



Call to prayer

Archbishops Justin Welby and Stephen Cottrell are encouraging people of all backgrounds to set aside time each day for prayer – if possible, stopping wherever they are at 6pm each evening. It follows their call last week for people to pause, 'reflect on the enormity of this pandemic' and pray for the nation and all those affected.

The call followed news that more than 100,000 people have died within 28 days of a positive Covid-19 test.

In a letter to the nation last week, the Archbishops wrote: "We encourage everyone who is feeling scared, or lost or isolated to cast their fears on God. "We also know that poorer communities, minority ethnic communities and those living with disabilities have been afflicted disproportionately and cry out for the healing of these inequalities."

They added: "One thing we can all do is pray. We hope it is some consolation to know that the church prays for the life of our nation every day. Whether you're someone of faith, or not, we invite you to call on God in prayer.

"Starting on 1 February we invite you to set aside time every evening to

pray, particularly at 6pm each day. More than ever, this is a time when we need to love each other. Prayer is an expression of love.”

Today, when we celebrate Candlemas, let us remember Christ as a Light to the World, bringing hope and peace and life.

The Collect for Candlemas:

Lord Jesus Christ, light of the nations and glory of Israel,
make your home among us,
and present us pure and holy
to your Heavenly Father,
your God and our God.
Amen

Prayer resources are available [on the Church of England website](#).

Gracious God,
as we remember before you the thousands
who have died,
surround us and all who mourn with your
strong compassion.
Be gentle with us in our grief,
protect us from despair,
and give us grace to persevere
and face the future with hope
in Jesus Christ our risen Lord.
Amen.

Watch, O Lord, with those who wake, or watch, or weep tonight, and give
your angels and saints 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 love's sake.
Amen.

Attributed to St. Augustine