

## ST. MARY OF NAZARETH /ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI – WEST WICKHAM

28<sup>th</sup> March 2021: Palm Sunday

### Hazel writes:

The National Day of Reflection offered an opportunity to review the past year. As well as remembering those who have died and experiences that we have missed, you may have been reminded of some **things to be thankful for**. We have a service that will focus on this in April and would like to compile a video with short clips from many different people saying 'thank you' for some of the things that God has provided over the past year through the church. If you'd like to contribute something, please let me know and I'll record you in church next week, or through a visit to your doorstep.

Next Sunday, Easter Sunday – 4<sup>th</sup> April there will be an on-line **service of Holy Communion** which will be livestreamed from **St Mary's at 9.15am**. This is an in-person service open to all and there will be another service at **St Francis' church at 10.45am**. This is an exception to our normal pattern of services as it is Easter Sunday. Please do bring flowers to put onto our Easter crosses at both churches. These will be placed outside the churches for this year in order that we can observe social distancing and involve the wider community in this activity.

Other **services for Holy Week** are set out on the attached schedule on pages 6 and 7.

**Resources and updates for the week ahead** – This week our service will be livestreamed at 10am and will be available to view afterwards. All other files have been combined and posted as a pew sheet which has been sent on paper to those who have told us that they are not on-line. Other worship and resources that you might want to listen to or look at on Sunday:

- The Church of England's national virtual service will be available on their website at [www.churchofengland.org](http://www.churchofengland.org).
- The BBC have the following programmes to watch and listen to:
  - Sunday Worship at 8.10am on Radio 4 – Celebration of Palm Sunday with a sermon from the winner of the 2021 Theology Slam.
  - Choral Evensong at 3pm on Radio 3 from Wells Cathedral.
  - On BBC 1: Sunday Worship at 11.00 a.m. – Kate Bottley introduces a service for Palm Sunday from All Saints Church in Hale Barns and
  - Songs of Praise at 1.15 p.m. - Aled Jones meets a scientist from the Oxford Vaccine team to celebrate hope.

Please bring **Foodbank donations** to the Vicarage or St Francis' Church. Currently they need desserts, UHT Milk, Tinned Vegetables, long life fruit juice, Tinned Fruit, Tinned Fish, Tinned Cold meat, Toilet Rolls. Please do not bring any fresh food, or Baby milk as the foodbank cannot pass this on. You can also donate financially here:

<https://bromleyborough.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-money>.

We will be collecting **donations for the Bromley Borough Foodbank** on the High Street between 10am and 3pm on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> April. If you would like to volunteer for an hour or two, please contact Tim Shingler on 020 8402 8586 or at [tim.shingler@ntlworld.com](mailto:tim.shingler@ntlworld.com)

Each week our **"coffee/tea & chat"** on Thursday at 2.30 pm is an opportunity to share with others. It is just 40 minutes and you don't need to commit to joining each week. Please let Rowena ([rowena.griff19@btinternet.com](mailto:rowena.griff19@btinternet.com) /020 8777 6112) know if you would like the log-in details.

As we look to support our community as we come out of lockdown, I am grateful to those who have already knitted or crocheted some more forget-me-nots for our **bereavement support bags**. These will be especially helpful in the months ahead. If you would like a bag to give to someone that you know who has lost a loved one, do let me know. Hazel

We have now **re-opened the church buildings for public worship**. The services will follow the same pattern as before with an 8.00 a.m. and 10.00 a.m. service each Sunday (with the exception of Easter Sunday – see above). The restrictions associated with social distancing, wearing a face mask and no singing or socialising indoors will continue to be in place. There will also be an on-line provision of our Sunday services for the foreseeable future and during Holy Week Churches Together in West Wickham will provide a daily bible reading, reflection and prayer.

**Merri and John** would like to thank everyone for their kind messages, support, love and prayers during John's stay in hospital. He is now home to continue his recovery.

**If anyone feels they could organise this year's MacMillan Coffee Morning please get in touch with Merri 8777 8772.**

After Easter both of our churches will hold their annual meetings, when we will report on the year past and look forward to the year ahead. We will be looking for **new PCC members** in both churches and want to include more people in guiding and shaping what we do. If you'd like a greater insight to how our churches run, do talk to one of the current members about the role and consider whether it's something you'd be interested in taking on.

The Church Electoral Rolls of our two parishes will be revised as follows:

- For St Mary's, starting on the 20<sup>th</sup> March 2021, and ending on 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2021.
- For St Francis', starting on the 28<sup>th</sup> March 2021, and ending on 10<sup>th</sup> April 2021.

Under the Church Representation Rules any lay persons are entitled to have their names entered on the roll if the person —

(a) is baptised,

(b) is aged 16 or over, and

(c) has made one of the following three declarations and duly applied for enrolment.

- that the person is a member of the Church of England or of a Church in communion with it and is resident in the parish.
- that the person is a member of the Church of England or of a Church in communion with it, is not resident in the parish, but has habitually attended public worship in the parish during the preceding six months.
- that the person is a member in good standing of a Church which is not in communion with the Church of England but subscribes to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity and is also a member of the Church of England and has habitually attended public worship in the parish during the preceding six months.

Application Forms for enrolment can be obtained from the Church Electoral Roll Officer (Chris Fitzgerald for St Mary's and Rowena Griffiths for St Francis'). In order for a person to attend the annual parochial church meeting and to take part in its proceedings, an Application Form for enrolment must be returned by the date shown above for the ending of the revision of the Church Electoral Roll.

**Christian Aid Week** this year is from 10-16<sup>th</sup> May and focusses on Climate Justice. We will not have a door-to-door collection, but (physical and virtual) envelopes can be given to friends and neighbours and we will focus on Christian Aid at our service on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> May. Carol Hubbard has stepped down as our representative at St Mary's and Anita Curtis from St Francis' will be unable to co-ordinate our efforts this year. If we are to contribute to Churches Together in West Wickham in this respect and record how much we raise, we will need to have someone else as our representative. If anyone is interested in finding out more (and the role need include only those aspects which someone is able to take on), please contact either Anita Curtis on 8777-5973 ([john.curtis23@ntlworld.com](mailto:john.curtis23@ntlworld.com)) or Hazel.

Any items for the joint pew sheet to Beryl [bbolton@ntlworld.com](mailto:bbolton@ntlworld.com) and items for the websites to [brian.griff19@btinternet.com](mailto:brian.griff19@btinternet.com) or Gifty [office@stmarywestwickham.co.uk](mailto:office@stmarywestwickham.co.uk)

# **Bishop of Southwark's Lent Call 2021**

## **Week 5 – Jerusalem**

On 20 January 2021, the Bishop of Southwark, The Rt Revd Christopher Chessun, and the Anglican Archbishop in Jerusalem, The Most Revd Suheil Dawani, signed a covenant between the two Dioceses. We have had close links with the Diocese of Jerusalem for many years and the Bishop and the Dean have led three Diocesan Pilgrimages to the Holy Land. In 2018, The Revd Canon Richard Sewell, formerly Team Rector of Barnes Team Ministry in the Diocese of Southwark, became the Dean of St George's College, Jerusalem. He remains an Honorary Canon of Southwark Cathedral which has further strengthened our link.

The Jerusalem Bishopric was first established in 1841; in 1976, a Province known as the Episcopal Church of Jerusalem and the Middle East was constituted which extends across five countries (Palestine, Israel, Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan). The current Bishop of the Diocese is Archbishop of the Region. The Diocese, which contains 27 parishes with 8,000 members, focuses on four main areas of work: health, education, youth and the empowerment of women. As part of its work, the Diocese runs more than 33 institutions which focus on the poor and needy and provide high-quality services to all people without prejudice or discrimination on the grounds of religion, social class, gender, education or political affiliation. The institutions include 20 schools and vocational training centres, seven health centres and rehabilitation centres, two hospitals, and four guest houses for pilgrims. The Diocese also runs a Women's Empowerment Programme and a Youth Leadership Programme.

The Most Revd Suheil Dawani became the 14th Bishop in Jerusalem in April 2007. His vision for the future of his Diocese is to engage in the ministry of peace and reconciliation by strengthening the Christian presence in the Holy Land. His focus is on working together with overseas partners and collegially in ecumenical inter-faith affairs, as well as encouraging the faithful to join efforts for reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians.

In referring to the importance of Jerusalem, Bishop Suheil emphasises that he sees it as his duty, and that of all Christians, to make Jerusalem a model for peace between the three Abrahamic faiths. He says, "It is our task to give hope to the hopeless. In our daily lives may we be guided by the star of God's love."

