



Morning Devotion for Families and Individuals

The Third Sunday before Lent - Septuagesima
February 1, 2026

*The mission of the Church is to restore all people to
unity with God and each other in Christ.*

From Psalm 51

Open my lips, O Lord, *
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.
Create in me a clean heart, O God, *
and renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from your presence *
and take not your holy Spirit from me.
Give me the joy of your saving help again *
and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: *
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

A Reading from the first letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians

At the games, as you know, all the runners take part, though only one wins the prize. You also must run to win. Every athlete goes into strict training. They do it to win a fading garland; we, to win a garland that never fades. For my part, I am no aimless runner; I am not a boxer who beats the air. I do not spare my body, but bring it under strict control, for fear that after preaching to others I should find myself disqualified.

A Reading from the Gospel According to Saint Matthew

“The kingdom of Heaven is like this. There was once a landowner who went out early one morning to hire laborers for his vineyard; and after agreeing to pay them the usual day’s wage he sent them off to work. Three hours later he went out again and saw some more men standing idle in the market-place. “Go and join the others in the vineyard,” he said, “and I will pay you a fair wage”; so off they went. At midday he went out again, and at three in the afternoon, and made the same arrangement as before. An hour before sunset he went out and found another group standing there; so he said to them, “Why are you standing here all day doing nothing?” “Because no one has hired us,” they replied; so he told them, “Go and join the others in the vineyard.” When evening fell, the owner of the vineyard said to the overseer, “Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with those who came last and ending with the first.” Those who had started work an hour before sunset came forward, and were paid the full day’s wage. When it was the turn of the men who had come first, they expected something extra, but were paid the same as the others. As they took it, they grumbled at their employer: “These latecomers did only one hour’s work, yet you have treated them on a level with us, who have sweated the whole day long in the blazing sun!” The owner turned to one of them and said, “My friend, I am not being unfair to you. You agreed on the usual wage for the day, did you not? Take your pay and go home. I choose to give the last man the same as you. Surely I am free to do what I like with my own money? Why be jealous because I am generous?” So the last will be first, and the first last.’

A period of silence may follow

The Apostles’ Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth;
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.
He 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,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again 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 may be offered for ourselves and others.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,

as we forgive those
who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.

The Collects

O LORD, we beseech you to favorably hear the prayers of your people; that we, who are justly punished for our offences, may be mercifully delivered by your goodness, for the glory of your Name, through Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end.. *Amen.*

Lord God, almighty and everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day: Preserve us with your mighty power, that we may not fall into sin, nor be overcome by adversity; and in all we do, direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Church of the Epiphany

The Rev. Kristin Wickersham SCP, Rector
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