation.

Having somebody on our side, somebody who doesn't require that we always agree with them
or have to bend ourselves to their agenda,
is a remarkable gift.

Jesus offers this to his friends before he is taken from them.

In today's passage he tells them that

he "*will ask the Father,
and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever.
This is the Spirit of truth....*"

Advocates and accusers

It is very comforting and affirming for us to know that the Holy Spirit is our Advocate.
An advocate who is there for you, who wants the best for you.

In diametric opposition is the devil,
who issues destructive language,
and leaves you floundering, or in isolation.

The devil is no advocate, but the accuser, the one who condemns and sends you into exile.

So, there are some clear differences between the voice of the Spirit and the voice of the devil, and by those *voices*, I mean the ones we listen to within our heads.

They are real, they are spiritual, and each will send us down certain paths.

However, just like being a good parent, the good Spirit, the Holy Spirit, the Advocate, does not always tell you what you want to hear.

You will not be told that every single thing you do or say is wonderful.

Darling, you're so marvellous! You're so clever!

No, sometimes you will be brought up short on your misdeeds or sin.

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth.

And the voice of truth will bring to your awareness what is not quite right, or what is exceedingly wrong!

Ignatius of Loyola was the one who developed this understanding of the spiritual voices: of the good and bad spirit.

Discernment is a key skill as you learn to sift through what you are hearing and deciding whether it is true or false.

This applies to voices of both consolation and desolation, two words Ignatius used, we might use the words positive and negative, or pleasure and pain.

In terms of consolation, or the positive voice,

Ignatius discerned that what was of the Holy Spirit gave lasting satisfaction.

One of his examples was to do with reading.

If he read a racy novel it gave him consolation, some pleasure, but not for long.

If he read something of more spiritual depth, he found he was more inspired and motivated.

In terms of voices that gave him desolation, as in sadness, or guilt, if it was from the bad spirit, the devil, he would feel paralysed and distanced from God.

But if it was from the Holy Spirit, it was more like a wakeup call, and again he was motivated to act and put whatever it was right.

He could move forward.

I have found this spiritual discipline very helpful, for one recognising that there are always voices talking and two, that I need to sort them out and know which ones I am listening to.

This spiritual discipline is all about our relationship with God.

It is about our abiding with God, and God abiding with us.

This relationship is often described as a parent-child relationship, we are children of God.

Inasmuch as we need to and do grow up,

we nevertheless continue to listen out for the voice of God.

I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. Jesus said.

In God we are never orphaned, never rejected, never abandoned, never lost.

But like typical children, we hear words we do not want to hear and are shown directions we do not want to take.

But like any good parent, God hangs in there,

still on our side and freely offering us his wisdom when we are ready to take it.

Of course there are children who reject their parents, who leave, who no longer acknowledge them or listen to them.

And like any good parent, God waits and hopes and looks out for their return.

Jesus told some stories about that.

The vocation of being alongside

As children often are in the image of their mother or father, or something of both, the children of God are called to grow up in the image of God.

*If you love me, you will keep my commandments. Jesus said.
This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.*

We can never reach the depths of this love which comes alongside,
which is patient and long-suffering,
which is steadfast and kind,
which is merciful and hopeful.

What is it like for each of us to experience that type of love from God?
What experience of that love have we known from another human being, perhaps a parent?
And what is like for each of us to give this sort of love to another?
To follow the vocation which belongs to all children of God, is to be alongside others as channels of
the Holy Spirit in love, faith and truth.

Abide is such a beautiful word.
It is gentle and caring, open and encouraging.

In the Acts reading, Paul comes alongside the Greeks in Athens and encourages them in their
searching.

Seeing an altar with the inscription,
'To an unknown god ...
Paul quotes from one of their poets, Epimenides,
In God we live and move and have our being.

Paul encouragingly tells them that no one, regardless of what they might or might not believe, is
entirely cut off from God and removed from the influence of God.
To live, to move, to be at all; is to be surrounded by God and underpinned by God.
Indeed, Paul specifically says that although God wants to be sought out by us,
God is not far from anyone and is within reach of everyone.

These are good things to hear, but Paul goes on with words not just of comfort, but of truth.
The Athenians need to know that once you are aware of the alternatives,
God does call you to make a choice to get your life in sync with God.
This tallies with Jesus' words when he made the exclusive sounding statement
that the world cannot receive the Holy Spirit,
because it neither sees or knows the Spirit,
but that the disciples can and do.

There is a choice to see and know, or to ignore and dismiss.
Stories of these choices abound in the gospels,
but let us remember that it is not God who dismisses, not ever.

Abiding

Abiding with God challenges us to love not only him but also those whom he sends to us.
And perhaps this is the real gift and intent of the Spirit, the Helper and Advocate
whom he promised to send to the disciples:
The Spirit will sustain us as we live into the love to which Christ calls us,
even when, and especially when,
it means abiding with those whom we'd rather build walls against.

May Jesus' words this week have you wondering who might need you to say the words:
I am on your side.

Who might need to hear those words from you?

May you know the challenging peace of the One who is on your side and who is within you.

I found this lovely prayer online, based on John 14 written by Christine Jerrett. Let this be our prayer today:

Let us pray

O Lord,

You are the source of our life.

*You have given us a wonderful world
and permeated it through and through
with your grace and your love.*

*You have promised that you will give us your Spirit,
to be with us as we journey through this life.*

*Yet, we confess the many times when
our eyes can't see you,
can't take you in,*

*can't comprehend how you can be at work
in pain and disappointment and sorrow.*

We need your Spirit to lift our sights to your wide horizons.

Teach us to pray with such openness to your Spirit that you make yourself plain to us.

*Bring us to that place where we are willing
to place our lives in your keeping,*

to submit to your life-changing love,

and to move with you into your large open spaces of salvation.

