



Morning Prayer
Third Sunday of Lent
7th March 2021

An Order for Morning Prayer on Sunday

7 March 2021

Third Sunday of Lent

† Preparation

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

This is the day that the Lord has made.
Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

We have come together in the name of Christ
to offer our praise and thanksgiving,
to hear and receive God's holy word,
to pray for the needs of the world,
and to seek the forgiveness of our sins,
that by the power of the Holy Spirit
we may give ourselves to the service of God.

Prayers of Penitence

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.

Lord God,
we have sinned against you;
we have done evil in your sight.
We are sorry and repent.
Have mercy on us according to your love.
Wash away our wrongdoing and cleanse us from our sin.
Renew a right spirit within us

**and restore to us the joy of your salvation;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

May the Father of all mercies
cleanse us from our sins,
and restore us in his image
to the praise and glory of his name,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Blessed is the Lord,
for he has heard the voice of our prayer;

Therefore shall our hearts dance for joy
and in our song will we praise our God.

Blessed are you, Lord our God,
creator and redeemer of all;
to you be glory and praise for ever.
From the waters of chaos you drew forth the world.
and in your great love fashioned us in your image.
Now, through the deep waters of death,
you have brought your people to new birth
by raising your Son to life in triumph.
May Christ your light ever dawn in our hearts
as we offer you our sacrifice of thanks and praise.
Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit:
Blessed be God for ever.

The night has passed, and the day lies open before us;
let us pray with one heart and mind.

Silence is kept.

As we rejoice in the gift of this new day,
so may the light of your presence, O God,
set our hearts on fire with love for you;
now and for ever.

Amen.

¶ The Word of God

Psalmody

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.

Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now:
and shall be for ever. Amen.

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.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The reading may be followed by a time of silence.

Old Testament Canticle

A Song of Humility

- 1 Come, let us return to the Lord
who has torn us and will heal us.
- 2 God has stricken us
and will bind up our wounds.
- 3 After two days, he will revive us,
and on the third day will raise us up,
that we may live in his presence.
- 4 Let us strive to know the Lord;
his appearing is as sure as the sunrise.

- 5 He will come to us like the showers,
like the spring rains that water the earth.
- 6 ‘O Ephraim, how shall I deal with you?
How shall I deal with you, O Judah?
- 7 ‘Your love for me is like the morning mist,
like the dew that goes early away.
- 8 ‘Therefore, I have hewn them by the prophets,
and my judgement goes forth as the light.
- 9 ‘For loyalty is my desire and not sacrifice,
and the knowledge of God rather than burnt-offerings.’ *Hosea 6.1-6*

Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.

Second Reading

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.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The reading may be followed by a time of silence.

Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead

And Christ shall give you light.

You have died and your life is hid with Christ in God.

Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead.

Set your minds on things that are above,

not on things that are on the earth.

And Christ shall give you light.

When Christ our life appears you will appear with him in glory.

**Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead,
and Christ shall give you light.**

Gospel Canticle

Benedictus

- 1 Blessed be the Lord the God of Israel,
who has come to his people and set them free.
- 2 He has raised up for us a mighty Saviour,
born of the house of his servant David.
- 3 Through his holy prophets God promised of old
to save us from our enemies,
from the hands of all that hate us,
- 4 To show mercy to our ancestors,
and to remember his holy covenant.
- 5 This was the oath God swore to our father Abraham:
to set us free from the hands of our enemies,
- 6 Free to worship him without fear,
holy and righteous in his sight
all the days of our life.

- 7 And you, child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High,
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way,
- 8 To give his people knowledge of salvation
by the forgiveness of all their sins.
- 9 In the tender compassion of our God
the dawn from on high shall break upon us,
- 10 To shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death,
and to guide our feet into the way of peace. *Luke 1.68-79*

Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.

Sermon (There is a reflection at the end of this booklet)

The Creed

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

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of 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;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**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

For true holiness in the Church and in the world, let us pray to the Lord.

Shield the Church from all that would corrupt her witness and make her unworthy of her Master ... May her places of worship be holy and her ministry unblemished by desire for material gain and worldly success. .

Lord in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

Have mercy on the world where profit too often stands before people and the love of money is a stronger motive than the love of holiness ... Drive out the false values by which some grow rich and many are poor, until the whole earth becomes a temple fit for the Lord. .

