

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

#### A Sentence of Scripture

Our citizenship is in heaven, and it is from there that we are expecting a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. Philippians 3.20

Let us pray.

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name, through Christ our Lord. **Amen**

#### **Two Great Commandments**

Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' Jesus said: 'This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: you shall love your neighbour as yourself.'  
**Lord, have mercy on us: and write your law in our hearts by your Holy Spirit.**

#### *Prayer of the Day*

God of our ancestors, whose chosen servant Abraham was given faith to obey your call and go out into the unknown: endow your Church with such faith that we may follow you with courage; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

#### **Isaiah 55.1-9**

<sup>1</sup> Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you that have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

<sup>2</sup> Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which does not satisfy? Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food.

<sup>3</sup> Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live.

I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David.

<sup>4</sup> See, I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples. <sup>5</sup> See, you shall call nations that you do not know, and nations that do not know you shall run to you, because of the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has glorified you.

<sup>6</sup> Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near;

<sup>7</sup> let the wicked forsake their way, and the unrighteous their thoughts; let them return to the Lord, that he may have mercy on them, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

<sup>8</sup> For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord.

<sup>9</sup> For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

#### **Psalms 63.1-9**

<sup>1</sup> O God, you are my God: eagerly will I seek you.

<sup>2</sup> My soul thirsts for you, my flesh longs for you: as a dry and thirsty land where no water is.

<sup>3</sup> So it was when I beheld you in the sanctuary: and saw your power and your glory.

<sup>4</sup> For your unchanging goodness is better than life: therefore my lips shall praise you.

<sup>5</sup> And so I will bless you as long as I live: and in your name will I lift my hands on high.

<sup>6</sup> My longing shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness: my mouth shall praise you with exultant lips.

<sup>7</sup> When I remember you upon my bed: when I meditate upon you in the night watches,

<sup>8</sup> How you have been my helper: then I sing for joy in the shadow of your wings,

<sup>9</sup> Then my soul clings to you: and your right hand upholds me.

## 1 Corinthians 10.1-13

<sup>1</sup> I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, <sup>2</sup> and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, <sup>3</sup> and all ate the same spiritual food, <sup>4</sup> and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ.

<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them, and they were struck down in the wilderness. <sup>6</sup> Now these things occurred as examples for us, so that we might not desire evil as they did. <sup>7</sup> Do not become idolaters as some of them did; as it is written, 'The people sat down to eat and drink, and they rose up to play.'

<sup>8</sup> We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. <sup>9</sup> We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did, and were destroyed by serpents. <sup>10</sup> And do not complain as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer.

<sup>11</sup> These things happened to them to serve as an example, and they were written down to instruct us, on whom the ends of the ages have come. <sup>12</sup> So if you think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall. <sup>13</sup> No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone.

God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it.

## Luke 13.31-35

<sup>31</sup> At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to him, 'Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you.'

<sup>32</sup> He said to them, 'Go and tell that fox for me, "Listen, I am casting out demons and performing cures today and tomorrow, and on the third day I finish my work. <sup>33</sup> Yet today, tomorrow, and the next day I must be on my way, because it is impossible for a prophet to be killed away from Jerusalem."

<sup>34</sup> Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!

<sup>35</sup> See, your house is left to you. And I tell you, you will not see me until the time comes when you say, "Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord."

This is the Gospel of the Lord, **praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

## Sermon

### The Nicene Creed

**We believe in one God, the Father, the almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father; through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.**

**We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.**

**We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

**Through Christ, then, let us continually offer a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that confess his name.**

### **The Prayers**

Let us pray for all people, and for the Church throughout the world.

Almighty and everliving God, we are taught by your holy apostle to make prayers and supplications and to give thanks for all people: we ask you in your mercy [to accept our alms and oblations and] to receive our prayers which we offer to your divine majesty.

We pray that you will lead the nations of the world in the ways of righteousness and peace, and guide their rulers in wisdom and justice for the tranquillity and goodofall. Bless especially your servant Elizabeth our Queen, her representatives and ministers, her parliaments, and all who exercise authority in this land. Grant that they may impartially administer justice, restrain wickedness and vice, and uphold integrity and truth.

We beseech you to inspire continually the universal Church with the spirit of truth, unity, and concord; and grant that all who confess your holy name may agree in the truth of your holy word, and live in unity and godly love.

Give grace, heavenly Father, to all bishops and other ministers (especially N our bishop and...), that, by their life and doctrine, they may set forth your true, life-giving word, and rightly and duly administer your holy sacraments. And to all your people give your heavenly grace, and especially to this congregation here present, that they may receive your word with meek hearts and due reverence and serve you in holiness and righteousness all the days of their life.

We ask you of your goodness, Lord, to comfort and sustain all who in this transitory life are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity.

