

THE ANGLICAN CHURCH IN THE DIOCESE OF
TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

NINE DAYS OF PRAYER FOR BRAUNS AND RECONCILIATION

December 2nd - December 10th, 2019

Let us remind ourselves that as disciples of Christ we are called to a ministry of reconciliation, therefore we begin by praying for guidance and make a commitment to fulfil that ministry.

Nine days of Prayer (Novena) began during the time the disciples and Mary prayed together between the Ascension of Jesus and Pentecost. Acts 1:12 - 14.

"Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which was near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away. When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying, Peter and John, and James, and Andrew, Phillip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot and Judas son of James. All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers."

It is offered as a sacrifice to God as a way of expressing devotion to God.

Our special intention for these nine days is to remind ourselves that the Church is called to Mission and Ministry in the world. We have not always lived up to that call. Therefore as we prepare to celebrate the birth of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, who has called us to be his disciples, it is important that as we begin this new year of the Church we acknowledge our failures and pray for healing and reconciliation for our failures in our mission and ministry. Let us commit ourselves to faithfulness in discipleship in the new year and the years ahead. We thank God for the gift of Jesus, God's Son and we commit ourselves to serving him faithfully as individuals and as the Church.

This booklet is provided for your guidance. Each day it is hoped that you would find a quiet place and at least twenty minutes to spend in prayer guided by the outline presented. Quiet reflection on each day's topic is advised. You may also wish to fast during the nine days.

Dear Friends,

Once again the Season of Advent is with us and we are invited to prayer, patient waiting and joyful expectation for the coming of our Lord Jesus. This year we begin the season with a regimen of prayer as a body, praying intentionally for healing and reconciliation within and among us (individual and corporate), and further afield for other persons and institutions, especially those who do not share our confession of faith. Jesus told a parable that we ought always to pray and not lose heart. (Luke 18:1). We are invited to continue in the same because the prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective. Pray then that we may emerge out of this season, renewed and restored, healed and forgiven to receive the coming Lord in our hearts. Let us pray!

Your Friend and Bishop
+Claude.

Monday 2nd December 2019

Day 1 - The Church in its Ministry

Opening Prayer

Lord of the Church, enable your people to be the Church - a redeemed people, a holy people, a united people, a missionary people, and in all things a people gladly submissive to the truth you have shown us in yourself, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Scripture reading: 1 Corinthians 12: 22 - 27

Reflection: As members of the body of Christ, we must be aware that we are different individually. We have different gifts, we are called to a variety of ministries in the church and the world, however we must be aware that we are called to work together for the building up of the body of Christ. We are called to respect one another, to support one another, to pray for one another and above all to love one another.

When we have wronged another and are estranged from someone in the church, or we believe that some action in the church has offended us. We are called to do the things that will facilitate healing and wholeness and strive to be reconciled with each other. We begin with prayer inviting the Holy Spirit to lead us to the path that God wishes the Church to take in any situation.

Invitation to pray: Pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit to lead the Church in its ministry in the world.

The Lord's Prayer

Closing Prayer:

Give your Church, O God, the grace to follow in the steps of Jesus, who came among us as one who serves. May it be ready in all the world to spend and be spent in the service of the poor and the hungry, the sick and the ignorant. May it work with strength and suffer with courage for the liberation of the oppressed and the restoration to all of the dignity and freedom of those created in your image: grant this, O Father, for the sake of the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Tuesday 3rd December 2019

Day 2 - The Church and the Family

Opening Prayer

Heavenly Father, whose Son Jesus Christ, born of a woman, sanctified childhood and shared the life of an earthly home; bless the homes and families of our nation. Give to parents a true sense of responsibility in the care and training of their children, that our boys and girls may grow up in the fear of your Name and the fellowship of your Church, for the glory of Christ our Lord. Amen.

Scripture reading: Ephesians 6: 1 - 4

Reflection: St. Paul reminds fathers, in today's reality, it applies to all parents of their responsibility to behave in ways that would be worthy examples to their children. This admonition applies to all adults in the church and the community. Children learn what they live and they are great imitators of adults. Therefore, as adults we must behave in ways that we would wish our children to emulate.

