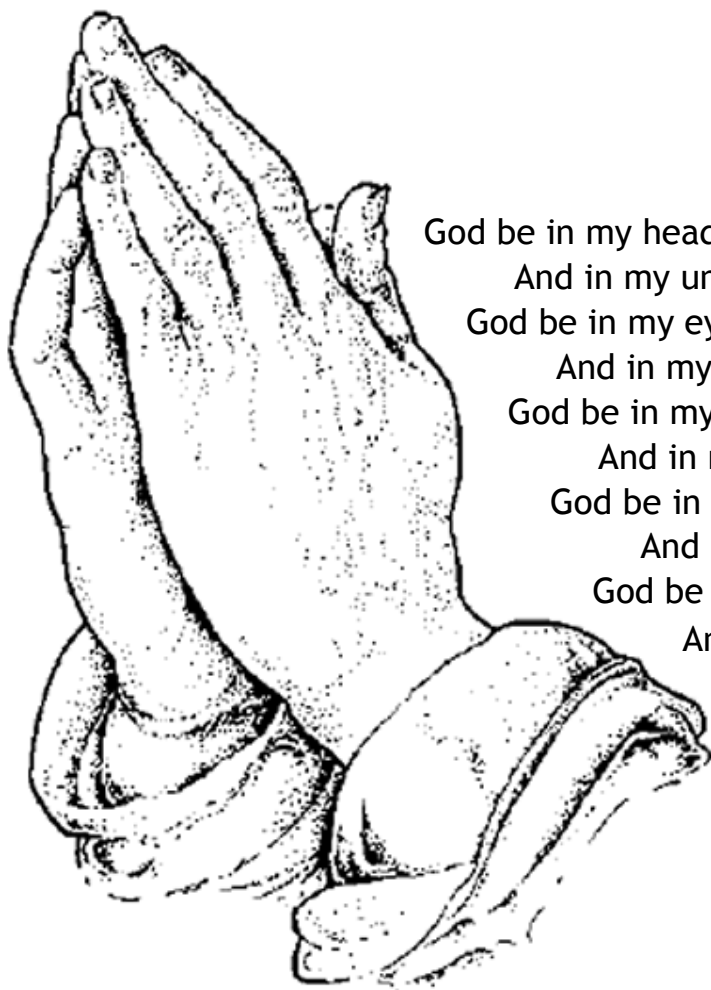


Prayer Leaflet

May 2006



God be in my head
And in my understanding.
God be in my eyes
And in my looking.
God be in my mouth
And in my speaking.
God be in my heart
And in my thinking.
God be at mine end
And at my departing.

The Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin

Godmanchester

Is it blessed to receive?

Acts 20:28-38

Keep watch over yourselves and over all the flock, of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God that he obtained with the blood of his own Son. I know that after I have gone, savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Some even from your own group will come distorting the truth in order to entice the disciples to follow them. Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to warn everyone with tears. And now I commend you to God and to the message of his grace, a message that is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all who are sanctified. I coveted no one's silver or gold or clothing. You know for yourselves that I worked with my own hands to support myself and my companions. In all this I have given you an example that by such work we must support the weak, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, for he himself said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

When he had finished speaking, he knelt down with them all and prayed. There was much weeping among them all; they embraced Paul and kissed him, grieving especially because of what he had said, that they would not see him again. Then they brought him to the ship.



We admire people who take responsibility for their lives and try not to burden others. Such self-sufficiency is commendable. But if every needy person in the world – and that includes all of us at one time or another – refused help, there would be no opportunity for anyone to give.

When we read Jesus' statement in Acts 20:35 that 'it is more blessed to give than to receive,' we tend to focus only on the virtue of giving. But, Jesus didn't say that it's undesirable to accept a gift, but that by comparison our goal should be to give, not to get. Actually, both giving and receiving are commendable, enriching, and even necessary.

Perhaps it's risky in a greedy age to extol receiving. Yet many sincere, well-meaning people hesitate when offered this lesser but equally valid blessing. They say, "Oh, I can't take that!" or "You really shouldn't!"

Why are we like this? Personally, I've concluded that it's often because I don't want to feel indebted to others, or I'm proud, or I want to have control. But these hidden attitudes are selfish and run contrary to the spirit of Him who said, "It is more blessed to give than receive."

Perhaps we need to give others the blessing of giving by learning to be a gracious receiver.

Our Prayers in May are especially requested for:

In the Church

the process of appointing a new parish priest, and especially those who have decisions to make.

Mothers' Union – for all those who facilitate Parenting Courses in our diocese.

Magazine – that new contributors may be inspired to come forward
Prayer Group – give thanks for the new meeting venue.

Flower Guild – for all those to be married in Church this summer.

St Mary's 0-5 Group – gives thanks for the continued support of the Church which helps us to run each week, and we also pray for the group as new members are found for the committee so that it can continue to go from strength to strength.

In the Community

the school's in the town – especially thinking and praying for those older pupils taking their SATs (Standard Assessment Tests).
May they do their best and cope with the strain and stress.

In the World

Christian Solidarity Worldwide – Pray for all those whose path is the cross. Pray for Christians in North Korea who either have a secret faith or one that casts them into prison camps. Pray for Rwandans who have fled their country after losing relatives in the genocide. Pray for the converts in Muslim countries whose decision to follow Christ can mean death. Pray for them all to keep the glory He has prepared for them close to their hearts.

The charity the Church supports through the collection plate in May:

Tearfund is a leading relief and development charity, working in partnership with Christian agencies and churches worldwide to tackle the causes and effects of poverty.

This month, in our Street Prayer Mission, we'll be praying for:

Week commencing Sunday 7 May:

Porch Close; Grainger Avenue; Littlefield Close; Sears Close.

Week commencing Sunday 14 May:

Park Lane; The Avenue; Pavilion Close.

Week commencing Sunday 21 May:

Danes Croft; McCartney House; Woodley Court.

Week commencing Sunday 28 May:

Those living outside of the Parish.

Please remember the residents of the above streets, those known to us, and especially those, as yet, unknown to us.

Some Prayers for May:

Risen Christ,
faithful shepherd of your Father's sheep:
teach us to hear your voice
and to follow your command,
that all your people may be gathered into one flock,
to the glory of God the Father.

Risen Christ,
your wounds declare your love for the world
and the wonder of your risen life:
give us compassion and courage
to risk ourselves for those we serve,
to the glory of God the Father.

Risen Christ,
by the lakeside you renewed your call to your disciples:
help your Church to obey your command
and draw the nations to the fire of your love,
to the glory of God the Father.

Risen Christ,
you have raised our human nature to the throne of heaven:
help us to seek and serve you,
that we may join you at the Father's side,
where you reign with the Spirit in glory,
now and for ever.

Risen, ascended Lord,
as we rejoice at your triumph,
fill your Church on earth with power and compassion,
that all who are estranged by sin
may find forgiveness and know your peace,
to the glory of God the Father.

