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We are looking for more contributions from the St Hilda’s community, if you would like to contribute, please either call, email or send an article to the Parish Office.

If you would like help or to speak to a member of the ministry team please contact:

- Parish Office Tel 01784 253525
  Email office@sthilda.org
- Father Joseph can be contacted on 01784 254237
YCCN Relay Reading to London – Part II

As I wrote before, my time on the relay was so intense that I could not cover it all in one article. Here I am going to try to give an impression of the fascinating people I met and some of the places I found interesting.

The most important people were the members of the Young Christian Climate Network themselves: enthusiastic about their faith and how it moves them to take action about the mess we've made of God's world, confident, and articulate. Ones I particularly remember are:

- Bethany joined YCCN when she turned 18 in March. At her first Zoom meeting about the relay it was suggested she take the role of volunteer co-ordinator for the Reading-London stage. She agreed. (Whoever told her it would take about an hour a week was very over-optimistic!) Once A-levels were over she did made excellent work of this demanding role, walked the whole stage, and seemed unphased by interviews and leading prayers. (She achieved the grades needed to go to Cambridge). She plays the cello, and was able to give details of a teacher to another walker who wanted to resume the cello in retirement. Bethany's parents joined for part of the walk, and have obviously encouraged her in her faith and actions.
- Annika travelled up from Guildford on three days to walk with us. She is a representative of the Church of England Youth Council on the General Synod.
- Stephen from Twickenham also walked with us for three days, and was happy to be interviewed.
- Naomi's smiling face was also with us for three days. She spoke for YCCN at the event on the steps of St. Paul's Cathedral.
Liz walked with us for two days. She is about to start a theology PhD on Hope in a time of climate change.

Mollie was part of the welcoming party at Clapham. There was a press cutting of her taking part in the relay in Cornwall. She gave the address during Evensong.

The other walkers who covered the whole stage were Barry and Ian, who had walked the whole of the Pilgrimage to Paris, and Ian's wife Alison. Ian and Alison help organise Pilgrim Cross (which used to be called Student Cross): during Holy Week pilgrims carry a cross to Walsingham. They have also walked a number of pilgrimage routes themselves, including the Camino from Walsingham to Santiago de Compostela.

Other members of the relay I learnt about from snatches of conversation while we walked. Bishop Olivia's husband Keith talked about being the Bishop's "other half": Bishop's husband is such a new role that there are no expectations, so they can make it up for themselves.

Jay, a weather-beaten gentleman with long white hair, met us on the second day at the one place where we had temporarily mislaid the route. He told us that his brother had seen us off from Twyford that morning. He then led us to Holyport, with several places where we might have gone wrong again, and left us as abruptly as he joined us. Peter joined us at this point, by arrangement, and led us the rest of the way to Windsor, giving us local information en route.

At the gathering at Windsor a very tall black gentleman in a Christian Aid tabard quizzed us gently about our church affiliations. He was less impressed than most people there with the 12 miles we had walked, and told us about growing up in the highlands of Kenya where the average walk to school was seven miles. When a family could afford a bicycle it was shared: one boy rode while the others ran alongside. "With that exercise every day at 4000 feet, is it any wonder we have good athletes?"

Rima was one of the party who fed us at Runnymede and walked on to Ashford with us picking up litter as she went. She runs marathons dragging a 10kg tyre behind her to raise awareness of environmental issues.

She was able to give advice to one of the YCCN members who was about to run her first marathon.

On two days we were joined by a lady in a distinctive Christian Climate Action T-shirt: black, with a white egg-timer and cross on it. This group is associated with Extinction Rebellion. She is a lawyer working with child care cases. She hadn't yet told her colleagues about her involvement with the group, but as she is planning to walk a "Camino to COP" (London to Glasgow) in September and October they will soon know! She found the Twickenham-Clapham leg quite tiring, so now has more idea what to expect on a long walk.

We also had encounters with other people on the way.

Chatting while waiting for a rail replacement bus on my way to Reading, a question gave me the opening to explain why I was going there. I was early at Reading Minster, and while I was looking round a gentleman pointed out on the list of past rectors one who started his
tenure under Henry VIII and managed to continue under Edward VI, Mary and into Elizabeth I’s reign.

