

## Reflection and Prayers for Lent 5

**The Lord be with me,  
and those who surround me in this world and the next**

I arise today through a mighty strength:  
God's power to guide me, God's might to uphold me,  
God's eyes to watch over me; God's ear to hear me,  
God's word to give me speech, God's hand to guard me,  
God's way to lie before me, God's shield to shelter me,  
God's host to secure me.

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### Collect of the Day

Most merciful God, who by the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ delivered and saved the world: grant that by faith in him who suffered on the cross we may triumph in the power of his victory; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

### Reading Romans 8.6-11

<sup>6</sup>To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. <sup>7</sup>For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law – indeed it cannot, <sup>8</sup>and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

<sup>9</sup>But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. <sup>10</sup>But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. <sup>11</sup>If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

## **Reflection**

In these troubling times it is easy to get swamped by all the “probables”, the risks and the danger lurking in every unwashed hand or over heated face, worry and fear are stalking the streets and the computers too. Sometimes the “social media” seems more like anti-social as it reminds us of the dangers of the world today bring fear and anger not reassurance.

But we are Christians, people of God who know the reality of God’s love and grace, the reality of the gift of Jesus that is hope, renewal, forgiveness and new life, the reality of the Holy Spirit whose comfort and peace cannot be shut out, who does not “socially distance” from us. Yes, there is a challenge to face and dangers around, but we know that we are more than flesh, we are part of the eternal kingdom of God, we are his people and his Spirit lives in each one of us.

Therefore, we need not be afraid of what might be, for we know that in all places, in all situations, in all challenges, in all dangers, we are NEVER ALONE, for our God is WITH US. He will never leave nor forsake us. There is no closed door that God cannot open, no cleansing routine that can keep God out, and no place of pain or fear that God will refuse to enter. Social isolation means we see less of people, and perhaps we have the opportunity to hear more of God, to spend some time in quiet and let the peace and love of God flow in, through and around you. Dear child of God, you are beloved and never forsaken, you are part of God’s family and very precious.

### **Intercessions by Daphne Hilda Simons amended**

Almighty, everlasting and Creator God –We come humbly before you to make known those issues and concerns which burden our hearts and those of your people this world over. We come, not just because we can, but because our Saviour Jesus taught us that you love us as a parent and like that parent want only what is right for us.

Help us Lord as we try and focus on the big issues of the day about which we often feel so powerless and the myriad of small, daily, concerns that sometimes threaten to overwhelm us.

Lord in Your mercy.                   **Hear our prayer**

We pray for the World-wide Christian Church praising your name in a thousand different languages and styles. Especially do we pray for churches in regions where any religious faith is suppressed or where Christianity is seen as an unwelcome minority. Give courage and faith to all who hold the name of Jesus central to their lives.

We pray for our ministers in this benefice and this diocese, bless all who hold office and have influence on decisions and we pray for guidance and wisdom as the church encounters both triumphs and challenges in doing your work today.

Lord in Your mercy.                   **Hear our prayer**

As schools and colleges close we pray for our children and young people and their families. And so we think now of those in need in our own community, the elderly, the housebound and those in care homes, hospital and hospice. We remember the victims of violence. And so we pray for all those who minister in this current crisis, for the NHS, for Carers and the supermarket staff, the police, ambulance team, the fire crews and RNLI. And all who put their own lives on the line for others, So let us share a moment of silence together as we bring before you those known only to ourselves as we name them in our hearts and commit them to your loving care.

(A short period of silence)

Lord in Your mercy.                   **Hear our prayer**

We pray for those who face the pain of grief at the loss of a loved one. Help us to support all those who mourn, both with our prayers and with practical help both this day and in the days and weeks to come.        Lord in Your mercy.                   **Hear our prayer**

Jesus Christ is the Light of the World, a light which no darkness can quench. We remember before God those who have died and we remember that the light of Christ can never be put out and brings hope in all situations. Lord in Your mercy. **Hear our prayer**

We pray for ourselves, our families and friends, asking for your protection Lord. In this very strange time we pray for those who are finding isolation difficult to handle, for those who are fearful and those who are driven to stockpile or to deny what is happening. Remind us Lord of your presence that we may know your peace Lord in Your mercy. **Hear our prayer**

Merciful father: **accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen**

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.**

Praise God who loves us.

**Praise God who cares.**

Christ give us grace to grow in holiness, to deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow him; and may the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**