

## Full transcript of Bishop James' May video – Thy Kingdom Come

I'm standing here just outside St Andrew's Monastery in Bruges; this is a Benedictine Catholic monastery which we use regularly for groups of clergy, lay ministers and others not least for weekends that are around training and formation.

And in case people think we're coming on a nice expensive jolly, actually, it's about half the price of bringing groups here than it would be to a conference centre in the UK.

The particular group that I've been with these last few days is the group of our final year curates; those who are beginning to think and pray towards their next post in ministry.

And whenever I meet groups like them – and I've interviewed each one of them one to one in the last few days – and others, like for example those in training for lay ministry; that, for me, is a huge encouragement, as I find these people responding to God's call and desirous to serve God to serve the church and to be part of God's mission in the world.

One of the archetypal prayers that we pray as Christians, as our Lord taught us, is of course the Lord's Prayer with that phrase 'thy kingdom come'. 'Thy Kingdom Come', which has become the title of the annual encouragement to prayer which our archbishops give to us in the period between Ascension and Pentecost.

And this year – this May – we in our diocese with so many others, not just now in the Church of England, but with our ecumenical partners and our brothers and sisters across the world as we join together to pray 'Thy Kingdom Come.'

What are we praying when we pray 'Thy Kingdom Come'? What is it that these curates I'm with are hoping and praying for as, through their ministries, they desire that something that something of God's kingdom will come?

Well, the prayer for God's Kingdom to come is the prayer for nothing less than the transformation of all things in Christ; the coming of that which is God's ultimate intention and purpose for creation and for humankind.

It is also, more explicitly of course, that people may consciously become part of the life of the kingdom as they respond in faith to God's grace in Jesus Christ. And that's a particular emphasis of the archbishops' 'Thy Kingdom Come' initiative.

It is prayer for mission, it is prayer for evangelism; it's prayer for people to become disciples of Christ, followers of Christ, to live the Christian life in all its fullness.

That's why we're being encouraged to pray for individuals, to pray for those we know; who we would wish to see come into that fullness of the life of the Kingdom of God.

Thy Kingdom Come. So, we join together in this time of prayer; we have resources available to us on the national website, on our diocesan website. To help us but the important thing is that we pray; that we pray 'Thy Kingdom Come.'

This year during this period of Thy Kingdom Come, I shall happen to find myself in Tanzania, representing Archbishop Justin at the enthronement of the new Bishop of Tanzania, but also taking time to spend a few days with Bishop Given of Kondoa in his diocese. They will be praying for the manifestation of God's kingdom in their setting.

This place is primarily a place of prayer and 'thy Kingdom Come' is a summons to us to share in the life of prayer. Maybe not after the pattern of these Benedictine brothers but in our own places, in our own ways, in our parishes, our homes and in our communities.

We pray for that coming in of God's kingdom. Primarily that God's kingdom might come in the whole world, for the transformation of creation according to the pattern of Christ. But also that the kingdom may come in the life of the church; that the church may become more and more, as it were, a sign of what the Kingdom life is about; how it should be.

But of course, we also ought to pray that God's kingdom will come afresh for us in our own lives day by day; that we will know that closeness, that livingness, that presence of God in Christ which is the reality of his kingdom.

So I Invite you to join with Christians across the world, with our brothers and sisters in Tanzania, with those wherever they are in responding to this invitation to come and pray 'Thy Kingdom Come.'