



## Prayers for use at home following the death of His Royal Highness – The Duke of Edinburgh

*St Peter and St Paul's Church Wincanton and St Michael's Church Pen Selwood.*

*(A reflection is included overleaf but you may wish to use your own thanksgivings and thoughts at this time during the time of reflection indicated).*

### Opening Sentence

'I am the resurrection and the life', says the Lord. 'Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.'

### Opening Prayer

Merciful Father and Lord of all life, we praise you that we are made in your image and reflect your truth and light. We thank you for the life of His Royal Highness Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, for the love he received from you and showed among us. Above all, we rejoice at your gracious promise to all your servants, living and departed, that we shall rise again at the coming of Christ. And we ask that in due time we may share with your servant Philip that clearer vision promised to us in the same Christ our Lord; Amen.

### Reading: Lamentations: 3:22-26

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. 'The Lord is my portion,' says my soul, 'therefore I will hope in him.' The Lord is good to those who wait for him, to the soul that seeks him. It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord.

### Time of Reflection

#### Prayers of Intercession

Eternal God, our heavenly Father, we bless your holy name for all that you have given us in and through the life of Philip, Duke of Edinburgh. We give you thanks: for his long and full life; for his strength of character; and for his devotion and service to family, nation and Commonwealth. We praise you for: his generosity; the many contributions he made to our national life; and the encouragement he gave to so many, especially to the young. Amen

O eternal Lord God, who alone spreadest out the heavens, and rulest the raging of the sea; who hast compassed the waters with bounds until day and night come to an end: be pleased, most merciful Father, to receive into thy almighty and most gracious protection the soul of our brother Philip; and grant that, with him and all the faithful departed, we may at the last enter into the haven of thine unending joy and felicity; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen  
*adapted from the naval prayer*

Merciful God, be close to all who mourn, especially The Queen and all members of the Royal Family. May they know the hope of your promises and the comfort of your love, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Gracious and holy Father, give us wisdom to perceive you, diligence to seek you, patience to wait for you, eyes to behold you, a heart to meditate on you, and a life to proclaim you; through the power of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen  
*st benedict (c. 480–543)*

Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

God be in my head, and in my understanding; God be in my eyes, and in my looking; God be in my mouth, and in my speaking; God be in my heart, and in my thinking; God be at my end, and at my departing. Amen

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**An optional reflection written by Rev Alison Way – but you may wish to use your own thanksgivings and thoughts at this time.**

In the name of God, loving Father, Risen Son and ever present Holy Spirit. Amen

I offer a few thoughts as we mark the passing of His Royal Highness – the Duke of Edinburgh.

Our Old testament reading from Lamentations spoke of the steadfastness of the Lord. The beginning of the reading is one of the opening lines of scripture often used at funerals – *The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end, they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.* It is a line I have said many, many times – rich and resonant with the love God has for us.

Yet just prior to the passage we heard, the writer of Lamentations is breaking his heart over how difficult things are in his present. The book is called Lamentations for good reason. The writer says things like *My soul is bereft of peace and I have forgotten what happiness is.* However even in depths such as these, this writer recognises how God's love for him is steadfast and never ceasing.

This is important for us too, to recognise God's steadfast, never ceasing love for us as we mark the passing of Prince Philip, and pray for her Majesty the Queen and all the royal family in their loss. This is surrounded by our United Kingdom's collective grief, the grief of the Commonwealth of nations and those across our world whose lives he touched.

Steadfastness is an important aspect of God's love for us – It is the quality of being resolutely unwavering. The quality of staying the same for a long time and not changing quickly or unexpectedly. In a way, this word steadfastness is also one that could be applied to the approach to life of Prince Philip. No doubt along with me, we have been watching some of the many hours of tributes and reflections shared on Friday and subsequently since his passing was announced. In a way it has filled in some gaps for the bits before I was tuned in to current affairs or even on the planet. I can't possibly do Prince Philip, and his long and full life justice with these short reflections – but I do want to dwell on 2 qualities that particularly stand out to me.

Firstly - I admire his quality of steadfastness to the path he chose to take in his twenties. In becoming the husband of the then Princess Elizabeth with the destiny she had and the love that has kindled between them in their long and lasting marriage. That destiny was fulfilled so much sooner than they would have hoped in the early days of their marriage and when bringing up a young family. All of this cannot have been easy for him, and it involved many sacrifices of his own. Yet Prince Philip has unswervingly served and loved his Queen, and our country and beyond over more years than anyone can have imagined. If that is not the qualities of steadfastness, duty and service lived out for all to see, I don't know what is.

Moving on to the second thing I deeply admire is how he has worked to pass on this kind of approach to life to the younger generation. An approach based on duty, service and steadfastness to the path of life and the path chosen. Though I never personally engaged with the Duke of Edinburgh's award scheme, I know for many, many people it has been the making of them and lifted their horizons. Helping them to dream dreams and fulfil their callings in ways they might not otherwise have imagined. This is a very rare gift to have influenced so many to move forward positively and resolutely in their lives, and to see beyond themselves in the love and service of others or passion for the conservation of the environment.

We pray for Prince Philip's eternal rest after a long and fulfilled life, and now at peace and abiding in the loving heart of God. We also ask for that peace to surround and sustain Elizabeth, our Queen, and all the members of the Royal family in their great loss.

Remembering for Prince Philip, Elizabeth our Queen and all the royal family and for us - *The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end, they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.* Amen.