

## Prayer for Synod.

Almighty and Everlasting God, Who by Thy Holy Spirit, didst preside in the Council of the Blessed Apostles, and hast promised through Thy Son Jesus Christ, to be with Thy Church to the end of the world; we beseech Thee to be present with the Synod of this Diocese about to be assembled in Thy name. Save the members from all error, ignorance, pride and prejudice; and of Thy great mercy vouchsafe so to direct, govern, and sanctify them in their deliberations by Thy Holy Spirit, that through Thy blessing the Gospel of Christ may be faithfully preached and obeyed, the order and discipline of Thy Church maintained, and the Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ enlarged and extended. Grant this, we beseech Thee, through the merits and mediation of the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## For Those in Mental Anguish.

*In response to a request, the following prayer is suggested by the Bishop as suitable for those in mental anguish:*

*"O Lord God, we beseech Thee of Thy Mercy that we may have the Heavenly Vision, and that the turmoil of this world may be seen by us to be bringing forth the sweet peace of the eternal years, and that in all our troubles and sorrows we may behold good; and so, with quiet mind and inward peace, we may fulfil the duty of life which brings to us the trusting heart. We give Thee Thanks for all Thy Mercy. We beseech Thy Forgiveness of all our sins. We pray for Thy Protection and Guidance and Blessing in all things, Thy Presence in our hour of death, Thy Glory in the life to come. Of Thy Mercy, hear us, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.*

## OPEN FORUM.

Sir:—

I have heard and have read so much about our empty churches, the people's lack of interest in and ignorance of religion, the failure of the Church to make its influence felt in world matters, and so on, and all sorts of reasons given to account for this state of affairs.

For a long time I have wondered how far individual ministers themselves are to blame, and how much they could do to improve things. Oh, I know it is only too easy to criticise. Our Ministers are up against difficulties that many of us know nothing about, and they are as different in character as Christ's own first disciples were. Though as an ordinary parishioner I do think that most of us make more allowances for them than they do for us, especially in these days when most of them are so very overworked.

I wonder how many of the clergy realise the influence they have on the people in their charge, and the far-reaching consequences their actions—kind and unkind—have? We all look to our ministers as men who should have the Christ-like qualities of kindness, gentleness, friendliness, approachability, tolerance and understanding—especially the two last-named. It is tragically easy to misjudge a person, and no minister can hope to know intimately each member of his congregation.

If all our ministers would preach—not emotional revivalism, the effect of which is seldom deep or lasting, nor give us strings of theological words put together, which mean nothing to the average congregation—but practice and preach practical Christianity and give us more of the human touch which Christ had, they would go a long, long way towards helping the Church to fulfil its mission, that of winning the world for God. People were never converted en masse.

Alongside the plans suggested for world-wide organisations for spreading the Gospel, this sounds inadequate and too simple. But, after all, Christianity was inaugurated by one Man, in one small village in one small country, and in my opinion we need more than anything to go back to the methods of those days; Christ's own methods, if we wish to revive and spread the true meaning of Christianity.

Yours,

"STELLA."

Bay of Plenty.

In Wales, the Church has experienced a twenty-five per cent. increase in communicants in the last twenty-five years.