

Blessing of Ploughs



We are gathered here to ask God's blessing on the ploughs here today. We gather before God, our Father and Creator with thanksgiving for all the goodness and benefits of his creation. For the skills he has bestowed upon us enabling the land to be ploughed and prepared for planting, the growth of the crops and their harvest. For those who use their skills to farm, for the farms and communities in which they live and work and for all those whose work and knowledge supports them. We remember too, those who are affected by all the demanding changes in farming. We bring our prayers to the Lord that we should all value the land and those who work on it as one of his most precious gifts.

Reading: *from Isaiah 28*

Homily

This parable from Isaiah reflects the age-old wisdom of agriculture, sources which lay far beyond the horizons of remembered history, and which were naturally traced back to God. The various actions symbolize God's dealings with his people, a time to judge and a time to restore.

The parable tells us that God sustains the needs of man through the rhythm of the seasons, through the wisdom of farming, our obligations as stewards of his creation and above all, through His care and salvation, our Creator and Redeemer.

Let us pray,
God our Father, we pray for all those who work on the land, especially our farmers; may they be protected and strengthened in their work.

This morning we pray too for all those who make and repair farm machinery and tools. May their products ensure that farming work and skills may be fulfilled and all may know the satisfaction of work well done.

We bring before you this day of competition and contest of ploughing skills and experience gained. May there be pleasure and satisfaction enjoyed by everyone throughout the day and thanks shown for its organizers and everyone involved.

We remember before you those who are unable to work through illness or disability. We pray for those recovering from injury, illness or grief. Surround all who suffer with your healing love and enable them to find hope in spite of their troubles.

Father, we ask you to lift us above the duties and responsibilities of our daily lives, that we might see in them in them in the light of your loving purposes. Help us to serve you with dedication and cheerfulness, rejoicing in the wonders of your Creation.

We pray in the name of Jesus, our Lord and Saviour,
Amen

As our Saviour taught us so we pray
Our Father who art in heaven...

The Blessing of the Ploughs

The plough is the foundation of the work and the symbol of the labour of farming, with its beam and mouldboard, the slade and the sidecap, the share and the coulter.

God our Father, bless these ploughs, and all who work with them today and all through the seasons. Bless all who work on the land, and help us all to labour for the good of each other, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen

Blessing

God be your comfort and strength;
God be your hope and support;
God be your light and your way;
And the +Blessing of God, Creator, Redeemer and Giver of life,
Remain with you now and for ever.

Amen

Reading: Isaiah 28.23-29

²³Give ear, and hear my voice; hearken and hear my speech.

²⁴Does he who plows for sowing plow continually?
does he continually open and harrow his ground?

²⁵When he has leveled its surface, does he not scatter dill,
sow cumin and put in wheat in rows and barley in its proper place, and spelt as a border?

²⁶For he is instructed aright; his God teaches him.

²⁷Dill is not threshed with a threshing sled, nor is a cart wheel rolled over cumin; but dill is beaten out with a stick, and cumin with a rod.

²⁸Does one crush bread grain? No, he does not thresh it forever; when he drives his cartwheel over it with his horses, he does not crush it.

²⁹This also comes from the Lord of hosts; he is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in wisdom.

Thanks be to God

Taken from a service used during a ploughing contest Burchetts Green at the Royal East Berkshire Agricultural Association Ploughing Match September 2005.