

*An Anthology of  
Covid and Other  
Prayers and Thoughts.*

Fr Graham

## COVID PRAYERS

(Prayers in Italics are evening prayers.)

Blessed are you Sovereign God of all, to you be glory and praise for ever. In your tender mercy the dawn from on high is breaking upon us to reveal a world struggling against a deadly foe. Guide those in authority who seek to protect us and give them wisdom to clarify the laws by which we should live in this emergency. Let those who defy the laws and endanger the lives of others receive the penalty due to them; protect our police and all who must enforce the law, and strengthen us to live responsibly, all for the greater good; in your mercy, hear our prayer. Amen.

*Lord God, fount of health and healing, we pray for the hospitals of our country in this critical time. Grant to all hospital workers whatever their role, the strength and endurance to cope with the increasing strain on their workload and on hospital resources. We pray that the necessary supplies will be forthcoming to prevent the breakdown of hospital services and give confidence to hospital staff in their compassionate care for their patients; for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.*

Lord God, day dawns, the darkness departs driven by the power of celestial light. As we occupy ourselves today, filling the long hours spent at home obedient to the restricting Covid rules, may our love and affection for those we hold dear penetrate those rules preventing face-to-face meetings to unite us in spirit, and give the assurance of our care, just as nothing can separate us from your love in Christ Jesus, through whom we pray. Amen.

Lord, we are still in the 40 days of Christmas, and some will display their Christmas lights until Candlemas. Not only are the nights still long and dark, but we are experiencing an intense darkness of daily life because of the virulent Covid variant. Let these 40 days of Christmas be filled with hope because of the Light Jesus brought into the world, the Light that shines now, as then, in the darkness of the times, a Light the darkness cannot overcome, the Light that gives hope; in that Light may we see light and rejoice to share that light, to your praise and glory. Amen.

Lord God, with the Psalmist we pray to be delivered from “the pestilence that stalks in the darkness and from the sickness that destroys at noonday”. Keep safe all who guard the health of this nation or maintain essential services; may we all act responsibly for the sake of each other, sustained by your living presence, who holds all souls in the arms of your mercy, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

*Thank you Lord God for today and such blessings as we have enjoyed despite the seriousness of the present time. We commend into your hand all hospital patients, and Claire and all nursing staff. In faith we enter the darkness of this night trusting in your love which surrounds us, who are bound together in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. We commit ourselves and those we love into your safe keeping; in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Gracious God, although many of us are confined to home to remain safe from the virus, our imaginations are free to roam throughout the world, filling our minds with sights of beauty and interest, fed by books and television. Lord, let such experiences give us inner strength and encouragement during this difficult time. Thank you for giving us this gift, one of your many blessings. Amen.

## **USA riot on the Capitol**

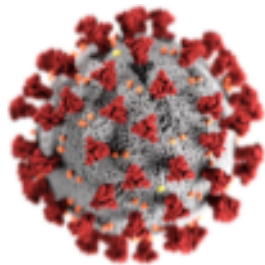
Lord God, we wake to a new day and worrying events in America; give us all grace to meet whatever comes our way with patience and fortitude, and may order and good sense prevail, to the honour of your name. Amen.

*“The Lord will grant his loving kindness in the daytime; through the night his song will be with me, a prayer to the Lord” (Psalmist). Lord, be with us all in the complexities of life from dawn to dusk and feed us with the prayer of hope; may our song of trust join with your song of faithfulness through the silent hours. Amen*

Lord God, it seems that Covid has got a strangle-hold over us with the new Lockdown and all its privations. We pray for all families and individuals for whom this will bring added stress and struggle. We pray that help and support will be forthcoming for those in most need, and that peoples of faith will play their part in offering help and comfort; for Jesus Christ’s sake. Amen.

## (Trivial)

Covid, Covid, give me your answer, do;  
The world's half-crazy, fearful because of you.  
But now we've got the vaccines  
to fight off your infection;  
We'll have you beat,  
you're on retreat  
from our vaccines just made for you.



Ring-a-ring of roses,  
With needles full of doses  
of vaccine, cough, sniff,  
We won't fall down.

