



## LENT 2 - SUNDAY 28<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2021

Once again, we are not able to worship in church, but here below we have an outline of our service. Choose a quiet reflective space and to make it more meaningful have a cross, bible and candle to make your sacred space.



### INTRODUCTION

I hope you are all able to access the Lent materials we have circulated at home and online, I must admit with our own, the team handouts and online information and prayer guides and services from the diocese, I don't think we have been as well served as we are now. Of course, the icing on the cake is that we could meet together to worship and socialise and that is definitely on its way.

Joyce and I have updated the risk assessment and are trying to ensure that when we do open, hopefully, we can keep you all safe. It is important that we all wear masks and the medical ones are the safest. That we obey all the safety rules keeping 2 metres apart and sanitising hands and keeping these rules outside the building as well as inside. We had a PCC emergency meeting with Peter on Tuesday evening and it was decided we would open church for private prayer on the 14<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> of March from 10am until 11am; this will help us assess our risk assessments and make any changes. We will then open for worship on the 28<sup>th</sup> March (Palm Sunday) at 9.30. It will be lovely to see you and we will hopefully get back to some form of normality. Information on Easter and Holy week services in church and online will follow shortly.

Of course, there is no pressure to attend but we are limited in numbers and we may have to ask you to indicate if you wish to attend so we can ensure safety. We are trying to avoid a booking system that some churches are doing as we feel it is a negative and unwelcoming step, but we'll see how things progress. We will however continue with our worship at home for as long as it is needed.

Today's reflection has been done by Rev Carol from Christchurch Walmsley and the intercessions by Chris Sutcliffe. Many thanks for their help and contribution.

Jan B.

## **PRAYER OF PREPARATION**

We meet in the presence of God.

**Who knows our needs, hears our cries, feels our pain and heals our wounds.**

**Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## **PRAYERS OF PENITENCE**

Our Lord Jesus Christ said:

The first commandment is this: "Hear O Israel the Lord our God is the only Lord. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength".

The second is this: "Love your neighbour as yourself." There is no other commandment greater than these. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. **Amen Lord have mercy.**

The Spirit of the Lord fills the world and knows our every word and deed. Let us then open ourselves to the Lord and confess our sins in penitence and faith.



**Almighty God our heavenly Father we have sinned against you and against our neighbour in thought word and deed, through negligence, through weakness, through our own deliberate fault. We are truly sorry and repent of all our sins. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ who died for us, forgive us all that is past and grant that we may serve you in newness of life to the glory of your name. Amen.**

## **KYRIE ELEISON**

Lord have mercy. **Lord have mercy.**

Christ have mercy. **Christ have mercy.**

Lord have mercy. **Christ have mercy.**

## **THE COLLECT**

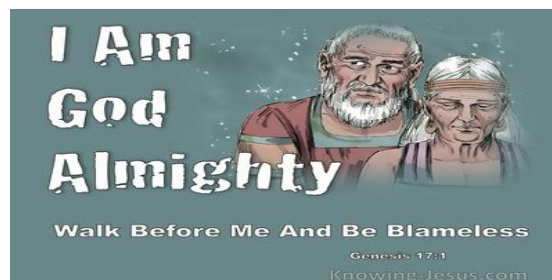
Almighty God, by the prayer and discipline of Lent may we enter into the mystery of Christ's sufferings, and by following in his Way come to share in his glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **THE OLD TESTAMENT READING** - GENESIS 17, 1-7, 15-16

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said to him, 'I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous.' Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, 'As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you.

God said to Abraham, 'As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her.'

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**



## **THE NEW TESTAMENT READING** - ROMANS 4, 13-25

For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, as it is written, 'I have made you the father of many nations')—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become 'the father of many nations', according to what was said, 'So numerous shall your descendants be.' He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already\* as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. Therefore his faith\* 'was reckoned to him as righteousness.' Now the words, 'it was reckoned to him', were written not for his sake alone, but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who

raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God**

## **THE GOSPEL** - MARK 8, 31-38

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark. **Praise to you O Christ King of eternal glory.**

Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, 'Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.'

He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, 'If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you O Christ.**



## **REFLECTION**

The theme of our gospel reading is not an easy one to hear. We are being told that our relationship with God demands trust.

*'Then [Jesus] began to teach* them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed,' but he closes the sentence with these words: *'and after three days rise again'*. Peter, it seems, is understandably overwhelmed by the first part of Jesus' teaching here and fails to grasp the latter. Peter is brave to take Jesus aside, and admonish him. I wonder what Jesus must have felt when Peter - the one he affectionately called the Rock - came to him and asked him to stop talking the way

he was. I imagine that Peter was deeply distressed at having been called Satan by his teacher and friend.

