

# Sunday Prayers for the First Sunday in Lent

21 February 2021

*The Gathering*<sup>1</sup>

O Lord, open our lips  
**and our mouth shall proclaim your praise.**

Hear our voice according to your faithful love;  
**according to your judgement, give us life.**

Blessed are you, God of compassion and mercy,  
to you be praise and glory for ever.

In the darkness of our sin,  
your light breaks forth like the dawn  
and your healing springs up for deliverance.

As we rejoice in the gift of your saving help,  
sustain us with your bountiful Spirit  
and open our lips to sing your praise.

Blessed be God, Source, Word, and 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.

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.**

## *An Invitation to a Holy Lent<sup>2</sup>*

Dear Friends in Christ,  
it is the custom of Christian people  
to prepare to mark the time of Christ's passion and resurrection  
by a season of penitence and fasting.

The church calls each of us during these forty days  
to repent of all that causes harm to ourselves,  
harm to our earthly dwelling place,  
and harm to our relationship with God.

By carefully keeping these days,  
Christians take to heart the call to repentance  
and the assurance of forgiveness proclaimed in the gospel,  
and so grow in faith and devotion.  
In turning our hearts towards God,  
we discover anew the boundless grace of God.

For God will help us to create beauty  
even within the turmoil of this chaotic world  
and will help us to gather a harvest of joy and gladness  
from lives of sorrow and care.  
Today and every day, God calls the wandering exile home.

We are invited therefore, in the name of the Church,  
to the observance of a holy Lent,  
by self-examination and repentance;  
by prayer, fasting, and self-denial;  
and by reading and meditating on God's holy word.

## The Psalm

To you Lord I lift up my soul;  
my God I have put my trust in you. •  
Let me not be disappointed,  
nor let my enemies triumph over me.  
**For all those who hope in you shall not be ashamed, •  
but only those who wantonly break faith.**

Make known to me your ways, O Lord, •  
and teach me your paths.  
**Lead me in the way of your truth and teach me; •  
you are God my saviour,  
for you have I waited all the day long.**

Call to remembrance, O Lord, your tender care, •  
and the unfailing love which you have shown from of old.  
**Do not remember the sins and offences of my youth, •  
but according to your mercy,  
remember me Lord in your goodness.**

You, O Lord, are upright and good; •  
therefore you show the path to those who go astray.  
**You guide the humble to do what is right, •  
and those who are gentle you teach your way.**

All your ways are loving and sure •  
to those who keep your covenant and your commandments.

*Psalm 25.1—10*

**Glory to God,  
Source of all being, Eternal Word and Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.  
Amen.**

## The First Reading

A reading from the book of Genesis.

Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, ‘As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you, and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark. I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.’ God said, ‘This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.’ God said to Noah, ‘This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth.’

*Genesis 9.8—17*

Listen for the leading of the Spirit.

**Thanks be to God.**

## The Gospel

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

The holy gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Saint Mark.

**Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.'

And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. He was in the wilderness for forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.

Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.'

*Mark 1.9—15*

The gospel of Christ.

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

## The Reflection

## The Great Litany

God the Father, Creator of heaven and earth,  
**Have mercy on us.**

God the Son, Redeemer of the world,  
**Have mercy on us.**

God the Holy Spirit, advocate and guide,  
**Have mercy on us.**

Holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, three persons and one God,  
**Have mercy on us.**

Lord, remember not our offences, nor the offences of our forebears;  
spare us, good Lord, spare your people  
whom you have redeemed with your precious blood.  
**Spare us, good Lord.**

From all evil and mischief, from sin,  
and from the crafts and assaults of the devil,  
**Spare us, good Lord.**

From all spiritual blindness, from pride, vainglory, and hypocrisy;  
from envy, hatred, and malice; and from all want of charity,  
**Spare us, good Lord.**

From all deadly sin, and from the deceits of the world, the flesh, and the devil,  
**Spare us, good Lord.**

From all false doctrine, heresy, and schism;  
from hardness of heart, and contempt of your word and commandment,  
**Spare us, good Lord.**

From earthquake and tempest; from drought, fire, and flood;  
from civil strife and violence; from war and murder;  
and from dying suddenly and unprepared,  
**Spare us, good Lord.**

By the mystery of your holy incarnation,  
by your baptism, fasting, and temptation;  
and by your proclamation of the kingdom,  
**Spare us, good Lord.**

