

Image of the day - Armagh

Calls for shot priests to be made martyrs

There are growing calls for two west Belfast priests, killed while anointing wounded parishioners, to be recognised as martyrs, Lauren Harte writes in the Belfast Telegraph

Fr Hugh Mullan was one of 10 people shot dead by the British Army during the Ballymurphy Massacre in August 1971.

Last week a coroner ruled the 10 people killed 50 years ago were “entirely innocent”. The Army was found to be responsible for nine of the 10 deaths.

Fr Mullan, who was from Portaferry in Co Down, was killed on the night of August 9, 1971.

The 38-year-old curate at Corpus Christi Church was shot dead as he went to the aid of his neighbour Bobby Clarke.

Eleven months later, on July 7, 1972, Fr Noel Fitzpatrick (40), also a curate in Corpus Christi, was killed in the same circumstances in the Springhill Massacre.

Fr Mullan's brother, Patsy, said work towards his cause for canonisation is “in progress” and should be considered due to “the circumstances of his death — helping somebody else — which was normally what he would do and always had done”.

May 22,2021

He welcomed the recent inquest, with the coroner dubbing Fr Mullan a “peacekeeper” who was killed “while performing his spiritual duties as a priest”.

“I'm 81, I'm sure I don't have a terrible long time to live and sometimes Rome is very slow at moving. The news (from the inquest) was good so we're just hoping for more good news from Rome,” Mr Mullan told The Irish Catholic newspaper.

Fr Paddy McCafferty, parish priest of Corpus Christi parish, told the Belfast Telegraph there is a “growing impetus and has been for some time” for both men to be recognised as martyrs as they were examples of “what a true priest is and does”.

“Canonisation is not a reward but the church holding up someone as an example of exemplary Christian living. They weren't just very brave on those particular days, they were good, faithful priests all their lives and highly regarded by the people,” he said.

Courtesy The Belfast Telegraph, 21.5.2021

MP slams BBC for mocking DUP leader's Christian faith

A DUP MP has accused the BBC of “lambasting” the new leader of the Democratic Unionist Party, Edward Poots over his Christian faith.

May 22, 2021

“The BBC want to lambast the man because he happens to be a man of faith and they want to take the mickey out of his religion, you wouldn't do that if he was a Muslim. You should be ashamed of yourselves and the BBC should be ashamed of yourselves for starting from that position,” Ian Paisley Jr said during an interview in the Newsnight programme.

“I'm reminded of the Frank Skinner line you can be anything in Britain today except a Christian.”

The North Antrim MP, one of Poots' biggest supporters, was answering a reporter who had asked him about Poots' political strategy in view of him being a “deeply social conservative man”.

“He is entitled to be the leader and he's entitled to have his faith”, Paisley continued.

The BBC has denied the claims saying that “at no point did anyone on the programme mock religious beliefs.”

Edwin Poots, a member of the Free Presbyterian Church, was elected as the new leader of the DUP on Friday following the resignation of Arlene Foster. He has promised to work with other unionists to tackle trading problems in the deal with the EU following Brexit.

“He has never been in a position where he would try and force his faith down your throat or anyone else's throat and he would not allow those things get in the way of how he engages in policy and policy-making,” Paisley added.

May 22,2021

He continued emphasising that Poots has “an excellent track record of working with Sinn Fein [and] other people across the board” and added that his focus is on “making Northern Ireland work”.

Poots will officially take on the role of new DUP leader on 28th May.

