



Morning Prayer
Second Sunday of Lent
28th February 2021

An Order for Morning Prayer on Sunday

28 February 2021

Second 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 22.23-28

- 23 Praise the Lord, you that fear him;
O seed of Jacob, glorify him;
stand in awe of him, O seed of Israel.
- 24 For he has not despised nor abhorred the suffering of the poor;
neither has he hidden his face from them;
but when they cried to him he heard them.
- 25 From you comes my praise in the great congregation;
I will perform my vows
in the presence of those that fear you.
- 26 The poor shall eat and be satisfied;
those who seek the Lord shall praise him;
their hearts shall live for ever.
- 27 All the ends of the earth
shall remember and turn to the Lord,
and all the families of the nations shall bow before him.
- 28 For the kingdom is the Lord's
and he rules over the nations.
- 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

Genesis 17.1-7,15-16

¹When 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. ²And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous.' ³Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, ⁴'As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁵No

longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁶I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. ⁷I 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.

¹⁵God said to Abraham, 'As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. ¹⁶I 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 reading may be followed by a time of silence.

Old Testament Cantic

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

Mark 8.31-38

³¹Jesus began to teach his disciples 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. ³²He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. ³³But 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.'

³⁴He 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. ³⁵For 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. ³⁶For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? ³⁷Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? ³⁸Those 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 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

Let us pray to God for right judgement and constancy in faith.

Strengthen the Church to follow the way of the Cross and not to judge in the haste of the moment ... Help all your faithful people to understand that to save is to lose and to lose is to find, that to give all is to gain all in the power of the risen Christ.

Lord in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

May those who value only the pleasure and satisfaction of the moment learn where true blessedness lies ... May those who hold power so set their minds on the things that are divine that they may rule with mercy in the things that are human.

Lord in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

Give to us, to our families and friends and neighbours, grace to follow as we are led and wisdom to know what is right in our way of life and what is a hindrance to our faith ... Strengthen us to let go of the old when you are calling to the new, knowing that in your will there is life and not loss.

Lord in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

Have mercy on those whose burdens in this world are heavy ... Be near to those who suffer for the sake of the gospel, who have offered their lives for its sake ... Shield them from harm and bring them to eternal life.

Lord in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

We pray for the departed, those who took up their crosses and carried them to the end of the way and have laid them down in the repose of heaven ... May we in our time be faithful until we come to share in their joy.

Lord in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

May our prayers be acceptable in Christ who suffered and died for us.

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

The Collect is said.

Almighty God,
you show to those who are in error the light of your truth,
that they may return to the way of righteousness:
grant to all those who are admitted
 into the fellowship of Christ's religion,
that they may reject those things
 that are contrary to their profession,
and follow all such things as are agreeable to the same;
through our Lord Jesus Christ,
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.

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Second Sunday of Lent

by Bridget Nichols

THREE covenants feature in the Old Testament readings set for the first three Sundays of Lent. Last week it was Noah's turn, this Sunday focuses on Abraham, and next week will bring Moses.

Each has a basic pattern of promise and sign. To Noah, God promises that the earth will never again be destroyed by flood, and, as a reminder, sets the rainbow in the sky. Old and childless, Abraham is promised that he will become the father of nations with whom God will "establish" a covenant relationship (Genesis 17.6-7). The outward sign that this covenant is being kept will be the circumcision of all the males of Abraham's household, and of the generations succeeding him (Genesis 17.9-14). God promises Moses, in their conversation on Mount Sinai, that the people he leads will be his "treasured possession" if they keep the covenant that exists already (Exodus 19.5-6). The sign of this will be the written Law (Exodus 20.1-17).

The Lectionary has omitted the instructions about circumcision from the story of Abraham. If this is a device to protect the readers' sensibilities, it also succeeds in obscuring something important. Abraham, as the great New Testament scholar C. K. Barrett pointed out, was not circumcised until God had recognised his faith and counted it as righteousness. This makes him technically a Gentile at the time he received the promise that he would be the father of innumerable descendants (Genesis 15), so that Paul can argue confidently that he is the father of all, not just the Jews (Romans 4.11). The faith that was "reckoned to him as righteousness" will be reckoned to all his children; but for Paul's audience it has a new dimension; for they believe in the God "who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead" (Romans 4.25).

It was much harder for Jesus to teach this lesson to his disciples. Certainly, there was no shortage of signs: they had twice seen thousands of hungry people fed from absurdly meagre provisions, and been able to gather ample leftovers (Mark 6.30-44; Mark 8.1-10); they had seen the child of a Gentile woman healed (Mark 7.24-30); they had seen a blind

man recover his sight (Mark 8.22-26); and they had heard Jesus's response to the Pharisees' strictures on observing the laws of cleanliness (Mark 7.1-13).

At one level, they had discerned the approach of the Kingdom of God in generosity to Jews and Gentiles. Peter responds to Jesus's question "Who do you say I am?" with the acclamation "You are the Messiah" (Mark 8.29). Yet the Messiah with whom they thought they were keeping faith was going to be a victor; and they were not prepared to hear what Jesus was undertaking, in living out the Messiah's vocation.

In one way, this is entirely understandable. Jesus inspired great numbers to seek him out as a teacher and healer. Peter's rebuke is full of panic. How could Jesus think of talking about suffering and death in front of people who depended on him? Suddenly the world was turning upside down, at least from the human point of view. Jesus wants to alter this perspective, and to make Peter see things from God's point of view. His answering rebuke, "Get behind me, Satan!" (Mark 8.33), flags up the dangers of worldly temptation, but it also puts Peter in his place, as a follower and not even a privileged one. That is confirmed in the repetition of "behind" in Mark's Greek, when Jesus calls the crowd -- together with the disciples -- warning that any who wish to "come along behind me" must deny themselves, and take up their cross (Mark 8.34).

Writers on this passage often note that, for most members of the crowd, "the cross" would instantly have called up images of condemned prisoners carrying the instrument of execution to the site of their death. Jesus's promise of life reached by such a dangerous route was even more implausible than the idea that a few people and some animals in a boat could survive a catastrophic flood; or that an old man and woman could become parents of the nations; or that a stammering man could lead God's people out of slavery.

It is a promise that will be written on his wounded body, to be fulfilled in the resurrection.