

Prayer in Hereford Cathedral

This Cathedral's prime purpose is to offer prayer to God and visitors are welcome to join in any of our acts of worship.

The Holy Communion or Eucharist

This service is one in which we remember Jesus' command to his disciples at the Last Supper to 'do this in remembrance of me'. We receive the bread and wine – which become for us the body and blood of Christ – symbols of his very life – and we are thus strengthened to go from here to love and serve our fellow men and women.

The Eucharist is celebrated daily – on weekdays with often a small congregation and very little music. On Sunday, the whole community gathers for the Cathedral Eucharist, where our best resources of music and liturgy combine to make a service of great beauty and inspiration.

Morning Prayer or Matins

We gather as a community each day to hear Scripture from the Old and New Testaments and to join in prayer. On weekdays the service is 'said' while on most Sundays it is sung by the cathedral choir

Evening Prayer or Evensong

Similar in structure to Matins, Evensong is more frequently sung by the cathedral choir. Music is offered by the choir on behalf of all present and many find that the music sung greatly helps them in their prayer.

Prayer at the Shrines

Each Friday at 12 noon, prayer is offered at the shrine of St Ethelbert. As Ethelbert was a martyr for Christ, so in our prayers we remember all who in the world today suffer in any way. We gather on Friday – the day of Jesus' suffering and death on the Cross.

Each Tuesday at 10.30 am, the Tuesday Prayer Group meets at the shrine of St Thomas of Hereford and from there sometimes moves to other parts of the cathedral to continue in prayer. This is an opportunity to bring any concerns in prayer; newcomers are especially welcome.

Prayers 'on the hour' – a special ministry to our visitors

During the summer period there is usually a chaplain on duty – a Priest or Reader from the diocese – and they lead short prayers each hour, inviting visitors to pause and reflect on the true meaning of this cathedral.

Our Chaplains are available to pray with visitors and pilgrims – as are members of the cathedral clergy. Some seek out our Chaplains for counselling and confession- and we encourage you to do this.

A prayer for Pilgrims

Teach us, O God ,
to view our life here on earth
as a pilgrim's path to heaven,
and give us grace to tread it courageously
in the company of your faithful people.
Help us to set our affections
on things above,
not on the passing vanities of this world,
and grant that as we journey on
in the way of holiness
we may bear a good witness to our Lord,
and serve all who need our help
along the way,
for the glory of your name. Amen



Hereford
Cathedral



Prayers for Pilgrims

The best prayer we can offer is often from our own hearts and it may well be that this cathedral – with its beauty and peace – will speak to you and encourage you in your prayer.

Men and women over the centuries have written down prayers which many have found helpful.

There follows a selection of these prayers – some come from other holy places – some are prayers which speak of our life as pilgrims.

We hope you find these prayers of use.

The prayer of St Richard of Chichester

Thanks be to thee, my Lord Jesus Christ.
For all the benefits which thou hast given to me,
For all the pains and insults which thou hast borne for me.
O most merciful redeemer, friend and brother,
May I know thee more clearly
Love thee more dearly,
And follow thee more nearly,
Day by day.

A prayer used at Durham Cathedral — A prayer of The Venerable Bede

I pray thee, merciful Jesus,
that as thou hast graciously granted me
to drink down sweetly from the word
which tells of thee,
so wilt thou kindly grant
that I may come at length to thee,
the fount of all wisdom,
and stand before thy face for ever.

A prayer used at Lincoln Cathedral – a prayer of St Hugh

Help us, Lord,
with whatever we own,
with whatever we do,
with whatever we are,
to make a loving response
to your great love,
Maker, Redeemer, Sustainer of all.

A prayer used by the Iona Community in Scotland

Bless to me, O God, the earth beneath my feet,
Bless to me, O God, the path whereon I go,
Bless to me, O God, the people whom I meet,
Today, tonight and tomorrow. Amen

A prayer based on words of Julian of Norwich

Lord, you are God,
Lord, you are in all things.
Lord, you do all things.
You never remove your hands
from your works,
nor ever will, without end.
You guide all things
To the end that you ordained them for,
before time began,
With the same power
And wisdom and love
with which you made them;
How could anything be amiss?

A prayer of St Francis of Assisi

Lord, make me an instrument of Thy peace;
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
and where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master,
grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled
as to console;
to be understood, as to understand;
to be loved, as to love;
for it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born to Eternal Life.

A prayer of pilgrimage to the Holy Land

May the babe of Bethlehem be yours to tend;
May the boy of Nazareth be yours to friend;
May the man of Galilee his healing send;
May the Christ of Calvary his courage lend;
May the risen Lord his presence send;
And his holy angels defend you, to the end.

A pilgrimage prayer by Sir Walter Raleigh (1552-1618)

Give me my scallop-shell of quiet,
My staff of faith to walk upon,
My scrip of joy, immortal diet,
My bottle of salvation,
My gown of glory, hope's true gage;
And thus I'll take my pilgrimage ...

A prayer for God's blessing from Tanzania

O Lord, grant us a calm lake,
little wind,
little rain,
So that the canoes may proceed well,
So that they may proceed speedily.

A hymn of pilgrimage

Guide me, O thou great Redeemer,
Pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but thou art mighty,
Hold me with thy powerful hand:
Bread of heaven,
Feed me till I want no more

Open now the crystal fountain
Whence the healing stream doth flow;
Let the fire and cloudy pillar
Lead me all my journey through:
Strong deliverer,
Be thou still my strength and shield.

When I tread the verge of Jordan,
Bid my anxious fears subside;
Death of death, and hell's Destruction
Land me safe on Canaan's side:
Songs and praises
I will ever give to thee.