

Church of the Redeemer

Lent 2014

An Order for Daily Prayer

First Sunday in Lent to the Saturday following



Introduction

Lent offers us an opportunity to be more intentional in our prayer-life – to enter more deeply into the conversation with God about who we are as God’s beloved. It is a time to listen to what God might be calling us to do and be and in turn to ask God to be with us as we seek out ways to love and serve God. It is a time to step forward – into something new or renewed. It is a time to step onto the path that God invites each of us to follow. The days of Lent will sometimes bring comfort and sometimes bring challenge as we seek to listen attentively. Perhaps it is helpful to remember that as we step into these days we have as our companions each other and we have Jesus. We can support and uphold one another and we can be supported and upheld by the one in whose steps we walk.

The order is designed such that you may enter into a time of prayer either in the morning or in the evening – whenever it fits the pattern of your day most easily. Please know that as you make time to pause and be with God, others in the parish are also praying alongside you. That is the wonderful thing about this discipline – while we may do this alone, we also do it in community.

Each Sunday a new booklet will be available following the worship service and on our website. You are welcome to keep the booklets each week. In addition we will post a brief excerpt from the daily prayers with an image on our Facebook page. We hope you’ll join us there, too.

It is our hope that this discipline becomes part of your journey from ashes to the cross to the empty tomb. In peace, let us pray.

Lent 1 to the Saturday Following

March 9 to March 15

We enter into a time of quiet. We offer to God our selves and in the silence know that God embraces us as God's very own. We offer to God our hopes and our concerns through our prayers and in the silence listen for God.

We begin by saying

Lord be gracious to us; we long for you. Be our strength every morning; our salvation in time of distress.

Isaiah 33.2

We continue with the Psalm

Happy are they whose transgressions are forgiven,
and whose sin is put away!

Happy are they to whom the Lord imputes no guilt,
and in whose spirit there is no guile!

While I held my tongue, my bones withered away,
because of my groaning all day long.

For your hand was heavy upon me day and night;
my moisture was dried up as in the heat of summer.

Then I acknowledged my sin to you,
and did not conceal my guilt.

I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord."

Then you forgave me the guilt of my sin.

Therefore all the faithful will make their prayers to you in
time of trouble;

when the great waters overflow, they shall not reach them.

In Peace We Pray

You are my hiding-place;
you preserve me from trouble;
 you surround me with shouts of deliverance.
“I will instruct you and teach you in the way that you
should go;
 I will guide you with my eye.
Do not be like horse or mule, which have no understanding;
 who must be fitted with bit and bridle,
 or else they will not stay near you.”
Great are the tribulations of the wicked;
 but mercy embraces those who trust in the Lord.
Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice in the Lord;
 shout for joy, all who are true of heart.

Psalm 32

We continue with the reading and the reflection beginning on page 8. In silence we ask what the reading has to say to us this day. Is there something in the reflection that draws us more deeply into the reading? What does God have to say to us? What do we have to ask God? When the time is right, we conclude our time of silence with the canticle below.

The Canticle ~ Song of Christ the Servant

Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example,
 that you should follow in his steps.
He committed no sin, no guile was found on his lips,
 when he was reviled, he did not revile in turn.
When he suffered, he did not threaten,

but he trusted himself to God who judges justly.
Christ himself bore our sins in his body on the tree,
that we might die to sin and live to righteousness.
By his wounds, you have been healed,
for you were straying like sheep,
but have now returned
to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

1 Peter 2.21b-25

The Intercessions

We continue in prayer for those people and situations that we hold up before God concluding with the prayer for the day, and the Lord's prayer

We offer prayers for the world
We offer prayers for the church, for all in leadership
We offer prayers for our community
We offer prayers for family and friends
We offers prayers of thanksgiving

Prayer for the Day

First Sunday in Lent

Almighty God, whose Son fasted forty days in the wilderness and was tempted in every way as we are, but did not sin: Give us grace to discipline ourselves in submission to your Spirit, that as you know our weakness, so we may know your power to save; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Monday

Almighty and everlasting God, mercifully increase in us your gifts of holy discipline, in almsgiving, prayer, and fasting, that our lives may be directed to the fulfilling of your gracious will; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Tuesday

Grant to your people, O Lord, grace to withstand the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil, and with pure hearts and minds to follow you, the only God; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.

Wednesday

Mercifully regard, O Lord, the devotion of your people, that those who through abstinence are disciplined in body, may through the fruit of good works be refreshed in spirit; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Thursday

Strengthen us, O Lord, by your grace, that in your might we may overcome all spiritual enemies, and with pure hearts give to you true and laudable service; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Friday

O God, grant us so to share in the sufferings of your Son Jesus Christ, that we may subdue the flesh to the spirit, and the spirit to you, and at the last attain to the glory of his resurrection.

Saturday

O God, by your Word you marvelously carry out the work of reconciliation. Grant that in our Lenten fast we may be devoted to you with all our hearts, and united with one another in prayer and holy charity; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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.

OR

God, who cares for us,
The wonder of whose presence fills us with awe,
Let justice, kindness and love shine in our world.
Let your secrets be known here as they are in heaven.
Give us the food and the hope we need for today.
Forgive us our wrongdoing
as we forgive the wrongs done to us.
Protect us from pride and from despair
and from the fear and hate which can swallow us up.
In you is truth, meaning, glory and power,
while worlds come and go. Amen.