We also bless your holy name for all your servants who have died in the faith of Christ. Give us grace to follow their good examples, that with them we may be partakers of your heavenly kingdom. Grant this, Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, our only mediator and advocate. **Amen**

Brothers and sisters in Christ, we who would come to the holy communion of the body and blood of our Saviour Christ must consider how St Paul exhorts us to examine ourselves before presuming to eat of that bread and drink of that cup.

For the benefit is great, if with a penitent heart and lively faith we receive that holy sacrament. We then spiritually eat the flesh of Christ and drink his blood; we dwell in Christ and he in us; we are one with Christ and Christ with us.

Yet also the danger is great, if we receive the bread and cup unworthily. Judge yourselves therefore, that you be not judged of the Lord. Repent truly of your sins, having a steadfast faith in Christ our Saviour. Amend your lives and love your neighbour.

Above all, give hearty thanks to God for the redemption of the world by the death and passion of our Saviour Christ, truly God and truly human, who humbled himself to death on the cross for us sinners, that he might make us children of God, and raise us to eternal life.

### **Confession**

**Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
maker of all things, judge of all people,  
we acknowledge with shame the sins we have committed,**

**by thought, word, and deed, against your divine majesty, provoking most justly your wrath and indignation**

**against us.**

**We earnestly repent, and are heartily sorry for all our misdoings.**

**Have mercy on us, most merciful Father.**

**For your Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake**

**forgive us all that is past,**

**and grant that we may ever hereafter**

**serve and please you in newness of life,**

**to the honour and glory of your name,**

**through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

*The priest, or bishop if present, stands and pronounces this Absolution.*

Almighty God our heavenly Father, who of his great mercy has promised forgiveness of sins to all who with hearty repentance and true faith turn to him: have mercy on you; pardon and deliver you from all your sins; confirm and strengthen you in all goodness; and keep you in eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to you, Lord, Mighty Creator, and Eternal God.

Therefore with angels and archangels, and with the whole company of heaven, we proclaim your great and glorious name, evermore praising you, and saying:

**Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Glory to you, O Lord most high.**

We do not presume  
to come to your table, merciful Lord,  
trusting in our own righteousness,  
but in your manifold and great mercies.

We are not worthy  
so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table.

But you are the same Lord  
whose nature is always to have mercy.

Grant us, therefore, gracious Lord,  
so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ,  
and to drink his blood,  
that we may evermore dwell in him,  
and he in us.

**Amen.**

All glory to you, our heavenly Father, for in your tender mercy you gave your only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death on the cross for our redemption: who made there, by his one oblation of himself once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world; and instituted, and in his holy gospel commanded us to continue, a perpetual memory of his precious death until his coming again.

Hear us, merciful Father, we humbly pray, and grant that we who receive these gifts of your creation, this bread and this wine, according to your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ's holy institution,

in remembrance of his death and passion, may be partakers of his most blessed body and blood; who on the night he was betrayed took bread<sup>1</sup>, and when he had given you thanks, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, 'Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me.' Likewise after supper he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them saying, 'Drink from this, all of you; for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you and for many for the remission of sins; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.'

### **Amen**

The body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for you, preserve your body and soul to everlasting life; take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your heart by faith with thanksgiving.

The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for you, preserve your body and soul to everlasting life; drink this in remembrance that Christ's blood was shed for you, and be thankful.

### **Prayer after Communion**

Lord and heavenly Father, we your humble servants entirely desire your fatherly goodness mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, and to grant that, by the merits and death of your Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in his blood, we and your whole Church may receive forgiveness of our sins and all other benefits of his passion.

And here we offer and present to you, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice, humbly beseeching you that all we who are partakers of this holy communion may be fulfilled with your grace and heavenly benediction.

And although we are unworthy, through our many sins, to offer you any sacrifice, yet we pray that you will accept this, our bounden duty and service, not weighing our merits but pardoning our offences, through Jesus Christ our Lord; by whom and with whom, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honour and glory are yours, Father, world without end. **Amen.**

**Glory to God in the highest,  
and peace to God's people on earth.**

**Lord God, heavenly King,  
almighty God and Father,  
we worship you, we give you thanks,  
we praise you for your glory.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,**

**Lord God, Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world:**

**have mercy on us;**

**you are seated at the right hand of the Father:  
receive our prayer.**

**For you alone are the Holy One,**

**you alone are the Lord,**

**you alone are the Most High**

**Jesus Christ,**

**with the Holy Spirit,**

**in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

*The priest, or bishop if present, lets the people depart with this Blessing.*

The peace of God which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be amongst you, and remain with you always. **Amen**



On the second Sunday of Lent we start by looking at the Journey to Jerusalem and what would have happened there. As our readings progress through Lent so will we hear more about that Journey

In today's reading some of the moderate Pharisees come to Jesus and warn him that Herod wants to kill him. We know that this is no idle threat because Herod has already killed John the Baptist. However, Jesus knows his destiny and he knows that Herod will be only a bit player in the drama of the crucifixion, so he dismisses that old fox and talks about his mission to the people that God loves.

