

***The Brooke Benefice
and
The Hempnall Group of Parishes
Thoughts and Prayers
October 2026***



October thoughts...

Goodness, we are coming into the season of “*mists and mellow fruitfulness*”. Our spring and summer seem to have merged seamlessly and autumn is now upon us as I sit in my garden - still in the warm sunshine - to write this.

As we enter October, we remember the feast of St Francis of Assisi on October 4th a special ‘Feast of the Povorello’. This year is even more special, being the 800th anniversary of Francis’s death.

My late husband Conal was a Franciscan priest based at the International Study Centre in Canterbury, Kent. As his journey of faith developed and changed (with Conal becoming in time the Team Rector in the Hempnall Group) his love of Francis never did. My own love of all things Franciscan emanated from my meeting with the Franciscan community in the nineteen seventies.

We so often see pictures of Francis with birds and animals – his love of creation was so much a part of him and of his strong faith. But, as a man, he did indeed suffer from severe depression which tested him to the limits, and he would retreat to the mountains and hills to be alone and ‘fight his demons’.

He cared for those with leprosy whom he met on the road to Assisi, outside the city walls, e.g. meeting a man with leprosy on the road to the city, Francis kissed him and washed his open sores before giving the man his own cloak. He was not afraid of touching and cleansing the open ulcers and lesions of this terrible disease. These poor people were outcasts left to beg, to live and die by the roadside, nobody really caring about them at all.

Leprosy is still a part of our world’s suffering. Incredible work of love and care continues to be undertaken by ‘The Leprosy Mission’ (<<https://www.leprosymission.org.uk/>>).

So, so many people need help just to survive.

Perhaps this October we could especially think and pray for those and so many who in our time sit beside the roadside and beg and long for someone like Francis to at least offer a ‘cloak’ for comfort.

Jackie Mahony

Sunday readings

The passages below for 4 October are from a specially developed lectionary of readings for the Season of Creation. Readings for the remaining Sundays are from the Common Worship Lectionary.

4th October Trinity 18 (Last Sunday of Season of Creation and festival of St Francis of Assisi)	Psalm 148 Job 12: 7-12 Revelation 22: 1-5
11th October Trinity 19	Psalm 23 Isaiah 25:1-9 Matthew 22:1-14
18th October Trinity 20 (Church Action on Poverty Sunday)	Psalm 96:1-9 [10-13 Isaiah 45:1-7 Matthew 22:15-22
25th October Last Sunday after Trinity	Psalm 1 Leviticus 19:1-2;15-18 Matthew 22:34-46

Prayers – This month

<i>Day</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>We pray especially for...</i>
Thursday	1 st	...The Hempnall Group and the Brooke Benefice led by Austin and Susanna
Friday	2 nd	...all families in our villages
Saturday	3 rd	...Black History Month...racial justice
Sunday	4th	...St. Francis of Assisi...all of God's creation...all who value share their lives with companion animals
Monday	5 th	...all religious communities and retired clergy
Tuesday	6 th	...all who work in our emergency services
Wednesday	7 th	...all who work in the NHS
Thursday	8 th	...our rivers and waterways, that they may be kept in good condition
Friday	9 th	...all volunteers who support the Church financially and in many other ways
Saturday	10 th	...those in positions of power in government, that they may exercise wisdom in their leadership

Sunday	11th	...our worship this morning in Brooke and Shelton...all we have reflected upon during our Harvest Thanksgivings, which conclude today...the work of WaterAid
Monday	12 th	...the United Nations World Food Programme
Tuesday	13 th	...all those we come into contact with, church or non-church, our neighbors, our friends and those we meet casually
Wednesday	14 th	...those who are imprisoned unjustly
Thursday	15 th	...young people who are having difficulties finding their way in life
Friday	16 th	...all creatures on this earth
Saturday	17 th	...nurseries, playgroups and schools
Sunday	18th	...those involved with Church Action on Poverty...social justice
Monday	19 th	...those among the elderly who need support...and those among the elderly who feel able to give support to others
Tuesday	20 th	...those who are newly married
Wednesday	21 st	...all who are poorly or in frail health...those who are bereaved and feeling bereft
Thursday	22 nd	...those who are carers, that they may be given strength and endurance
Friday	23 rd	...our Fabric Officers and Building Administrators...all who keep our churches clean...flower arrangers...grass cutters...all who assist in the upkeep of our buildings and churchyards
Saturday	24 th	...those who offer Home Communion or visiting where needed...and those whom they visit
Sunday	25th	...those who have no safe home...those who live on our streets...all who are rough sleeping
Monday	26 th	...all who give to the Food Bank and the distributors...all who need that assistance
Tuesday	27th	...our churches which are open and welcoming to everyone
Wednesday	28 th	...those who fear the future
Thursday	29 th	...and many who feel they have no future
Friday	30 th	...those who work tirelessly for our fund raising
Saturday	31 st	...everyone who is in need of a kind word or a comforting arm

Throughout, we pray for those who especially need your help at this time, remembering:

Martin, Mike, Ian, Michael, Ann, Frank, and Rosemary
Bedingham/Woodton: Sheila, Hilary, Anne, Bruce, Richard,
Susan, Marco, David

Fritton/Morningthorpe: Jason, Carol

Hempnall: Lesley and family, Sophie

Shelton/Hardwick: Maureen

Topcroft: Candy, Penny, Cathy, and Jane

Long-Term Care...

Bedingham/Woodton: Dennis, Shirley, Jacob, Sally

Hempnall: Colin, Denise

Mundham/Seething: Margaret, Nancy

Francis and the Wolf of Gubbio



Image from website of First Congregational Church, Winchester, Maine, USA :<<https://fcc-winchester.com/latest-news/the-story-of-the-wolf-of-gubbio-and-st-francis-of-assisi/>>

(Compiled and for the Brooke Benefice and the Hempnall Group of Churches)