

Prayer for others Sunday 9 June 2019

O God, we pray as always that you will give us the grace and wisdom to see the situations and needs of others through the eyes of Jesus, and that you will grant us the strength and skills to change the things that we can, to acknowledge the things we cannot change, and the grace to know the difference.

Pentecost – Greek for Shavuot, the old Jewish festival of the spring harvest, but remembered since that first century celebration in Jerusalem, that we read about in Acts, because the Spirit of God began a new harvest, the harvest of people of diverse races, colours and languages, gathered into the growing number of followers of The Way of Jesus, the followers we know today as Christians.

We thank you, our God, that your Spirit dwells in each one of us, helping us to see both the wonders of your creation around us, in our beautiful country, and the wonders of the uplift of our own spirits when others share their creative spirits with us, as the talented young finalists of the Michael Hill Violin Competition did for everyone in the Town Hall and on radio, here and around the world, last night. We thank you for the legacy left for us to enjoy by composers like Sibelius and Shostakovich, by writers like Dickens, Dostoevsky and our own Maurice Shadbolt, Witi Ihimaera and Roger Hall, by artists like Michelangelo, Salvador Dali, Charles Goldie, Rita Angus and Frances Hodgkins.

We cannot all aspire to giving at the level these cultural icons give, but we can all, with your spirit within us, see the good, and the potential for it, in those we meet day by day, our families, our neighbours, our Christian friends, our work colleagues, the children, the sick and the elderly we teach or care for, the customers and clientele we serve, and others in our community.

Your spirit can also help us to see the needs of others: the poor, the depressed, the sick and the lonely. Keep reminding us we pray, that Jesus practised what he preached. He did not turn his back on the weak, such as Peter on the night Jesus was arrested, or the woman at the well, or Zacchaeus, who cheated when collecting taxes. Instead, Jesus saw each person he met as a child of God who deserved to have his help. Please help us to be more like him, day by day, giving because we are grateful for all we have received. In a society like ours we can not only give to those close to us, but through our taxes and our donations, we can share what we have with our wider community and share both the hurting and the beauty of this world.

As always, we pray that faith in your strength and presence will give hope and peace to all in our church family, especially at times when sickness and the aging process cause distress or anxiety. Jesus promised he would be with his friends always and for this we thank and praise you,

In Jesus' name we pray, and we also remember his prayer which we say together: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For yours is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever, AMEN