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EASTER 7C

1st June 2025

A short act of worship and daily devotions

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Opening Prayers

Take time to find something in your home that you hold as precious and important. It may be a photograph, a flower or personal item.

Whatever you choose, spend some time quietly reflecting on these questions:

- What is it that makes it important to you?
- What memories does it hold?
- How do you feel about it and what would happen if you lost it?

Now imagine that God is holding you as precious and important:

- Loving and caring for you and your unique character
- Following your journey of faith
- Wanting never to lose you.

When you feel able put down your object and pick up again these written words

Come then to worship, knowing that whatever you offer in this moment is precious and important. Amen.

You may now wish to say the Lord's Prayer in a version or translation with which you are familiar

Reading: John 17:20-26 – [Click for reading](#)

Responding to the reading

What does today's Gospel reading have for us?

As you read John 17, notice Jesus praying: not for himself, and not just for the disciples who are with him, but for all of us: "for those who will believe in me through their word."

In this tender, intimate moment which has so much to teach us about prayer and about the nature of the Christ, Jesus is not performing a miracle or delivering a parable. He is interceding, longing, hoping. And what does he pray for? Unity. Oneness. That we may all be one.

It's a powerful and deeply grace-filled moment. Jesus doesn't pray for uniformity. He doesn't ask that we all agree on everything, or become indistinguishable from one another. Instead, he prays that we may be united as he is one with God the Creator – connected through love, through relationship, through shared purpose.

This is not unity by force or conformity. It is unity rooted in grace.

Grace says: 'You belong.' Grace says: 'You are included, not because of what you've done or what you believe perfectly, but because you are loved.' Grace is the divine thread that binds us to God and to one another, even when we struggle to find common ground.

For those of us walking a path of open-hearted, inclusive discipleship, this passage is both a comfort and a challenge. It reminds us that Jesus' vision was always broader than any

one group or tradition. His prayer reaches across generations, denominations, and ideologies. And it calls us into something deeper than agreement: it calls us into relationship.

But this unity isn't abstract. It shows up in how we live. Jesus says that the world will know who we are – will know that he was sent by God – by the love and unity we share. In a world often torn by division, suspicion, and fear, our calling is to be signs of something different: a community grounded in grace and held together by love.

So today, ask yourself:

Where am I being invited into deeper unity with others: not through agreement, but through grace?

How can I show the world what love looks like, in my words, my choices, my relationships?

Where might I need to let go of pride or fear in order to embrace someone more fully?

Jesus' prayer is still echoing through time. And we are part of the answer; not by being perfect, but by being people of grace.

"That they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me."

Let that love be our foundation. Let that grace be our guide. Let that unity be our witness. Amen.

Hymn/Song:

664 STF – Lord, you call us to your service, each in our own way – [YouTube](#)

Blessing

My chains have fallen away,
I, and all around me, are set free.
Help me, and help each of us, to live a life of freedom this week,
Liberated by your eternal love for, and trust in, each of us.
Amen.

Prayers and Prayer Pointers

Monday 2nd June

- On this day over 900 years ago (in 1098), the first Siege of Antioch finished, marking a victory for the invading Crusaders on their way to Jerusalem.
- This time of violence and invasion in the name of religion (but actually in the service of empire) is a time of shame for the church and all who are associated with organised religion.
- Although it was a long time ago, the temptation for our religious institutions to collude with 'empires' (the forces of power in our world – political, business, wealth) remains.
- Today, let us pray for our leaders, that they will avoid the call of earthly power and seek to glorify God in all things.

Tuesday 3rd June

- Opening the curtains, blinds or shutters:
- Take time to pray for the world and in particular those who live and work in your community. The shopkeepers, restaurants and bars. For service providers, hairdressers, beauticians and the Post Office. For health providers like the Doctors and Chemist.

Wednesday 4th June

- Today is marked internationally as the memorial of the Tiananmen Square protests in China, which ended in violence on 4th June 1989. However, public gatherings to mark the occasion are still banned in China and Hong Kong.
- Today, we pray for all who live in fear of their own leaders and rulers, whether in local, national or international settings.
- Come Lord Jesus, Amen.

Thursday 5th June

- Looking in the mirror:
Ask God to reveal to you what part you should play in their plan. What are your special gifts and graces? What in particular might you do today that would show God's love to others?

Friday 6th June

- Using the kettle, oven or microwave:
Pray for those who are struggling to make ends meet and for whom food and drink are not easy to come by. For those people where starvation is the norm. Consider what you might do to be part of Gods plan to ensure all can flourish.

Saturday 7th June

- God of all grace,
Today I pray for all suffering with physical pain – especially where that has not been treated or treatable. Come, healing, comforting God, into the suffering that comes when we cannot trust our own bodies. Amen.