

INTERCESSIONS FOR HOLMBURY ST MARY (AND WOTTON?)

25 April 2021

*Great Shepherd of your people, hear; Your presence now display;
As you have given a place for prayer, So give us hearts to pray...*

We, the sheep of your pasture, look back over recent days and pray for the Church and the world.

Lord, although we are grateful that lockdown is easing and that so many people have been vaccinated, we hold before you countries like Brazil and India where the situation remains dire. We also remember before you the news that over 800,000 payroll jobs in this country have been lost in the last year and that over 80% of them were held by people aged under 35. Loving Shepherd, grant comfort to all who suffer in health and through hardship, including those with chronic pain.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Although the roads and skies round here continue to be quieter, and although we have learned that car insurance is likely to be cheaper as a result, we also hear that there's likely to be a post-covid boom in carbon emissions. We pray that world leaders engaging with climate issues, and we in our own lifestyles, will bear in mind that you own this world where our tenancy is at your pleasure.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

You are the Good Shepherd who knows all his sheep, but we have learned this week that rich owners of cathedrals of sport do not know their congregations. We pray that the ideals of sport be not adulterated by the love of money.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

When you have 99 sheep safely in your fold, you still go out looking for the hundredth and for other sheep "not of this fold." So we pray for all who do not recognise your voice, all who have gone astray, all who are seduced by opportunity, and all who use violence to further their aims whether that's in Chad, Egypt, Myanmar, the United Kingdom or anywhere else. We thank you for the Archbishops' statement on the report of the Anti-Racism task force and we repeat before you their desire and ours for wisdom, courage and grace as the Church moves from lament to action. And in the same way we pray for the United States of America.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

You, our Cornerstone, were brought back from the dead as that great Shepherd of the sheep, and you gather all to that peaceful fold where the wolf can't get in. We remember in your presence those who have died, especially Leonard Trimm and Dennis Weeks, thanking you for their good works and long association with [this church] [*"group of churches" if used at Wotton.*] We pray too that you would strengthen the bereaved, both locally and at Windsor, because you ensure that after darkness there is dawn. [Silence]

So, with a bright flame before us, a guiding star above us, a smooth path below us, and a kindly Shepherd behind us, we pray together:

Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen