



Morning Prayer
Second Sunday
before Lent
7th February 2021

An Order for Morning Prayer on Sunday

07 February 2021

Second Sunday before 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

Jesus says, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand.'
So let us turn away from our sin and turn to Christ,
confessing our sins 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 104.26-37

- 26 O Lord, how manifold are your works!
In wisdom you have made them all;
the earth is full of your creatures.
- 27 There is the sea, spread far and wide,
and there move creatures beyond number, both small and great.
- 28 There go the ships, and there is that Leviathan
which you have made to play in the deep.
- 29 All of these look to you
to give them their food in due season.
- 30 When you give it them, they gather it;
you open your hand and they are filled with good.
- 31 When you hide your face they are troubled;
when you take away their breath,
they die and return again to the dust.
- 32 When you send forth your spirit, they are created,
and you renew the face of the earth.
- 33 May the glory of the Lord endure for ever;
may the Lord rejoice in his works;
- 34 He looks on the earth and it trembles;
he touches the mountains and they smoke.
- 35 I will sing to the Lord as long as I live;
I will make music to my God while I have my being.
- 36 So shall my song please him
while I rejoice in the Lord.
- 37 Let sinners be consumed out of the earth
and the wicked be no more.
Bless the Lord, O my soul.
Alleluia.

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

Proverbs 8.1,22-31

- ¹Does not wisdom call,
and does not understanding raise her voice?
²²The LORD created me at the beginning of his work,
the first of his acts of long ago.
²³Ages ago I was set up,
at the first, before the beginning of the earth.
²⁴When there were no depths I was brought forth,
when there were no springs abounding with water.
²⁵Before the mountains had been shaped,
before the hills, I was brought forth –
²⁶when he had not yet made earth and fields,
or the world's first bits of soil.
²⁷When he established the heavens, I was there,
when he drew a circle on the face of the deep,
²⁸when he made firm the skies above,
when he established the fountains of the deep,
²⁹when he assigned to the sea its limit,
so that the waters might not transgress his command,
when he marked out the foundations of the earth,
³⁰then I was beside him, like a master worker;
and I was daily his delight,
rejoicing before him always,
³¹rejoicing in his inhabited world
and delighting in the human race.

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 David

- 1 Blessed are you, God of Israel, for ever and ever,
for yours is the greatness, the power,
the glory, the splendour and the majesty.
- 2 Everything in heaven and on earth is yours;
yours is the kingdom, O Lord,
and you are exalted as head over all.
- 3 Riches and honour come from you
and you rule over all.
- 4 In your hand are power and might;
yours it is to give power and strength to all.
- 5 And now we give you thanks, our God,
and praise your glorious name.
- 6 For all things come from you,
and of your own have we given you. *1 Chronicles 29.10b-13, 14b*
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 1.1-14

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. ⁴What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify

to the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

¹⁰He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

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 the new life that is in Christ, let us pray to the Lord.

Make the Church a true witness to the light that has come into the world ... Grant to all Christian people so to be faithful to Christ that as he shared our humanity we may be drawn into his divinity.

Lord in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

May the Lord by whom all things were made look with compassion on the world ... May the people who know him bring his light to others and those who know him not receive that light.

Lord in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

As the Word was made flesh for our salvation, may he dwell among us, be close to us in our families and friendships and with our neighbours ... Give us grace to behold his glory in our lives day by day.

Lord in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

Have mercy on those who are in the darkness of suffering, the sick, the bereaved, the oppressed, the homeless ... Bring them relief in their need through the light that darkness cannot contain.

Lord in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

We pray for the departed who have walked in the light through this world and have come to the perfect light of heaven ... May we with them become the children of God for ever.

Lord in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

We pray in the name of Christ, the true Light, the eternal Word.

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

The Collect is said.

