

Embedded Prayer

In these difficult times many of us are turning to prayer, even those of us who may be a little out of practice. Don't worry if that's YOU! We all have ups and downs in our spiritual lives and this is very clear now.

When I speak of "embedded prayer" I'm thinking about the resources we are quite possibly all carrying around in our heads, all day every day, prayers we learnt as children perhaps. Take the Lord's Prayer. That maybe is one of the most well known Christian prayers in the world. We learnt it perhaps from our parents or grandparents and is a brilliant starting point. It doesn't matter what version you use, or if it feels a bit rusty, or you get words wrong – it covers so much.

But then there may be other prayers we carry that are helpful too, and these will vary greatly from person to person and what tradition we come from.

At my Infant school class we started every day with this simple little prayer which goes more or less like this...

O gentle Jesus, good and kind, guide thou my steps this day
and let me keep thee in my mind in all I do, or think, or say. Amen.

Yes, I still use that one from time to time, as it's embedded.

Then later, at top juniors we concluded each day by either singing "Glory to thee, my God this night" (Tallis' Canon) or saying the lovely third Collect (against all perils) from the BCP Evensong service...

Lighten our darkness we beseech thee, O Lord;
and by thy great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night;
for the love of thy only Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

This is often my last conscious act before I fall asleep at night - commending others, the fearful, the endangered and myself to God's loving care. Again, it's embedded deep in my brain and heart. You may also be interested to know that on many Navy ships during WW2 the sailors would say this prayer when either turning in, or going on watch at night.

In these unprecedented times it can be great comfort to seek what is already there somewhere in our hearts and minds...then of course we can reach out to God in other different ways of prayer too with full confidence that we will be heard .

I'd be really pleased to hear if any of you have other embedded prayers that you'd like to share with us. Please send or phone me with them. Of course I won't give your name...unless you have reason to want it given.

Lastly, a prayer for these times from Barbara Glasson of the Methodist Conference

Gracious God, give skill, sympathy and resilience
to all who are caring for the sick,
and your wisdom to those searching for a cure.
Strengthen them with your Spirit,
that through their work many will be restored to health;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Till my next post, love and prayers to you and yours

Alice, your Vicar