We conclude our time of prayer

This is love, not that we loved God,
but that he loved us and sent his Son.
He is the sacrifice for our sins,
that we might live through him.
If God loves us so much
we ought to love one another.
If we love one another
God lives in us.

The Readings and Reflections

First Sunday in Lent

Reading

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished. The tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." But he answered, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

Matthew 4.1-4

Focus

When you are hungry what tempts you. Not just physical hunger but emotional and spiritual hunger, too. What tempts you? Do you look for the easy food that satisfies in the moment? Look beyond the bread to find the Bread of Life...

Monday

Reading

The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, “You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.”

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God say, ‘You shall not eat from any tree in the garden?’” The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.’” But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not die; for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.

Genesis 2.15-17, 3.1-7

Focus continued on the next page.

Focus

The temptation of that which delights is there. It calls our name. We desire it.

Were not the other fruits in the garden delightful? Were not the other trees good for food? How many times as we go about our day do we see clothing in a store window or a car parked at the curb; that we hear of a friend's vacation or notice a new restaurant and suddenly the clothing in a closet, the car in the driveway, the vacation we have planned or the cupboard full of food isn't enough. There is something more, something better that we desire, that we hope will delight us.

Do we seek more than we need? What do you seek this Lent? How are your eyes being opened?

Tuesday

Reading

Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'"

Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

Matthew 4.6-7

Focus

Do not put the Lord your God to the test.

We do that all the time, don't we?

God, if you really love me...

God, if this doesn't happen I will...

God, I promise...

In moments of despair; in times of feeling lost we ask, we beg, we plead. It is understandable that we do.

But...

what if we let go of the despair and trusted that God is there with us;

what if we stood still and trusted that God is there in the wandering;

what if we sat quietly and listened rather than bargained.

God is there. Waiting.

Wednesday

Reading

My child, when you come to serve the Lord,
prepare yourself for testing.
Set your heart right and be steadfast,
and do not be impetuous in time of calamity.
Cling to him and do not depart,
so that your last days may be prosperous.
Accept whatever befalls you,
and in times of humiliation be patient.
For gold is tested in the fire,
and those found acceptable, in the furnace of humiliation.
Trust in him, and he will help you;
make your ways straight, and hope in him.
You who fear the Lord, wait for his mercy;
do not stray, or else you may fall.
You who fear the Lord, trust in him,
and your reward will not be lost.
You who fear the Lord, hope for good things,
for lasting joy and mercy.
Consider the generations of old and see:
has anyone trusted in the Lord and been disappointed?
Or has anyone persevered in the fear of the Lord and been forsaken?
Or has anyone called upon him and been neglected?
For the Lord is compassionate and merciful;
he forgives sins and saves in time of distress.

Ecclesiasticus 2.1-11

Focus

*Trust in him, and he will help you;
make your ways straight, and hope in him.*

Trust is such a hard thing. So easily lost. So difficult to restore.

And yet. Trust is such a beautiful thing. It strengthens relationships. It comes from deep within the soul.

Is there someone whose trust you've lost? Is there someone you have hurt? Trust in God. Make the way right. Hope.

Thursday

Reading

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor; and he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.”

Jesus said to him, “Away with you, Satan! for it is written, ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him,’” Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

Matthew 4.8-11

Focus

Is there someone in your life who causes you to forget the right path? All they offer—friendship, gifts, belonging, meaning—costs you something. You know deep in your soul the price you pay. Do you need to let go?

Remember, God loves you—in all your strengths; in all your weaknesses. God loves you.

Let go.

Friday

Reading

One day the heavenly beings came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them. The LORD said to Satan, 'Where have you come from?' Satan answered the LORD, 'From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it.' The LORD said to Satan, 'Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man who fears God and turns away from evil.' Then Satan answered the LORD, 'Does Job fear God for nothing? Have you not put a fence around him and his house and all that he has, on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. But stretch out your hand now, and touch all that he has, and he will curse you to your face.' The LORD said to Satan, 'Very well, all that he has is in your power; only do not stretch out your hand against him!' So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.

Job 1.6-12

Focus

When life isn't going the way we want, do we blame God? God gives. God takes away. Is that how it works? What do you do when you feel God's absence in your life?

Saturday

Reading

My friends, if anyone is detected in a transgression, you who have received the Spirit should restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness. Take care that you yourselves are not tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfil the law of Christ. For if those who are nothing think they are something, they deceive themselves. All must test their own work; then that work, rather than their neighbour's work, will become a cause for pride. For all must carry their own loads.

Those who are taught the word must share in all good things with their teacher.

Do not be deceived; God is not mocked, for you reap whatever you sow. If you sow to your own flesh, you will reap corruption from the flesh; but if you sow to the Spirit, you will reap eternal life from the Spirit. So let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest time, if we do not give up. So then, whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all, and especially for those of the family of faith.

Galatians 6.1-10

Focus

When you read this passage, what word or phrase do you notice? Read the passage again and then come back to this focus

Carry that phrase or word with you today. Consider how God is speaking to you through it.

May it be a blessing to you.

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