Walking through Windsor, a lady asked us whether we were the YCCN Relay, and said she was glad to have met us; her work was to do with education and the environment.
At the JFK Memorial we met a lady involved with the environment and the Mothers' Union in Lincolnshire.
In Staines, bored teenagers asked what we were doing, which gave opportunities to tell the people most affected about what we were doing.
After Staines all the way to London no-one else approached us or asked questions.
Three buildings stood out for me because of their stories.

At White Walton we were given lunch in 'The Tree House': a new building in the grounds of a Grade 1 listed church in a conservation area. There was so much opposition to it on the grounds of potential disturbance to a quiet village that the council restricted its use to eight three-hour sessions a week, and all day Sundays. Now they have been open for several years they plan to petition the council to relax this with the evidence of no complaints from its use.

All Saints, Dedworth has an amazing sculpture above its entrance of Jesus leaping off the cross with his arms open in welcome. This was designed by students from "The boy's school" for one of the churches in central Windsor, which then did not want it. All Saints jumped to give it a home. The current building dates from the 1970s but has William Morris windows carried over from a previous building, and delicate floral murals.

St. Barnabas Church, Southfields seemed so familiar that I suspect it was designed by the same architect as St. Hilda's. The size, style of tracery in the windows, and age of the glass are similar. The windows are shades of green rather than the pastel colours in our East window, but equally difficult to match today. While we are glad the money ran out before a bell tower could be built at St. Hilda's, at St. Barnabas the money ran out before the details of the building were complete, so while one column is carved as rounded columns, the others still have rough square outlines.
The final delight of the relay was a brief tour of the grounds of Lambeth Palace by the Head Gardener. He showed us the olive trees flanking a walk, each with an oak label for a geographical area of the Anglican Communion. The olive represents peace and continuity; apparently Neil Armstrong left a golden olive branch on the moon. The trees are in pots so they look temporary to give "the powers that be" time to get used to them! There is a herb garden, again for continuity: many of the plants would have been grown there when the Palace was first built. (Only the crypt remains of the original building). A grass labyrinth gives a space for a meditative walk. Parts of the nearby lawn are left uncut for a wildlife habitat; they are in the shape of a traditional church with the labyrinth where the altar would be. This gave us time in an oasis of quiet before we returned to the bustle of central London.

Over 100 churches mobilise to help Afghan refugees settle in the UK

More than 100 churches from across the country have joined forces to help Afghan refugees settle in the UK. Christian charity Welcome Churches, together with the Hospitality Pledge, both of which encourage the Christian community to support refugees, launched an emergency call for churches to join their support efforts, especially those based in areas where the resettlements are going to be. Dr Krish Kandiah, founder of adoption charity Home for Good and leader of the Hospitality Pledge project, told Premier over 100 churches joined on Tuesday.

"It's been so amazing to see the church step forward and really get involved," Kandiah said. "We have identified some of the regions where these resettlement hotels are going to be. So, we are working with the Home Office to provide practical support. People have arrived with very little, they've got very light clothing and, you know, when it rains, it feels cold here, even in the summer so churches have been sourcing prams and clothing...there are so many things that churches can do".

He went on to explain that one of the biggest needs was accommodation. "People are being put into these hotels in groups of about 100. And that's another request. I've been speaking to as many Christian conference centres and retreat centres as I can find, because hotels are not a great place for families to be but some of our Christian conference centres are really well placed, I think, to offer assistance," Kandiah continued.
On Tuesday, Prime Minister Boris Johnson announced the UK will take up to 20,000 vulnerable Afghan refugees through a special resettlement scheme. They will come over the coming years with 5,000 arriving in the next 12 months.

But many have criticised the Government saying the measure does not meet the scale of the crisis.

Kandiah recognised the figure could be higher but said he is relieved to see the Government taking action.

"Looking at some of the ways that our immigration policy was going, I was scared we weren't going to take any. So, 20,000 is great compared to zero. But we're a big, powerful nation, I think we've got capacity to be able to take more if we're going to be a global Britain. I think we really need to step up but we need to take care of those that we've currently said yes to. Let's encourage our governments to take more by showing that we really can look after those that we've already accepted."

Women, girls and religious minorities will be prioritised for the scheme.