The situation of the people in the Holy Land has been precarious for many years. Unemployment amongst the Christian population and the Palestinians has been high for

some while and those who are employed often spend hours reaching their places of work. The Coronavirus pandemic has made life much harder. In the Holy Land, the situation has been exacerbated because much of the economic activity and employment for people there is related to pilgrimages, and the tourism industry has been decimated by the pandemic. For instance, at Christmas we know that many pilgrims would usually be in Bethlehem and other parts of the Holy Land, and the shops and street vendors would be able to make a living. In 2020, however, pilgrims and tourists were unable to come and those who rely upon them found themselves without an income and no longer able to feed and clothe their children or meet the needs of their families.

In early March 2020, Bishop Christopher and The Very Revd Andrew Nunn, the Dean of Southwark, led the first Ecumenical Pilgrimage to the Holy Land with Bishop Paul Hendricks and Fr Philip Andrews from the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark. Nearly 70 people accompanied them around the holy sites and shared the experiences of seeing where Jesus lived and had his ministry. It was a wonderful time and we were so sad to have to leave a little early because of the pandemic.

Whilst we were there, however, we also saw the hardship which many were experiencing and now the situation is much worse. The Diocese has experienced a sharp downfall in income because of the lack of pilgrimages and because outpatient clinics had to close in all medical centres and hospitals. As well as this, the Diocese has been unable to collect school fees during this time.

In the past, the Diocese has helped those unable to provide for their families through its schools, hospitals and other institutions, but with the fall in income brought about by the pandemic it can no longer do this. So, with our help and some resources of its own, the Diocese of Jerusalem hopes to be able to offer \$100 (about £74) to up to 50 vulnerable families so they can feed themselves for about a month. This would enable them to buy basic food such as rice, sugar, beans, tomatoes, lentils, sardines, tuna and cooking oil.

The main aim of this project will be to ensure food security among the families of the parishes of the Diocese; families with no income, families which are large, and families which contain members suffering from chronic illness will be prioritised.

**Please pray for the people of the Holy Land and for peace with justice in this holy place.**

**Please also consider whether you are able to show compassion for the people in the parishes of the Diocese of Jerusalem by offering enough money to pay for a month's worth of food for a family, or something towards this, by donating through the Bishop of Southwark's Lent Call: [southwark.anglican.org/lentcall](https://southwark.anglican.org/lentcall).**

# HOLY WEEK & EASTER 2021

Each day during Holy Week, the Ministers of the Churches in West Wickham are providing a daily reflection, which will be broadcast via YouTube, to aid our faith journey through Holy Week, beginning on Palm Sunday and concluding on Easter Day. Each daily reflection will draw on an aspect of Jesus' passion, and have as a focus a symbol. The schedule is as follows:

Date	Theme		Symbol
Palm Sunday 28 <sup>th</sup> March	Entry into Jerusalem		Palm Cross
Monday 29 <sup>th</sup> March	Jesus in the Temple	Coins	
Tuesday 30 <sup>th</sup> March	Foot Washing		Bowl of water and Towel
Wednesday 31 <sup>st</sup> March	Last Supper	Bread and Wine	
Maundy Thursday 1 <sup>st</sup> April	Peter's denial		Cockrel
Good Friday 2 <sup>nd</sup> April	The Crucifixion	Cross	
Holy Saturday 3 <sup>rd</sup> April	Jesus' Burial		Rock
Easter Sunday 4 <sup>th</sup> April	Easter Garden	Easter Garden	

The devotions will be uploaded on a daily basis through Holy Week to the CTWW YouTube Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPSc8fwp4LwP5KOWD-ByExQ>

**Services in Church and online  
during HOLY WEEK & EASTER 2021:**

***Palm Sunday***

8am Holy Communion at St Francis'

10am Holy Communion at St Mary's (also a live streamed service)

***Wednesday 31st March***

10.45am Holy Communion at St Francis'

***Maundy Thursday 1st April***

7.30pm Holy Communion at St Mary's (also a live streamed service)

***Good Friday 2nd April***

11am Service of Meditations and Readings at St Francis'

2pm 'Crosslight' - a play about the characters around the cross by  
The Riding Lights' Theatre Company shown on the screen in St Mary's  
church – bring your own cushion

***Easter Sunday 4th April***

9.15am Holy Communion at St Mary's (also a live streamed service)

10.45am Holy Communion at St Francis'

**Collect**

True and humble king,  
hailed by the crowd as  
Messiah:  
grant us the faith to know  
you and love you,  
that we may be found  
beside you on the way of  
the cross,  
which is the path of glory.

**First Reading: Isaiah 50: 4-9a**

<sup>4</sup>The Lord GOD has given me  
the tongue of a teacher,  
that I may know how to  
sustain the weary with a word.  
Morning by morning he  
wakens— wakens my ear  
to listen as those who are  
taught.