On the other hand, children are required to honour father and mother. While this commandment has a promise, it is unconditional. As children we are not called to judge our parents, but to honour those whom God the Creator, used as instruments of His creation to give us the gift of life. Families represent the links in the chain of our church and the nation. Strong, God-fearing, caring, loving, responsible families build a faithful church and strong nation.

Invitation to pray: Pray for healing and reconciliation in families. For God's love to prevail in all families.

The Lord's Prayer

Closing Prayer:

Heavenly Father bless the families of our nation. Make each parent and child an instrument of your peace and love. Purify our hearts, strengthen our minds and bodies, fill us with mutual love. Do not let pride, self-conceit, rivalry, or dispute come up among us. Make us all earnest and true, wise and prudent, may your peace be with us every day and keep us all faithful to your service. Amen.

Wednesday 4th December 2019

Day 3 - The Church and our Schools and Institutions

Opening Prayer

Heavenly Father we pray for our schools and all institutions of learning throughout our nation. Grant your blessing to all who teach and all who learn. Help our institutions to grow as places of sound wisdom and godly discipline. Help our students to find mentors who help them to discover your purpose for their lives and to develop their full potential. Teach us to seek You as the true Source of Wisdom and always to your honour and glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Scripture reading: Proverbs 4:4-8

Reflection: We are invited in scripture to seek wisdom and insight and the promise is that if we prize wisdom and insight it will extol and bring us to the things that honour God. We are not simply to engage in acquiring knowledge but we are to gain skill in applying what we learn to the situations we face in life. WISDOM. Those who teach impart more than a lesson and those who learn receive more than what is said or done.

At every level, those who have the responsibility for guiding, influencing and imparting knowledge to others must also give them a thirst for the things that help us all to use our knowledge in the service of others and for the things that build up our families, communities and our society as a whole. We pray that God will empower all those who have the sacred trust of teaching formally and informally.

Invitation to pray: Pray for God's grace and strength, wisdom and discernment upon those who teach and impart knowledge to others.

The Lord's Prayer

Closing Prayer

We give you thanks Almighty God, for the gift of learning, for the many opportunities for growth that are presented to us to improve our skills and abilities. Help us to cherish our teachers and the sacrifice that they make. Make our students enthusiastic and committed to the highest standards of scholarship and community life that we may continue to mature as a society, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Thursday 4th December 2019

Day 4: The Church and Victims of Abuse and Violence

Opening Prayer

Almighty God you sent your Son, Jesus Christ to give us an example of godly living, hear the cry of those who are victims of abuse and violence. Let the fire of your Holy Spirit fill their hearts with the power of vision and hope. Empower them to act, that they may not be passive victims of abuse and violence but seek to transform their lives. Turn the hearts of the oppressors that their lives may be changed by your loving forgiveness and their abusive and violence acts cease. In the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, who came to liberate the world. Amen

Scripture reading: Psalm 37: 1 - 7

Reflection: The Psalmist invites those who are victims of abuse and violence to put their trust in the Lord and commit their way to the Lord and they will receive their hearts' desire. The Psalmist does not recommend getting even or being a passive victim. He is asking for stillness before God in order to hear the voice of God who will provide a way out of the situation of evil.

The Psalmist affirms that evildoers will go the way of all flesh and of course be judged for their evil ways. Those who put their trust in God, those who commit their life to God will come to know that God is true and will show them a way out of their situation of evil.

Invitation to pray: Pray for all victims of abuse and violence that they will commit their way to God and be guided by the Holy Spirit out of their evil situation. Pray for the perpetrators of abuse and violence that they may have a change of heart and commit their ways to God. Pray for healing and reconciliation for abused and abuser.

The Lord's Prayer

Closing Prayer:

Creator God you gave us to each other to love one another and to grow to fulfill your purpose in the world. But many are experiencing hatred instead of love; betrayal instead faithfulness, violence instead of understanding and empathy by lashing tongues, thrusting fists and touch unasked and unnamed. By the power of your Holy Spirit make the abuse and violence cease. Heal those cruel acts and words and bring reconciliation to those relationship broken by abuse and violence. In the name of Him who taught us to love one another as He loves us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Friday 6th December 2019

Day 5 - The Church and the Dispossessed and Oppressed

Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, you had a special concern for the marginalized and for those in need and suffering. Grant to us that same mind that was in you so that by our actions we may lift up those who are struggling, those who are fallen, those who are in circumstances which cause them to be taken advantage of. Turn the hearts of those who oppress others that your restoring love may transform those situations where power and authority is misused. Grant to all who are dispossessed and oppressed the grace to overcome their present circumstances and make us instruments of restoration in their lives. We ask this in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen

Scripture reading: Psalm 69: 30, 32-34

Reflection

Holy Scriptures give us a clear understanding that God is concerned about justice, mercy and compassion. We are meant always to become instruments of God's presence and to engage those things that help persons to be liberated from oppression. Jesus declares openly that he has come to set the captives free, to bring release to those who are in bondage.

