



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Lent 2016

Thy kingdom Come, thy will be done ...

A Call to Prayer in the week leading up to Pentecost 2016

As we travel around the country, we are continuously encouraged by the faithfulness, commitment and courage of all our Partners in the Gospel. Your ministry in sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ, often in testing circumstances, is an inspiring testimony to the transforming work of our Lord. We thank God for our partnership in the Gospel.

Like us, you will know that ministry is empty and barren without prayer. That is why we are taking the unprecedented step of writing to every serving parish priest in the Church of England inviting you and your people to join us in a week of prayer for the evangelisation of our nation. In the week leading up to Pentecost (May 8th - 15th, 2016) we long to see a great wave of prayer across our land, throughout the Church of England and many other Churches.

Our hope is

- for all Christians to deepen their relationship with Jesus Christ
- for all of us to have confidence to share the Gospel
- for all to respond to the call of Jesus Christ to follow Him as disciples, to live out the Gospel and to seek God's Kingdom from day to day

At the heart of our prayers will be the words that Jesus Christ himself taught us - **‘Thy kingdom come, thy will be done.’** It is impossible to overstate the life-transforming power of the Lord's Prayer. It is a prayer that is reassuring enough to be on the lips of the dying and yet dangerous enough to be banned in cinemas. It is famous enough to be spoken each day by billions in hundreds of languages and yet intimate enough to draw us ever closer into friendship with Jesus Christ. It is simple enough to be memorised by small children and yet profound enough to sustain a whole lifetime of prayer. When we pray it with sincerity and with joy, there is no imagining the new ways in which God can use us to his glory.

But how? We are aware that many dioceses, cathedrals, parishes, and chaplaincies will already be preparing to engage in special times of prayer and witness at that time. If this applies to you, please do not see this letter as an additional burden; we simply ask that your own prayers, as you engage in your Diocesan or parish plans, should include your longing that more should come to know Christ.

Only you know the context in which you minister and the opportunities and challenges you face, so the precise way in which this time of prayer is realised locally will be up to you and the people you serve. If you go to the website: www.thykingdom.co.uk you will find many ideas and resources to inspire you. Amongst them are the following suggestions;

- ❖ As a parish, team, or deanery commit to a week of 24/7 prayer
- ❖ 'Help my church to pray' guide
- ❖ Special prayers in Sunday worship
- ❖ Prayer walking
- ❖ An hour of prayer before Jesus Christ in the Eucharist
- ❖ A novena prayer card handed out to every member of your congregation
- ❖ A parish retreat or quiet day or a school of prayer

In addition there will be Beacon events in Cathedrals across the country over Pentecost weekend (Canterbury, Durham, Winchester, Coventry and St Paul's), also at St Michael le Belfrey, York. The dream is this: imagine every Anglican, perhaps even every Christian, in this nation praying that prayer together with the specific intention that all may come to know Jesus as Lord. We profoundly hope that you and those you serve will want to be part of this great movement of prayer. Evangelism is the work of God, and it begins as we seek him in prayer. It is always good for the Church to pray.

May the grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

+Justin Cantuar

+Sentamu Eboracensis