Remembering Fr Des - a voice for the voiceless

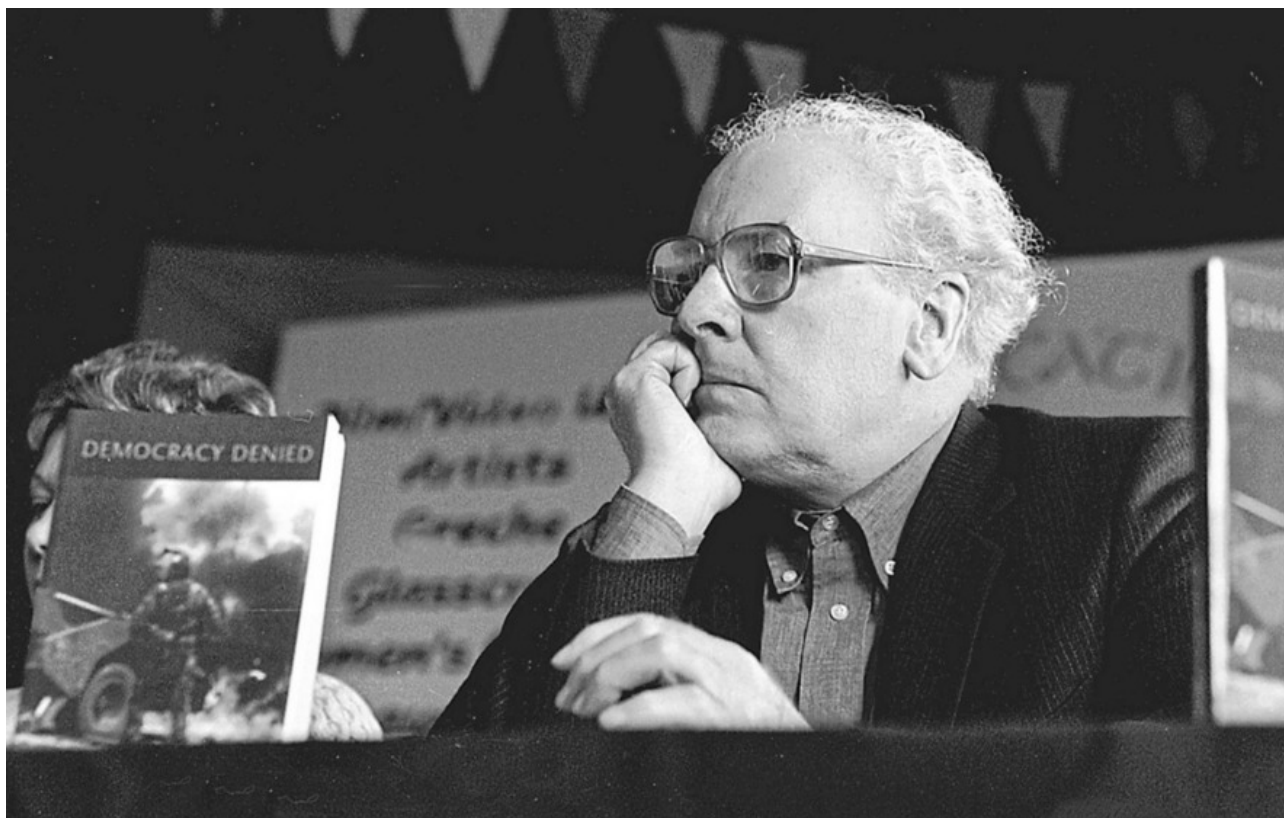
Fr Joe McVeigh has written a booklet about his great friend Fr Des Wilson. It's a warm reminder of a priest who lived in solidarity with the people of Ballymurphy and who made an immense contribution to society, says Fr Gerry McFlynn , writing in The Irish News.

FATHER Des Wilson, who died on November 5 2019 at the age of 94, was one of the best known and best loved priests in Ireland. He was also one of the most controversial.

Indeed, few priests in these islands have so fearlessly and consistently spoken the truth to power - both civil and ecclesiastical - than Fr Des Wilson.

His was the prophetic voice often telling us what we would rather not know and challenging us to find new ways of dealing with old problems.

His great friend, Fr Joe McVeigh, has now put together a little booklet about Fr Des's life called simply Des Wilson: A Voice for the Poor and Oppressed.



Beautifully produced with photographs and contributions from those who knew and worked with him, the booklet is a brief overview and examination of the major events and issues in Fr Des's long life.

Fr McVeigh says that the great lesson from Fr Des's life is that at a particular moment in the life of the Irish Church, he took the side of the poor and powerless.

He was a man with a clear vision of how the Church should be - a Church shorn of authoritarianism and clericalism in which the leaders stood on the side of the poor and powerless.

In his work for peace, justice and human rights, his ecumenical work, his commitment to the poor and powerless, his outreach to prisoners and those on the margins of society, and his understanding of the Church as

May 22,2021

the People of God, Fr Des was a Vatican II priest long before many people had even heard of the Council.

Most of his priestly life was devoted to serving the people of Ballymurphy. Indeed, his coming there in 1966 was arguably a life-changing experience for him.

The poverty and social deprivation he experienced there radicalised him overnight.

For the remainder of his life he devoted his time and energy to developing a type of Irish Liberation Theology, empowering people to discover their dignity and worth.

In reality, it was more like a 'liberation of theology' at the centre of which was the Springhill Community House, a house reminiscent of the Catholic Worker houses set up by Dorothy Day in the US in the 1940s for feeding people, providing liturgies and, interestingly, Clarification of Thought sessions following talks by invited guests.

Fr Des was a man with a clear vision of how the Church should be - a Church shorn of authoritarianism and clericalism in which the leaders stood on the side of the poor and powerless

Throughout every decade since the 1970s, Springhill Community House was at the centre of many of the positive initiatives to emerge from west Belfast including education for justice, policing and human rights and many other projects.

May 22,2021

Not surprisingly, the application of his theology, combined with his fearlessness in speaking out on political and social issues, brought Fr Des into conflict with the Church authorities, so much so that in 1968 he left the institutional Church and decided to go it alone in Ballymurphy.

There, with the help of local activists, he founded local co-ops, started a People's Theatre and developed outreach with working class unionist communities.

But Fr Des was never ambitious for power. He was a humble man whose only ambition in life was to show solidarity with the oppressed and downtrodden.

As Fr McVeigh points out, Fr Des has left a wonderful legacy: the Springhill Community House, the Conway Mill, Féile an Phobail and his many articles and books.

But his greatest legacy is the example he has given of a life lived in solidarity with the people of Ballymurphy.

His overall contribution to community politics, to education, and to peace in Ireland, was immense.

Fr Des always took the view that however bad things were, they didn't have to be like that forever; they could and should be better.

And he was always trying to make things better for the people he lived among.

Another of his great friends, the late Fr Daniel Berrigan SJ - priest, poet and anti-war activist - once said that the only

May 22,2021

way to make the future different was to live the present differently.

Fr Des certainly did that and encouraged us all by the wonderful example of his life to do likewise.

We owe Fr Joe McVeigh a debt of gratitude for bringing Fr Des's life before us so clearly like this and reminding us of how it should challenge us all.

Fr Gerry McFlynn is a priest of the Down and Connor diocese, project manager at the Irish Chaplaincy in London and involved in Pax Christi, the international Catholic Peace Movement.

Des Wilson: A Voice for the Poor and Oppressed by Fr Joe McVeigh costs £5 (plus £2 P&P) and is available by contacting Springhill Community House, Ballymurphy, Belfast, BT12 7SE, telephone 028 9032 6722.

Bishop of Winchester steps back after diocesan rebellion

The Bishop of Winchester, Dr Tim Dakin, has “stepped back” from work for six weeks after he was threatened with a vote of no confidence at the next diocesan synod, the Church Times reports

On Tuesday evening, the Suffragan Bishop of Southampton, in Winchester diocese, the Rt Revd Debbie Sellin, announced: “Bishop Tim has today informed me that he will be stepping back from his role as Bishop of Winchester for

May 22,2021

the next six weeks, so that he can focus on discussions about future leadership and governance reform in the diocese.”

The letter gives no further details, but it is understood that between 20 and 30 senior church members in the diocese, clergy and laity, threatened to pass a vote of no confidence in his leadership at the diocesan synod.

The letter also states that Bishop Sellin, who has been in post for less two years, has been asked to lead the diocese. The reason for this is that the senior suffragan bishop in the diocese, the Bishop of Basingstoke, the Rt Revd David Williams, is said to be in sympathy with the protesters, and has also stepped back. He is said to have represented the protesters’ views to both Dr Dakin and Lambeth Palace, which is involved in the discussions.