Almighty God,

you have created the heavens and the earth

and made us in your own image:

teach us to discern your hand in all your works

and your likeness in all your children;

through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,

who with you and the Holy Spirit reigns supreme over all things,

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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2nd Sunday before Lent
Chelmsford Diocesan Transcript

I wonder if you have heard of Andy Park, an electrician from Melksham in Wiltshire? He styles himself “Mr Christmas” having claimed to have celebrated Christmas Day every day since July 1993. Apart from a short break in 2015, he is supposed to have eaten Christmas dinner every day, had mince pies and watched a recording of the Queen! Unbelievable!

But I want to suggest that he might be on to something. Maybe it would be good if we Christians celebrated Christmas every day?

Of course, at a human level we think that Christmas is over. Twelfth night was nearly a month ago, the trees and decorations are either at the tip or back in the loft. And with the passing of Candlemas last week, even the crib and magi have been packed away for another year. I know a few keen people will have been out in the January sales buying Christmas cards, presents and wrapping paper for next Christmas, but for most of us it’s over.

So it may come as a surprise that today’s Gospel reading is the start of John Chapter 1? It will have featured prominently at our carol and Christmas services. So why does it appear again so quickly in our lectionaries?

Maybe, hearing the nativity gospel again reminds us that since the birth of Jesus, everyday **is** Christmas Day. Jesus is with us always – after all, that is what Emmanuel means!

Maybe today – in this pause between seasons in the Christian year – is a good time to reflect on what the presence of Jesus could mean.

John records that Jesus is the bringer of light and life; of grace and truth. His presence is not to catch us out; not to betray us; not to take us down a peg or two. No. Jesus is with us so that we might have the fullest life possible (as he affirms later in John 10.10 in those famous words “I came that they [we] may have life, and have it abundantly”).

And so the invitation today is not to reflect on our failings or regrets but to wonder how we might live to the full. What would it mean to make the

most of our opportunities? What would it mean to live life in full light, rather than in semi-darkness? What would it mean if we truly knew the grace and truth of God that is revealed in Jesus?

These questions come to us in different words in today's epistle reading from Colossians. These verses are perhaps St Paul's equivalent of John's prologue. He too traces Jesus history from the beginning of time and in the most sublime, poetic language makes it clear that Jesus is preeminent in everything. He has no peers; no one in human history can get even close to him. He is the true image of God; the firstborn; he is before everything else and he holds everything together; he is the head, the source and the origin of everything.

In their own ways, both St John and St Paul affirm that Jesus is both central to everything and supreme over everything.

In his 'Paul for Everyone' commentary on Colossians, Tom Wright points to three particular aspects about Jesus that are affirmed in these verses: First, 'it's by looking at Jesus that we discover who God is'. Second, 'Jesus hold together the old world and the new, creation and new creation'. And third, 'Jesus is therefore the blueprint for the genuine humanness that is on offer through the gospel'.

So what does this mean for us today? First, it means that no matter how God has revealed himself to us in the past – whether through creation - particular holy people or places, Jesus now brings us the final and full revelation. Jesus is God's supreme word and image for us.

Second, it means that we can find this fullness of life in the everyday reality of our own circumstances. It might be easy to think that true happiness can only be found by escaping from the natural world and all its failings. But no, Jesus is creator of all and the one that holds everything together. We are designed to live and thrive in this fragile world where there is disaster, disease and disappointment. We can't escape the realities of this world but we can have an entirely different perspective as we invite the creator himself to live and journey with us.

And so, I want to say that living life to the full as a human being is only possible as we allow Jesus to take first place. This is a paradox, we will naturally assume that fullness of life comes when we have complete self-

control and personal power – but the reality is that always fails. It is never long before we discover that self-made heroes have feet of clay. True fulfilment comes with putting Jesus first and central – only then does everything else fall into place.

So, let's celebrate Christmas every day – not with turkey and mince pies, but with welcoming the presence of Jesus and putting him first!

In the words of the famous carol:

O holy Child of Bethlehem
Descend to us, we pray
Cast out our sin and enter in
Be born to us today
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell
O come to us, abide with us
Our Lord Emmanuel.