By your agony and bitter grief, by your cross and passion,  
by your precious death and burial,  
by your glorious resurrection and ascension,  
and by the coming of the Holy Spirit,  
**Good Lord, deliver us.**

In our times of trouble, in our times of prosperity,  
in the hour of death, and on the day of judgement,  
**Good Lord, deliver us.**

Receive now our prayers, Lord God.  
May it please you to rule and govern your holy Church universal  
and lead it in your way.  
**Hear us, good Lord.**

Strengthen your servant Elizabeth our Queen  
in true worship and holiness of life,  
be her defender and keeper, that she may always seek your honour and glory,  
and endue the leaders of this nation with wisdom and understanding.  
**Hear us, good Lord.**

Bless and defend all who strive for our safety and protection,  
and shield them in all dangers and adversities.  
**Hear us, good Lord.**

Grant wisdom and insight to those who govern us,  
and to judges and magistrates the grace to execute justice with mercy.  
**Hear us, good Lord.**

Guard, strengthen and enlighten Susan our bishop,  
and all bishops, priests, and deacons  
with true knowledge and understanding of your word,  
that in their preaching and living they may declare it clearly and show its truth.  
**Hear us, good Lord.**

Encourage and prosper your servants who spread the gospel in all the world,  
and send out labourers into the harvest.  
**Hear us, good Lord.**

Bless and keep your people,  
that all may find and follow their true vocation and ministry.  
**Hear us, good Lord.**

Give us a heart to love and reverence you,  
that we may diligently live according to your commandments.  
**Hear us, good Lord.**

To all your people give growth in grace to listen to your word,  
to receive it gladly, and to bring forth the fruit of the Spirit.  
**Hear us, good Lord.**

Strengthen those who stand firm in the faith, encourage the faint-hearted,  
raise up those who fall, and finally beat down Satan under our feet.  
**Hear us, good Lord.**

To all nations grant unity, peace, and concord, and to all people give dignity,  
food, and shelter.  
**Hear us, good Lord.**

Grant us abundant harvests,  
strength and skill to honour the resources of the earth,  
and wisdom to use them well.  
**Hear us, good Lord.**

Enlighten with your Spirit all who teach and all who learn.  
**Hear us, good Lord.**

Come to the help of all who are in danger, necessity, and trouble;  
protect all who travel by land, air, or water;  
and show your pity on all prisoners and captives.  
**Hear us, good Lord.**

Defend and provide for the widowed and the orphaned,  
the refugee and the homeless, the unemployed,  
and all who are desolate and oppressed.  
**Hear us, good Lord.**

Heal those who are sick in body or mind,  
and give skill and compassion to all who care for them.  
**Hear us, good Lord.**

Grant us true repentance, forgive our sins,  
and strengthen us by your Holy Spirit to amend our lives  
according to your holy word.  
**Hear us, good Lord.**

Son of God, we ask you to hear us.  
**Son of God, we ask you to hear us.**

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:  
**Have mercy on us.**

O Christ, hear us.  
**O Christ, hear us.**

Lord, have mercy on us.  
**Christ, have mercy on us.**  
Lord, have mercy on us.

As Jesus teaches us, so we pray:

**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.  
Save us from the time of trial,  
and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours,  
now and for ever.  
Amen.**

**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,  
the power, and the glory,  
for ever and ever.  
Amen.**

## *The Collect<sup>3</sup>*

God of our salvation,  
your bow in the clouds  
proclaims your covenant with every living creature.  
Teach us your paths and lead us in your truth,  
that by your Holy Spirit,  
we may remember our baptismal vows  
and be keepers of your trust with earth and its inhabitants  
through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now for ever and ever.  
**Amen.**

## *The Solemn Prayer over the People<sup>4</sup>*

Let us bow down before the Lord.

Grant, Almighty God,  
that your people may recognize their weakness  
and put their whole trust in your strength,  
so that we may rejoice for ever in the protection of your loving providence;  
through Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

## *The Dismissal*

Let us bless the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

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<sup>1</sup> *Common Praise: Daily Prayer*. Church of England. “Morning Prayer. Lent.” 238—39.

<sup>2</sup> The Very Reverend Kelvin Holdsworth. <https://thurible.net/2021/02/13/a-preface-for-ash-wednesday/>

<sup>3</sup> *Revised Common Lectionary Prayers*. Consultation on Common Texts.

<sup>4</sup> *The Book of Occasional Services* 2018. The Episcopal Church of the United States.