Welcome Churches have also launched an Emergency Afghan Fund to help offer local support.

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All-loving God, Your hands have fashioned every lovely corner of this treasured planet, and the beautiful land of Afghanistan is as precious as every other place Your children call 'home'. By its rivers and mountains, its fields and gardens, its busy towns and ancient villages, it is the heart’s desire of its people and the place where their lives and loves are nurtured.

We grieve today with those who grieve over Afghanistan, the people who call it home indeed, the people exiled or suddenly having to leave, and the men and women from other countries who have made sacrifices in recent years in the cause of that country’s future.

We pray for peace, dignity, freedom and confidence for the men, women and children of Afghanistan; for courage, vision and generosity within the international community responding to such need; and for tranquillity of mind amongst our own Service community and its wider family.

In the name of Jesus Christ, the peace-giver, we pray, AMEN.

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Cathedrals bring in millions of pounds for cities, says report

THE 42 cathedrals in England have a hugely positive economic and social impact on the cities and communities they serve, says an independent report commissioned for the Association of English Cathedrals and published on Thursday.

In 2019, they contributed £235 million to their local economies, provided 6065 full-time equivalent jobs and 15,400 volunteering posts, and received more than 14.6 million visits.

They also hosted a programme of arts, music, heritage, and culture, besides providing the venues for film shoots such as The Crown and Doctor Who.

They also played a part socially, responding to local needs by running foodbanks; support groups for the more vulnerable, the unemployed, and the homeless; and providing
outreach activities in schools, residential homes, and hospitals, lunch clubs, parent and toddler groups, and community cafés.

**Visitors at Salisbury Cathedral, last month**
The lockdowns and continuing restrictions during 2020 had a direct impact on their ability to be self-sustaining, the report says, estimating that their finances “will be constrained for some time to come”. A significant fall in the average non-visitor income reflected a reduction of almost 80 per cent in income generated from the use of cathedral facilities. Closure and restrictions on congregation size also meant fewer people attending services, and a subsequent drop in donations.

Cathedrals benefited from new coronavirus-related grant programmes from the Government, the Church Commissioners, and independent trusts. This included at least 96 Culture Recovery Fund and Historic England grants in 2020, totalling £27.8 million, enabling urgent repairs to allow cathedrals to open safely, and safeguarding their core activities.

Visitor numbers in 2020 fell by approximately 70 per cent, compared with 2019. But Covid-19 has also given rise to newer opportunities, the report says: in particular, by encouraging cathedrals to live-stream their services and to use Zoom to provide pastoral support.

Recognising schools’ increased reluctance to travel, by the end of 2020, one third had begun offering or developing online resources.

Case studies were carried out at Gloucester and Rochester as medium-sized historic cathedrals; Leicester and St Edmundsbury as functioning parish churches; Liverpool as an urban cathedral; and Winchester as a large cathedral of international importance.

Cathedrals are a key feature of the nation’s cultural heritage, the report states: there were 9.8 million visitors in 2018. Even though only a few cathedrals charge for entry, paying visitors accounted for 33 per cent of all visitors to cathedrals in that year.

Figures from the Association of Leading Visitor Attractions (ALVA) show that St Paul’s was the 18th most visited attraction in the UK in 2019, receiving more than 1.7 million visitors. Canterbury, Durham, and York also featured in ALVA’s top 53 attractions in 2019.

Innovative exhibitions attracted many visitors, including the *Poppies: Weeping Window* temporarily installed at Hereford (196,000 visitors), and the helter-skelter in Norwich.

There has been a significant increase in tourist numbers at Leicester since Richard III was buried in the cathedral. York Minster had a record number of visitors in 2019, thanks partly to its Northern Lights sound-and-light projection events, which were seen by 22,500 people.

It is estimated that cathedrals generate a total spend of more than £235,000,000 in their local economies. They can form an important part of the visitor offer in an area. More than 90 per cent work with their local tourism promotion agencies to further this, and cathedrals
often represent a powerful and iconic image of a city. They are valued for their architecture, their place in history, and their aesthetic appeal. Teaching is also a big part of their impact, the report says.

Community support included setting up initiatives designed to address the needs of the most vulnerable members of the community, such as Sheffield’s Archer project, which seeks to help lift people out of homelessness. More than 90 per cent of cathedrals provided details of specific projects or initiatives to provide support, and the most common initiatives were supporting a foodbank and the homeless.

Overall, cathedrals spend about £51 million per year on wages and salaries, suggesting a total wage bill of about 20 per cent higher than that estimated in 2014. The study found clear evidence that the activity of cathedrals “results in a range of social benefits which would be expected to impact positively on the wellbeing of participants and of society in general”.

“Cathedrals stand at the heart of their communities and regions — places of faith and worship, welcome and service, wonder and education,” said the Dean of Lichfield, the Very Revd Adrian Dorber, who chairs the Association of English Cathedrals. “By our welcoming and inclusive ethos, millions are drawn to our cathedrals every year. It is touching to receive so much public attention and endorsement.

“We have, though, been badly affected by the pandemic; the data proves that very clearly. But we’ve risen to new challenges. We’ve gone digital, streamed our services, and reached out to provide practical and spiritual care to be beacons of hope in tough times.

“This study gives the evidence of our impact as sacred spaces and places of compassion, community, and solace. England’s cathedrals are resources for our local communities and the nation.”

**Senior Church of England figure who worked to allow women to be bishops announces retirement**

The Right Reverend Christine Hardman has announced she's to retire from her role as Bishop of Newcastle, at the end of November. Bishop Christine is a Member of the House of Bishops in the Church of England's General Synod and her major area of work on General Synod was the legislation to allow women to be bishops. Bishop Christine said: “I am reaching my 70th birthday at the end of August and my time as Bishop of Newcastle is drawing to a close. Her Majesty the Queen has graciously accepted my resignation, and with the Archbishop of York’s permission I will be stepping down as Bishop of Newcastle on 30th November, 2021.

“I am profoundly grateful for the six years I have served this Diocese, the depth of welcome and relationships in this region has been inspirational and encouraging. We have all been called to minister together, lay and ordained, at a time of extraordinary challenge, and I am
very proud of the way in which our clergy and laity have responded to this. I give thanks for all of you. It has been a privilege to be your Bishop.

“My husband Roger and I have been incredibly blessed by the generosity and support that has been shown to both of us in our time in Newcastle Diocese. Its people, history, and landscape have an enduring place in our hearts, and we will always treasure the years we have spent here.”

Bishop Christine became a Deaconess in 1984 and was ordained Deacon in 1987, serving in the Diocese of St Albans. From 1987 to 1996 she was a tutor, and then course director for the St Alban’s and Oxford Ministry Course. In 1996, she was appointed Vicar of Holy Trinity and Christ the King, Stevenage, also Rural Dean of Stevenage in 1999, and in 2001 served as Archdeacon of Lewisham and Greenwich in the Diocese of Southwark. In 2012, she retired only to return to active full-time ministry when she was consecrated Bishop of Newcastle.

She is also a Church Commissioner, Chair of the Archbishops’ Pastoral Advisory Group, sits in the House of Lords and chair of the North of Tyne Combined Authority Inclusive Economy Board.

Suffragan Bishop of Berwick, the Right Reverend Mark Wroe said: “Bishop Christine has been a profound voice of hope and faith for the Church and the North East, locally and nationally, as a passionate advocate of our region. It’s been a privilege to serve in the team she has developed, in the midst of so many changes and challenges, to help us be a growing church bringing hope for our Diocese. We have appreciated her compassionate, straight-talking, faith-filled and collaborative leadership which never shies away from the issues at hand. “Although we will miss Bishop Christine deeply in the diocese, we will be bolstered by the hope and faith in Jesus Christ which she constantly holds before us. Our prayers and love will go with her and Roger.”

Stephen Cottrell, Archbishop of York said: “Christine Hardman has been an outstanding Bishop of Newcastle, bringing hope and purpose to the parishes and communities she serves and becoming a trusted and respected voice for the Christian faith in the North East, but also in our national life through her work and witness in the House of Lords. As she approaches retirement, I wish her and Roger every blessing. We thank God for her tenacious faithfulness.”

