

INTERCESSIONS

Epiphany 11 19th January 2003

At this Epiphany-tide, let us once again, prepare ourselves to receive God's message anew.

Dear Lord, we look to You to liberate us from desire, ignorance and pride: to imbue us with compassion, wisdom and humility: and to embrace us within a conscious, loving relationship with one another and with You, our Creating God.

At this Epiphany-tide, we pray for :

The Archbishop of Canterbury, for the Bishops and for the Clergy, of this Church of England and of all Christian denominations, that they may inspire their people, by their leadership, and by their example. Particularly at this time of threatening war, may governments listen to *them*, and to the hundreds of thousands of people around the world, who took part in anti-war demonstrations yesterday, and take heed of their warnings.

**Lord, in Your mercy
Hear our Prayer**

At this Epiphany-tide, we pray most ardently for world peace, for those leaders of the most powerful nations, who seem bent on war, for those who are already the victims of war, and for those who will be caught up in new conflicts, whether they are troops already being deployed to the Gulf, or the inevitable innocent civilians.

We pray also, for victims of people's ill-treatment of others. Those who have been physically, sexually or mentally abused. Those who have been robbed - as David and Margaret have - those who have been tormented and bullied, or wrongly accused. We think of people who are: homeless and displaced, cold and hungry, the sick, the sad, the confused, the bereaved, the lost and the lonely, those of other faiths, and those with no faith.

But we also ask for Your help, in understanding, how we should relate to the perpetrators of these crimes. What does it mean to forgive?

At this Epiphany-tide, help us *not* to find the faults in others, but rather to seek ways of helping, supporting and alleviating the problems of others, by our time, our talents and our resources.

Lord, Hear us
Lord, graciously hear us

At this Epiphany-tide, we pray for our families, our friends and our neighbours, both here and abroad. We try to imagine how it must feel to have lost everything in the floods in Brazil and the bush fires in Australia. Be with them in their time of need.

Deepen and strengthen every relationship, so that all our earthly love may be gathered up into Your love. Help us to be helpful and considerate, forbearing and forgiving, so that the harmony of our daily dealings, may be strengthened and sustained.

Lord, in Your mercy
Hear our prayer

At this Epiphany-tide, we ask for the grace of Your Holy Spirit, on the souls of those who have recently died. For those youngsters gunned down at a New Year's party in Birmingham; for the Manchester Detective Constable - Stephen Oak - knifed in the pursuit of his legitimate role;
for Wayne Trotter of Boreham Wood, set on fire and killed by a gang of youths; for those abducted and murdered: and for those who died naturally, but are nonetheless, mourned by loved ones.

Be with the families and friends left behind, bitter, baffled and bereaved.

Lord, hear us
Lord, graciously hear us

Lord, at this Epiphany-tide, we pray for ourselves.

Sin is turning away from You, and the call of Your love; and turning towards our own egotistic desires. Sin is putting ourselves first.

At this time of Prayer for Christian Unity, help us to understand the differing ways, in which people come to understand Your love. Help us to strive for Christian Unity, by seeking to understand one another's points of view, whilst maintaining non-uniformity in our differing modes of worship.

Help us to prepare, and to be prepared, to accept Your message of salvation, turning our human natures, into unity with You. So that ultimately, we are at-one.

O God, show us Your heavenly light, and like the wise men of old, give us grace to follow until we find You, and finding You, rejoice. And as the wise men presented their gifts, so may we, make the offering of a loving heart, an adoring spirit, and an obedient will.

**Merciful Father,
Accept these prayers,
For the sake of Your Son,
Our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen**