

Suggested readings, prayers and resources for use in parishes and by individuals or groups in preparation for the Olympic Games in 2012

Scripture Readings

The following are suitable for use in worship in preparation for and during the Olympic and Paralympic Games:

Offering hospitality

Genesis 18.1-8; I Kings 17.8-16; Mark 6.34-44; John 6.1-14;
3 John: 5-8

Parable about treasure

Matthew 13.44-53

Running the race

I Corinthians 9.24-27

Verses from Psalm 8

Lord our God,
the whole world tells the greatness of your name.
Your glory reaches beyond the stars.

Even the babble of infants
declares your strength,
your power to halt the enemy and avenger.
Your glory reaches beyond the stars.

I see your handiwork in the heavens:
the moon and the stars you set in place.
Your glory reaches beyond the stars.

What is humankind that you remember them,
the human race that you care for them?
Your glory reaches beyond the stars.

You treat them like gods,
dressing them in glory and splendour.

Your glory reaches beyond the stars.

You give them charge of the earth, laying all at their feet:
cattle and sheep, wild beasts,
birds of the sky, fish of the sea, every swimming creature.

Your glory reaches beyond the stars.

Lord our God,
the whole world tells the greatness of your name.

Your glory reaches beyond the stars.ⁱ

An Act of Praise (based on Psalm 145)

The following may be used as a dialogue between the minister and congregation:

Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised:
there is no end to his greatness.

**One generation shall praise your works to another,
and shall declare your power.**

All creation praises you, Lord,
and your faithful servants bless you.

**They declare the glory of your kingdom
and tell of your mighty power.**

My mouth shall proclaim the praise of the Lord.

**Let every living thing bless his holy name
for ever and ever.ⁱⁱ**

Other suitable biblical texts may be used.

Prayers

A prayer in preparation for the 2012 Games

Eternal God,
Giver of joy and source of all strength,
we pray for those
who prepare for the London Olympic and Paralympic games.
For the competitors training for the Games and their loved ones,
For the many thousands who will support them,
For the Churches and others who are organising special events
and who will welcome many people from many nations.
In a world where many are rejected and abused,
we pray for a spirit of tolerance and acceptance,
of humility and respect
and for the health and safety of all.
May we at the last be led towards the love of Christ
who is more than gold, today and for ever.

Amen.

A prayer for use during the Olympic and Paralympic Games

God our Creator,
we pray for the Olympic and Paralympic Games.
We give thanks for the privilege of hosting them
and the thrill of watching them;
and we pray for all who are taking part.
Give them courage and strength,
wisdom and generosity.
Make us warm in our welcome
and generous in our hospitality.
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ,
our teacher and our friend.

Amen.

A prayer for people who will travel

God, our Protector,
whose Son travelled to Bethlehem as a refugee
and walked the streets of Jerusalem as a pilgrim,
we pray for all who travel to London for the games:
for competitors and coaches, cleaners and caterers;
for umpires and judges, city guides and security guards;
for audiences and volunteers.
Grant them safe travel
and journeys filled with enriching encounter.
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ,
our teacher and our guide.
Amen.

A prayer for London

Gracious God,
we pray for *London**
welcoming the people of the world to the Olympic Games.
We give thanks for its long history
and dazzling diversity
offering a warm embrace to many.
Grant enrichment and friendship
to all who visit and receive hospitality here,
that the world may be sustained
in its journey towards tolerance,
understanding and peace.
Amen.

**if used in London, the word 'London' may be replaced with 'our city'*

A prayer before a competitive event

Almighty God,
you created humanity in your image
and delight in our talent, skill and flair:
give us grace to celebrate
the achievements of our fellow men and women.
Give determination and equity to competitors,
gratitude and charm to winners,
grace and mercy to those who do not come first,
and thankfulness and admiration to observers;
that in all our best efforts
your creation may be glorified.
Amen.

The following Collects are also suitable for use at any timeⁱⁱⁱ:

A Collect for the sixth Sunday after Trinity

Creator God,
you made us all in your image:
may we discern you in all that we see,
and serve you in all that we do;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

A Collect for the thirteenth Sunday after Trinity

Almighty God,
you search us and know us:
may we rely on you in strength
and rest on you in weakness,
now and in all our days;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Litanies

A Litany at the time of the London Olympic Games

[Let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.]

For the peace that comes from God alone,
and for the unity of all peoples,
let us pray to the Lord:
Lord, have mercy.

For the nations of the world, and for all its leaders,
let us pray to the Lord:
Lord, have mercy.

For every athlete,
for each team
and for all who train and support them,
let us pray to the Lord:
Lord, have mercy.

For the city of London,
and for all venues that will host events,
let us pray to the Lord:
Lord, have mercy.

For all who have planned the games,
visionaries and constructors,
financiers and funders,
let us pray to the Lord:
Lord, have mercy.

For all who will support the Games,
for those with public roles
and all those who will work unseen,
let us pray to the Lord:
Lord, have mercy.

For all visitors, travellers and tourists,
let us pray to the Lord:
Lord, have mercy.

For the good earth which God has given us,
and for the wisdom and will to conserve it,
let us pray to the Lord:
Lord, have mercy.

Let us commend ourselves, and one another,
and all our life, to God.

Silence is kept.

For yours is the majesty,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit;
yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory,
now and for ever.
Amen.

*The following is suitable for use as an ending to the Prayers or as a liturgical ending
to A Service of the Word.*

Though many, we form one body in Christ.
We belong to one another.

By God's grace we have different gifts.
We will use them in faith.

Rejoice in hope, stand firm in trouble, be constant in prayer.
Filled with his Spirit we will serve the Lord.^{iv}

compiled by Mrs Gill Ambrose and edited by the Reverend Christopher Woods

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ⁱ The ICEL (International Commission on English in the Liturgy) translation, with a response taken from Psalm and Canticles , p.124 *New Patterns for Worship*, copyright ©, The Archbishops' Council 2002

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ⁱⁱⁱ taken from *Common Worship: Collects and Post Communion Prayers*, ©, The Archbishops' Council 2004

^{iv} taken from Action and movement, Words for dedication, p.285 *New Patterns for Worship*, copyright ©, The Archbishops' Council 2002