

Welcome to a time of prayer and reflection. Let's be still and recognise that we are in the presence of God who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

The Old Testament reading set for this sixth Sunday after Trinity comes from the book of Amos. It gives us one of the images God uses to guide Amos in understanding a message for his people:

This is what he showed me: the Lord was standing beside a wall built with a plumb-line, with a plumb-line in his hand. ⁸ And the LORD said to me, 'Amos, what do you see?' And I said, 'A plumb-line.' Then the Lord said,

'See, I am setting a plumb-line
in the midst of my people Israel;
I will never again pass them by;

A plumb line is a simple device, a weight on a string, which will show a straight vertical line – necessary for the safe construction of a wall, for example.

Like a swinging plumb line our lives can drift out of true alignment with God's loving will for us. Like gravity, God's merciful love draws us back to where we need to be, so let's open our lives to that merciful grace now as we confess the times when in thought, deed and lack of response our lives have drifted from God:

Father, you come to meet us when we return to you:

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Jesus, you died on the cross for our sins:

Christ, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Spirit, you give us life and peace:

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

May the God of love and power forgive you and free you from your sins, heal and strengthen you by his Spirit and raise you to new life in Christ our Lord.
Amen

Let us pray:

Merciful God,
you have prepared for those who love you
such good things as pass our understanding:
pour into our hearts such love toward you
that we, loving you in all things and above all things,
may obtain your promises,
which exceed all that we can desire;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen

From the Gospel according to Mark 6: 14-29

Sermon (see attached text)

Let us pray:

For the unity of the Church in witness and proclamation of the Gospel,
For our Bishops: Robert, Jackie and Nick: for wisdom as they guide the
church in Devon, and for Bishop Sarah and the national recovery group
as they frame guidance for our life together in the coming weeks
For our Mission Community, this week especially for our church wardens,
as the Archdeacon's visitations take place, we give thanks for their great
service and pray for others to come forward to fill the many gaps in our
PCC roles, sharing the responsibilities necessary for the life of our
churches to flourish

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer

For the peace and stability and wellbeing of all peoples

For the leaders of the nations that they may seek peace and pursue it in all their policy decisions always in service of the common good.

In our own nation we continue to pray for our government and all who advise. We ask that a sense of shared responsibility, and a willingness to love neighbours as ourselves will guide us all as legal restrictions around our behaviour are removed.

For the nations of the world whose battle with Covid 19 is less well resourced that they may be supported by the affluent world

Lord in your mercy hear our prayer

For a blessing on our homes and all those with whom we share our lives;

for our relations and friends and all whom we love ...;

for our wider community: for all on holiday amongst us that they may find renewal in their resting, and for all who offer hospitality, for their energy and wellbeing

For the sick and suffering and all who minister to their needs ...;

Lord in your mercy hear our prayer

For those we love and see no longer, all who have died recently or whose anniversaries fall at this time, and for those who mourn

Lord in your mercy hear our prayer

Let us commend ourselves, and all for whom we pray,
to the mercy and protection of God.

For the coming of God's kingdom we pray in the words Jesus gave us:

Our Father who art in heaven. Hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread.

Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory. Forever and ever, Amen.

Giving thanks for the communion we share through baptism with one another and with God in Christ Jesus our Lord we make an act of spiritual communion in the words of this prayer:

Thanks be to you, Lord Jesus Christ, for all the benefits you have given me, for all the pains and insults you have borne for me. As I cannot receive you sacramentally today, I ask you to come spiritually into my heart. O most merciful redeemer, friend and brother, may I know you more clearly, love you more dearly, and follow you more nearly, day by day. Amen.

God the Holy Trinity make you strong in faith and love,
defend you on every side,
and guide you in truth and peace;

And the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

All **Amen.**