

INTERCESSIONS

Sunday 15th August 2004

INCLUSIVE SUNDAY

Lord, on this Inclusive Sunday, we pray for all peoples on your earth. For tolerance and understanding; of those of other cultures and faiths; of those whose skin is a different colour, whose sexuality is alien to our own, whose intelligence is limited, whose physical and mental capacities are impaired. We are all your children made in your image. Help us to refrain from thinking of You in our image.

The Bible tells us, that your call to humanity, is to be good stewards of all the wonders of your creation. Instil in us a reverence for every living thing. As Christians, we have a duty to better inform ourselves about global issues, so that we can take part in meaningful dialogue, without misinformed ignorance and prejudice.

You have provided enough food in the world to feed all its people. Yet 20% of the world's population, of which we are a part, has 90% of the world's riches. How do we achieve a more favourable distribution? How should we react to the 25 million *environmental* refugees as well as to the 22 million others? How would *we* react in their circumstances? Do we have an informed view of Genetically Modified food?

President Bush overturned Bill Clinton's signing of the Kyoto Agreement on green house emissions saying that he would not agree to a measure that would 'harm the economy and hurt the American workers.' He professes the Christian faith, but is this a Christian view? Is it our view?

What should be our Christian view of the genome project and DNA testing? What do we understand by so called 'cloning'? How should the Christian be involved?

The Bible tells us that your creation is good. Lord help us to be better stewards of the resources you have entrusted to us, by first seeking to understand, how your creation works.

Lord hear us:

Lord Graciously hear us.

Lord, on this Inclusive Sunday, in this era of globalisation, when we know about events on the other side of the world, before we know how our neighbour is, we watch our televisions and read our newspapers in comfort. Help us to appreciate the real horrors that are perpetrated by a few, but felt by the many. Help us to find an understanding of some of the seemingly intractable problems, caused by people in Your world. We think of just a few of the more prominent problems:

The conflict between East and West in Iraq, Iran and Saudi Arabia
 between Christian and Muslim
 between Jew and Arab

between Israel and Palestine
between India & Pakistan
between terrorists and their targets around the world

Many of these are among the 202 nations and 10,000 athletes competing in the Olympic Games in Athens. Grant to the competitors, and the spectators around the world, a spirit of co-operation, brotherhood, fair play and peace, that may be the example for all to follow.

Bless and guide the rulers of the nations, and all in authority at whatever level of society. Grant them wisdom, integrity and unselfishness. May they seek to practise truth, not spin, that they may develop a vision of equality for all people. Direct every nation and society in the ways of justice and peace, that we may all learn to honour one another and to seek the common good.

**Lord hear us:
Lord graciously hear us.**

Lord, on this Inclusive Sunday, we pray for your blessing on all your churches and all your people who profess your name. Bless we beseech you, the *leaders* of all your churches, especially, Rowan our Archbishop, Geoffrey, David and Manuel our bishops, Eric and David our clergy and all their lay assistants. Strengthen them with your heavenly grace. May they be diligent in prayer, and in the study of your holy word, that by their wise counsel and good example, they may guide your people, and work for the extension of your kingdom here on Earth.

**Lord hear us:
Lord graciously hear us.**

Lord, on this Inclusive Sunday, we pray for the people of our own community here in Algarve, and in our home countries. For the victims of people's ill-treatment of others. For the abused, those who have been mugged or robbed, for those who have been tormented, bullied or wrongly accused. We pray for the victims of the fires and the those who fought the blaze, for the homeless and displaced, the orphaned, the unemployed, the hungry, the sick, the sad, the elderly, the confused, the bereaved, the lost and the lonely, those of other faiths and those with no faith. They are all created in your image, and they are all our neighbours, whom we are directed to love and care for.

Let us keep a moment's silence while we remember those who are known to us, and are in need of our prayers.

Lord we pray for your blessing on ourselves, our homes and our families, where ever they may scattered across your world. Grant them your love, and your grace, and your peace.

**Lord hear us:
Lord graciously hear us.**

Lord, on this Inclusive Sunday, we pray for ourselves and our church community. Help us to understand the differing ways in which people come to understand your love. Help us to strive for Christian Unity, by coming to understand one another's points of view, whilst maintaining, non-uniformity in our differing modes of worship.

Grant to us, the members of this congregation, that spirit of tolerance and understanding, that differences can be discussed and solutions found.

Sin is turning away from You, and your call to love one another as you love us. Sin is putting ourselves first.

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.

Lord hear us:

Lord Graciously hear us.

Lord, on this Inclusive Sunday, grant us a deeper understanding of what it means to love our world-wide neighbour. Help us to develop charitable minds and lives.

Lord, in your tender love, grant us a like compassion, for all who claim our help, and a willingness to identify ourselves with their needs.

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

Amen.