A spokesperson for the Church of England said on Thursday: “As the diocese of Winchester has already announced, Bishop Tim Dakin has stepped back for a period of six weeks, so that issues raised re: leadership and governance reform in the diocese can be addressed. This process is now under way.”

Bishop Sellin is instigating a weekly prayer meeting for the diocese on Zoom on Monday mornings, beginning next week.

Discontent about Dr Dakin’s management style and agenda has been growing in the diocese for several years. He comes from an Evangelical background, having started his ministry in East Africa and then serving as general secretary

May 22,2021

of the Church Mission Society (CMS) for 12 years before being consecrated to serve as Bishop of Winchester. Although he was an honorary curate during his time with the CMS, he has never worked in full-time parish ministry.

Critics say that the issue goes beyond his church tradition and includes the lack of pastoral care for clergy and the imposition of a particular approach to the Church's ministry. It is said that the diocese has lost 22 clergy posts through pastoral reorganisation. It is, none the less, seeking to appoint a Church Planting Missioner, who will be given the task of planting 30 new churches by 2030; and a Church Growth Missioner to develop capacity for growth in the diocese.

Another source said that Dr Dakin, who was awarded a Ph.D. last year, had been largely invisible in the diocese.

Little of this criticism has been made public before now; but, in 2019, the General Synod agreed to transfer episcopal oversight of the Channel Islands from Winchester diocese to Salisbury. The presenting issue was the temporary suspension of the Dean of Jersey by Bishop Dakin over a safeguarding concern. The Dean apologised and was reinstated a month later. The standing committee of the deanery of Guernsey wrote to the Archbishop's commission set up to examine the affair: "While the handling of the Jersey safeguarding issue may have been the trigger for the current position, it is not the only matter which has so seriously strained the relationship.

"Bishop Timothy has consistently been resistant to the Islands' special relationship to the diocese, and his apparent

May 22,2021

wish to treat Guernsey and Jersey as English deaneries is unacceptable to both the secular authorities and the church communities in the Islands”.

It is not clear what the outcome of the governance discussions might be. Dr Dakin is in his early sixties. He was approached for comment, but the only response was to be directed to Bishop Sellin’s statement.

Books, Broadcasts, Resources and Webinars

Online Church: Practical Lessons from the Frontline

The Church of Ireland Council for Mission will host a webinar on Zoom on Thursday, 3rd June 2021, between 2.00pm and 3.30pm on ‘Online Church – Practical Lessons from the Frontline’.

Over the last year many churches have offered worship online. Now that we are back in our churches, how could this continue to be a feature of how we connect with people in the future?

Dr Nick Shepherd, who is a member of the Church of England Digital Labs Conference, will be our keynote speaker. Nick writes: “The last year has seen many churches ‘pivot’ to provide online worship and keep connected as a community through digital means. Many commentators see this use continuing as ‘hybrid’ models of physical and digital meeting become ‘normal’. This session

Online Church – Practical lessons from the frontline.

2-3.30pm, Thurs 3rd June 2021

- Reflect on missional opportunities
- Hear how parishes have remained online post-lockdown.
- An opportunity for discussion and to ask practical questions.

Keynote Speaker
Nick Shepherd
Church of England Digital Labs.

Webinar Contributors

Rev. Andrew Quill
Dromore, Clogher

Rev. Nicola Halford
Enniscorthy, Ferns

Rev. Cliff Jeffers
Dunmanway, Cork

Live Webinar on Zoom
Bookings to Rev. Colin McConaghie
councilformission@ireland.anglican.org
(By 31st May 2021)

Facilitated by The Church of Ireland Council for Mission.

explores some of missiological and pastoral benefits this might provide and reflects on the theological basis for approaching worship and Christian community in this context.”

Three Church of Ireland rectors from across the island of Ireland will tell their stories of remaining online as the Covid–19 restrictions ease and they share how they believe that live streaming church online can be a missional opportunity. Each of the rectors will lead a webinar about their online journey, the technologies they have used as well as reflecting on why they do it. They might also confess some of their many mistakes and bloopers!

The Revd Nicola Halford is rector of Enniscorthy and Monart Union of Parishes in Ferns Diocese, Co. Wexford. She has a web camera in her church and uses Facebook Live from her smartphone to live–stream her services.