And then Jesus calls the crowd to him with his disciples, 'if any of you want to follow me you must deny yourselves and take up *your cross*.'

In our modern world, the phrase "take up your cross" is just a figure of speech. It may suggest some sort of sacrifice, but we cannot fully understand the extent of that sacrifice. When Jesus spoke those words, the cross had not yet become a symbol of Christian faith; the mention of a cross struck terror in the hearts of those who heard it. The cross was a terrible instrument of torture and death. To be executed on a cross was to die a long, agonizing death.

Jesus' message regarding discipleship is not an easy one. The road to discipleship is full of pain and suffering, it is a difficult journey.

With that in mind, when you hear Jesus say, 'deny yourself and take up your cross,' does it make you want to follow Him?

We are not talking about giving up cake or wine for Lent. This is not about abstinence or fasting. A disciple of Jesus is asked to sacrifice, to surrender and to live a life that is fully dependent upon God. To be able to fulfil these requirements, one must allow his or her heart and mind to be changed.

Jesus teaches the way of putting others first, of making ourselves vulnerable to suffering. Jesus says, "Follow me. Have faith in me. Forget yourself, and take on the ministry God has given you, and come with me."

"Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." But if you will deny yourself, so you can know me, and if you will take up your cross, as I have taken up mine, and if you will follow me, as foolish as it sometimes seems, I will be with you, even to the end of the age. Those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it.

As we journey through Lent together, we will hear more of what it costs to follow Jesus. But today's passage makes it clear that following Jesus is the only way to go. Following Jesus is, according to Tom Wright, "*Mark's definition of what being a Christian means*. Jesus is not leading us on a pleasant afternoon hike but on a walk into danger and risk. Or did we suppose that the Kingdom of God means merely a *few minor adjustments in our ordinary lives?*"

Rev Carol Hayden

## AFFIRMATION OF FAITH



Do you believe and trust in God the Father?

**I believe in God, the Father almighty creator of heaven and earth.**

Do you believe and trust in his Son Jesus Christ?

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

Do you believe and trust in the Holy Spirit?

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

During the intercessions, we pray for the church, our country, our government, people in difficulty and those who have died. You can use your own prayers or if you *prefer here are some on today's theme.*



Let us pray to our God in faith, knowing that he understands what is best for us.

Heavenly Father, increase our faith, that everyone in your Church may be more ready to trust you and move forward with you wherever you lead us.

We pray for Manchester Diocese and all those involved, as they work towards forming the new Deaneries and Mission Communities. Give courage and strength to the Turton Moorland Team clergy and ALMs as they lead us in worship at this time.

Lord, in your Mercy: **Hear our Prayer**

Heavenly Father, give strength to all leaders and their advisers, the courage to be honest and the will to be just, that they may make wise decisions at this time.

Lord, in your Mercy: **Hear our Prayer**

Heavenly Father, at the door of each home place your welcome; in the rooms of each home, your love and in the eyes of each person, your truth. Protect all families who are vulnerable during lockdown in the hope they receive the support needed to see them safely through the pandemic.

Lord, in your Mercy: **Hear our Prayer**

Heavenly Father, we entrust to your tender care those who are ill or in pain, knowing that your everlasting arms are there to hold them safe. Comfort and heal them, and restore them to health and strength. Praying especially today for anyone known or unknown to us.

Lord, in your Mercy: **Hear our Prayer**

Heavenly Father, may the dying be prepared to meet you, and the souls of those who have died in faith live forever in the joy of your presence. Give courage and faith to those who are bereaved, may they find the strength to face the days ahead.

We remember the families of those whose anniversaries fall at this time: Ronald Isherwood, Annie Fletcher Sutcliffe and Edna Maycraft.

Heavenly Father, give us thankful hearts to bless your name in sadness and in joy, knowing that you are always there beside us.

Merciful Father: **Accept these prayers for the sake of your son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ**

## THE LORD'S PRAYER



Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name.  
Your Kingdom come,  
your will be done, on earth as  
in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily  
bread.  
Forgive us our sins,  
as we forgive those who sin  
against us.  
Lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For the Kingdom,  
the power, and the glory are  
yours.  
Now and forever.  
Amen

## THE BLESSING

God give us grace to grow in holiness, to deny ourselves, to take up your cross and follow you. May the blessing of God almighty the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be among us and remain with us always. Amen.

