

Evening Prayer for the 1st Sunday of Lent

6th March 2022, from The Book of Common Prayer

Hymn – Lead us heavenly father, lead us

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mowhHHgFWcc>

Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us
o'er the world's tempestuous sea.
Guard us, guide us, keep us, feed us,
for we have no help but thee;
yet possessing every blessing
if our God our Father be.

Saviour! breathe forgiveness o'er us,
all our weakness thou dost know.
Thou didst tread this earth before us,
thou didst feel its keenest woe;
self-denying, death defying,
thou to Calvary didst go.

Spirit of our God, descending,
fill our hearts with heavenly joy.
Love with every passion blending,
pleasure that can never cloy:
thus provided, pardoned, guided,
nothing can our peace destroy!

James Edmeston
(1791-1867)

Opening prayers

God is love; and he that abideth in love abideth in God and God in him.

1 John 4.16

Beloved, we are come together in the presence of almighty God and of the whole company of heaven to offer unto him through our Lord Jesus Christ our worship and praise and thanksgiving; to make confession of our sins; to pray, as well for others as for ourselves, that we may know more truly the greatness of God's love and shew forth in our lives the fruits of his grace; and to ask on behalf of all men such things as their well-being doth require.

Wherefore let us kneel in silence, and remember God's presence with us now.

**Almighty and most merciful Father,
we have erred, and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep.
We have followed too much the devices and desires
of our own hearts.
We have offended against thy holy laws.
We have left undone those things which we ought to have done;
and we have done those things which we ought not to have done;
and there is no health in us.
But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us, miserable offenders.
Spare thou them, O God, which confess their faults.
Restore thou them that are penitent;
according to thy promises declared unto mankind
in Christ Jesu our Lord.
And grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake,
that we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life,
to the glory of thy holy name. Amen.**

Grant, we beseech thee, merciful Lord,
to thy faithful people pardon and peace,
that they may be cleansed from all their sins,
and serve thee with a quiet mind;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Our Father, which art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done,
in earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive them that 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.**

O Lord, open thou our lips
and our mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

O God, make speed to save us.
O Lord, make haste to help us.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Ghost;
**as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.**

Praise ye the Lord.
The Lord's name be praised.

Magnificat

My soul doth magnify the Lord :
and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

For he hath regarded :
the lowliness of his handmaiden.

For behold, from henceforth :
all generations shall call me blessed.

For he that is mighty hath magnified me :
and holy is his Name.

And his mercy is on them that fear him :
throughout all generations.

He hath shewed strength with his arm :
he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

He hath put down the mighty from their seat :
and hath exalted the humble and meek.

He hath filled the hungry with good things :
and the rich he hath sent empty away.

He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant Israel :
as he promised to our forefathers, Abraham and his seed for ever.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son
and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be :
world without end. Amen.

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 6.1-8

I send, and who will go for us?' And I said, 'Here am I; send me!'

Psalm 91.1-2,9-16

1 I will give thanks to you, O Lord, with my whole heart;
before the gods will I sing praise to you.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son
and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be
world without end. Amen.

Epistle

Romans 10.8b-13

What does scripture say?

‘The word is near you, on your lips and in your heart’ (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); because if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved. The scripture says, ‘No one who believes in him will be put to shame.’ For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him. For, ‘Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.’

Nunc Dimittis

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace :
according to thy word.

For mine eyes have seen :
thy salvation;

Which thou hast prepared :
before the face of all people;

To be a light to lighten the Gentiles :
and to be the glory of thy people Israel.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son :
and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be
world without end. Amen.

Gospel Reading

Luke 4.1-13

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished. The devil said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread.' Jesus answered him, 'It is written, "One does not live by bread alone." '

Then the devil led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And the devil said to him, 'To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.' Jesus answered him, 'It is written, "Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him." '

Then the devil took him to Jerusalem, and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, 'If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written,

"He will command his angels concerning you, to protect you", and

"On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone." '

Jesus answered him, 'It is said, "Do not put the Lord your God to the test." ' When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time.

The Apostles' Creed

**I believe in God the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth:
and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried.
He descended into hell;
the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father almighty;
from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Ghost;
the holy catholic Church;
the communion of saints;
the forgiveness of sins;
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.
Amen.**

The Lord be with you.
And with thy spirit.

Let us pray.
Lord, have mercy upon us.
Christ, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon us.

**Our Father, which art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done,
in earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive them that trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil. Amen.**

○ Lord, shew thy mercy upon us.
And grant us thy salvation.

