



## **ST. JOHN'S CHURCH PRAYER DIARY – APRIL 2019**

This month includes Lent and Easter. It could be argued that this year we need as never before, God's support and guidance. Our country and its Parliament are in such chaos. Across the world there is so much hostility, intolerance, wicked cruelty and a general sense of 'man's inhumanity to man'.

For many the climate has been equally vicious. The redeeming feature, for which we much be thankful, is that alongside there are acts of kindness, generosity and a willingness to help the many experiencing grief, or hardship and deprivation. The following poem by Joy Tetley seems appropriate:

**God of all goodness,  
by the hell and victory of the cross  
embolden us to come to you  
with our loud cries and tears,  
to receive mercy and help  
in time of need.**

Monday 1 April. Oak Lodge House Group meets at 7.30pm to look at the life of Mark and Onesimus.

The Lenten Group meets also for its study course. God's blessing on both groups.

Tuesday 2 April. C of E School will be attending Church for the Easter Service. We hope that this will be a meaningful experience.

The Mothers' Union will hear a talk by Martin Gillate, J.P., on the work of the family courts.

Those meeting at Finchampstead, St. James, appropriately, will be addressed by Dr. Janice Proud of the Disaster Relief and Resilience Manager, the Anglican Alliance. We hope for God's blessing on all three events.

Wednesday 3 April – Saturday 6 April. Before Passiontide begins and while we are deeply into Lent, we pray that the Lord Jesus will be with us. We ask that he will incline our hearts and minds to a greater understanding of his will and insight into his words of guidance.

This prayer from the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola may help you to centre your thoughts.

**O Lord Jesus Christ  
take as your right  
receive as my gift  
all my liberty  
my understanding, my will:  
all that I have,  
all that I am,**

**all that I can be.  
All is yours  
I dispose of it according to your will  
Give me your love,  
And give me your grace  
It is enough for me.**

Thursday 4 April. The Lenten group meets to consider another topic from the 'Mystery of God'.

Friday 5 April Prayers for the Sick at 6.00pm in the vestry.

Sunday 7 April. Fifth Sunday in Lent.

This fifth Sunday begins Passiontide and the unfolding of the Easter story.

We pray for the residents of Alcot Close and Fielding Gardens. **(See prayer at end).**

We ask that those attending the APCM will receive guidance to inform the decisions made on behalf of our Church and its community.

Monday 8 April. May Christ's blessing be on the two House groups meeting tonight.

Tuesday 9 April. We remember with thanks the example set by Dietrick Bonhoeffer, a leader of the Confessing Church, a movement which broke away from the Nazi – dominated Lutherans in 1934. His defiance of Nazism and his influential writings, led to his imprisonment and his death in 1945 having volunteered his life in place of another.

The speaker this evening at 7.45pm at St. James Centre, Finchampstead, is Rev. Tonia Elliott, the New Committee Minister at Finchampstead and California. She will talk on the enforced bearer of Christ's cross, Simon of Cyrene. **(See prayer at end).**

Wednesday 10 April. At 2.00pm the Mothers' Union will hear Deborah Wheeler talking on the subject of 'Mend and Make do', an appropriate subject in the light of all the current encouragement to be less wasteful of our planet's resources.

Thursday 11 April. Remember George Augustus Selwyn, appointed the first Bishop of New Zealand on this date. Our thoughts must be with the population of that country in view of the massacres during March.

May God be with the House group meeting this evening.

Friday 12 April. Pray at home or with the group meeting at 6.00pm in the vestry, for the sick and those in need of our thoughts among our families, friends and loved ones.

Sunday 14 April. Palm Sunday. There should be joyful singing and thoughtful, grateful prayers as we rejoice in the memory of Christ's passage through Jerusalem, this glorious son of God mounted on a humble donkey.

Monday 15 April. May happiness and conviviality be with those who meet at the Methodist Church for the Agape Meal at the end of Lent.

Tuesday 16 April. The C of E School will be celebrating Easter in Church today.

The Oak Lodge House group will be meeting tonight to discuss a new topic.

The final Lenten talk at St. James Centre at 7.45pm. on the subject of both Judas Iscariot and Pontius Pilate will be given by General Tim Cross, of the Royal Engineers.

Thursday 18 April. Maundy Thursday. There will be a Sung Eucharist at 8.00pm with the traditional washing of the feet by our clergy, followed by the stripping of the altars, preceding the vigil in the Lady Chapel.

Friday 19 April. Good Friday. Come together at 2.00pm to join in the Choral Liturgy of the Cross. Prayers for the sick at 6.00pm in the vestry.