May 22,2021

The Revd Andrew Quill is rector of Holy Trinity Dromore, in Clogher Diocese. Andrew also uses Facebook Live, and has integrated graphics and recorded many hymns and worship songs in the form of videos that can be used in their online services.

The Revd Cliff Jeffers is rector of Fanlobbus Union of Parishes in Cork Diocese and has been using Zoom to stream services online to Facebook and control the video feeds, including PowerPoint and videos of hymns, interviews and parishioners participating live from their homes.

The webinar will be presented on Zoom by the Church of Ireland Council for Mission. It will be recorded so that those who cannot attend will be able to view it at a later.

The timetable for the webinar will be as follows:

- 2.00pm Welcome – Dean Tim Wright (Kildare) – Council for Mission
- 2.05pm Keynote address by Dr Nick Shepherd
- 2.30pm Webinar 1 – Revd Nicola Halford – ‘Keeping it simple’
- 2.40pm Webinar 2 – Revd Andrew Quill – ‘Integrating graphics and Videos’
- 2.50pm Webinar 3 – Revd Cliff Jeffers – ‘Online participation’
- 3.00pm Breakout Groups (participants can choose which one they attend).
- 3.20pm Plenary session – bringing back together – Revd Adam Pullen
- 3.30pm Finish

May 22,2021

To book a place at the *Online Church – Practical Lessons from the frontline* Seminar, please send an email to the Revd Colin McConaghie, the Secretary of the Church of Ireland Council Mission, by **Monday, 31st May 2021**: councilformission@ireland.anglican.org

Forging ahead – returning to youth activities

The Church of Ireland Youth Department (CIYD) is sharing advice for youth leaders and workers for returning to youth work activities, as soon as possible, now that lockdowns across the island are continuing to ease.

The [11–page guide](#) covers planning ahead, programmes, practicalities for indoor and outdoor gatherings, and loads of ideas for activities to bring youth people back together.

These include:

- ‘Lunch on the Lawn’ – with everyone bringing their own picnic
- dropping off a card and a bag of sweets to each young person’s household
- drive–in movies in your church car park
- youth small groups for social events or discipleship Bible study outside
- garden games and scavenger hunts
- social action projects in your community (e.g. litter picks, gardening, helping elderly people)
- ‘Kindness Rocks’ – painting rocks/stones with encouragements and Bible verses etc. and leaving them in various places.

May 22, 2021

CIYD National Youth Officer, Simon Henry, writes: “Firstly, it is important to acknowledge that youth ministry never stopped! The creative and innovative ways many churches, leaders, and youth workers across Ireland supported and



continue to support young people during the Covid–19 pandemic are a testament to their faith in God, passion, resilience, and commitment. As we journey through this crisis, looking ahead, we can begin to look to the future and how – on a carefully managed basis – we can restart youth ministry activities over the coming weeks.

“It is important that we look to restarting youth ministry activities, however small, without any unnecessary delays, based on the latest government advice at the time – for the good of our young people’s socialisation, faith development and mental health.”

All guidance is indicative and subject to ongoing public health advice and a step–by–step risk assessment which should be carried out on an ongoing basis by each organisation or group, in line with the *Return to In–Church*

May 22, 2021

Worship Protocols resource. Clear planning and communication with your Rector and Select Vestry is also essential.

Youth leaders and workers are encouraged to come back to CIYD or their local diocesan office for help and advice or to ask anything more specific regarding youth ministry. All activities should have regard to all other relevant requirements and good practice (e.g. in child protection, awareness of risk, and the safety and well-being of staff and volunteers).

CIYD records its thanks to “ our friends and colleagues in the Irish Methodist Youth and Children’s Department, Presbyterian Church in Ireland, National Youth Council of Ireland, and Education Authority (Northern Ireland) for their assistance in the preparation of this document.”

Churches Uniting in Christ releases resources for Pentecost 2021

Churches Uniting in Christ, a dialogue among 10 Protestant faith communions in the U.S., announces the release of new ecumenical resources for local congregations to utilize during Pentecostide services.