Right Reverend Mark Wroe will lead the Diocese of Newcastle as the process begins to appoint the next Bishop of Newcastle.
‘Stop asking where Dracula’s grave is’: Yorkshire church asks tourists

A church in North Yorkshire is pleading eager tourists to deter from asking about the vampire’s grave.

Church leaders at the Church of St Mary the Virgin, have put up a poster in the entrance door which reads: "Please do not ask staff where Dracula's grave is as there isn't one. Thank you."

British author Kevin Meagher took a picture of the sign and posted it on Twitter saying: “Posted without a hint of irony on the door of the Church of St Mary the Virgin, adjacent to Whitby Abbey.”

Whitby receives many tourists looking to see the town in which Bram Stoker found inspiration to write the novel in 1897.

It is understood that it was in Whitby’s library that Stoker came across the name ‘Dracula’, a nickname for ‘Vlad the Impaler’ a Rumanian ruler.

St Mary the Virgin is located next to the Whitby Abbey and holds a cemetery ground mentioned in the book prompting many tourists to ask for the exact location of Dracula’s grave, forgetting Dracula never existed.

The grave that can be found, however, is that of a man named Swales who is also mentioned in the book.
Sponsor a church chair

We have selected some fresh, new replacement chairs. During the last few years, as well as worship, the church has been used for concerts, educational activities, conferences and even a curry and carols evening. We need the building and its furnishings to support the developing uses of the church space and replacing the chairs is a big initiative.

The sale of the old chairs covered approximately half of the cost of the new ones. You can help us with the cost of the new chairs:

❖ £90 covers the cost of a chair
❖ £225 covers the cost of a stacking dolly or trolly

Features of the new chairs:

• They stack (up to 10 in a stack or 25 on a special dolly)
• They link together at floor level, making them safe and compliant with current regulations
• They are lightweight
• They are upholstered – for comfort and looking good
• The upholstery is wipe-clean
• They come with and without arms, so all the chairs will match
• The chrome finish is an upgrade and will not scratch (like the chairs in the hall)

We will recognise the sponsors of the new chairs in a memorial book / list which will be displayed in church – you can donate either in memory of someone or as an individual donation.

Thank you

If you are interested in sponsoring a chair, please complete a form that can be found:

• At the back of the Church
• On the Website
• Or Contact the Parish Office

Cheques are payable to St Hilda’s PCC or you can transfer monies direct;
St Hilda’s PCC
Sort Code: 60-01-22
Account Number: 36290696
Read John 6: 56-69

This reading reminds us of the importance of taking Jesus and God as part of our lives. Draw a heart shape on card and cut it out. Now cut the heart into two, in whatever pattern or angle you want, to make it into a puzzle. Write ‘God’ on one half of the heart and your name on the other, and decorate them. Talk together about how Jesus was explaining that following Jesus is about having your heart connected to GOD.

St Hilda’s Parish News

If you have any Parish News you would like to share, then please send them into the Parish Office.

Seating update
As the restrictions ease there are more changes in church. The chairs are set out in a standard configuration of rows in the centre aisles. This means that going forward you will be able to choose where to sit and with whom to sit and we will not continue to implement “bubbles”. However, we will continue to ask everyone to wear a mask and sanitise on entry and exit. We will of course, also continue to maintain ventilation. We will also still ask you to continue to book – so that there is a track and trace list just in case it is needed.

We recognise that there are some people who would feel more comfortable to maintain social distancing and we will therefore have some seats in the side aisles which are separate for those wishing to maintain a distance.

It is hoped that this moves us forward towards some level of normality, and will also keep everyone feeling comfortable about returning to church and we look forward to seeing you soon.

Spelthorne Deanery Confirmations – Sunday 19th September
Spelthorne deanery confirmation service is taking place at St Hilda’s at 3pm.
Confirmation is a special church service in which a person confirms the promises that were made when they were baptized. If you were baptized at a christening when you were a child, your parents and godparents made these promises on your behalf. As a young person or adult, you may be ready to affirm these promises for yourself and commit your life to following Jesus Christ. At the confirmation service, you make these promises for yourself. Friends and family as well as the local Christian community will be here to promise to support and pray for you.

Bishop Graham will lay his hands on your head and ask God’s Holy Spirit to give you the strength and commitment to live God’s way for the rest of your life. If you would like to find out more, please do get in touch with Fr Joseph.

