**Thy Kingdom Come – Global Partners in Prayer**

Jesus’ promise on the eve of Pentecost was that the Holy Spirit would come and transform frightened disciples by giving them the power to be witnesses ‘to the ends of the earth’. The early disciples believed that and acted on it, as did others down the generations – otherwise we would not be here today! The whole church throughout the world is called to do this, from everywhere to everywhere, supporting one another in that task, not least in prayer.

In Revelation we catch a glimpse of the end result, when the praising throngs are described as coming from every nation, tribe, people and language.

We are now between these two texts and we pray ‘thy kingdom come on earth’.

We are called to be involved in the great transformation pictured in Ezekiel 37 as dry bones are turned into the living people of God. It is a task which not only goes out to all people groups; it is a task which involves all people groups – each with their own take on ‘Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the ends of the earth’.

As Teresa of Avila reminds us – the global church is now his feet to go to others, his hands to care for others, his mouth to speak to others.

This year Archbishop Justin has called on church leaders across the globe to join in with the Thy Kingdom Come initiative and many have responded. As part of the Novena in our churches we are called to pray for others we know around the globe, and they for us.

We see an example of this in Philippians where we are told Paul prayed for the Philippian church – that they might grow more and more in love, while he thanks the Philippian church that God has refreshed him through their prayers

This will look different in all of our situations. Some of us will have links with other churches or individual Christians across the globe; some of us will have strong links with particular organisations working globally – like CAFOD or Christian Aid; some in your congregations may regularly work elsewhere (we’ve just sent two mission partners to Senegal and discovered another member of the congregation works for a firm renewing a highway at the entrance to the school they work in!).

To pray intelligibly during the Novena utilise all these different links and be in touch with people – ask them what they need prayer for, let them know what you need prayer for.

If I can be Anglican for a moment – within the Diocese of Winchester we have companion links in East Africa, with Myanmar, and with the Diocese of Newcastle in the UK.

Most deaneries have established links – see handout. If you are from the diocese make use of these links to pray.

Some suggestions as to what you might do:

If your existing link has access to Skype, why not pray together over the web – probably works best with a small group, but if your church building has the technology, go for it.

Contact each other before the Novena by whatever is most easily done (e-mail, Twitter, Facebook, Snapchat...), swap prayer requests and arrange to pray at the same time (time zones might make this interesting for one of you!) I’ve just started this with one of our parish partners and it is reinvigorating a link which was going stale.

Many Christian organisations include prayer items on their websites – see handout for suggestions.

Use news websites to see what needs praying for in the locations you are linked to

FINALLY – keep the praying going after the Novena. Let each other know how prayers were answered and share further prayer requests. ‘Thy kingdom come’ finds its fulfilment when Christ returns.