

This is a time of sadness and sorrow as we mourn the loss of our Queen, Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II. I want to extend my condolences and send my prayers and love and care for her family at this time.

Many of us hold her with great affection and warmth and remember her fortitude, her commitment, her sense of duty and service to our country. And of course, she was marked by that wonderful grace and faith that she held so dear.

I had the privilege to be an Honorary Chaplain to The Queen for a number of years and I remember well an opportunity to meet in a small gathering and in the conversation we had I remarked on the portraits on the wall – not knowing quite what to say in the presence of Her Majesty. She was just so warm and responded with such enthusiasm and invited me to go and see the restoration work that they had done in Windsor Castle in the art gallery – and went off-piste, as it were, and took me to see and view what had happened. And that was the way in which she showed her empathy, her care – to always to have that time and moment for the individual. So today, we remember with affection, with love and give our thanks to the God she served, followed, and worshipped.

For us as a nation it is a time of mourning and marking the passing of a wonderful, great woman. Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II. Someone who served this country well and whom we all held in esteem. So, as we bring our condolences and best wishes for the family, our prayers for them at this time of loss, may we also note our own loss and that of our kingdom here in the UK [and northern Ireland]. Let us remember what she stood for. How she followed a God, whom she would share with us in her messages, in her prayers in both her care for individuals and the whole nation. Not just of our country but of the Commonwealth. We remember her with love, with thankfulness and gratitude.

We pray now in this moment of transition and change.

Lord we thank you for our Queen. For all that she meant to each one of us. And especially we pray for her family at this time. And we ask that as we look to the future we might allow your hand to lead us and guide us as we seek what that future might bring.