

Lent 2 Year B

Notes for Use

This service is designed for you to use in your home. If you used our Advent materials, you will notice a familiar structure and rhythm to these Lent resources. Feel free to use them in any way that suits you best. For example, you can move confession and the kyrie to between the intercessions and the concluding prayers, if you are used to confession just before the Eucharist. You can also cut the number of readings if you prefer, but we would advise if doing this that you retain the Psalm and the Gospel.

Some churches keep The Feast of The Transfiguration this Sunday. If this is the case for your church, the readings and collect will not match up with our resources here.

The intercessions are offered as a guide only. You are, of course, completely free to use this prayer space as you need or wish to.

The questions at the end of the reflection are optional but offer time for reflection either during the service or afterwards. If you are using this resource to worship either as a family or at an online gathering, you can use them for group discussion. In a group setting you can change the singular “I/my” for “We/our” as needed. Words in **bold** should be said together. Instructions and guidance are written in *italics*.

Lent, a season of penitence and reflection, can sometimes be a challenging season as we focus so much on personal relationship with God. Do remember that you can reach out to your priest, or fellow members of the congregation, or any other trusted person, if you want to discuss how you are feeling as you progress through Lent.

Introduction

You may wish to light a candle or have a moment of silence before you say:

Lord God, I open my ears to hear you.

Lord God, I open my eyes to see you.

Lord God, I open my heart to love you.

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All the ends of the earth shall turn to you, O Lord.

Confession

A time of silent confession may be held here instead.

God our Father, we confess to you and to our fellow members in the Body of Christ that we have sinned in thought, word and deed, and in what we have failed to do. We are truly sorry. Forgive us our sins, and deliver us from the power of evil, for the sake of your Son who died for us, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Kyrie

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy

Collect for 2nd Sunday of Lent

God of patience and humility, in your love you gave your Son to be rejected and raised up on a cross. Gather us under its shadow and open our eyes to its mystery, that we may share even now in the life that is from above; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

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Readings

Genesis 17.1-7,15-16

17When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said to him, 'I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. ²And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous.' ³Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, ⁴'As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁵No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁶I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. ⁷I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you.

15 God said to Abraham, 'As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. ¹⁶I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her.'

Psalm 22.22-30

²² I will tell of your name to my brothers and sisters;
in the midst of the congregation I will praise you:

²³ You who fear the Lord, praise him!
All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him;
stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel!

²⁴ For he did not despise or abhor
the affliction of the afflicted;
he did not hide his face from me,
but heard when I cried to him.

²⁵ From you comes my praise in the great congregation;
my vows I will pay before those who fear him.

²⁶ The poor shall eat and be satisfied;
those who seek him shall praise the Lord.
May your hearts live for ever!

²⁷ All the ends of the earth shall remember
and turn to the Lord;
and all the families of the nations
shall worship before him.

²⁸ For dominion belongs to the Lord,
and he rules over the nations.

²⁹ To him, indeed, shall all who sleep in the earth bow down;
before him shall bow all who go down to the dust,
and I shall live for him.

³⁰ Posterity will serve him;
future generations will be told about the Lord,

Romans 4.13-25

13 For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

16 For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, ¹⁷as it is written, 'I have made you the father of many nations')—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. ¹⁸Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become 'the father of many nations', according to what was said, 'So numerous shall your descendants be.' ¹⁹He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the

barrenness of Sarah's womb. ²⁰No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, ²¹being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. ²²Therefore his faith 'was reckoned to him as righteousness.' ²³Now the words, 'it was reckoned to him', were written not for his sake alone, ²⁴but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, ²⁵who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

Mark 8.31-38

Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, 'Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.'

He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, 'If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.'

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Reflection

Today's readings ask us to consider a fundamental question about being a Christian: what is the cost of our faith? What are we willing to do for God?

Being a Christian in the UK is blessedly easy. We enjoy enormous privileges as the "default" religion in all four nations, irrespective of differing denominations, with power and influence in politics and society that is unequal to our worshipping numbers. We are so used to peace and security in our worship that we often forget how very lucky we are. All synagogues in the UK have professional security on the door. Mosques are routinely subject to, at best graffiti and tragically, at worst deadly terror attacks. Our brothers and sisters of the Abrahamic faiths are subject to daily suspicious questioning of their very existence here in Scotland.

When Jesus went around preaching in 1st Century Palestine, he did so under constant threat of arrest. Mark's Gospel is essentially a Gospel of Conspiracy, where every chapter mentions the scrutiny, the whispers, the political machinations that were determined to see this Galilean upstart silenced for preaching differently, and sometimes actively opposingly, to traditional authority figures.

When Peter pulls Jesus aside to question the wisdom of this loud preaching, it is out of fear for their safety. Peter, perhaps for the first time since he began to follow Jesus, can clearly see which way the wind is blowing and is afraid. Jesus, on the other hand, is totally aware of the plotting against him, and he has made his decision as to what is important: that people turn and return to God in love.

In our own lives, have we ever had the courage to speak out against for what we know to be right? Even when there is so much that might make it much easier to remain silent? Standing up for our faith is, for the most part, a painless activity in the UK. But do we stand up against injustice in society? Injustice against those of other faiths? Injustice against black people and people of colour? Injustice against the most vulnerable in society? Injustice against the environment? With our relative influence and power that we hold, do we use it to seek betterment for everyone in society, or do we use it to raise ourselves still further? It is important to remember that in our confession we confess the sins of inaction as well as our other sins. We confess to those times when we were silent because it was easier. We confess to those times when we decided to ignore the truth the Spirit placed on our hearts.

But perhaps the most difficult moment comes when those we feel have been the perpetrators of these injustices also believe that they too are fighting for what is right. What then? How do we discern what is good, and what is not. When do we trust Peter's words as wise counsel, and when do we dismiss them as evil? These are difficult moments of discernment, and there are no easy ways to reconcile them, but we must remember what Jesus says. Are we concerned with divine things, or human things? Do we seek to bring the vision of Psalm 22 into reality, or are we content to leave things as they are? A challenge indeed – what are we willing to do for God?

The reflection today has focussed on the Gospel, but what other themes stand out to you in today's readings. Think on them, see if you can find connections between the themes, and what is most important for you.

How do you feel when you read Jesus' stern rebuke of one of his most devoted disciples in today's Gospel? What would it feel like if you were Peter?

There are many questions posed in today's reflection. What struck you as the most important question, and which question were you least comfortable with? Talk with God about why you feel this way.

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Creed

A short silence should be kept before reciting the creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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.

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Prayer

The prayer here is a shortened, adapted form of intercession. If your church has shared intercession for the Sunday service beforehand, it can be said here instead. You may also find the intercessions for use during a pandemic suitable here.

I pray to you, Lord, that I may discern your will for me each day. Hear my prayers:

**I pray for the church,
For....**

**I pray for my community,
For...**

**I pray for the world,
For...**

**I pray for those who are ill,
For....**

**I pray for those who have died,
For....**

**Hear my prayers Lord, that I may discern your will for me each day.
Amen.**

Meditation



Sit with this icon of Abraham and Sarah for a few minutes of meditation.

How does it make you feel?

How do you want to respond to God?

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
Forever and ever,
Amen.

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread,
and forgive our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against
us.
Do not bring us to the time of trial,
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power and the
glory are yours,
Now and forever,
Amen.

Conclusion

Lord, all that I have done in your name, accept as my offering today.

Lord, as I journey through the wilderness with all my brothers and sisters in Christ, I ask that you send us with every blessing in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Amen.