

Healing Service for – Tuesday 21st July **Feast of Mary Magdalene**

Opening prayer

We gather here in your presence Lord
In our need and bringing with us the needs of the world
We come to you, for you come to us in Jesus
And you know by experience what human life is like
We come with our faith and with our doubts
We come with our doubts and with our fears
We come as we are because you invite us to come
And you have promised never to turn us away

The Collect

Almighty God,
whose Son restored Mary Magdalene to health of mind and body
and called her to be a witness to his resurrection:
forgive our sins and heal us by your grace,
that we may serve you in the power of his risen life;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen

Readings

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:
a time to be born, and a time to die;
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;
a time to kill, and a time to heal;
a time to break down, and a time to build up;
a time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn, and a time to dance;
a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together;
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;
a time to seek, and a time to lose;

a time to keep, and a time to throw away;
a time to tear, and a time to sew;
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
a time to love, and a time to hate;
a time for war, and a time for peace.

Luke 8:1-3

Soon afterwards he went on through cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. The twelve were with him, as well as some women who had been cured of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, and Joanna, the wife of Herod's steward Chuza, and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them out of their resources.

Sermon (Gill Gough)

I wonder what you pray for when you pray for healing. A cure for some physical ailment, a forgiveness, a reconciliation, relief or ease, strength, a restoration, peace for a troubled heart, wholeness of body mind and spirit. Each of us will most likely have different interpretations of the word and certainly different prayer expectations which may change over time as circumstances in our lives change.

Healing and all its connotations is an integral part of the good news of Jesus Christ. The Bible is full of instances where people have been healed individually and instances where whole nations have been restored.

It is apparent in Scripture that the physical, emotional, social and spiritual well-being of humankind is closely interconnected. Christ's work of reconciliation extends beyond the purely personal and relational needs to the social order of the whole of creation. (Read Colossians 1 v 15-27) Injustice and reconciliation, harmony and healing are all inter locked in God's great plan for mankind.

The gospels use the term 'healing' both for physical healing and for the broader salvation that Jesus promises.

A common New Testament word for sickness is weakness, which carries broad associations of powerlessness and vulnerability. As Christians face weakness of whatever kind, they receive God's grace, expressed sometimes in an experience of healing and sometimes through the strength that comes in the bearing of sickness or suffering.

Most individuals, at any given time, know at least a handful of people who are battling an illness of some kind. One of those people may even be themselves. Now that there is a powerful global pandemic, we are facing greater fear over the mere possibility of sickness as well as the realistic impact this could have on those with pre-existing medical conditions. No matter what the specific circumstances may be, the plea, the prayer and the hope is for healing, for self and for others, for the nation and for the world.

Whether the ailment is physical, mental, spiritual or emotional, praying for healing as well as strength to cope, is a productive, common response and there are many inspirational verses to be found in the bible to verify this.

One of the stories concerns Mary Magdalene whose feast day occurs tomorrow, 22nd July.

She is a prime example of one who receives Christ's healing touch. Did she ask for healing, or understanding for herself and other people of something beyond her control, or a freeing of her emotions.

The scripture says "Mary (called Magdalene) from whom seven demons had gone out".

Can you imagine having seven demons inside you? Mary was definitely tortured by this for quite a time. In Mark's gospel after the crucifixion, it states that the risen Jesus first appeared to Mary Magdalene from whom he had cast out seven demons. There is no doubt about who had performed the miracle of healing her. It was Jesus himself, her Lord and Saviour.

What a change that made to her life: from demoniac bondage to the freedom of Jesus Christ. Mary became a follower of Jesus, travelling with other women and the disciples and she ministered to them, and became known as the Apostle to the Apostles.

Jesus healed Mary Magdalene and she was faithful to him, right unto the end and even after his crucifixion.

I wonder how has Jesus answered your prayers, has he shown you his healing powers? Are you faithful to him now and hopefully for ever?

Will you keep praying and trusting in him, and witness to his healing power, his love and his compassion?

And what about prayers that seem unanswered or answered in a different way to what we expected.

What are our thoughts when this happens? Have we a strong enough faith to persist in prayer; to persevere when things seem to get worse instead of

better. As Christians, we know that God loves us. We know that he will help us, and Jesus promised to be with us always; but Jesus came not just to heal, certainly he told us that we would probably suffer, for him. Being a Christian is not a simple option; we haven't chosen the easy life free from all troubles. Our reward will be found in heaven, when we meet Jesus and God face to face, and as I believe we will be reunited with loved ones who have gone before us. Whatever our prayer may be I firmly believe that God has a plan and a purpose which we mere mortals may neither understand nor comprehend.

Whatever you are currently up against, I pray you will receive relief and comfort that will alleviate some of the tension and worry that comes from facing difficult situations and distressing and painful circumstances, especially during taxing seasons of life when there seems to be more questions than answers.

I pray that your prayers will be answered as you wish, whether for yourself, someone you love or someone you have never met. But keep trusting in God and his Son Jesus Christ and you will receive that inner strength and peace that only our Lord and Saviour can provide.

I leave you with a verse from Isaiah ch 41 v 10
*Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God.
I will strengthen you, Yes I will help you.
I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.*

What more could one want. Amen

Prayers of Intercession

With Mary Magdalene and all holy women,
let us praise our God and call upon him in prayer.
Father, your Son said of the woman who was a sinner,
'Her many sins are forgiven because she has loved much.'
Forgive the sins of all who love you
and strengthen your Church to show forth your love in today's world.
Lord, hear us.

Lord, graciously hear us.

Mary Magdalene was the first to greet your risen Son
and carried the news of his triumph over death to the disciples.

Strengthen us to be faithful witnesses to the gospel in the world
and grant your grace to all who preach and teach the faith.

Lord, hear us.

Lord, graciously hear us.

Your Son called those who do your will his brother and sister and mother.
Teach us to live as members of one family, united in faith and love.

Lord, hear us.

Lord, graciously hear us.

Many women ministered to the needs of your Son on his saving journeys.
Open our eyes to see you in those in need or sickness
and hear our prayers for

We read the names of those who are on the Guild healing list

Lord, hear us.

Lord, graciously hear us.

Prayers of Penitence

The gospel calls us to turn away from sin
and be faithful to Christ.

As we offer ourselves to him in penitence and faith,
we renew our confidence and trust in his mercy.

Cast your burden upon the Lord
and he will sustain you.

In returning and rest
you shall be saved.

In quietness and trust
shall be your strength.

**Most merciful God,
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
we confess that we have sinned
in thought, word and deed.
We have not loved you with our whole heart.
We have not loved our neighbour as ourselves.**

**In your mercy
forgive what we have been,
help us to amend what we are,
and direct what we shall be;
that we may do justly, love mercy,
and walk humbly with you, our God. Amen.**

God, the Father of mercies,
has reconciled the world to himself
through the death and resurrection of his Son, Jesus Christ,
not holding our sins against us,
but sending his Holy Spirit
to shed abroad his love among us.
By the ministry of reconciliation
entrusted by Christ to his Church,
receive his pardon and peace
to stand before him in his strength alone
this day and for evermore.

Amen.

The Ministry of Healing

Be with us, Spirit of God;
Nothing can separate us from your love.
Breathe on us, breath of God;
Fill us with your saving power.
Speak in us, wisdom of God;
Bring strength, healing and peace.
The Lord is here.
His Spirit is with us.

In confidence let us pray to the Father
For the coming of the kingdom among us:

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name;
your kingdom come; your will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.**

**Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the Kingdom the power
and the glory are yours
now and for ever. Amen.**

Praise God who made heaven and earth,
who keeps his promise for ever.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God,
who is worthy of all thanksgiving and praise.

Blessed are you, sovereign God, gentle and merciful,
creator of heaven and earth.
Your Word brought light out of darkness,
and daily your Spirit renews the face of the earth.
When we turned away from you in sin,
your anointed Son took our nature and entered our suffering
to bring your healing to those in weakness and distress.
He broke the power of evil and set us free from sin and death
that we might become partakers of his glory.
His apostles anointed the sick in your name,
bringing wholeness and joy to a broken world.
By your grace renewed each day
you continue the gifts of healing in your Church
that your people may praise your name for ever.
By the power of your Spirit may your blessing rest
on those we pray for today;
may they be made whole in body, mind and spirit.
Hear the prayer we offer for all your people.
Remember in your mercy those for whom we pray:
heal the sick, raise the fallen, strengthen the fainthearted
and enfold in your love the fearful and those who have no hope.
In the fullness of time complete your gracious work.
Reconcile all things in Christ and make them new,
that we may be restored in your image, renewed in your love,
and serve you as sons and daughters in your kingdom.
Through your anointed Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord,
to whom with you and the Holy Spirit
we lift our voices of thanks and praise:

**Blessed be God, our strength and our salvation,
now and for ever. Amen.**

*A time of silence as we bring before God ourselves and others we know who
are in need of his healing touch*

In the name of God and trusting in his might alone,
receive Christ's healing touch to make you whole.

May Christ bring you wholeness
of body, mind and spirit,
deliver you from every evil,
and give you his peace.

Amen.

The almighty Lord,
who is a strong tower for all who put their trust in him,
whom all things in heaven, on earth, and under the earth obey,
be now and evermore your defence.

May you believe and trust that the only name under heaven
given for health and salvation
is the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Blessing

Watch now, dear Lord,
with those who wake or watch or weep tonight,
and give your angels charge over those who sleep.
Tend your sick ones O Lord Christ,
rest your weary ones,
bless your dying ones, soothe your suffering ones,
pity your afflicted ones, shield your joyous ones,
and all for your name's sake.

Amen

And now may the God of hope
fill us with all joy and peace in believing,
that we might abound in hope
in the power of the Spirit. **Amen**