Dear Lord God, in the confusion of these troubled times lead us with the assurance of your loving presence. Guide with your wisdom those who must make difficult decisions, especially those affecting the lives of others; confirm in us the desire to serve you in one another by prayer and action, and may young and old act responsibly, members of one human family made in your image and likeness; we pray in the name of Christ. Amen.

*Lord God, of your mercy protect all who this night must work, providing essential services on our behalf. We pray for Claire and her many nursing colleagues, giving thanks for their dedication, skill and compassion. Lord, bless all who are working for our security and protection, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.*

*In the silence of the night, dear Lord, while we sleep and let go the concerns of the day, may we hear your still, small voice to calm us and give us peace. Amen.*

*Lord, look with compassion on all whose lives are being greatly restricted through Covid. In your loving mercy grant them patience in their frustration and sense of both isolation and confinement. Guide those who can bring relief and some kind of human contact. We pray for hospitals under increasing pressure, and give thanks for the dedication of all who work in hospital and health care. Here we pray for Ian in hospital and Ann in her concern for him. So, Lord, we commit our troubled world into your hands who are our Creator and Redeemer. Amen.*

## New Year

O Lord, as we experience the final gasps of a year like no other, a year filled with illness, death, sorrow, isolation, loneliness, separation, anxiety and fear, let us recall and give thanks for those things which have helped us to endure, and given us hope for a better future: the wonderful care and dedication of the carting profession, the skill and determination of those seeking effective vaccines, the generosity and care of neighbours, the many acts of kindness and sacrifice, the likes of Zoom and WhatsApp to keep us connected; such things have been beams of light in the darkness that has threatened to overwhelm us, signs of your kingdom present among us. Lord, help us to hold fast our faith as this year passes and we enter the new year in hope and with the certainty of your faithful presence, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Lord God, the sky is cold and grey, high cloud depriving us of the brightness and warmth of the sun; let not the clouds of social isolation and upheaval afflicting our world today prevent us from experiencing the warmth and light of your risen Son, which can penetrate the darkest days to give us hope and bring us joy. Amen.

*As we lay on our comfortable beds, Lord, remind us that the homeless have returned to our streets because the Government Scheme has closed and, their future looks grim. We pray, Lord, that help may be forthcoming through churches and charities to restore hope and dignity to those whose lives have been disfigured through unemployment, family break-up, alcohol or drugs, and now have no permanent shelter. Show us, Lord, how we can make a difference, after the example of our compassionate Saviour. Amen.*

Lord, we want to live, of course we do, but the Covid virus makes life very precarious. The present advance of the virus is leaving increasing numbers infected and dying, with many more fearful. We ourselves are just as vulnerable as any others. Lord, help us to keep a firm grip on our faith, believing that although death comes to us all eventually, we are not without hope. We are Citizens of two countries, earthly and heavenly, and you are with us in both. Lord, give us courage to live as fully as we are able, supporting one another practically, prayerfully and carefully, with heaven's song in our hearts and gratitude always. In your name we pray. Amen.

Lord God, the sky is cold and grey, high cloud depriving us of the brightness and warmth of the sun; let not the clouds of social isolation and upheaval afflicting our world today prevent us from experiencing the warmth and light of your risen Son, which can penetrate the darkest days to give us hope and bring us joy. Amen.

## **For Sunday**

Dear Lord, although we cannot yet receive you sacramentally, on this day of resurrection we open our very selves to you in worship; enter our lives afresh in the power of your Spirit, that we may be one with you and all who desire you, a communion of loving fellowship in the faith; for your name's sake. Amen.

Almighty God, bring us together to offer our worship and to rejoice in your gifts of life and faith. Whether present in church or watching on line, we give thanks for the fellowship we share in Jesus Christ, for the sacrament of Christ's presence received physically or spiritually, and the witness we are able to give by coming together as the Body of Christ. We pray for one another I our needs and give thanks for our blessings, and are sorry for all that has fallen short of your will for us; for his name's sake. Amen.