“Pentecost is a time for Christian churches to celebrate the very beginning of the church. We are essentially one in Christ by the power of the Spirit who binds, while celebrating the diversity among us,” said Bishop Teresa Jefferson-Snorton, president of Churches Uniting in Christ. “This is also a liturgical season to renew our hearts as followers of

May 22,2021

Christ by rekindling the fire of life from the Holy Spirit to bring new life to the world.”

Resources to help congregations understand and observe these events can be found on the CUIC’s website:

[[www.churchesuniting.org/teaching-and-preaching.](http://www.churchesuniting.org/teaching-and-preaching)]

Resources include a 9-minute introductory video by the Rev. Dr. Claudio Carvalhaes, an associate professor at Union Theological Seminary, and a 6-minute video in which he shares a personal story related to Pentecost. The Rev. Dr. Youngsook Charlene Kang, a pastor of the United Methodist Church, offers her understanding of crossing cultural boundaries and learning to live in the spirit of Pentecost.

Jefferson-Snorton, who is also the ecumenical officer for the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, encourages all U.S. congregations to use any, or all, of these resources as they commemorate this year’s Pentecost season.

Major revision of Cork, Cloyne and Ross Diocesan website

Cork, Cloyne and Ross Diocesan website has had its fourth major revision in 20 years.

Speaking about the new look website, Bishop Paul Colton said: ‘Liam Burke who has done amazing work for our website for many years has given our Diocesan website a fresh and very Cork look, using the red and white colours of the Cork flag. It is crisp and easy to navigate with a wealth

May 22,2021

of information and useful material. I want to thank Liam especially for all his work and patience with us.

‘We have come a long way since we were among the first, if not the first, Diocese in Ireland to launch our first website in early 1999.

‘Keeping on top of a website involves a lot of detailed work and I am grateful for the scrutiny of many people which not only came before the launch but which is an on-going discipline.’

The new Cork, Cloyne and Ross Diocesan website is at www.cork.anglican.org

Kilgore, Elphin and Ardagh diocesan online service

This week’s diocesan online service on Sunday is the annual Girls’ Friendly Society (GFS) Festival Service. YouTube: youtu.be/4ykhRnNAbqc

Media review

Call for Sinn Féin to apply its southern housing policies to west Belfast “housing crisis”

The Detail

Pressure is being put on Sinn Féin to apply its southern housing policies to a major piece of public land, under its control, in a party stronghold.

The vast majority of the former Mackie’s textile factory in west Belfast is owned by Stormont's Department for

May 22,2021

Communities (DfC). DfC is responsible for housing development and Sinn Féin's Deirdre Hargey is DfC Minister.

Participation and the Practice of Rights (PPR) is a Belfast-based human rights organisation which campaigns about housing rights and land reform throughout the city.

"In the south, Sinn Féin are championing policies which maximise sustainable housing developments on available land as a priority in addressing the housing crisis," said PPR director, Dessie Donnelly.

"We need these approaches at Mackie's to address the housing crisis on this side of the border."

[[] <https://www.thedetail.tv/articles/call-for-sinn-fein-to-apply-its-southern-housing-policies-to-west-belfast-housing-crisis?>]

Historical abuse redress board 'not functioning to an acceptable level'

Belfast Telegraph

... in residential homes run by religious orders and the state in Northern Ireland ...

[[] <https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/historical-abuse-redress-board-not-functioning-to-an-acceptable-level-40446327.html>]

Historical abuse redress board 'not functioning to an acceptable level'

Irish Examiner

May 22,2021

He said ministers had met Catholic Archbishop Eamon Martin, Church of Ireland Archbishop John McDowell, Barnardos and representatives of the ...

[[] <https://www.irishexaminer.com/news/arid-40293710.html>]]

Jayne Ozanne's evidence to parliament

Daily Telegraph

Coverage of C of E General Synod member Jayne Ozanne's evidence to the Commons Women and Equalities Committee.