Saturday 20 April. Easter Eve. Our thanks to the flower arrangers, cleaners and all those who will be involved in making our Church beautiful ready for our Easter celebrations. Without theirs and the musical contribution, our Easter Day celebrations would be a dull affair. Let us not forget the Churchyard team who make the approach attractive, the Welcome Team and the coffee makers who contribute to the happy occasion.

Sunday 21 April. Easter Day. Come together and give thanks that our Lord is out of his torment and by his death and resurrection gives us the reassurance of eternal life. May it be a joyous occasion for us all.

Monday 22 April. We give thanks for the efforts of our Vicar and clergy, not only throughout this season but also for their hard work throughout the year. We welcome to the LLM Team, Julia Norton and hope that she will be happy with us.

Tuesday 23 April. We pray that there will be an opportunity over the Easter period for those who may have had to be on duty over the holiday period; the doctors, nurses at our care homes and hospitals; the police; firefighters, paramedics watchful for our safety; those who are housebound and have the daily responsibility of a sick or disabled relative.

Wednesday 24 April God's blessing be on those candidates joining the Junior Confirmation Class this evening. May it be for both leaders and candidates, an enriching experience. **(See prayer at end).**

Thursday 25 April. We pray for all our youngsters in the Net, Minus Fives; the pre-school playgroups, our local primary and secondary schools. We wish them and their leaders and teachers a rich and joyful experience.

Friday 26 April. We ask God's protection and support for all engaged in helping the underprivileged in this world, homeless through war or climate extreme. In our own country we thank God for those who help with the Food Bank and Fair Trade. We give thanks that our church is still able to contribute to our missions, listed below, all are so deserving of our care and commitment.  
Prayers for the sick, in the vestry at 6.00pm.

Saturday 27 April. Christina Georgina Rossetti 1830 -1894. This famous poet who wrote so many memorable poems about Christmas, love and death, is remembered on this day.

Sunday 28 April Easter II. There will be choral evensong. We are asked to pray for all who live at, or have connections with Waterloo Road. **(See prayer at end).**

Monday 29 April. Adult Confirmation classes begin this evening.. We ask that the love of Christ will bless their studies and all find a true fellowship in studying his word.

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**A Prayer for those Preparing for Confirmation**

**May your children hear your voice  
And gladly answer your call  
To give their lives to you  
To serve your Church  
To offer their gifts  
And give their hearts  
To you.**

**Bless their hopes and desire,  
Their resolve to go forward,  
And learn to put their trust in you.**

**Amen**

**A Prayer for the Streets**

Dear Lord, we ask that all residents, their families and friends of those mentioned earlier are given happiness and joy this Easter. Give strength to any experiencing need or sorrow. Support any experiencing sickness or any feeling any kind of pressure. Guide any who may be finding faith in you difficult.

**Simon of Cyrene, Christ's cross bearer.**

Some say Simon of Cyrene was black, some say white, some Greek, some Jew.

We rejoice in the good things of our land.  
We pray that justice and freedom will be for all peoples.  
We remember today all those who are imprisoned for speaking against evil  
or for resisting a current regime.  
We pray today for the peace of Jerusalem.

David Adam

**A Prayer for Our Missions and those who lead them**

Bless, O, God, those who give of their time to support those less fortunate than ourselves. May we all continue to bring hope where so often so little exists.

Church Missionary Society;  
The Church Army;  
The Leprosy Mission;  
Embrace the Middle East;  
Corymeela Community;  
Bible Society;  
Children's Society;  
Hope Zone and Zone 6 Drop-in Café;  
Alexander Devine Children's Hospice Service  
JAC, a centre for disaffected youngsters

**An extract from Uphill**

Does the hill wind uphill all the way  
Yes to the very end  
Will the day's journey take the whole long day?  
From morn to night my friend

.....  
Shall I find comfort, travel-sore and weak?  
Of labour you shall find the same.  
Will there be beds for me and all who seek?  
Yea, beds for all who come.

Christina Georgina Rossetti (1830 – 1894)

**A Celtic Prayer for Good Friday.**

Jesus, who bore such pain upon the cross  
And suffered the nails in your feet and in your hands  
Turn to me and I will turn to You  
And may I never turn from You again.

From Soltaire.

Easter

I got me flowers to straw Thy way  
I got me boughs off many a tree  
But Thou wast up by break of day,  
And brought'st Thy sweets along with Thee.

Yet though my flowers be lost, they say  
A heart can never come too late;  
Teach it to sing Thy praise this day,  
And then this day my life shall date.

George Herbert (1593 – 1632)