Confirmation preparation for adults will run on Thursday the 2nd, 9th and 16th September.

**Soup and roll**

Starting on **Wednesday 29th September**, after the 11am service and continuing on the last service of each month.

*There’s something spiritual about breaking bread together. After the Eucharist, we will gather for soup and roll. It will be an excellent way to get to know each other better, to share in fellowship, meet some new faces and enjoy a delicious home cooked soup with a bread roll.*

**Women’s and Men’s Breakfast**

We are planning to hold individual breakfast get togethers for Women and Men separately. The aim of these is to create a new time for fellowship, followed by a full English breakfast, and a talk by a guest speaker.

The first get togethers are:
- Men’s Breakfast – 11th September
- Women’s Breakfast – 16th October

**Hope Into Action**

*Thank you, to everyone who has used the blue bins to donate clothing. Our first collection will be week commencing 23/8. The bins will remain in place, please feel free to continue to leave clothing and shoes. The money raised will be put towards the work of Hope into Action locally.*

Homelessness has been a key element of St Hilda’s missional engagement and St Hilda has started to support Hope Into Action:

“We provide not just shelter and housing know-how but also friendship. Together with over
70 churches, we provide direct support to people whom others have often given up on. Our vision is for every church to lovingly provide the homeless with a home. The tragedy of homelessness is in every community.”

There are two blue wheelie bins, one in church and one in the church hall to take donations of clothes, belts and shoe. It will all be sold, and the proceeds donated towards the partnership with Hope Into Action. Please – clean clothes, paired shoes, and belts only. We cannot do anything with bedding, towels, curtains, and other soft furnishings.

**Wanted**

If anyone has any spare threads, embroidery threads and wools, please place in the box at the back of the church for use by a local charity. Thank you

**Large Baby Doll**

Does anyone have a large baby doll which could be adopted by Junior Church? They will be loved and well cared for!

*Thank you, Christine Taylor*

**Mothers’ Union Election for London Diocesan President:**

Voting is by post this year. The deadline for forms to be received at the office has been extended to 31 August.

If you need a voting form, contact Sally Goulden 07970 824367.

Every vote counts! I encourage you to vote.

**Peggy Pinfold**

Please hold Peggy in your prayers, she has had a recent fall at home, and the attending paramedics carried out the usual tests which showed up some other problems, which are now being treated in St Peter’s. She is being well cared for and she is grateful for the messages of support she is receiving via Sue.
This weeks services

Sunday Eucharist – 22nd August @ 9.30am
This service can be viewed via our Facebook page, our new YouTube channel (St Hilda’s Ashford), and Twitter.

Wednesday Eucharist – 25th August @ 9.45am

Tickets can be booked for this week’s services via the links on our website and Facebook page or by contacting the Parish Office by 5pm Friday for Sunday’s service and 12pm Tuesday for Wednesday’s service.

Junior Church will be returning next Sunday (29th) with the Book Bag Blessing service so please remember to book your youngsters when the link becomes available on Monday.

Please note we asking for the safety of yourselves and others that you continue to wear a mask whilst in the church.

Tea and Chat after Sunday Service

The Sunday Tea and Chat is taking a short break for the summer, we are currently looking at holding this at another time as following the lifting of restrictions, refreshments will restart at the end of the Sunday service this week.
Please hold in your prayers and thoughts this week those who are affected by the Corona Virus as well as the family and friends of those below.

**The Sick**

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<td>Ann Considine</td>
<td>Libby Mills</td>
<td>Rev. Peter Taylor</td>
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<td>Peter Garner</td>
<td>Peggy Pinfold</td>
<td>Philip Willerton</td>
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<td>Juliet Griffith</td>
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**The Recently Departed**

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<tr>
<td>Clifford McCammon</td>
<td>Marion Muggeridge</td>
<td>Paul Harvey</td>
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**Prayer**

Almighty and everlasting God,  
you are always more ready to hear than we to pray  
and to give more than either we desire or deserve:  
pour down upon us the abundance of your mercy,  
forgiving us those things of which our conscience is afraid  
and giving us those good things  
which we are not worthy to ask  
but through the merits and mediation of 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