Lord God, awakening to a new day we go forward in the faith that you will be beside us through all we do. Protect us and all we care for from Covid and all that may harm us; may we celebrate the life we have by embracing every opportunity to show kindness to others and enjoy such good things as come our way. Our lives are in your hands, Lord, sustained by your life-giving Spirit; as Jesus was fully immersed in life with all its complexities, so may we face today's issues with hope and courage; for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

*Blessed be God at this evening hour, when silence comes to our anxious world. Lord, help us leave our worries and concerns in your strong hands, and fill our minds with memories of this day's pleasures – of family, friends, 'phone conversations, music, our prayers and our trust in you; in Jesu's name we pray. Amen.*

Heavenly Father, in the uncertainties of our dislocated world may we hold firm to our faith in you the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Be to us the strong Rock of the Psalmist as we face the dangers of this present time; as a rope's strength lies in the binding together of its individual strands, so may our strength be found in our being bound together in Christ in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, bearing the strains of serving one another and our community, as well as witnessing to the way of Christ our Lord; in his name we pray. Amen.

*Lord, we pray this night for all who suffer pain and severe discomfort, for whom sleep is patchy or denied. May your presence through the long hours of darkness bring relief and consolation, who yourself on the cross suffered greatly and committed yourself into the hands of your Father and ours. Amen.*

Lord God, help us to receive this day as your gift to be spent wisely and thankfully. Despite the strict limitations placed upon us we can still join with countless numbers when we pray, regardless of the rule of six; our imaginations can let us travel to wherever we wish and, without fear, the love of our hearts can still embrace those who are dear to us. Lord, help us to act responsibly towards others, and of your great mercy grant us the inner qualities required to cope with the present necessary but unwelcome restrictions; throughout, be our companion in faith, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

## **OTHER PRAYERS**

### **The Baptism of Christ**

Dear Lord, a new day must bring fresh hope, especially to all who have passed through the waters of baptism. Today, as we remember your own baptism at the hands of John, we reaffirm our allegiance to you, and pray that being immersed in your love, our lives will witness to you, the gospel you declared, and our oneness with you, our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

### **Epiphany**

Lord God, as we celebrate the Epiphany truth of the Christ-Child being revealed to the gentile kings, we celebrate their prophetic gifts signifying the child's destiny as Prophet, Priest and King. May Christ so reveal himself to us in our day that we may receive the truth of his prophetic word, the sacramental gift of his divine life, and accept him as our king, to whom be all glory and praise, now and for ever. Amen.

O Christ our King, every Friday is a reminder of your great sacrifice of love when you were nailed to a cross wearing your crown of thorns, lifted up, enthroned. May we and all who have received the gift of faith rejoice in the salvation you have won for us and let you reign in our hearts, leading us in the fight against evil and all that opposes your Kingdom of justice, peace and love; to the honour and glory of your name O King eternal. Amen

### **On learning Fr. Jim will be leaving**

Dear Lord, our Bp's decision to move Fr. Jim to a new post has understandably left us with disappointment, sadness and anger. Now we and Fr. Jim must face new futures trusting that we will be led by the Holy Spirit in ways which will be upheld by your faithfulness, honour the Gospel and reveal the ways of your kingdom. We lay our thoughts and emotions before you, praying for your help in dealing with them. Let us not dwell too much on past hopes but rather harness our energy and gifts to build on the strengths of our witness gained under Fr. Jim's leadership. Lead us Lord into your future, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

Lord, give me a thankful heart this day whatever joys and sorrows may cross my path. Help me to receive them with equanimity and deal with them with good humour and gladness; for I am alive today, and have you for company, and I can ask for nothing better, Jesus, my friend and brother. Amen.

*Heavenly Father, night and day are but as one to you but they mark out time for us; as we enter the darkness of this night let the radiance of your presence reassure us of your love, you who neither slumber nor sleep; in Jesu's name. Amen.*

Free us, dear Lord, from all that betrays your love for us, and may we never be ashamed or nervous to speak of our faith to others; we ask in your name, our Redeemer and Lord of all. Amen.

Loving God, our Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer, you call us into a relationship with you and each other, in our families, in our communities and in our world. May our relationships be touched by your Spirit, that we may care for the world you have created, and grow in love for you and each other. As we face the challenges of our changing world, help us to find our certainty and security in you. Amen.