[<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2021/05/19/governmentlgbt-adviser-quit-minister-failed-truly-understand/>]

Widening Sinn Féin shake-up

Irish News

Following sweeping changes in Foyle, the party has now replaced a sitting South Down MLA with a councillor

Martin McGuinness' son touted as possible Sinn Féin replacement in Foyle

Irish News

Of all the late Mr McGuinness's children, his son Fiachra appears to be the only one to display an appetite for politics through his social media posts

New DUP leader Edwin Poots says Irish government has 'done real damage' over Protocol

Irish News

The Lagan Valley MLA said "North-South relationships have never been as bad"

May 22,2021

NI Protocol port checks could be reduced by 80% – Irish minister.

Belfast News Letter

The number of checks on goods arriving into Northern Ireland from Great Britain could be reduced by 80%, the Irish Foreign Affairs minister has said.

State files ‘suggest Taoiseach collusion’ in IRA cover-up, says victims’ group.

Belfast News Letter

A man whose brother was murdered in the Narrow Water bombings is “very aggrieved” that Dublin promoted a ‘cover-up’ which helped frustrate RUC investigations.



Pointers for prayer

Mighty God,
in whom we know the power of redemption,
you stand among us in the shadows of our time.
As we move through every sorrow and trial of this life,
uphold us with knowledge of the final morning

May 22,2021

when, in the glorious presence of your risen Son,
we will share in his resurrection,
redeemed and restored to the fullness of life
and forever freed to be your people. Amen.

Living God,
long ago, faithful women
proclaimed the good news
of Jesus' resurrection,
and the world was changed forever.
Teach us to keep faith with them,
that our witness may be as bold,
our love as deep,
and our faith as true. Amen.

Creator of the universe,
you made the world in beauty,
and restore all things in glory
through the victory of Jesus Christ.
We pray that, wherever your image is still disfigured
by poverty, sickness, selfishness, war and greed,
the new creation in Jesus Christ may appear in justice, love,
and peace,
to the glory of your name. Amen.

O God, your Son remained with his disciples after his
resurrection,
teaching them to love all people as neighbours.
As his disciples in this age,
we offer our prayers on behalf of the universe
in which we are privileged to live
and our neighbours with whom we share it.
Open our hearts to your power moving

May 22,2021

around us and between us and within us,
until your glory is revealed in our love of both friend and
enemy,
in communities transformed by justice and compassion,
and in the healing of all that is broken. Amen.

Holy God,
you have called us to follow in the way of your risen Son,
and to care for those who are our companions,
not only with words of comfort, but with acts of love.
Seeking to be true friends of all,
we offer our prayers on behalf of the church and the world.
Guide us in the path of discipleship,
so that, as you have blessed us,
we may be a blessing for others,

Speaking to the Soul

Prophecy and speaking in unknown languages and special knowledge will become useless. But love will last forever! Three things will last forever—faith, hope, and love—and the greatest of these is love.

1 Corinthians 13:8, 9 & 13 NLT

I don't know about you but I don't like throwing things away. I am writing this on a laptop. A new laptop. I hung on to the last one for as long as possible. It was starting to run very slowly, and sometimes didn't want to start at all. I was prepared to concede that it had good days and bad days, because we all do, but, in the end, I had to admit that I was devoting too much of my life to waiting for it to spring into action. The truth is, of course, that all our possessions have

May 22,2021

a limited life. Our cars, our microwaves, our beds, our desks and even our homes don't last for ever.

The same principle exists in the spiritual realm as well. Our spiritual gifts are a wonderful blessing but they come to an end. Speaking in tongues, prophecy, preaching, words of knowledge are all amazing gifts of God but the day will come when they are silent. There will be no more need for them. However, some things do last for ever. Paul lists them as faith, hope and love. But one shines above them all and that's love.

Isn't it a wonderful thought that the love that we show day by day never comes to an end? It is a reflection of God's eternal nature and so every time we reach out to another person and truly love them we are sharing in the stream of his eternal love. We need that reminder because loving is often painful and unnoticed and sometimes rejected. However, there is nothing more important that we can ever do than love.

QUESTION

In what way are you encouraged by the fact that love never ends?

PRAYER

Thank you Lord that your love never ends. Help me to devote more of my life to sharing the eternal gift of love.
Amen