We ask these things in Jesus' name, our light and our salvation, who lives and reigns with the Father and the Spirit in the bright glory of the holy Trinity, forever and ever. Amen.¹

¹ <https://christinejerrett.wordpress.com/2011/08/28/a-prayer-based-on-john-14/>

INTERCESSIONS – by Pam Taylor

Almighty God, we praise you for the world you have created; help us to see its true beauty and to appreciate the diversity and wonder of our environment. May we be respectful of the earth and when challenges present help us to commit to caring and preserving it in a responsible manner for all humanity.

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

Merciful God, at this time we acknowledge and commemorate the 75th anniversary of the ending of the Second World War May 1945. We give heartfelt gratitude to all those brave men and women who gave the ultimate sacrifice for their country – we pray that we may learn from the mistakes of the past, hopeful that the day will come when all will live in peace and harmony.

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

Gracious Lord, with our continuing battle of these uncertain and overwhelming times due to the pandemic, both here and around the world, we respectfully pray for those families suffering with illness and the loss of loved ones. Our hearts go out to many people who have lost their jobs resulting in enormous stress adding to the isolating restriction we are all experiencing presently. We continue to pray for all the health workers, doctors, nurses, paramedics and carers who work tirelessly to enable others to hopefully remain safe. Lord, we pray that an effective vaccine may soon become available to alleviate the present circumstances.

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

Almighty God, ruler of all, we pray that all those who hold office in authority fulfil their duties with wisdom, understanding and fairness for all. Lord, we are grateful that in Australia strict rules and regulations were installed early compared to other less fortunate nations. Hopefully, with slow and cautious easing of restrictions we may return to normality once more.

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

Ever loving Lord, we pray for those families who are struggling to cope with life at this time. We especially pray for those suffering from abuse, violence and neglect. May they seek professional help thus enabling them to gain safety within a comforting and safe environment. Lord, we give grateful thanks to both the police and medical professionals who cope within often dangerous circumstances.

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

Compassionate Lord, we remember those who have gone before us at this time. We especially give thanks for the inspirational life of the Rev John Leaver - for his friendship, his wisdom and his tireless service. We remember Wendy and all the family, together with others known to us who seek your love and comfort at this time.

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

Heavenly Father, we are grateful and acknowledge that you are a God who cares deeply, loves fully and remains faithful at all times. We give thanks for the modern technology that enables us to stay in contact with both friends and family alike. Help us to appreciate the God given gifts that you have bestowed upon us all. Many people have shown that resilience, fortitude and determination can result in positive and productive outcomes. Risen Lord, we praise your name always.

Almighty God, you have promised to hear our prayers .

Grant that what we have asked in faith we may by your grace receive, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done
on earth as in heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread.

**Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.**

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory, are yours now and for ever. Amen.

RESUME VIDEO FOR PART 4 – VIDEO OF HOLY COMMUNION

GREETING OF PEACE [PRIEST]

Christ is risen. Alleluia!

The peace of the risen Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have these gifts to share.

Accept and use our offerings for your glory and for the service of your kingdom.

Blessed be God for ever.

HOLY COMMUNION

O loving God, in union with Christian people throughout the world and across the centuries gathered to make Thanksgiving, hearing your holy Word and receiving the Precious Body and Blood of your dear Son, we offer you praise and thanksgiving. Even though we are dispersed from tasting the Bread of Heaven and drinking the Cup of Salvation we pray that you will unite us with all the baptised and with your Son who gave his life for us.

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 our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right to give you our thanks and praise, O God, and to bring our gifts into your house in gratitude for the constant love you have pledged to us.

The world and everything in it was made by you. Life and breath are your gifts to all mortal things, and in you we live and move and have our being.

Everywhere and always you have been within our reach and have inspired us to search for you.

In Jesus the Christ you have shown yourself to us, the unknowable revealed in the known. He was rejected and put to death in the flesh, but you raised him from the dead and gave him life in the Spirit. Through his resurrection, you have raised us from the saving waters, and now your blessing abides with us even in suffering and your Spirit assures us of your coming justice.

Therefore, we lift our voices to praise you, saying,

Holy, holy, holy Lord,

God of power and might,

heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

And now we thank you for these gifts of bread and wine; may we who receive them, as Jesus said, share his body and his blood.

On the night he was betrayed, he took bread and gave you thanks.

He broke the bread and gave it to his friends, and said, 'Take and eat. This is my body given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'

After supper he took the cup and gave you thanks. He shared the cup with them and said, 'This is my blood poured out so that sins may be forgiven. Do this in remembrance of me.'

**Christ has died,
Christ has risen,
Christ will come again.**

You have gathered us together to feed on Christ and to remember all he has done for us: Fill us with your Spirit that we may follow Jesus in all we do and say, working for justice and bringing your peace to this world that you have made. Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Blessing and honour and glory and power, are yours forever and ever. Amen

THE BREAKING AND SHARING OF THE BREAD AND WINE

As this broken bread was once many grains,
which have been gathered together and made one bread:
**so may your Church be gathered
from the ends of the earth into your kingdom.**

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Eternal God, giver of life,
in the breaking of the bread we know the risen Lord.
May we who celebrate this holy feast
walk in his risen light
and bring new life to all creation.

**Living God,
make us apostles of the risen Christ.
Give us joyful hearts, words of hope,
and grace to recognize the Lord Jesus when he meets us,
wherever we are on the road.**

BLESSING

Go now into the world.
Search for the God who is not far from each one of us.
May God greet your prayers with constant love;
May Christ Jesus give you life through his own life;
May the Spirit of truth abide with you and within you, always.
and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

DISMISSAL

We go in peace of Christ. **Alleluia! Amen.**