

Service for Week 26th May- 1st June

2025 By Chaplain Andy

Our Opening Prayer.

Gracious God, we praise you that,
above all else, you are a God of love-
not of judgement, anger or vengeance,
but of constant and total love.

We give you our thanks and offer our
worship, in the name of Jesus Christ.

Amen

The Lord's Prayer

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

Bible Reading

John 17:20-26

Jesus said "My prayer is not for them
(his disciples) alone. I pray also for
those who will believe in me through
their message, that all of them may be
one, Father, just as you are in me and
I am in you. May they also be in us so
that the world may believe that you
have sent me.

I have given them the glory that you
gave me, that they may be one as we
are one: I in them and you in me. May

they be brought to complete unity to
let the world know that you sent me
and have loved them even as you have
loved me.

"Father, I want those you have given
me to be with me where I am, and to
see my glory, the glory you have given
me because you loved me before the
creation of the world. "Righteous
Father, though the world does not
know you, I know you, and they know
that you have sent me. I have made
you known to them, and will continue
to make you known in order that the
love you have for me may be in them
and that I myself may be in them."

Holy words, Holy wisdom,

Thanks be to God.

Reflection

Just prior to Jesus being arrested he
prays for his disciples and for all who
have come to know God. Those that
have heard his teachings and the
teachings of his disciples.

Jesus asks God to have the same, very
close relationship with his disciples and
believers that God has with Jesus. He
asks that ' they may be one as we are
one'. We call Jesus, 'God's Son'
because within our human experience
of families that is the nearest thing
to describe God's relationship to Jesus.
But Jesus is not exactly like a son in a
human family, it is wonderfully much
more than that. The words we use
which are more accurate are that
Jesus, when living here 2000 years ago



was 'of God' . Also, that prior to being alive in our world he was always part of God. Jesus says in our reading that *'they may be one as we are one'* Jesus then goes on to say *"Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world."*

Words that echo and reinforce the reference to Jesus at the very beginning of John's gospel *'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.'*

It is a sad thing that today that religious differences cause so many conflicts in our world and that even our Christian churches are so divided. In Jesus' prayer to God, he asks for believers to unite – to come together to let everyone know about God's love and the love that God has for each and every one of us. Jesus in his prayer says that he has revealed the truth about God's love to his disciples and that they, after he has gone will continue to spread this truth. This is, he says "in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them."

Jesus knew that his disciples would face persecution and even death when he had gone but is confident that God's love which he has instilled in them will persevere and his teachings

will survive and flourish in future generations. Words that we know to today became true with the spread of Christianity throughout the world. it's estimated that 84% of the world's population identifies with a religious group, which translates to approximately 5.8 billion people. Christianity being the largest religion globally, over 2.38 billion representing nearly one-third of the world's population.

Jesus urges believers in the God of love that Jesus taught his disciples and us about, to unite. This doesn't mean that we should believe in exactly the same things about God. There are big differences between religions and between different Christian church groups. Those differences will perhaps always exist but Jesus' prayer is that those with faith in God should unite in this one aspect- and that is the love that God has for us all. That love is like the relationship God has with Jesus, he is, and therefore God is, with us.

As Jesus said "the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them." **Amen**

Closing Prayer.

Lord Jesus Christ, before I ever loved you, you loved me. Before I ever looked for you, you were seeking me out. Help me to love others as you love me. **Amen.**

Prayers inspired by Prayerfully Yours by Nick Fawcett