*Dear Lord, as we draw down the blinds of our eyes to blot out the light and sights of today's gentle drama of our lives, let our minds quieten, our breathing slow down until we sink into blessed sleep, that mysterious state in which our bodies, minds and spirits are restored, problems sometimes resolved and blessings experienced. Into your hands, blessed Lord, we commend ourselves this night. Amen.*

Lord God, we have life, your great and wonderful gift to us. It's like sailing on a river or canal: we may drift past tranquil scenes lit by the sun when all goes well, or industrial stretches when life is bleak and unpromising. Some have to negotiate perilous White Water, being tossed about among the rocks which threaten to capsize or wreck our fragile craft. Yet others pass beneath hills through long dark tunnels of despair, times when life seems without purpose and not worth living. But through all our life's journey you sail with us and you have given us the life-jacket of faith for protection and the necessary rations of Sacrament and Word, with the Scriptures as our guide book. Lord, increase our trust in you, hold before us our true destination, and may this day's sailing be calm and purposeful with a secure mooring tonight. Amen.

Dear Lord, we like to have fun with words in prose and verse and jokes; they are part of our creative nature. But we treasure most your Holy Word who speaks your truths to us in our hearts, and strengthens us for the journey of life; may we be ready to hear and obey; in Christ's name, the Word made flesh. Amen.

*Lord, the weather's cooler now, O let not my trust grow cold, but rather let your Spirit blow upon the embers of my faith until that small flame becomes a blaze, and stays a fire of love until the new day's dawn comes from above. Amen.*

Dear Jesus, lord of every home, renew your gift of faith in us this day, that all the daily tasks and chores, tedious as they sometimes are, we will see as necessary parts of daily living and still a means of your glory; that brooms and dusters, pots and pans may become instruments of domestic grace and Holy living; for your love's sake. Amen.

*Close the curtains of our eyes dear Lord, that we may sleep undisturbed by pictures of our troubled world. Let the goodness and compassion so generously displayed at this time be to us a source of hope to our souls and the inspiration for the new day. Amen.*

## Verse, or worse

*Psalm 23 for a wet day:*

*The Lord is my umbrella therefore I shall not get wet, he makes me sit in dry places and leads me under wide awnings. He may dampen my shoes but guides me through arcades of dryness. Though I walk through puddles or worse I will fear no leaking, for you are with me and your Scotchguard will protect me. You spread a rack of fine clothing before me in the presence of wet shoppers, you have covered my hair with a beret and my head will stay dry. Surely hot chocolate and scones will sustain me all the way home, and I will stay dry in my house for ever.*

I thank you Lord for all my friends,  
for family and odds and ends –  
the many things I take for granted,  
which mean so much but if denied them  
would leave me feeling so disheartened.  
Good Lord, I know I'm truly blest,  
so as I come to take my rest,  
O loving Lord on you I call  
that you would richly bless us all. Amen.

## SHOPPING PRAYER – A LATE NIGHT COGITATION

The Postman comes but seldom knocks,  
Just posts things through the letter box:  
bills, of course, and letters few;  
Ah! Catalogues for us to view,  
each containing tempting offers  
aimed at filling up their coffers.

Italian suits and slim-line skirts,  
cardigans and drip-dry shirts,  
expensive scent, Cologne for men,  
a very expensive fountain pen  
with which to write important letters  
to those who think they are our betters.

Garments made with finest cotton,  
expanding bras for ample bosoms,  
soft-top socks and Panty Hose;  
how we study all those clothes,  
both his and hers – it's just the same  
we're all caught up in the fashion game,  
seduced by things we think will make us  
slimmer, younger, and maybe famous!

But pandering to contemporary taste  
does nothing for my bulging waist,  
I can't disguise my widening hips  
my double chins and wrinkled lips,  
so compromise is on the books  
to mitigate my "so-so" looks.

You want to tell us it's all vain  
to think this way, but just the same  
with hand on heart you can't protest  
because we want to look our best,  
want to draw admiring glances  
at social "Dos" and local Dances.

The great allure of Haute Couture  
designed, they, say for the more mature –  
the more discerning person, able  
to afford the exclusive label,  
who pays by Card, and as you'll find  
would never dream to buy on-line.

