

A hymn for Prisons Week

Tune: Kingsfold or Coe Fen

Eternal God, we come with prayer,
those pioneers to praise,
who offered prisoners hope and care
in half remembered days;
the honoured few, whose names we know,
a Howard or a Fry,
and those unnoticed here below
whose names are known on high.

Bless those whose duty lies today
within the prison wall;
give them, on our behalf, we pray,
an equal care for all.
Draw near to those in sore distress
with weary years to spend;
dispel their fear and loneliness
and be for them a friend.

We pray for lives where hope is lost,
a weary road to climb;
the innocent who pay the cost
and bear the scars of crime.
Through all the world our prayer we make
for those unjustly tried,
the prisoners held for conscience' sake,
in cells where martyrs died.

O Christ, who once in mercy came
to seek for those astray,
the blessings of your saving Name
be known in this our day.
Your kingdom come, O Prince of peace,
to burst oppressions chain,
where hatred, crime and conflict cease,
and grace and mercy reign.

Written by Timothy Dudley-Smith for Kevin Downham, Managing Chaplain HMP Long Lartin, to celebrate Prisons Week 2014. It will be sung at special services across the country on Sunday 16th November, including Worcester Cathedral and Rochester Cathedral.