○ Lord, save the Queen.
And mercifully hear us when we call upon thee.

Endue thy ministers with righteousness.
And make thy chosen people joyful.

○ Lord, save thy people.
And bless thine inheritance.

Give peace in our time, O Lord.
**Because there is none other that fighteth for us,
but only thou, O God.**

○ God, make clean our hearts within us.
And take not thy Holy Spirit from us.

The Collect of the Day

Almighty God,
whose Son Jesus Christ did fast forty days in the wilderness,
and was tempted as we are, yet without sin:
give us grace to discipline ourselves in obedience to thy Spirit;
and, as thou knowest our weakness,
so may we know thy power to save;
through Jesus Christ thy Son our Lord,
who liveth and reigneth with thee,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

The Collect for Peace

O God, who art the author of peace and lover of concord,
in knowledge of whom standeth our eternal life,
whose service is perfect freedom;
defend us thy humble servants in all assaults of our enemies;
that we, surely trusting in thy defence,
may not fear the power of any adversaries;
through the might of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

The Collect for Aid against all Perils

Lighten our darkness, we beseech thee, O Lord;
and by thy great mercy
defend us from all perils and dangers of this night;
for the love of thy only Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Hymn – Forty days and forty nights

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9N29ZnwU4LM>

Forty days and forty nights
thou wast fasting in the wild;
forty days and forty nights
tempted, and yet undefiled.

Sunbeams scorching all the day;
chilly dew-drops nightly shed;
prowling beasts about thy way;

stones thy pillow; earth thy bed.

And if Satan, vexing sore,
flesh or spirit should assail,
thou, his vanquisher before,
grant we may not faint nor fail.

So shall we have peace divine:
holier gladness ours shall be;
round us, too, shall angels shine,
such as ministered to thee.

Keep, O keep us, Saviour dear,
ever constant by thy side;
that with thee we may appear
at the eternal Eastertide.

George Hunt Smytton
(1822-1870)

Sermon

In the desert we see Jesus, our Saviour, having his faith in God tested, and we've heard St Paul talking about being saved through faith in Jesus.

"Being saved" is a consequence of our faith in God, of our trust in God. So let's see if we can explore in more detail what it means.

Here's a story about someone who was confident of being saved by God, but it didn't quite turn out as he expected:

A man was stuck on his rooftop in a flood. He was praying to God for help.

Soon a man in a rowing boat came by and the man shouted to the man on the roof, "Jump in, I can save you."

The stranded man shouted back, "No, it's OK, I'm praying to God and he is going to save me."

So the rowing boat went on.

Then a motorboat came by. The man in the motorboat shouted, "Jump in, I can save you."

To this the stranded man said, "No thanks, I'm praying to God and he is going to save me. I have faith."

So the motorboat went on.

Then a helicopter came by and the pilot shouted down, "Grab this rope and I will lift you to safety."

To this the stranded man again replied, "No thanks, I'm praying to God and he is going to save me. I have faith."

So the helicopter reluctantly flew away.

Soon the water rose above the rooftop and the man drowned. He went to Heaven. He finally got his chance to discuss this whole situation with God, at which point he exclaimed, "I had faith in you but you didn't save me, you let me drown. I don't understand why!"

To this God replied, "I sent you a rowing boat and a motorboat and a helicopter, what more did you expect?"

From this story, I reckon that "being saved" doesn't just happen to us, it's more like an action or series of actions that we have to take.

Say you were on that roof as the waters were rising, can you think of something else you might have liked to have, if there were no boats or helicopters around? (There is a clue on the front cover!)

A life-jacket....

But even a life-jacket won't save us unless we put it on! Only when I'm wearing one will I have a greatly improved chance of being saved.

It turns out, I think, that being saved requires us to do new things, different things from what we did before, and to stop doing things that lead us astray. Like Jesus in the desert, we have to try and resist the temptation to do selfish and self-indulgent things.

I very much doubt wonder I would have stood as strong as Jesus did in the desert. This is what we would have faced:

Firstly, you're incredibly hungry, and you're offered the opportunity to do a miracle to create some food just for yourself. Just imagine, wouldn't everyone else be amazed at your power and cleverness?

Secondly, imagine if a wealthy criminal, with all the money in the world said: "If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours." In other words, you can become just as big a criminal as him! Think of all that money and power, wouldn't it be wonderful?

Thirdly, suppose you had the chance to be the one person in the world who couldn't be hurt or killed? You'd be invulnerable.

The thing that's wrong with all the devil's temptations is that he assumed that Jesus would greedily jump at the chance of being special and different and unlike anyone else.

