

**Thursday Prayers for February 18<sup>th</sup> 2021**

**Theme:** Rebuilding Hope and Confidence

**Prayer Focus:** Lent

**Introductory Prayer**

Lord God, as Jesus resisted temptation by the devil in the wilderness, help us reflect on his faithfulness to You, his rejection of worldly values and hold these thoughts in our hearts throughout Lent and beyond.

Amen

**Prayer for this month:**

**In penitence and sorrow we bring our empty lives to be filled by our merciful Saviour. Lord you drank deeply from the cup of suffering: you tasted death that we may have life. So we will partake of the cup of thanksgiving; drink deeply of your provision and be refreshed by your water of life; united as one in the body of Christ. Forgiven and restored we will offer the cup of the water of life; let all taste and see that you are good.**

**Amen**

**Bible Reading: Matthew 4:1, 3&4, 8-11**

<sup>1</sup> Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

<sup>3</sup> Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread."

<sup>4</sup> But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.' "

<sup>8</sup> Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory.

<sup>9</sup> And he said to Him, "All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me."

<sup>10</sup> Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.' "

<sup>11</sup> Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him.

**Meditation**

We all lead busy lives pulled this way and that; with family commitments, appointments, household jobs and, for some, the constraints of employment. So much so, that we may have little time to think about our spiritual self. We are so absorbed in this 'business of life', our spirit, if not completely forgotten, is often neglected. When we do find the time to look at ourselves honestly, we may discover that worldly distractions have gradually eaten away at our good intentions and our better selves have become faded by the cares and self-centred spirit of the world.

Fortunately for us, within our Church year, we are offered periods of reflection where renewed effort can be made to free ourselves from the grip of worldly cares and to once again imitate the example of Christ and reflect it in our lives. The season of Lent invites us to renew our concentration on prayer, fasting and the generosity of giving of our time and/or resources.

Through the discipline of quiet prayer, we can again affirm the sovereignty of God in our lives. In doing this, we surrender our own self-reliance, accepting that we are not the measure of all things. In the practice of fasting, we seek to overcome the power that material things have gained over us; we strive to be servants of the sacred and not merely masters of the material. Finally, we are called to be generous to our neighbours, to give help to others sharing what we have and so surrender our natural tendency to be self-seeking. Prayer which unites us to God, fasting which curbs our endless desires, and generous giving which allows us to actively love our neighbour as ourselves - these are the transforming gifts of Lent.

However, being reacquainted with these gifts is not enough. If we are to truly benefit from our re-awakening, we must make them our bedrock in which we deepen and enrich our faith and, in turn, our relationship with Jesus Christ. As we are, once again, given this opportunity to find God in our lives, let us pray to use it wisely.

### **Prayer for Lent**

God of all wholeness, heal our hearts of all that prevents us responding to our sisters and brothers excluded by poverty and prevented from living a full and healthy life.

This Lent, may we:  
implore justice through our prayer,  
stand in solidarity through our fasting  
and reach out through our giving.

Send your life-giving power to revive the weary,  
restore the broken  
and renew the face of the earth.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

### **The Thursday Prayer**

**Heavenly Father, you have called us apart to share in a worldwide fellowship of Christians united in prayer. Take our prayers we humbly ask, fill them with your love and power, and use them in the cause of your glorious kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen**

## **Intercessions**

Lord, we ask your blessing on Beverley Jullien, our chief executive; Sheran Harper our Worldwide President; Kathryn Anderson, our Provincial President and, in our own diocese of Ely: Hazel Williams, Diocesan President; the Trustees, the Task Group Leaders and all who work in Mary Sumner House, including those who have moved on due to recent redundancies.

We remember in our prayers, our MU links world wide:

Lusaka in Zambia

Shyogwe in Rwanda

Sokoto and Ikka in Nigeria

Karinmager in India

and our diocesan links with Kigali in Rwanda and Vellore in India.

Let us have a few moments of quiet prayer for those in need and to offer personal concerns: either aloud or in silence.

## **The Mothers' Union Prayer:**

**Loving Lord, We thank you for your love so freely given to us all. We pray for families around the world.**

**Bless the work of the Mothers' Union as we seek to share your love through the encouragement, strengthening and support of marriage and family life.**

**Empowered by your Spirit, may we be united in prayer and worship, and in love and service, reach out as your hands across the world.**

**In Jesus' name.**

**Amen**

## **Hymn - Be Thou my Vision, Oh Lord of my Heart**

**Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart,  
naught be all else to me, save that thou art;  
be thou my best thought in the day and the night,  
both waking and sleeping, thy presence my light.**

**Be thou my wisdom, be thou my true word,  
be thou ever with me, and I with thee Lord;  
be thou my great Father, and I thy true son;  
be thou in me dwelling, and I with thee one.**

Be thou my breastplate, my sword for the fight;  
be thou my whole armour, be thou my true might;  
be thou my soul's shelter, be thou my strong tower:  
O raise thou me heavenward, great Power of my power.

Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise:  
be thou mine inheritance now and always;  
be thou and thou only the first in my heart;  
O Sovereign of heaven, my treasure thou art.

High King of heaven, thou heaven's bright sun,  
O grant me its joys after victory is won;  
great Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,  
still be thou my vision, O Ruler of all.

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

### **The GRACE**

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

*Christine Holt*