<sup>5</sup>The Lord GOD has opened my  
ear, and I was not rebellious, I  
did not turn backwards.

<sup>6</sup>I gave my back to those who  
struck me, and my cheeks to  
those who pulled out the  
beard; I did not hide my  
face from insult and spitting.

<sup>7</sup>The Lord GOD helps  
me; therefore I have not been  
disgraced; therefore I have set  
my face like flint, and I know  
that I shall not be put to  
shame; <sup>8</sup>he who vindicates me  
is near.

Who will contend with me?

Let us stand up together.

Who are my adversaries?

Let them confront me.

<sup>9</sup>It is the Lord GOD who helps  
me; who will declare me guilty?

**Gospel Reading: Mark 14:1-16**

It was two days before the  
Passover and the festival of  
Unleavened Bread. The chief  
priests and the scribes were  
looking for a way to arrest Jesus  
by stealth and kill him; <sup>2</sup>for they  
said, 'Not during the festival, or  
there may be a riot among the  
people.' <sup>3</sup>While he was at  
Bethany in the house of Simon  
the leper, as he sat at the table, a  
woman came with an alabaster  
jar of very costly ointment of  
nard, and she broke open the jar  
and poured the ointment on his  
head. <sup>4</sup>But some were there who  
said to one another in anger,  
'Why was the ointment wasted  
in this way?' <sup>5</sup>For this ointment  
could have been sold for more  
than three hundred denarii, and  
the money given to the poor.'  
And they scolded her. <sup>6</sup>But Jesus  
said, 'Let her alone; why do you  
trouble her? She has performed  
a good service for me. <sup>7</sup>For you  
always have the poor with you,  
and you can show kindness to  
them whenever you wish; but  
you will not always have me.  
<sup>8</sup>She has done what she could;  
she has anointed my body  
beforehand for its burial. <sup>9</sup>Truly I  
tell you, wherever the good news  
is proclaimed in the whole world,  
what she has done will be told in  
remembrance of her.' <sup>10</sup>Then  
Judas Iscariot, who was one of  
the twelve, went to the chief  
priests in order to betray him to  
them. <sup>11</sup>When they heard it, they  
were greatly pleased, and

promised to give him money. So  
he began to look for an  
opportunity to betray him. <sup>12</sup>On  
the first day of  
Unleavened Bread, when the  
Passover lamb is sacrificed, his  
disciples said to him, 'Where do  
you want us to go and make the  
preparations for you to eat the  
Passover?' <sup>13</sup>So he sent two of  
his disciples, saying to them, 'Go  
into the city, and a man carrying  
a jar of water will meet you;  
follow him, <sup>14</sup>and wherever he  
enters, say to the owner of the  
house, "The Teacher asks, Where  
is my guest room where I may  
eat the Passover with my  
disciples?"' <sup>15</sup>He will show you a  
large room upstairs, furnished  
and ready. Make preparations  
for us there.' <sup>16</sup>So the disciples  
set out and went to the city and  
found everything as he had told  
them; and they prepared the  
Passover meal.

**Post Communion Prayer**

Lord Jesus Christ,  
you humbled yourself in  
taking the form of a  
servant,  
and in obedience died on  
the cross for our salvation:  
give us the mind to follow  
you and to proclaim you as  
Lord and King, to the glory  
of God the Father.



## Sermon: Richard Ford

So who is this strange figure who features in our reading from Isaiah? This figure who offers his back to those who beat him, his cheeks to those who pull out his beard, who does not hide his face from mocking and spitting?

There's something vaguely familiar about those words isn't there? But who is he?

We first meet him a few chapters earlier, where he is referred to as "O Israel my servant." As we go forward, this servant figure is sometimes seen as being the nation of Israel as a whole, at other times an individual who represents the nation of Israel. Israel as a nation is the chosen people whose role is to show the world who God is, but instead of sharing God with the world, they either reject him, following other gods and ending up in exile in Babylon, or keep Him to themselves, as we can see in New Testament times, when they refuse to eat with Gentiles or enter their homes, regarding them as unclean.

Soon we hear God proclaiming, through Isaiah, "Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight and he goes onto say:

"I will... make you to be a covenant for the people  
and a light for the Gentiles,  
to open eyes that are blind,  
to free captives from prison  
and to release from the dungeon  
those who sit in darkness" (*Is 42.6b and 7*)

These are words which you no doubt recall Jesus applies to himself during his ministry.

