



The Chapels Royal of St Peter ad Vincula and St John the Evangelist HM Tower of London

Dear friends,

“I BELIEVE in one God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, And of all things visible and invisible... .” So begins the Nicene Creed in the Book of Common Prayer. You may or may not know that 2025 marks 1700 years since the 325 AD Council of Nicaea, which bequeathed to us the eponymous Creed that we recite at every Eucharist (Holy Communion). That Council – the first ‘Ecumenical Council’, summoned by Emperor Constantine and attended by church leaders from throughout the Roman world, both east and west - was given the task of establishing a set of beliefs to be held throughout the Church, everywhere. The Creed consists of a series of positive statements, but it has to be understood equally as excluding unacceptable, unorthodox or, if you prefer, heretical beliefs. For example, the Arians (followers of Arius) held that Jesus was not really the Son of God and was only partly divine. To exclude this view, the Nicene Creed states categorically and repetitiously a belief in, “... one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten son of God, Begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of very God, Begotten, not made, Being of one substance with the Father....” ‘Begotten’ is the word used of children in relation to their parents, as opposed to being ‘made (or ‘created’) like creations or creatures.

A while ago someone remarked to me that one of the (many) reasons why he did not like the modern Church of England liturgy - *Common Worship* - was that it started the Nicene Creed with the word ‘We’ rather than ‘I’; the proper word (that is, as used in the Book of Common Prayer) was surely ‘I’? After all, in all settings of the Mass this part is called the *Credo*, which in Latin means simply ‘I believe’. Remember that the Nicene Creed was formulated at the Council of Nicaea to proclaim the beliefs to be held throughout the catholic (that just means universal) church. I can imagine the 200-odd Bishops standing up at the end and reciting the Creed as one of their crowning achievements. They would have done so in Greek and the first word of their Creed in Greek is the first-person singular plural of the verb to believe – that is, ‘**We** believe’. By making this joint, not individual, declaration they were emphasising that the belief was shared by them all. Furthermore, anyone who would not join in (for example, the Arians) was excluded from the Church. Later, when the Creed was translated into Latin, for some reason the first-person singular was used – so, ‘**I** believe’ rather than ‘We believe.’ When Cranmer and others created the Book of Common Prayer they translated from the Latin not the original Greek.

The use of ‘we’ has the authentic ring of a proclamation by a group of people. Think, for example, of the United States’ Declaration of Independence, drawn up by a self-appointed committee, which says, “**We** hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness....” Over coffee after church recently, there was an interesting exchange about the use of ‘I’ or ‘We’ at the start of the Creed. Against the legal view that ‘I’ implies a stronger personal commitment there was the thought that ‘we’ insists on the commonality of belief within the church – what you could call its catholicity or universality. There are certainly arguments in favour of both but, with apologies to the person who dislikes *Common Worship*, on this point it is faithful to the original formula from 1700 years ago. At this point I might urge you not to lose any sleep over it, but I suspect that that possibility is anyway remote. As the late lamented John Ebdon used to say at the end of his BBC radio programme *Archive Feature*, “If you have been, thanks for listening”.

With all good wishes,

Cortland.

Sunday Service 13th April 2025
The Sunday next before Easter – Palm Sunday

0930 Said Holy Communion in The Chapel of St John the Evangelist, White Tower

Readings

Philippians 2:5-11 and Matthew 27:1-54

Collect for the Sunday next before Easter

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who, of thy tender love towards mankind, hast sent thy Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, to take upon him our flesh, and to suffer death upon the cross, that all mankind should follow the example of his great humility;
Mercifully grant, that we may both follow the example of his patience, and also be made partakers of his resurrection;
through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Prayer of the week: An Evening Prayer from the Church of South India



This week's prayer is not by a named author but is taken from the prayer book of the Church of South India (CSI), formed by the union of a number of Protestant denominations in South India that occurred after Indian independence in 1947. It has a membership of nearly four million, and is the second-largest Christian church in India according to the number of its members. The inspiration for the creation of the CSI came from ecumenism and especially the words of Jesus as recorded in the Gospel of John (17:21) "That they all may be one," which is the motto of the CSI.

This prayer offers us a simple but authentic way of bringing ourselves before God at the day's end. The first four lines reflect the changeless reality of night following day and day following night. The second four lines recognise that we often take to our beds with unrealised hopes and nagging anxieties but invites us to place all these before God. In the final four lines we entrust ourselves and those whom we love to God's guardianship, acknowledging God as our one sure hope. As a prayer it has the virtues of being both precise and concise.

O God our Father,
by your mercy and might
the world turns safely into darkness
and returns again to light:
We give into your hands our unfinished tasks,
our unsolved problems,
and our unfulfilled hopes,
knowing that only that what you bless will prosper.

To your great love and protection
we commit each other and all those we love,
knowing that you alone are our sure defender;
through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen

Music: *Christus factus est.*

Joe Deery (of our Choir) sings *Christus factus est* (Gregorian Chant for Palm Sunday). The words, adapted from *Philippians 2:8-9*, are as follows:

Christus factus est pro nobis
obediens usque ad mortem, mortem autem crucis.
Propter quod et Deus exaltavit illum et dedit illi nomen,
quod est super omne nomen.

*For us Christ became obedient
to the point of death, even death on a cross.
Because of this, God greatly exalted him and bestowed on him the name
which is above every name.*

Jigsaw

This week's picture is of the dome of St Paul's Cathedral seen through spring blossom. You can find the jigsaw [here](#).



Prayers

Please continue to remember those on our sick list, some of whom are very ill, amongst whom we name: Stanley, John, Mark, Rob, Kofi, David, Val and His Holiness Pope Francis.

RIP

Roxane Stevens and John Greaney.

Please continue to pray for peace in Ukraine and the countries of the Middle East:

God of peace and justice, we pray for the people of Ukraine and the Middle East today.

We pray for peace and the laying down of weapons.

We pray for all those who fear for tomorrow,
that your Spirit of comfort would draw near to them.

We pray for those with power over war or peace,
for wisdom, discernment, and compassion to guide their decisions.

Above all, we pray for all your precious children, at risk and in fear,
that you would hold and protect them.

This we pray in the name of Jesus, the Prince of peace. Amen.

With best wishes to all, Cortland.



The Reverend Cortland Fransella
Assistant priest, Chapels Royal, HM Tower of London
Deputy Priest in Ordinary to HM the King
Cortland.Fransella@hrp.org.uk

Our Safeguarding Officer

Dan Hawkins, Tower of London Operations Manager Dan.Hawkins@hrp.org.uk

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We are always grateful for financial contributions to help us in our work. If you would like to support the Chapels Royal, HM Tower of London by setting up a Standing Order, making a one-off donation to Chapel Funds or setting up a Direct Debit, this is how to do it.

Thank you in advance for your generosity.

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Thank you again for your generosity.

The HM Tower of London Chapels Royal Foundation



Standing Order

Standing Order

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Please remit £ _____ to the account detailed below commencing on

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Use the information below to set up online, or return the completed form to your bank.

Please remit to: CAF Bank plc	Sort code	40-52-40
	Account number	00027597
	Account name	The HM Tower of London Chapels Royal Foundation
	Reference	[<i>your initials and surname</i>]

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