Lord in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

Bless us, our families and friends, with such reverence in our faith that we may value the holiness that is in other people ... Grant to those who conduct their business in this community the spirit of fair dealing and mutual respect.

Lord in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

Have mercy on all who have suffered loss from the dishonesty of those they trusted ... Release from evil those who have made material profit their goal and have lost the peace of contentment.

Lord in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

We pray for the departed who having worshipped in this world have died with Christ and been raised up with him ... May they rejoice in the heavenly Temple where he is the eternal light.

Lord in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

We pray in the name of Christ who drives out all that is evil.

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

The Collect is said.

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.

The Lord's Prayer is said

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today 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 for ever.
Amen.**



The Conclusion

The Blessing

The Lord bless us, and preserve us from all evil,
and keep us in eternal life.

Amen.

Copyright acknowledgement (where not already indicated above):

Some material included in this service is copyright: © 1989 National Council of the Churches of Christ, USA

Some material included in this service is copyright: © The Archbishops' Council 2000

Rubric: The minister may say © The Archbishops' Council 2002

Third Sunday of Lent

by Angus Ritchie

CHRISTIANS are made uncomfortable by Jesus's cleansing of the Temple. Although it is one of the best-known Bible stories, it is rarely depicted on the stained glass in our churches and cathedrals. Even the lectionary keeps it out of sight in the central liturgies of the Christian year. While the story is pivotal in the Passion narrative of each Synoptic Gospel, it will not be read at any eucharist in Holy Week.

The Fourth Evangelist has the opposite reaction. In his narrative, the cleansing of the Temple comes at the very start of Jesus's ministry. Moreover, he offers the most vivid account of this physical act of confrontation. This is the only Gospel in which Jesus makes a whip of cords — driving out the animals, traders, and money-changers, and pouring out their coins.

As Jean Vanier explains, Jesus was “enraged” because the traders were selling animals for sacrifice at an unjust price. Likewise, the money-changers were “taking a big commission, impoverishing those who were already quite poor because of the temple tax they had to pay with temple money, not Roman money” (Drawn into the Mystery of Jesus through the Gospel of John).

The cleansing of the Temple is placed immediately after the wedding feast at Cana. Both are stories of transformation. At Cana, the water used for ritual purification is turned into wine. It becomes a symbol of the blood of Christ, poured out on the Cross and at every eucharist. Jesus's cleansing of the Temple fulfils Malachi's promise that God's messenger will come to the Temple as a purifying and refining fire (Malachi 1.1-3).

In the Fourth Gospel, the cleansing of the Temple takes place at Passover. On its careful chronology, Jesus's death occurs exactly two liturgical years later. Thus, it invites reflection on the extent of the transformation of Temple worship: Jesus's act of cleansing prefigures the day when this edifice of stone will be torn down.

In the “temple of his body”, Jesus will offer the sacrifice of God himself. This sacrifice will usher in a new worship, in a temple not built by human hands. This is why the disciples fully understand Jesus’s words only “after he was raised from the dead”. In the words of Benedict XVI, “The Temple is his body, the Risen One, who gathers the people and unites them in the sacrament of his body and blood” (Jesus of Nazareth: Holy Week from the entrance into Jerusalem to the resurrection).

The discomfort which many Christians feel about the cleansing of the Temple is perhaps a sign of its wider theological challenge. The passage poses a question to each generation of believers: When are we in danger of allowing the gospel to be downgraded from a “sign of contradiction” into “a cement for social conformity”?

An adequate conception of Jesus’s ministry must reflect the moments of anger and confrontation as well as of reconciliation. Rather than allow the prevailing values of our society to constrict and sanitise our image of Jesus, Christians are called to allow the gospel’s narrative to challenge and reshape our moral world-view.

In the cleansing of the Temple, Jesus challenges both the social and the religious order of his day. He is condemning a system that exploits those who are poorest economically. In the very same act, he is making a bold and apparently blasphemous claim about his identity. (In Matthew and Mark, a distorted version of Jesus’s words appears in the mouths of the accusers at his trial.)

For different reasons, each of these claims may seem like “foolishness” to today’s prevailing culture. Jesus’s challenge to unjust and exploitative economic systems causes one kind of disturbance; proclaiming the uniqueness and divinity of Christ causes another kind of offence. At the cleansing of the Temple, Jesus is doing both these things in a single act. He summons his Church to do likewise.