While not the stuff of normal prayers  
you are our God who always cares,  
so forgive us Lord that we are those  
who think too much about our clothes  
and fret about our image too  
when there are better things to do,  
when all the time we should aspire  
to be the people you desire.

“Re-clothe us in our rightful minds”  
Lord, help us our true selves to find,  
for outward show will not impress  
your heavenly eyes and holiness.  
Our inner beauty’s all that matters,  
All the rest is shreds and tatters.

## **A CONVERSATION RATHER THAN A PRAYER**

What a hectic day I’ve had, dear Lord,  
I’m in a proper state –  
I’ve rinsed the cat and put him out  
I ate the food left on his plate.  
I put the cornflakes in the bin  
when I set my breakfast tray,  
now Tiddles is mewing to come back in,  
When he’s in I hope he’ll stay!

I’ve overdone things, Lord, I know,  
and now I need to rest,  
let body, mind and heart relax  
to stop the thumping in my chest.  
I’ve tried to do too much today

and know that I must learn  
to calm myself and then to pray  
that God will help me to be firm;  
that all my doings be kindly meant,  
and after that when all’s been said  
I’ll climb the stairs and rest content  
and lay with Tiddles on my bed.

Lord, when I awake and day begins,  
Keep, O keep me free from sin;  
fill my day with kindly deeds,  
ways to meet my neighbour’s needs -  
a cheerful wave, a friendly smile  
time to stop and chat awhile,  
and all upheld by loving prayers  
to you my Lord and God who cares. Amen.

## (not a prayer)

Dear lord, it's Friday, my day to shop,  
I'll put my mask on, will not stop  
to chat to neighbours who I meet  
as I'm going down the street,  
although no doubt I shall swap smiles  
with fellow shoppers in the aisles.  
With our trolleys, lists in hands  
how we'll make a glorious band  
all bent on finding food to make  
into meals and lovely cake.

I'll social-distance, pay the bill  
at the disinfected checkout till,  
then struggle home, put things away  
and make a cup of tea, then pray  
to thank you Lord that my poor feet  
got the shopping done for one more week.

*Another night has come, O Lord, in which to take our rest;  
accept our gratitude and love, dear Lord, because we are so blest:  
with homely comforts, food and drink, plus family and friends,  
and now and then a G & T before the evening ends.  
We have the knowledge of your love, your call to live like Christ,  
plus all the blessings from above, and a joyful Christian life.  
And when we sin we know, good Lord, (with sorrow in our hearts),  
you will forgive and help us try to make a fresh clean start.  
So thank you Lord, yes thank you Lord, in Jesu's name we pray;  
may gratitude our hearts possess until the break of day. Amen.*

*Dear Lord, with sleepy eyes and drowsy head  
I know it must be time for bed;  
so after I have climbed the stairs  
cleaned my teeth and said my prayers,  
let me slip between the sheets,  
close my eyes and fall asleep. Amen.*

Gracious God, when we awake and put ourselves together:  
glasses, dentures, hearing aids, supportive footwear made of leather,  
may we face the world again all confident and ready,  
with walking stick and Zimmer frame to keep us up and steady.  
Lord may our day be virus-free with face mask to protect us  
when we travel to the shops by car, on foot or by bus;  
we'll happily smile at shoppers who, wire baskets filled with goods, cheerfully  
smile back at us before we all go homewards.

### **A Response:**

*Dare I...? Dear Father G more verse I see  
a prayerful hug from you to me and all who worship with us.  
How blessed we are to sense He's there  
and close to us in daily prayer and all that life throws at us.  
So out of bed, my own prayers said,  
a weird new normal day ahead, but hope and love around me. (JOAN)*

Wake! Awake, it's my alarm, the noisy herald of the day;  
I have to stretch to turn it off before I can sit up and pray.  
I ponder what this day will bring  
and pray, dear Lord, I shall not sin,  
but rather walk Christ's Pilgrim route  
who is the Way, the Life, the Truth,  
and draw in others by your grace  
that they one day shall see your face. Amen.

