

Lichfield Diocese Prayer Diary: Issue 309

We pray for the implementation of our diocesan strategy 'Seeking the Kingdom', within the context of the varied roles and ministries across the Diocese. As 'People of Hope,' we remember those impacted by natural disasters; those in Ukraine suffering grievously and we pray for the people & leaders of Russia; and for a lasting peace for the people of Palestine, Israel, Iran and the wider Middle East.

discipleship
vocation
evangelism

Sunday 22nd March:

Lord, we start a series of prayers for Hodnet Deanery by lifting before you each of its church schools. We lift before you the Primary Schools in each of the villages of Adderley, Moreton Say, and Norton-in-Hales. Please may your hand rest upon the staff and volunteers who work in any of these schools in whatever role; and for all the children and their families who are part of them.

Monday 23rd:

We continue our prayers for Hodnet Deanery by lifting before you the churches there that are in Vacancy; for Christ Church Little Drayton, St Chad's Norton in Hales, St Leonard's Woore and the Aston Chapel. So too we lift before you the churches of the United Benefice; St Luke's Hodnet, St Luke's Sambrook, St Mary's Hale, St Michael's Childs Ercall, St Oswald's Hinstock, St Peter's Stoke on Tern, St Swithun's Cheswardine, and The Epiphany Peplow. Lord, we pray for the right people to be called forward to lead these churches and serve alongside the teams there.

Tuesday 24th: *(Walter Hilton of Thurgarton, Augustinian Canon, Mystic, 1396. Paul Couturier, Priest, Ecumenist, 1953 Oscar Romero, Archbishop of San Salvador, Martyr, 1980)*

*As we remember Oscar Romero today, a prayer attributed to his philosophy, and shared amongst central Diocesan Staff in recent weeks. Perhaps a helpful reminder of not just what we can't do, but what we **can**;*

It helps, now and then, to step back and take a long view. The kingdom is not only beyond our efforts, it is even beyond our vision. We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work. Nothing we do is complete, which is a way of saying that the kingdom always lies beyond us. No statement says all that could be said. No prayer fully expresses our faith. No confession brings perfection. No pastoral visit brings wholeness. No program accomplishes the church's mission. No set of goals and objectives includes everything. This is what we are about: We plant the seeds that one day will grow. We water seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise. We lay foundations that will need further development. We provide yeast that produces far beyond our capabilities. We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realising that. This enables us to do something, and to do it very well. It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way, an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest. We may never see the end results, but that is the difference between the master builder and the worker. We are workers, not master builders; ministers, not messiahs. We are prophets of a future not our own. Amen.

Wednesday 25th: *(The Annunciation of Our Lord to the Blessed Virgin Mary)*

On the day we remember The Annunciation, we pray for the one church in the diocese dedicated to that event, the Church of the Annunciation on the Yew Tree Estate in southern Walsall. We pray for your hand of blessing to rest on this church, it's sister one of St Gabriel's Fulbrook, and the communities they serve. We also pray for the DAC as it meets this afternoon, for wisdom and discernment over any decisions that may need to be made.

Thursday 26th: *(Harriet Monsell, Founder of the Community of St John the Baptist, 1883)*

We continue our prayers for Hodnet Deanery by praying for the five churches that make up the AMICA Benefice, for Adderley St Peter, for Ash Christ Church, for Calverhall Holy Trinity, for Ightfield St John the Baptist, and for Moreton Say St Margaret of Antioch. We pray you may bless the team that works in these churches, and guide them in serving these beautiful communities on the border of Shropshire and Cheshire.

Friday 27th:

Lord, on the final deadline day for this year's Stats for Mission, we thank you for all the numbers submitted over the last few weeks. We thank you that each of those numbers represents people, thank you for all the people that make up our churches and with whom we engage in our communities. Lord, we pray that you may grant wisdom to those who now work with those numbers, in Lichfield, Westminster and beyond, to interpret the current picture, and possibly influence how things may develop in the future.

Saturday 28th:

We conclude our prayers for Hodnet by praying for St Mary's, the church in the centre of the town of Market Drayton. Along with the nearby Christ Church Little Drayton, we pray for their role in supporting and serving the market town as it in turn resources the surrounding rural villages. Lord, we humbly ask for your hand to rest upon the town of Market Drayton and the surrounding deanery of Hodnet.

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