And as we meet with the Servant in the prophecies of Isaiah, we can see more and more how this figure points forward to Jesus and the sufferings he will endure as his ministry enters its final stages in Jerusalem. Perhaps the most familiar of what have come to be known as the Messianic prophecies is this:

He was pierced for our transgressions,  
he was crushed for our iniquities;  
the punishment that brought us peace was on him,  
and by his wounds we are healed.

<sup>6</sup>We all, like sheep, have gone astray,  
each of us has turned to our own way;

and the LORD has laid on him  
the iniquity of us all.

<sup>7</sup> He was oppressed and afflicted,  
yet he did not open his mouth;  
he was led like a lamb to the slaughter,  
and as a sheep before its shearers is silent,  
so he did not open his mouth. (*Is 53.5-7*)

The Servant has now replaced Israel the nation as God's chosen channel for revealing himself to the world. Or to put it another way, Jesus, the fulfilment of these Messianic prophecies and an Israelite, becomes Israel in its ideal form as he reveals to the world the true nature of God. Where Israel as a nation is seen to fail in its God-given purpose, Jesus, the Messiah, succeeds.

And so to our Gospel reading, where we find Jesus, after his triumphal entry into Jerusalem, which we are celebrating today, Palm Sunday, relaxing in Bethany at the home of Simon the Leper, presumably so called because he was one of those whom Jesus had cured of this disease, and enjoying a good meal. And from John's account of this event in his Gospel we know that this was also the home of Mary and Martha and their brother Lazarus, whom Jesus had raised from death.

Some of you may recall that I'm a fan of Milton Jones, the spiky-haired, Christian comedian, especially his book of "Ten Second Sermons" one of which goes as follows: "Over the course of a lifetime we will all attend a few surprise parties, but just the one surprise funeral."

I'll read that again to help it sink in: "Over the course of a lifetime we will all attend a few surprise parties, but just the one surprise funeral."

It's almost a summary of our gospel reading this morning.

The meal which Jesus and his friends were enjoying should have been an occasion for a great celebration, coming so soon after the triumph of Palm Sunday as it did. And no doubt in many ways it was, but Mark adds some darker notes, as does Milton Jones, when he reminds us of our own mortality with his remark about our only being present at one surprise funeral – our own.

Just before he tells us about this dinner-party, Mark informs us that the chief priests and the teachers of the law are looking for a way to arrest and kill Jesus. But they are

wary of doing it during the Feast of Passover in case it causes a riot. Normally the population of Jerusalem was around 50,000, but in 65AD the Romans conducted a survey which revealed that 256,500 lambs had been slaughtered to celebrate Passover. The law said that there must be a party of at least 10 people for each lamb, which would suggest that there must have been between 2.5 to 3 million people in the city.

These pilgrims were there to celebrate the Israelites achieving freedom from slavery in Egypt at a time when they were looking to be freed from what they regarded as enslavement to the Romans. And a popular young leader had just arrived in the city in a manner that fulfilled the words of the prophet Zechariah:

See your king comes to you  
righteous and having salvation,  
gentle and riding on a donkey. (*Zechariah 9.9*)

No wonder the chief priests and the teachers of the law were nervous. No wonder they thought it wise to eliminate this threat to their position and the peace of Jerusalem. But how to do it without precipitating a riot?

Meanwhile a woman, who John tells us is Mary, is pouring perfume over Jesus' head. And not just any perfume. This is pure nard, worth the equivalent of a year's pay for a day labourer.

No wonder that those whose motivation is money are upset. John tells us that it is Judas who leads the complaints, adding that he was a thief, taking advantage of his role as keeper of the disciples' common purse to help himself.

To the charge that the perfume could have been sold and given to the poor, and supporting the poor was something that was done at Passover, Jesus makes the point that, since there will always be those who are poor, there is plenty of opportunity for helping them.

Jesus is not suggesting that there is no need to support those in need. Far from it – he has spent much of his time with the outcasts of society and makes it clear in the parable of the sheep and the goats (Matthew 25.31-46) that when we support anyone in need, we are doing it for him, and more than that, it is a condition of our salvation. Interestingly, in Matthew's Gospel, this teaching comes immediately before his account of Mary's anointing Jesus.

No, what Jesus does is to recognise something that Judas and those like him fail to recognise: Mary's motivation. She wants to show Jesus how much she loves him and so she gives him the most precious thing she has. It is an act of worship, and Jesus uses the word "beautiful" to describe it, recognising the cost to her what she has done.