It will not be literally three days until he gets to Jerusalem but a figurative three days, three days are a symbolic amount because Jesus needs to do his mission and then complete it on the third day. As we all remember Jesus was in the temple when he was twelve for three days and he will be in the tomb three days, it is all drawing attention to that perfect number 3. The trinity.



It is common for mother hens to protect their chicks by covering them with their wings. Anytime there is danger the mother hen calls her chicks, and they are safe. Sometimes the mother hen dies from fire or other danger, but the chicks emerge safe at the end. This is what makes this analogy so apt, Jesus knows quite well that he is about to die for the people.

Jesus loves his people even more than a hen loves her chicks, but the people of his time would not, could not recognise the danger and would not come to Jesus to be saved.

In hindsight we can see what Jesus' journey to Jerusalem is going to mean. Israel's greatest crisis is coming upon her, and Jesus is offering an urgent summons to repent, to come to his kingdom-way, his way of peace.



Jesus' intention, in obedience to his vocation, is to go to Jerusalem, that city that stones the prophets, and like the hen with her chicks to take upon himself the full force of that disaster. He will give himself on behalf of the many.



During Lent we prepare ourselves for Easter when we remember that Jesus did die for us and rise again. You could say we are on a journey to Easter as we follow Jesus on his journey.



Jesus knew all along what his destiny was going to be, he lived his whole ministry blessing, healing and comforting people, telling them the good news, and all that knowing that he was going to die for them and for us. In some sense Jesus carried his cross his whole ministry.

"Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord." Is a phrase from Psalm 118 which is a processional hymn sung by the pilgrims as they approach the temple. So, Jesus is saying that they will not see him again until they recognise who he truly is. Although his disciples chanted this Psalm on Palm Sunday the authorities never recognized Him on this earth.



Our reading from Corinthians is mostly a warning not to behave like those people who rejected Jesus but ends with this promise.

<sup>13</sup> No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it. Whenever we are tempted to behave like those people, God will give us the strength to resist because He is Faithful.

Jesus was faithful on earth and fulfilled his destiny to die for us. God is faithful and he will walk with us through every trial and temptation, every testing.

God is faithful. We know He loves us with an everlasting love and wants to bless us in every way and yet there are times when things happen in our lives, and we think 'it has all gone wrong, what is God doing?'



This week I have been at Clergy Retreat at Galong. I don't know if you know it but it is a beautiful old monastery beyond Yass. Lovely countryside. Nice rooms, great food, and a labyrinth. Whenever I am there, I try to walk the labyrinth every day.

With COVID they have had to cut down on ground staff so this year the labyrinth had a few weeds. Each day I pulled a couple out.

A labyrinth is a journey in itself. You follow the path and sometimes, you are so close to the centre, you could just step over the few rocks and be there, sometimes you are back at the very edge, sometimes you are almost back where you started but you just keep following the path. Sometimes the path stretches ahead of you and you feel like you're really making progress, then suddenly the path takes a U turn, sometimes the path is short and then you take another turn.



But the whole time you just trust the path maker and unlike a maze, there are no dead ends, no false paths and finally you arrive at the centre.

I love labyrinths, I see so many parallels with life and with our journey through Lent.

In my life God has taken me to places that were my idea of heaven and then taken me away again, there have been paths that seemed to be endless delight which have turned suddenly to nothing, and paths which seemed to be very short which have opened to wonderful times. U turns and times when I thought I might soon arrive, and times when the path seemed to be leading in totally the wrong direction but also my Lord has led me on and I know that I will never reach my destination in this life but I know that I can totally trust the path maker and he will lead me through many wonderful places but eventually home.

Wherever you are in your life right now, God is a loving God and he will look after you, he will take you to those places of blessing in his time. You don't have to understand you only have to trust.

As we read in Isaiah:<sup>9</sup> For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. Says the Lord.



Just as Jesus turned his face to Jerusalem so too in Lent we turn our face to look at our sins and anything which is holding us back from walking the path that Jesus is calling us to walk. Sometimes things that have no vice in them at all are just not right for us at this time. It was traditional to give up things for lent but it was never dsigned to punish us but as a way to cut ourselves off from things which are holding us back.

One year I gave up a computer game which was taking way to much of my time. I was sneaking off to play it whenever I could find five minutes. It was not a good use of my time so I gave it up for lent and never went back to it. Most years I give up chocolate and or wine and go back to them after Easter but when I go back to them I am not bound to them, I enjoy them but I know that I don't need them, they have no power over me.



So this Lent as you walk the path with our Lord, do notice if he points out any weeds you need to remove, and trust him to lead you to the place where you need to be.