Whereas it was quite the opposite. Jesus came to join us, to live with us, to be one of us, to be a friend to everyone, and to suffer like us.

Not for a moment did Jesus lose sight of his mission to bring God's love and joy to all. He resisted the temptations to be selfish and to win popularity.

This is what St Paul hoped for, for all those who were being saved.

Perhaps what "being saved" really means is to stop living for oneself, stop seeking one's own satisfaction. Instead learning how to put God as one's top priority, and then to love and care for everyone around, ignoring all those temptations to simply do (or get) only what we want.

With the result, as Paul says, that "The Lord of all is generous to all who call on him." God's generosity always leads to our happiness; to life, and joy, and peace.

We just need to put on God's lifejacket, saying "Lord I am following you", and he will keep us safe!

Amen.

Hymn – Seek ye first the kingdom of God

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FFxZeY2D5tc>

Seek ye first the kingdom of God
and His righteousness;
and all these things shall be added unto you
Allelu, Alleluia!

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Man shall not live by bread alone,
But by ev'ry word
that proceeds from the mouth of God;
Allelu, Alleluia!

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
Ask, and it shall be given unto you;
Seek, and ye shall find.
Knock, and the door shall be opened unto you.
Allelu, Alleluia!

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Prayers

In the power of the Spirit and in union with Christ, let us pray to the Father.

Almighty and ever-living God, who by thy holy apostle hast taught us to make prayers and supplications, and to give thanks, for all men: we humbly beseech thee most mercifully to receive these our prayers, which we offer unto thy divine majesty; beseeching thee to inspire continually the universal Church with the spirit of truth, unity and concord; and grant that all they that do confess thy holy name may agree in the truth of thy holy word, and live in unity and godly love.

We beseech thee also to lead all nations in the way of righteousness and peace; and so to direct all kings and rulers, that under them thy people may be godly and quietly governed. And grant unto thy servant Elizabeth our Queen, and to all that are put in authority under her that they may truly and indifferently administer justice, to the maintenance of thy true religion, and virtue.

Give grace, O heavenly Father, to all bishops, priests and deacons, especially to thy servant Robert our bishop, that they may both by their life and doctrine set forth thy true and lively word, and rightly and duly administer thy holy sacraments.

Guide and prosper, we pray thee, those who are labouring for the spread of thy gospel among the nations, and enlighten with thy Spirit all places of education and learning; that the whole world may be filled with the knowledge of thy truth.

And to all thy people give thy heavenly grace; and specially to this congregation here present, that, with meek heart and due reverence, they may hear and receive thy holy word, truly serving thee in holiness and righteousness all the days of their life.

And we most humbly beseech thee of thy goodness, O Lord, to comfort and succour all them who in this transitory life are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity.

And we commend to thy gracious keeping, O Lord, all thy servants departed this life in thy faith and fear, beseeching thee, according to thy promises, to grant them refreshment, light and peace.

And here we give thee most high praise and hearty thanks for all thy saints, who have been the chosen vessels of thy grace, and lights of the world in their several generations; and we pray that, rejoicing in their fellowship and following their good examples, we may be partakers with them of thy heavenly kingdom.

Grant this, O Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, our only mediator and advocate. **Amen.**

A prayer for all those affected by Coronavirus

Keep us, good Lord,
under the shadow of thy mercy.
Sustain and support the anxious,
be with those who care for the sick,
and lift up all who are brought low;
that we may find comfort
knowing that nothing can separate us from thy love
in Christ Jesus our Lord. **Amen.**

Hymn – Lord Jesus Christ

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QA_q98O42Q4

Lord Jesus Christ,
you have come to us,
you are one with us,
Mary's Son;
cleansing our souls from all their sin
pouring your love and goodness in,
Jesus our love for you we sing,
living Lord.

Lord Jesus Christ,
now and every day
teach us how to pray,
Son of God.
You have commanded us to do
this is remembrance, Lord, of You:
into our lives your power breaks through
living Lord.

Lord Jesus Christ,
you have come to us,
born as one of us,
Mary's Son.
Led out to die on Calvary,
risen from death to set us free,
living Lord Jesus, help us see
You are Lord.

Lord Jesus Christ,
I would come to you,
live my life for you.
Son of God.

All your commands I know are true,
your many gifts will make me new,
into my life your power breaks through,
Living Lord.

Patrick Appleforth
(b.1925)
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Ending

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

God, who has prepared for us a city with eternal foundations,
give you grace to share the inheritance of the saints in glory;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among us and remain with us always.
Amen.