But Jesus sees in her actions something else. He knows what lies ahead. John tells us that he knows that Judas is going to betray him. And as we heard in our reading, immediately after this, Judas, true to his mercenary nature – at least that's how the gospel writers present it - goes off to agree payment with the religious authorities for betraying Jesus into their hands.

So Jesus interprets what Mary has done as preparing his body for burial, after he has fulfilled his role as Isaiah's Suffering Servant, a preparation for which, we now know, there is no time after Jesus is taken down from the cross, because of the approach of the Sabbath and, as we also now know, when the women go to the tomb when the Sabbath is over to carry out the burial rites, there is no body for them to anoint.

To Mary goes the honour of Jesus' final anointing; to Judas goes the ignominy of betraying God's son into the hands of evil men.

As Jesus says in Mary's defence: wherever the gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her, just as we have heard today.

It's clear that Jesus wants us to be aware of what Mary did, to recognise its significance. We know from John's Gospel that Mary "sat at Jesus' feet," as a disciple sits at the feet of a Rabbi, that is to say that she spent time being taught by him. And Jesus commends her for this, telling her, and those who are prepared to listen, that in spending time in relationship with him and learning from him, she has chosen the better part, in comparison with her sister Martha, who busied herself with household chores, even if those involved preparing a meal for Jesus.

And now we find Mary being commended for giving Jesus the most precious thing that she has, for in doing that she is revealing just what Jesus means to her.

And what about us?

As we step back from this reading, we can see that Mark has placed this account of Jesus' anointing by Mary, this act of love and devotion, between two acts of hatred and betrayal.

Which of these best describes our attitude to Jesus?

Are we prepared to spend time sitting at the feet of Jesus, learning from him in prayer and in the pages of the Bible?

Are we like Mary ready to place at his feet all that we have and all that we are, in recognition of what he has done for us?

Amen

### **Prayer Pointers**

As we journey together through Holy Week, from the joyful entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, through the Last Supper Jesus had with his friends, to the anguish of the Cross, may we understand the depth of the love that sent Jesus into the world to be our Saviour. As we stand at the foot of the cross of your Son, help us to see and know your love for us, that in humility, love and joy we may place at his feet all that we have and all that we are. As the mystery and beauty of Christ's love for us becomes revealed through his death, resurrection and triumph, pray for help to proclaim your word and to use this Holy Week to demonstrate the meaning of your gospel message to all we meet.

We think of Christ's compassion despite receiving none himself. Pray for all who are working at home, and those who work in essential services in the community, especially in health care. Give thanks for our National Health Service, working to bring relief to those suffering from the virus, and saving lives. Give thanks for carers who put others before themselves and give so much to enable them to live at home. Pray that we may all recognise the needs of others and the need to support those who care, quietly and without complaint.

On the cross we see how wide the love of Christ is. Pray for those areas where normal, daily life is violence, conflict and grinding poverty. Pray especially for Zimbabwe and our link Diocese of Central Zimbabwe. Pray for the protection of the people's health during the Covid pandemic, for the clergy, lay ministers and their families during the lockdowns and for the success of projects the diocese is undertaking to sustain itself. Pray for our link parish of St Andrew's, Gweru, as their priest has moved to another post and they await a new minister.

Pray for all those who are ill and for those who have had surgery or treatment recently –especially for John Godfrey; Anne Bryan (sister of Barbara Colpus); Chris Cowlard and his wife Pauline (nephew of Ken Colpus) and Michael Sanders (husband of Mary Sanders). We pray for those we know, and those known to God alone, who are experiencing suffering, ill health, isolation and loneliness. Pray that they may feel the love of Jesus in their hearts, that they may not fear the future. Comfort them and sustain them in their need.

We remember those who have died. Help us to trust they are at peace with you. Show us how to reach out to others with kindness and care, so that hope shines out in every heart and home. Pray especially for Samuel Akadi and Dennis Barcoo. May they now experience your greater glory. We pray for those who mourn the recent death of those they've loved, especially Samuel's mother, Jane, his fiancée, Amy and his young son Isaac and for Darren and Mark Barcoo mourning the death of their father, Dennis.

We ask, God of grace, that you will make us more like some of the crowd:  
that we will follow Jesus and give him our praise in the way we live;  
that we will turn away from wrong and evil and stand on the Master's side,  
that we will be faithful in worshipping the one who has come in the Lord's name  
through our worship, our prayers, and in giving our skills, time and means day by day.