

THE MOTHERS' UNION GLOUCESTER DIOCESE

SERVICE FOR 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM

MONDAY NOVEMBER 30TH 2020 at NOON

‘Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present or the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.’ Romans 8 vv 38 -39

Welcome: Welcome to our service, which is part of our 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence. As members of the Body of Christ we draw near in faith to commit ourselves to be Christ’s hands and feet in the world. Hands to raise awareness by pointing out injustice and unrighteousness and feet to march for change, and to run to those in need of help. The verses from Romans remind us that we are all held in God’s hands.

***All :* Lord Jesus Christ, we are your people. Today we celebrate those who struggle to follow your example to set the captives free. You, Lord, have called us to be the body of Christ, make us ready to act as his hands and feet in the world, to raise awareness of what**

must be challenged, and to address the plight of the vulnerable. Amen.

Leader: Forgive us, Lord, who call ourselves your own but daily cause you pain, who see someone in need and walk across the road, hear about injustice and fail to say a word. Forgive us, Lord, who call ourselves your own.

***All :* Renew our hearts, our souls and minds; strengthen our faith and make us a people who are your hands, your feet and voice within this world. Amen.**

Leader: Let us pray.

Almighty God, who alone can bring order to the unruly wills and passions of a sinful humanity; give your people grace so to love what you command and to desire what you promise, that, among the many changes of this world, our hearts may surely there be fixed where true joys are to be found; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

***All:* Amen**

Bible Reading : 1 Corinthians 12 vv 12, 24 - 27

Unity and Diversity in the Body

¹² Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ.

²⁴ while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has put the body together, giving greater honour to the parts that lacked it, ²⁵ so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. ²⁶ If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honoured, every part rejoices with it.

²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

Homily/ Reflection – Kay Hensley

Leader : Let us affirm our faith in Jesus Christ the Son of God.

All : Though he was divine, he did not cling to equality with God, but made himself nothing. Taking the form of a slave, he was born into human likeness. He humbled himself and was obedient to death, even death on the cross. Therefore God has raised him on high, and given him the name above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and every voice proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Leader: The response to Loving God, creator of all is **We give you thanks and praise.**

Lord of justice and mercy, draw us close to those who hurt, those who are imprisoned physically and mentally, those who suffer at the hands of others, those for whom the colour of our skin is an issue, those who daily suffer injustices. Let us reach out our hands in your name to share the sorrow and lessen the pain. Loving God, creator of all.

All : **We give you thanks and praise**

Leader : Lord of justice and mercy lengthen our strides to march for good. We thank you for the gift of courage; for all those who fight injustice on behalf of those imprisoned by others acts and for recognition of the evils done. Loving God, creator of all.

All : **We give you thanks and praise**

Leader : Lord of justice and mercy knit us together as the body of Christ, and give us grace to see you in every person we meet, that we may speak out with one accord for the kingdom of God to prevail. Loving God, creator of all.

All : **We give you thanks and praise**

Leader : Lord of justice and mercy, we ask you to bless the work of the Mothers' Union throughout the world, and especially in each diocese for which we pray today. Mpumalanga in South Africa, Central Buganda in Uganda, Zonkwa in Nigeria, Bo in Sierra Leone, Newcastle in England and Barrackpore in India. Bless our members in their lives and in their homes, that they, may being strengthened in love to you and each other, may faithfully serve you to your glory. Loving Lord, creator of all.

All : We give you thanks and praise

Lord of justice and mercy, who has called us to be the body of Christ, we offer up our prayers for those who are affected by gender-based violence and as a sign of our unity with all who campaign for justice across the world. Amen.

Loving Lord, We thank you for your love so freely given to us all. We pray for families around the world. Bless the work of the Mothers' Union as we seek to share your love through the encouragement, strengthening and support of marriage and family life.

Empowered by your Spirit, may we be united in prayer and worship, and in love and service reach out as your hands across the world. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Bishop Rachel: May the mystery of God beckon us; may the wisdom of God direct us, may the forgiveness of God heal us, may the energy of God send us into the world to exercise justice and love, and the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with us and all we pray for now and always.

All : Amen

Leader : Let us go in peace to love and serve the Lord