

Pershore Abbey Iona Service - 5pm on Sunday 28th July 2024

Fatherhood

Welcome and Introduction:

Gathering Song: 🎵 God welcomes all, strangers and friends.
God's love is strong and it never ends. (x3)

Opening Responses:

Leader: We gather here today, fathers, children, pilgrims all.
All: **We gather as your son Jesus taught us, to praise God the Father together.**
Leader: Today we celebrate fathers both earthly and heavenly
All: **In our community and the family of the church.**
Leader: On this earth, more children now than ever before grow up without a father in their lives
All: **And fewer in turn choose to dedicate their time to raising a family.**
Leader: Although it can seem that fatherhood's virtues are now harder to find
All: **They are ever more precious and needed.**
Leader: For the future belongs to our children.
All: **We are its custodians, entrusted to safeguard then pass on, not use and throw away.**

Song: 🎵 *(by F. Bland Tucker, tune Rhosymedre)*

- 1. Our Father, by whose name all fatherhood is known,
Who dost in love proclaim each family thine own,
Bless thou all parents, guarding well,
With constant love as sentinel,
The homes in which thy people dwell.**
- 2. As thou thy Child didst fill with wisdom, love, and might,
To know and do thy will and teach thy ways aright,
Our children bless, in ev'ry place,
That they may all behold thy face,
And, knowing thee, may grow in grace.**
- 3. May thy strong Spirit bind our hearts in unity,
And help us each to find the love from self set free.
In all our hearts such love increase,
That ev'ry home, by this release,
May be the dwelling place of peace.**

Bible Reading on the theme of Fatherhood:

Reader: Listen to the word of God.

For the word of God in scripture, for the word of God among us, for the word of God within us,

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Sharing our thoughts about Fatherhood:

Please be aware that that others may have strong feelings about their own experience of fatherhood, or that their ideas may be very different to your own.

Listen compassionately and share only what you are happy to.

Please do not repeat what others have said about specific people outside this Iona service. Thank you.

In small groups take time to share your thoughts about Fatherhood. Without mentioning any names, jot down your reflections and put them on the central table for reflection and prayer.

Time for Reflection: *Time for quiet reflection and reading the thoughts jotted on paper.*

Time for Sharing:

The Lord's Prayer:

All: **Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as 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.**

Prayers of Intercession: *In the pauses, please offer your own prayers either spoken or unspoken.*

Leader: We pray for those who are new to the role of fatherhood, whether the journey was planned or not. Please grant them the love to steadfastly serve and protect, and that they might receive love and belonging in return for their efforts.

PAUSE

Leader: We pray for all children who lack a father's care, through absence, disengagement or even abuse. Let your example of dedication shine through other men in their lives, that they may grow up in the knowledge of what a man can be.

PAUSE

Leader: We pray for single mothers, who as well as the challenges of providing, face the task of filling the void left by a man in their lives and those of their children. May your companionship be with them, that whatever the road brings they will not face it alone.

PAUSE

Leader: These prayers from a listless and unanchored world, we offer to you.

All: **In the name of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.**

Song:♪

- 1. Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all joy,
Whose trust, ever child-like, no cares can destroy,
Be there at our waking, and give us, we pray,
Your bliss in our hearts, Lord, at the break of the day.**

2. Lord of all eagerness, Lord of all faith,
Whose strong hands were skilled at the plane and the lathe,
Be there at our labours, and give us, we pray,
Your strength in our hearts, Lord, at the noon of the day.
3. Lord of all kindness, Lord of all grace,
Your hands swift to welcome, your arms to embrace,
Be there at our homing, and give us, we pray,
Your love in our hearts, Lord, at the eve of the day.
4. Lord of all gentleness, Lord of all calm,
Whose voice is contentment, whose presence is balm,
Be there at our sleeping, and give us, we pray,
Your peace in our hearts, Lord, at the end of the day.

Closing responses:

Leader: When the day's work is done, tools are put away and coats hung up
All: **And we may more fully turn our minds to those who truly matter to us.**
Leader: We are made in your image O Lord, and as such we have the capacity to bring forth small elements of your heaven in our own earthly manner
All: **Through family, community and worship.**
Leader: May children have a stable foundation for their lives, and parents never slide into complacency.
All: **Souls ablaze, may their journey of learning continue to grow alongside their children.**
Leader: The road is rarely easy and we often stumble along the way
All: **But every time you reach out a hand and lend a shoulder to pick ourselves up with.**
Leader: As all good fathers do, you do not coddle us, but challenge us outside our comfort zone
All: **That we might grow in wisdom and be better prepared for this confounding but beautiful world.**

The Grace: *Please join in The Grace in any version that you are comfortable with.*

ALL: **May the grace of Jesus Christ, the love of God
and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with us all
this night and always. Amen**

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If you have been affected by the topics raised today and would like to talk to someone about it, please talk to one of the people identified to help tonight.

NEXT IONA SERVICE 5pm on SUNDAY September 2024

After our break from Iona services in August, we will have a get together, short service and time to discuss ideas for future services.

Until we meet again, may God hold you, in the hollow of his hand.