We too, therefore, have a mandate from God to help persons be freed from the evils and negative circumstances that bind them, trusting that God's love conquers all. As we work for change we have an opportunity to restore both oppressed and oppressor and honour God's desire that none will be lost but that all shall be saved. Let us always work to support those whose circumstances are difficult not only by our prayers but also by our presence and action.

Invitation to pray: Pray for all those who are oppressed, displaced or dispossessed that they may experience the transforming and restorative power of Jesus Christ.

The Lord's Prayer

Closing Prayer

We thank you Heavenly Father that we can cast our burdens upon you, we ask you to intervene in every situation where there is an abuse of power, authority or relationship. Restore all those who are dispossessed and grant relief to those who are oppressed. Grant your peace strength and justice to all who face trials and revive their hearts for we ask this for Christ sake. Amen

Saturday 7th December 2019

Day 6 - The Church and those in prison

Opening Prayer

Lord, open our eyes to the sufferings of our brothers and sister in prison, enable us by our understanding and love, to bring them your peace and joy. Give those who are awaiting trial, patience and hope that they would receive justice. To those who are paying the price for their crimes, help them to acknowledge their sins and be truly penitent, asking forgiveness from you and those affected by their crime. We pray for peace and justice, in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Scripture reading: Isaiah 42: 6 - 8

Reflection: The Lord through the prophet affirms God's call to the people to righteousness and trust in God. We are reminded that we are a covenant people, that is, God is our God and we are God's people. As the people of God, we are to be a light to the nations, to open the eyes of the spiritually blind and to bring prisoners out of the dungeon and those who sit in darkness.

As disciples of Christ and members of the New Covenant, we are to let our light shine in all situations of darkness and seek to bring healing and wholeness to those situations. We must therefore do what we can to ensure that justice and peace prevails in our nations. We must ensure that those who are innocent will go free and those who are guilty pay for their crime but are treated with dignity, care and compassion and are led to the path of restoration. That the victims of crime are adequately compensated and assisted to return to normal life.

Invitation to pray: We are invited to pray for all in prison. For those awaiting trial, that they will have an opportunity to defend themselves and that justice will prevail. We pray for those serving their sentences that they will acknowledge the wrong they have done and ask forgiveness of God and those affected by their crime.

The Lord's Prayer

Closing Prayer

Almighty God you sent your Son, Jesus to set us free from bondage of every kind, may your light shine on those in prison, relieve their suffering, enable us all to grow toward true freedom in justice and harmony, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sunday 8th December 2019

Day 7 - The Church and the Judiciary

Opening Prayer

We give you thanks Almighty Father for the Judiciary and all those who administer justice. Protect and guide our judges and magistrates as they carry out their responsibility to uphold and interpret the laws of our land. We ask O Lord that you will inspire them to apply the law fairly and to seek wisdom in the execution of the duties in our courts. Give discernment and integrity to lawyers and all those who support the work of our courts behind the scenes. Help us all to hunger and thirst after mercy and justice so that our society may become more just at every level.

Scripture reading: Deuteronomy 16:18-20

Reflection

We serve a God who is intimately concerned about justice and who we believe is and will be the Judge of all people. In Isaiah Chapter 59, the prophet expresses a clear concern that part of the nations suffering is that there is a lack of justice and urges the people to turn back to God and to righteousness. Those who are charged with the responsibility of administering justice are invited to pursue fairness and to give their rulings without bias and in an impartial manner.

We must ask God to assist our judges to stand firm in the truth and to use their power to protect the innocent. Justice is critical to the well-functioning of the society. We understand the difficult times in which we live and how society devolves when good people do nothing. We must seek justice at every level so that we may be a people that holds to what is right and good and rejects what is evil.