*Lord, when we slip between the sheets  
Please close our eyes and grant us sleep;  
but if for hours we sleepless lie  
then grant us calm from heaven on high;  
take from our minds disturbing thoughts  
and let us to your heaven be brought  
in peace and in tranquillity  
until we rise to greet the day. Amen.*

Lord, as into bed I crawl to rest my weary limbs,  
Look not on all my foolish ways nor upon my sins;  
But let your gaze be one of love upon a child of yours,  
To give me peace and trust, dear Lord,  
Even though I snores. Amen.

Another day of sun and showers,  
sweet bird song and garden flowers,  
cats and dogs with tics and fleas,  
butterflies and majestic trees.  
Lord give us eyes and minds to ponder  
these your gifts, that full of wonder  
at this store of nature's art  
we want to thank you from our hearts. Amen.

Daily duties to be done,  
little errands to be run;  
soon the hours will quickly pass  
cleaning windows, mowing grass,  
helping neighbours if they ask  
me to carry out a task.  
Lord, I ask that through this day  
I will find the time to pray  
for your blessing from above  
on deeds done in Christian love;  
May your praise be on my tongue  
with good will for everyone. Amen.

Oh, dear Lord, what gifts you give –  
night for resting, day to Live!  
Enlivened by your Spirit's power  
help us live each waking hour  
in your service, Friend and Brother,  
bringing joy to one another  
and to those we chance to meet  
in the shop or down the street,  
“Gospel-Mongers” in your name,  
your love to share, your grace to claim,  
ambassadors for our heavenly King,  
your ways to teach, your praise to sing.  
Amen.

**(When Social Teas were being offered.)**

*Tea and buns and harmless fun,  
Happy chat across the table  
socially distanced as we're able  
under Covid 19 strictures,  
sharing anecdotes and pictures  
of our families and pets.*

*Lord, we enjoyed our get-together ;  
blessed today by sunny weather,  
sharing friendship, swapping news  
of fellow Christians from our “pews”  
needing prayer or conversation  
to cheer them in their isolation.*

*Lord, let these teas which all may share in  
be a happy way of caring  
for any folk who feel alone  
and would like to leave their home  
and join with friends for cakes and tea  
and pleasant chat in company. Amen*



The curtain' drawn, the sun shines in  
a lovely way for the day to begin;  
the Son of God shines from above  
to bring us all God's light and love.  
So throughout the coming day  
in our work and in our play,  
may we be warmed within, without,  
when staying in or going out.

The day is yours, Lord, let it be  
filled with friends and cups of tea  
as well as all that must be done  
before we see the setting sun.  
You are our God, accept our praise  
for blessing us through all our days.  
With joyful lips and grateful hearts  
We love you, Lord, with all we are. Amen.

Dear Lord,  
I draw back the curtains and what do I see?  
My lovely and shapely Silver Birch tree.  
It has to be dead, Lord, for it had no spring leaves  
which saddened me greatly but I did not grieve.  
It's become nature's playground for magpies and crows,  
Woodpeckers, Robins and pigeons and those  
colourful Parakeets flashing bright green,  
taking warmth from the sun, it's a regular scene.

Squirrels come skitt'ring – it maybe they're brothers  
climbing and leaping and chasing each other.  
They live in the same world as us, but fret not  
about Covid or finance or things they've not got.  
Untroubled by matters that overwhelm us  
like money and health and world peace and the stress  
of battling Covid and Lockdown; they dare,  
Lord, to show us a life lived without care.

## **(“consider the lilies....”)**

Dear Lord, when evening dusk turns into night  
and life winds down and all is quiet,  
we seek to liven up our homes  
with TV shows and mobile phones  
to keep in touch and share our news  
and listen to another’s views.

You said to Adam on his own,  
*“It’s not good to be alone,”*  
And so, dear Lord how very much  
we value all who care for us,  
who make us feel that life’s worthwhile,  
and walk with us the second mile,  
through good and ill remain our friends;  
Accept our grateful thanks. Amen.

*Lord, this night I pray you keep  
me through the little death of sleep;  
And should I take my final breath,  
Lord, hold me through the sleep of death. Amen.*

## **Simon & Jude**

Today is the Feast Day of saints Simon and Jude,  
We know little about them, the records are crude;  
They were apostles of Jesus and called to serve God  
For Jesus saw in them the gifts for the job.

