



Prayer Resource for the Vacancy-in-See

Prayers for the one to come...

...the new Bishop of Winchester...

.... in the name of the one whose coming is certain, Jesus Christ our Lord.

The process of appointing the new Bishop of Winchester is under way and a range of people and committees have formal roles to play in this process. But every one of us in the diocese has an active part to play in seeking God's wisdom and care for those responsible for this appointment and those whom God is calling to be considered for this vital role of service.

This simple resource offers some ways we can all pray for the process and the new Bishop, for use individually and within your parishes. Please pray specifically:

- For God's provision and care for all those responsible for calling the new Bishop
- For the person God is preparing to respond to that call
- For the life of our diocese and for all the communities we seek to serve, that our love for God and each other would be deepened even as we wait

Some Bible passages for reflection:

'Whoever would be great among you must be your servant.' (Matthew 20:26)

'The saying is sure: whoever aspires to the office of bishop desires a noble task.' (1 Timothy 3.1)

'When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?' He said to him, 'Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed my lambs.' A second time he said to him, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' He said to him, 'Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Tend my sheep.' He said to him the third time, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, 'Do you love me?' And he said to him, 'Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed my sheep.' (John 21:15-17)

'For this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher.' (2 Timothy 1:11)

'Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.' (1 Peter 2.4)

Ideas for Prayers:

God of provision and care, discernment and knowledge,

Lead us in your love, empower us by your Spirit, and equip us with your gifts;

Give us hearts full of love for all people, minds open to the signs of the times, and wisdom to know how to respond to the voice of your calling.

We ask this through him who's coming is certain, whose day draws near, your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A Prayer written by Year 6 pupils from St Bede Church of England Primary School, Winchester:

Wise and loving God,

We pray that you will give wisdom to those searching for the new Bishop of Winchester.

Help us to create a community of love and peace as we seek a new Bishop to lead us.

We ask for a leader who will show humility, empathy and love to all your people.

We ask for a person who will build your Kingdom here on earth, in this city and across the world.

Let us seek a person who is peaceful and patient.

Someone who cares not only for the people of Winchester but anybody who comes to seek help.

Someone who is honest and approachable, someone who will help us to follow you.

Someone who can bring out the best in us, someone who isn't afraid to ask for help.

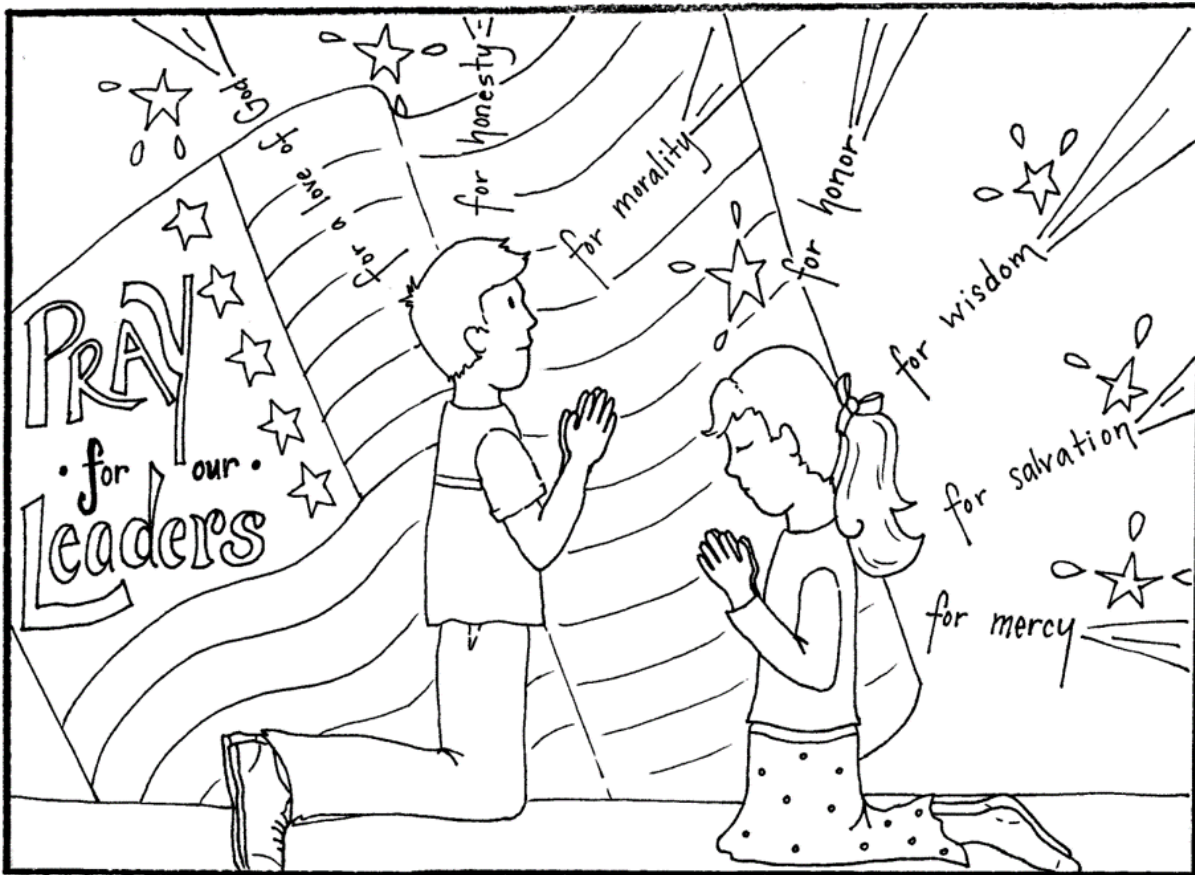
Someone who can understand.

Continue to guide and strengthen us in our daily lives.

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

(By Ivy, Leo and Zoe, year 6)

Prayer colouring activity (see separate PDF for download & printing):



Poem for reflection

- Adapted from 'On thy wonderous works I will meditate' by Mary Oliver

I know a [person] of such
mildness and kindness it is trying to
change my life. [He/she] does not
preach, teach, but simply is. It is
astonishing, for [he/she] is Christ's ambassador
truly, by rule and act. But, more,

[he/she] is kind with the sort of kindness that shines
out, but is resolute, not fooled. [He/she] has
eaten the dark hours and could also, I think,
soldier for God, riding out
under the storm clouds, against the world's pride and unkindness,
with both unassailable sweetness, and tempering word.