

REFLECTIVE SERVICE: FOR WORSHIP IN ISOLATION THE FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

As we meet together in spirit through these words of praise, may we think of and pray for each other sharing this reflection.

We come from scattered lives to meet with God. Let us recognise God's presence with us now.

Keep a short silence, still your heart. You may like to light a candle

Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your disciples, 'I am with you always'. Be with us today, as we offer ourselves to you. Hear our prayers for others and for ourselves and keep us in your care. Amen.

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful people, and kindle in us the fire of your love; through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

In the light of Jesus, let us examine ourselves and confess our sins.

Keep a short silence. Confession:

Most merciful God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, we confess that we have sinned in thought, word and deed. We have not loved you with our whole heart. We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves. In your mercy forgive what we have been, help us to amend what we are, and direct what we shall be; that we may do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with you, our God. Amen.

Absolution:

May God have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and strengthen us to live in the power of the Spirit all our days. Amen.

Collect for the First Sunday in Lent

Almighty God,
whose Son Jesus Christ fasted forty days in the wilderness,
and was tempted as we are, yet without sin:
give us grace to discipline ourselves in obedience to your Spirit;
and, as you know our weakness,
so may we know your power to save;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Read a passage from the Bible

Mark 1.9-15

⁹In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰And 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. ¹¹And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

¹² And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. ¹³ He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.

¹⁴ Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, ⁵ and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.”

Spend a few moments in silence thinking about the passage and ask God to speak to you through his scriptures

Reflection

“Forty days and forty nights”...Lent stretches out ahead of us, inviting us to accompany Jesus into the desert of temptation.

Where is your desert?

Where in life do you find it difficult to hear or see or feel God’s love?

Read the passage again and notice the activity of the Spirit of God.

What is God doing?

How aware are you of God’s activity in your daily life?

During the weeks of Lent, try to put aside a few minutes each day to be still and to practise listening to God (*“Be still and know that I am God”* Ps.46).

For forty days, Jesus was both tempted and looked after.

How do you look after yourself?

Are you ever kind and gentle to yourself?

Do you allow others to care for you?

Jesus’ own time in the desert came to an end with John’s arrest, leading Jesus to say,

“The time is fulfilled...repent and believe in the good news”

Lent is a time to reflect on our lives, on our relationship with God and to repent (or change) the way we live.

During the next few weeks, ponder your life and consider something you might change in the light of God’s love for you.

Mark

We affirm our faith in God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit:

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.

We intercede for others in the quiet of our hearts.

Lord, meet us in the silence

And hear our prayer.

Silence for prayer is kept: Pray for yourself in your isolation, that you would know God is with you. Pray for others in their loneliness. Pray for our country. Pray for the world.

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.

Silence is kept

O gracious and holy Father, give us wisdom to perceive you, diligence to seek you, patience to wait for you, eyes to behold you, a heart to meditate upon you, and a life to proclaim you, through the power of the spirit of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Let us bless the Lord

Thanks be to God.

“For God has said, ‘I will not leave you or forsake you’ so we can confidently say, ‘The Lord is my helper; I will not fear’.” (*Hebrews 13:5-6*)

“It is the Lord who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not leave you or forsake you. Do not be dismayed.” (*Deuteronomy 31:8*)

Please God, we can meet together in church again, soon.

A couple of notices

1) In the light of the most recent lockdown restrictions it has been agreed by both PCCs to suspend services in our Benefice churches for the duration of the stated government lockdown period.

There will each week be a zoom service. Links for this and service sheets will be circulated in addition to the weekly Service of Reflection.

2) At present both All Saints Kirkbymoorside and Edstone churches are still open for private prayer on Wednesday and Sunday.