Invitation to Prayer: We are invited to pray for all members of the Judiciary at every level for discernment and wisdom.

The Lord's Prayer

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father we ask you to make our Judiciary with all its many members; godly, righteous, wise and trustworthy. Support them by your Holy presence and give them the mind that was in Christ that their rulings and determinations may advance your gracious will for our society. through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Monday 9th December 2019

Day 8 - The Church and those who Serve, Guard and Protect the Nation

Opening Prayer

Almighty God, hear our prayers for all who serve, guard and protect our land and so make our life secure. We thank you for the peace and freedom we enjoy and all who strive to protect that freedom. We pray that you would keep them under your divine protection, guard and protect their families as they strive to serve, guard and protect us. We ask these things in the name of Jesus Christ your Son, our Lord. Amen

Scripture reading: Proverbs 3: 3 - 8

Reflection: Those who are called to serve, guard and protect the nation are reminded that loyalty and faithfulness must be the centre of their actions. As they approach their dangerous task with loyalty and faithfulness, they will find favour with God and the people.

As they pursue their very dangerous and challenging tasks, they are invited to trust God and not to rely on their own insights but on the guidance of the Holy Spirit. There is the promise that God will make their path straight. They are called not to be wise in their own eyes but to fear God and turn away from evil. In this way they will experience healing and refreshment for their body.

Invitation to pray: Pray for all who have committed their lives to serve, guard and protect our land, the Army Forces - Army, Coast Guard and Air Guard; the members of the Police Service, the Prisoner Officers, the Members of the Fire Services, Traffic Wardens, Members of Private Security Firms and all engaged in security affairs. Pray for their loyalty and faithfulness to their task as they put their lives on the line to ensure our freedom and peace. Pray for their protection and wellbeing. Pray for their families and the sacrifices they must make as their loved ones go to serve, guard and protect our nation.

The Lord's Prayer

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father, we bring before you with gratitude all who serve, guard and protect our land. Keep them always under your divine protection and give them a just reward for their services. Preserve their families and help us to be always aware of their sacrifices and be grateful for their service through Christ our Lord. Amen

Tuesday 10th December 2019

Day 9 - The Church and the Nation and our Leaders

Opening Prayer

Almighty God, the Giver of all good things: we give you thanks for our twin island nation and for the natural beauty and resources of our republic. We thank you for the rich diversity of our culture and the plurality that makes us who we are as a people. We ask your blessing on all our leaders make them strong in courage and faith. Guide our nation's leaders and all who influence the lives of others to your perfect will for us a people by the presence of your Holy Spirit, that we may be led into the things that help us to grow always to your honour and glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord

Scripture reading: 1 Timothy 2: 1-2

Reflection

Paul urges Timothy to guide the Church to offer "supplications, prayers, intercessions and thanksgivings be made ... for all those in high positions' that we all may lead "a quiet and peaceful life in all godliness and dignity". Leaders set the tone; they guide the way for those who follow. We are invited to lift our nation and leaders before God so that they seek Divine wisdom as they chart the way for us as a people.

We continue to ask that God will preserve all those in authority and give our leaders a deep sense of integrity and faithfulness. Leaders can only make good decisions if they have discernment, understanding and knowledge. We therefore are encouraged to lift up our leaders and to trust that God's influence over them will draw them to things that edify God's people here in our land.

Invitation to Prayer: Pray for our National Leaders and all those who guide the lives of others at every level.

The Lord's Prayer

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father, we ask you to search our hearts as a nation and to aid us to humble ourselves before you. Help our nation to grow in godliness and the bonds of love. Love for country and genuine love for each other that those bonds may make us better citizens who work together for the common good and the continued development and maturity of our people. Send down upon those who hold office in our nation the spirit of wisdom justice and love that they may faithfully promote the well-being of our people.

Concluding Prayer

Most gracious Father, we humbly bring before you your holy Church. Fill it with all truth; in all truth with all peace. Where it is corrupt, purify it; where it is in error, direct it; where anything is amiss, reform it; where it is right, strengthen and comfort it; where it is in want, furnish it; where it is divided and rent asunder, heal the divisions in it, for the love of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION. PEACE AND LOVE.