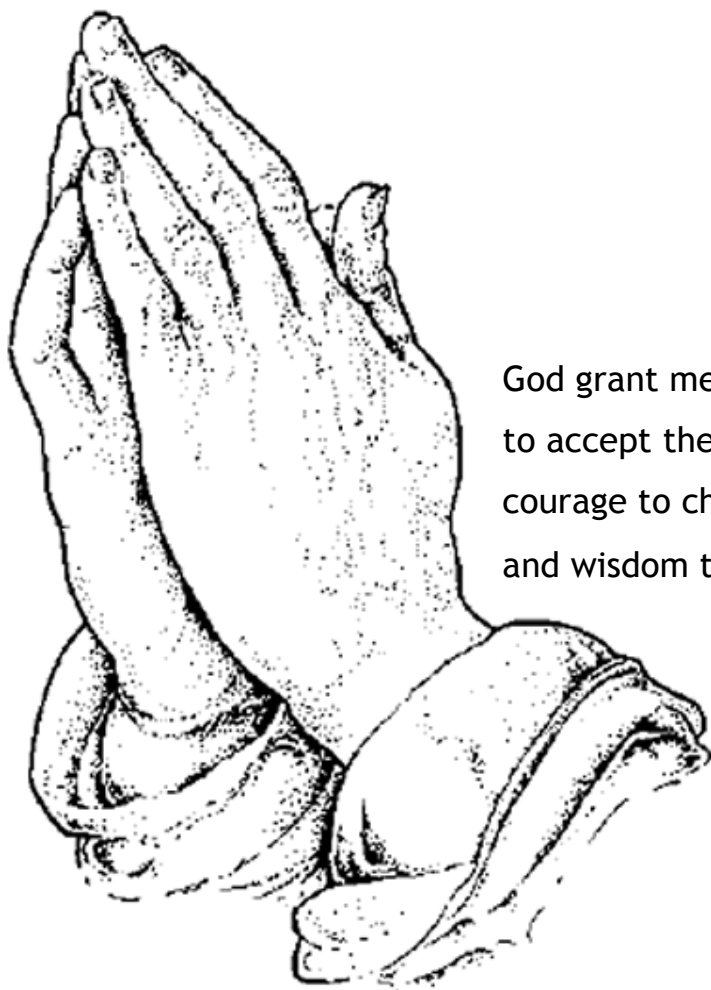


Prayer Leaflet

July 2006



God grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change;
courage to change the things I can;
and wisdom to know the difference.

The Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin

Godmanchester

The Untouchables

Mark 1:40-45

A leper came to him begging him, and kneeling he said to him, 'If you choose, you can make me clean.' Moved with pity, Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, and said to him, 'I do choose. Be made clean!' Immediately the leprosy left him, and he was made clean.

After sternly warning him he sent him away at once, saying to him, 'See that you say nothing to anyone; but go, show yourself to the priest, and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.' But he went out and began to proclaim it freely, and to spread the word, so that Jesus could no longer go into a town openly, but stayed out in the country; and people came to him from every quarter.



Of all diseases, leprosy is the only one singled out by the law of Moses and linked with sin. It's not that having leprosy was sinful, nor was it the result of sin. Rather, the disease was seen as a graphic symbol of sin. If we could see sin, it would look something like leprosy.

In Mark 1 we read about a leper who fell on his knees before Jesus and made his request: "If you choose, you can make me clean" (v.40). It's the first instance in the Gospels of a plain request for healing – touching and profound in its simplicity.

Jesus was "moved with pity" (v.41). People normally felt sympathy for the sick and troubled, but not for lepers. Because they were considered in those days as "unclean" both ceremonially and physically (Leviticus 13:45; 22:4), they were repulsive in every way to most people, who stayed as far away from them as possible. Nevertheless, Jesus was "willing" to reach out to this desperate, disease-ridden man and actually touch him! At that very moment the leprosy left him and he was cleansed.

Why did Jesus touch this man? He could have healed him just by saying, "Be cleansed". But his touch illustrates his great compassion.

Jesus loves sinners. Do we?

Our Prayers in July are especially requested for:

In the Church

the Revd David Busk and his family as they prepare for their forthcoming move to Godmanchester.

Mothers' Union – for our links with St Anne's Church of England Primary School.

Emmaus Groups – thanksgiving for the opportunities to meet and grow together, and for the fellowship the groups provide.

Magazine – for guidance for our team to make sound editorial decisions and to produce a successful magazine

St Mary's 0-5 Group – for the older children in our group who are moving on to school or pre-school. We pray for their wellbeing and hope that they continue to flourish in all that they do.

In the Community

The school's in the town – for safe and refreshing Summer break for both staff and pupils.

In the World

Christian Solidarity Worldwide – we pray for our brothers and sisters who live in the Middle East. We pray they will know they are not alone and that you are their God. Give them your wisdom, courage and strength, so they can be living sources of hope and love in a region characterised by despair and hatred. And we pray for their Church leaders, serving under very difficult circumstances. We pray you will give them strength and grant them your protection and peace.

The charity the Church supports through the collection plate in July: **DISH**, provides an information and advice service to disabled people, carers and professionals in the Huntingdonshire area.

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

Week commencing Sunday 2 July:

Holmehill; Hayling Close; Cob Place; Fishers Way.

Week commencing Sunday 9 July:

Riverside Mill Flats; Bridge Place.

Week commencing Sunday 16 July:

London Road; Martin Close; Roman Gate.

Week commencing Sunday 23 July:

Cambridge Road; Cambridge Villas; Meadow Way; Harcourt; Almond Close.

Week commencing Sunday 23 July:

Carnaby Close; Rushes Walk; Field Walk; Merton Walk.

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

Some Prayers for July:

God our Saviour,
look on this wounded world
in pity and in power;
hold fast to your promise of peace
won for us by your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Gracious Father,
by the obedience of Jesus
you brought salvation to our wayward world:
draw us into harmony with your will,
that we may find all things restored in him,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Almighty God,
send down upon your Church
the riches of your Spirit,
and kindle in all who minister the gospel
your countless gifts of grace;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Creator God,
you made us all in your image:
may we discern you in all that we see,
and serve you in all that we do;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Generous God,
you give us gifts and make them grow:
though our faith is small as a mustard-seed,
make it grow to your glory
and the flourishing of your kingdom;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