With zeal and with faith they both followed our Lord,  
Proclaiming the Kingdom and sharing the word,  
Healing much sickness and giving folk hope,  
When seeking repentance of Jesus they spoke.

Both went to Persia and were martyred, it’s said,  
Living and dying like Jesus their Head.  
May we, Lord, like them remain faithful to you,  
In life and in death let us always be true. Amen.

## Not a prayer: *“The Covid mask.”*

The Covid effects are really awful  
which is why I have a drawer full  
of masks from which I choose to wear  
one that matches clothes or hair.

I make a virtue of necessity  
(and do so quite explicitly)  
that while protecting you and me  
my masks blends in with what you see.

This smart co-ordinated look is meant  
to show off my accoutrements,  
and though, for looks, it always passes,  
The wretched mask steams up my glasses!

Dear Lord,  
I awake very early and give a great yawn,  
the faint light I see surely heralds the dawn.  
Before I can rise and get out of bed  
I need to ensure that my prayers have been said:

Thanks for the night’s rest, strength for the day,  
the well-being of others I care for, I pray.  
Such daily devotions I try not to miss,  
they are the foundation for the life I shall live;

Every new day is your gift that I should  
use to serve others in ways loving and good.  
With you at my side, Lord, this day will I pass  
and live, as the hymn says, as if it’s my last. Amen.



Dear Lord, after rest comes the day  
with time to work and time to play,  
time for prayer to you above,  
time for thoughts of those we love,  
time to share by Skype or phone  
with friends and family stuck at home;  
time to do domestic chores  
like dusting shelves (which always bores),  
or mopping down the kitchen floor  
and dusting all the panelled doors.  
I must find time to sit, relaxing  
with the Crossword if not too taxing,  
or do a jigsaw on the table  
or other hobbies that I'm able,  
to keep my mind and fingers supple,  
and me at home and out of trouble.  
All these daylight hours to fill  
dear Lord, so guide and help me still,  
that I do nothing to repent  
and then tonight I'll rest content. Amen.

Tears of sorrow, tears of grief  
Of suff'ring souls who seek relief;  
Those whose loved ones illness bear,  
Those whose loved ones are in care,  
Not able now to be together,  
Kept apart, it seems for ever.  
Tears of those whose loved ones died  
Through Covid though the nurses tried  
Hard to save them from the virus  
(Angels who have so inspired us).  
Lord, on all weighed down with sorrow  
Bring hope and comfort for the morrow. Amen.

The Astro Zeneca and Oxford vaccines  
Are subject now to various schemes  
Giving protection to both young and old;  
All should receive it or so we are told.  
Give thanks for the scientists working in labs,  
Using knowledge and skills to give us our jobs;  
The NHS also with all those who strive,  
Each to the utmost, to keep us alive.

How great is your mercy and kindness, dear Lord,  
Bringing good out of evil, redeeming your world  
Through wisdom and sacrifice by all who labour  
And give of themselves for the sake of their neighbour. Amen.

Dear Lord, the light of dawn now slowly fills the sky,  
The squirrels scramble and the birds begin to fly,  
seeking their food to sustain them through the day  
while we, to feed our souls, to you begin to pray.  
We boldly claim your love, which in Jesus you revealed,  
to win our hearts and souls and inspire us to good deeds –  
to share your love with those we meet whose lives are bleak and sad,  
and in your name give help and hope and reasons to be glad. Amen.

O God in heaven above we pray your kingdom come,  
that justice, truth and peace in all our hearts be done;  
that nations too will set aside  
their selfish aims and earthly pride,  
to build a world where all in need –  
the homeless, poor and refugee --  
will find a place, and by your grace  
from hopelessness be freed;  
in Jesu's name we plead. Amen.

## **In moderation!**

*As the days draw in and the nights get longer,  
my night-cap gets increasingly stronger;  
As the nights get longer and the days draw in,  
and during the Quizzes I drink my gin.*

*If it seems that to alcohol I'm too inclined  
I drink only a modest half-glass of wine  
at lunch-time to go with my cooked repast,  
which means that one bottle some six days should last.*

*I read that "wine gladdens the heart of man",  
so the scriptures inspire me to do what I can  
to follow its teachings and it couldn't be plainer  
that Jesus encouraged imbibing at Cana.*