

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

Throughout an exceptionally long life of public service, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth frequently said "Thank You" and "Well done" on our behalf to countless deserving people. On the sad news of her death, we now have an opportunity to say "Thank you" and "Well done" most deservedly to her.

In doing so, I believe we will be joining our words to those of Christ, quoted in the old Prayer Book funeral service; "Well done thou good and faithful servant, enter now into thy rest".

I was deeply moved by our late Queen's Platinum Jubilee letter signed simply "Your servant Elizabeth". Someone once called her "the servant Queen following the Servant King" and this was most evident in her annual Christmas broadcasts.

In the days since Her Majesty's death I have been reminded of the lovely General Thanksgiving prayer which I have discovered was written by a former Rector of All Saints Church in Northampton, Edward Reynolds (1599 -1676). He based it upon an earlier private prayer of the first Queen Elizabeth.

As I reflected on this beautiful



prayer, I was filled with gratitude for God's goodness in ordinary life ("creation, preservation and all the blessings of this life"), spiritual life ("inestimable love in the redemption of the world"), eternal life ("the hope of glory"). It pleads for unfeigned thankfulness to be lived out in deeds not just words ("giving up ourselves to thy service") and for faithful life-long goodness ("holiness and righteousness all our days").

The more I read the prayer, the more it described our late Queen, humble gratefulness leading to life-long servant-hearted faithfulness. It is printed on the next page so you may use it in your thankful reflection upon her.

With my love and prayers,



+John
Bishop of Brixworth

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A General Thanksgiving

ALMIGHTY God, Father of all mercies, we thine unworthy servants do give thee most humble and hearty thanks for all thy goodness and loving-kindness to us and to all men; We bless thee for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all for thine inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ, for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. And we beseech thee, give us that due sense of all thy mercies, that our hearts may be unfeignedly thankful, and that we shew forth thy praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives; by giving up ourselves to thy service, and by walking before thee in holiness and righteousness all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost be all honour and glory, world without end.

Amen.