



Third Sunday of Lent , 7th March 2021

Grace, mercy and peace
from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ
be with you

and also with you.

**Lord, direct our thoughts, and teach us to pray.
Lift up our hearts to worship you in spirit and in truth,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

The sacrifice of God is a broken spirit;
a broken and contrite heart God will not despise.
Let us come to the Lord, who is full of compassion,
and acknowledge our transgressions in penitence and faith.

Wash me thoroughly from my wickedness
and cleanse me from my sin:
Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Make me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me:
Christ, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Cast me not away from your presence
and take not your holy spirit from me:
Lord, have mercy.

cf Psalm 51

Lord, have mercy.

May the God of Love bring us back to himself, forgive us our sins, and assure us of his eternal love in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

The Collect for the day

Almighty God,
whose most dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain,
and entered not into glory before he was crucified:

mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross,
may find it none other than the way of life and peace;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Amen

Hearing and responding to the Word of God

(We encourage you to look at the readings in your own time and will continue with the Gospel)

First Reading: Exodus 20.1-17

¹Then God spoke all these words: ²I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; ³you shall have no other gods before me.

⁴You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. ⁵You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and the fourth generation of those who reject me, ⁶but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments.

⁷You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not acquit anyone who misuses his name.

⁸Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. ⁹Six days you shall labour and do all your work. ¹⁰But the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God; you shall not do any work – you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. ¹¹For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it.

¹²Honour your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.

¹³You shall not murder.

¹⁴You shall not commit adultery.

¹⁵You shall not steal.

¹⁶You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.

¹⁷You shall not covet your neighbour's house; you shall not covet your neighbour's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbour.

Psalm 19

1 The heavens are telling the glory of God
 and the firmament proclaims his handiwork.

2 One day pours out its song to another
and one night unfolds knowledge to another.

3 They have neither speech nor language
and their voices are not heard,

4 Yet their sound has gone out into all lands
and their words to the ends of the world.

5 In them has he set a tabernacle for the sun,
that comes forth as a bridegroom out of his chamber
and rejoices as a champion to run his course.

6 It goes forth from the end of the heavens
and runs to the very end again,
and there is nothing hidden from its heat.

7 The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul;
the testimony of the Lord is sure
and gives wisdom to the simple.

8 The statutes of the Lord are right and rejoice the heart;
the commandment of the Lord is pure
and gives light to the eyes.

9 The fear of the Lord is clean and endures for ever;
the judgements of the Lord are true
and righteous altogether.

10 More to be desired are they than gold,
more than much fine gold,
sweeter also than honey,
dripping from the honeycomb.

11 By them also is your servant taught
and in keeping them there is great reward.

12 Who can tell how often they offend?
O cleanse me from my secret faults!

13 Keep your servant also from presumptuous sins
lest they get dominion over me;
so shall I be undefiled,
and innocent of great offence.

14 Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart
be acceptable in your sight,
O Lord, my strength and my redeemer.

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1.18-25

¹⁸The message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹For it is written,

‘I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,
and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.’

²⁰Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ²¹For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know

God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. ²²For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, ²³but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling-block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, ²⁴but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

Gospel: John 2.13-22

¹³The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. ¹⁴In the temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves, and the money-changers seated at their tables. ¹⁵Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables. ¹⁶He told those who were selling the doves, 'Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father's house a market-place!' ¹⁷His disciples remembered that it was written, 'Zeal for your house will consume me.' ¹⁸The Jews then said to him, 'What sign can you show us for doing this?' ¹⁹Jesus answered them, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.' ²⁰They then said, 'This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?' ²¹But he was speaking of the temple of his body. ²²After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

Reflection

Prayers of Intercession

United in the company of all the faithful
and looking for the coming of the kingdom,
let us offer our prayers to God,
the source of all life and holiness.

Merciful Lord,
strengthen all Christian people by your Holy Spirit,
that we may live as a royal priesthood and a holy nation
to the praise of Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Lord, have mercy

Christ have mercy.

Bless John our bishop and Stephen our Archbishop, and all ministers of your Church,
that by faithful proclamation of your word
we may be built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets
into a holy temple in the Lord.

Lord, have mercy

Christ have mercy.

Empower us by the gift of your holy and life-giving Spirit,
that we may be transformed into the likeness of Christ

from glory to glory.
Lord, have mercy
Christ have mercy.

Give to the world and its peoples
the peace that comes from above,
that they may find Christ's way of freedom and life.
Lord, have mercy
Christ have mercy.

Hold in your embrace all who witness to your love in the
service of the poor and needy;
all those who minister to the sick and dying;
and all who bring light to those in darkness.
Lord, have mercy
Christ have mercy.

Touch and heal all those whose lives are scarred by sin
or disfigured by pain,
that, raised from death to life in Christ,
their sorrow may be turned to eternal joy.
Lord, have mercy
Christ have mercy.

Remember in your mercy all those gone before us,
preserve in your faith your servants on earth,
guide us to your kingdom,
and grant us your peace at all times.
Lord, have mercy
Christ have mercy.

We give you thanks
for the whole company of your saints in glory,
with whom in fellowship we join our prayers and praises;
by your grace may we, like them,
be made perfect in your love.
Amen.

Forty days alone, a wilderness of thoughts,
tempting and inviting thoughts,
which could so easily have distracted you
from your task, your mission, your vision.

Yet you emerged, stronger and more attuned
to all that had to be done, despite a time constraint
that to our eyes would have seemed hopeless.

We too live in stressful times.

Demands are made of our time, that leave so little for the important things of life.

We are easily distracted in the wilderness of our lives, by every call to go this way or that,
to turn stone to bread leap from mountains,
and do all that would keep us from the truth.

We listen to the voices of this world,
and ignore the one who endured all this
and so much more, and emerged triumphant,
that we might not have to suffer so.

Forgive us, Father, when we get distracted from our task. Forgive us those times when we
try to be all things to all men, and fail to be anything to anyone.

Amen

Lord, grant us simplicity of faith and a generosity of service that gives without counting cost.
A life overflowing with Grace poured out from the One
who gave everything, that we might show the power of love to a broken world,
and share the truth from a living Word.

Lord, grant us simplicity of faith, and a yearning to share it.

Amen

For the Nation

Loving Father God,

be with us in our distress;

be with our families, friends, and neighbours,
our country and our world.

Give health to the sick,

hope to the fearful,

and comfort to mourners.

Give wisdom to our frontline and key workers,

insight to our Government,

and patience to us all.

Overcome disease with the power of your new life,
through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Benefice Prayer

God who made everyone and who may be found in every place, bless our parishes and
Benefice, prosper our attempts to be faithful to you and to draw others to you.

Inspire us by the power of your Holy Spirit that we may be a caring people, the true

community of the body of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

We commend ourselves, and all for whom we pray,
to the mercy and protection of God.

Merciful Father,

**accept these prayers
for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.**

Amen.

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.**

Amen.

Christ give you grace to grow in holiness,
to deny yourselves, take up your cross, and follow him;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

Amen.

**The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God and the fellowship of the
Holy Spirit, be with us all now and evermore. Amen.**