

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, has given his backing to a call from the Pope for Christians across the world to join in saying the Lord's Prayer as part of the response to the coronavirus pandemic.

Pope Francis has invited Christian leaders and congregations worldwide to pray the Lord's Prayer simultaneously at noon Rome time (11am UK) on Wednesday, on the Feast of the Annunciation. The Church of England is encouraging everyone to share a photo or video using

#PrayTogether.

Archbishop Justin said: "When the disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray he taught them the words that we know as the Lord's Prayer or the Our Father. This prayer gives us words to pray even when we don't know how or what to pray.

"I will be joining with Pope Francis and with Christians all round the world to pray the Lord's Prayer at 1100 London time (1200 Rome) tomorrow, commending the world into God's merciful care at this difficult time."

Speaking on Sunday, Pope Francis called for all Christians to respond to the coronavirus pandemic "with the universality of prayer, of compassion, of tenderness", adding, "Let us remain united. Let us make our closeness felt toward those persons who are the most lonely and tried".

The call comes as the Church of England expands the number of digital and print resources to support people praying at home and growing in faith in new ways. Yesterday the Church published news that five million people saw or heard a special Mothering Sunday service from the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The Church of England will be offering a national weekly service which will be broadcast online each Sunday via social media. The Church's "Time to Pray" app, which includes simple daytime and night prayer services, is now free to everyone. An accompanying daily audio offering on SoundCloud and iTunes was launched last week, with the Archbishop of Canterbury leading worship. This is in addition to the wide range of resources local churches are creating and sharing in both print and digital formats.

Notes to editors

- Leaders of churches and of every Christian community are being invited, together with all Christians, to pray the Our Father, or the Lord's Prayer, simultaneously on Wednesday at noon Rome time (11am UK) or noon local time or any other convenient time of the day.
- More on the Lord's Prayer can be found on our website.