

Sunday 3rd March 2019: the SUNDAY before LENT (Transfiguration)

Collect

Almighty Father, whose Son was revealed in majesty before he suffered death upon the cross: give us grace to perceive his glory, that we may be strengthened to suffer with him and be changed into his likeness, from glory to glory; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

A reading from the Book of Exodus

Exodus 34. 29-35

Moses came down from Mount Sinai. As he came down from the mountain with the two tablets of the covenant in his hand, Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with God. When Aaron and all the Israelites saw Moses, the skin of his face was shining, and they were afraid to come near him. But Moses called to them; and Aaron and all the leaders of the congregation returned to him, and Moses spoke with them. Afterwards all the Israelites came near, and he gave them in commandment all that the Lord had spoken with him on Mount Sinai. When Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil on his face; but whenever Moses went in before the Lord to speak with him, he would take the veil off, until he came out; and when he came out, and told the Israelites what he had been commanded, the Israelites would see the face of Moses, that the skin of his face was shining; and Moses would put the veil on his face again, until he went in to speak with him.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 99

1 The Lord is king, and the peoples tremble:

he sitteth enthroned upon the cherubim and the earth is shaken.

2 The Lord is great in Zion:

he is exalted over all the peoples.

3 They give thanks unto his name, which is great and terrible:

holy is he and mighty, a King who loveth justice.

4 Thou hast established equity:

thou has executed justice and righteousness in Jacob.

5 O magnify the Lord our God:

and bow down before his footstool, for he is holy.

6 Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among such as call upon his name:

these cried unto the Lord and he answered them.

7 He spake unto them out of the pillar of cloud:

they kept his testimonies and the law that he gave them.

8 Thou didst answer them O Lord our God:

thou wast a God who forgave them, yet punished their evil doings.

9 O magnify the Lord our God:

and bow down toward his holy hill, for the Lord our God is holy.

A reading from the Second Letter of Paul to the Corinthians

2 Cor 3.12- 4.2

Since, then, we have such a hope, we act with great boldness, not like Moses, who put a veil over his face to keep the people of Israel from gazing at the end of the glory that was being set aside. But their minds were hardened. Indeed, to this very day, when they hear the reading of the old covenant, that same veil is still there, since only in Christ is it set aside. Indeed, to this very day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their minds; but when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And all of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord, the Spirit.

Therefore, since it is by God's mercy that we are engaged in this ministry, we do not lose heart. We have renounced the shameful things that one hides; we refuse to practise cunning or to falsify God's word; but by the open statement of the truth we commend ourselves to the conscience of everyone in the sight of God.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Listen to the Gospel of Christ according to Saint Luke.

Luke 9. 28-36

Glory to you, O Lord.

Now about eight days after these sayings Jesus took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray. And while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white. Suddenly they saw two men, Moses and Elijah, talking to him. They appeared in glory and were speaking of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. Now Peter and his companions were weighed down with sleep; but since they had stayed awake, they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. Just as they were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, 'Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah' - not knowing what he said. While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were terrified as they entered the cloud. Then from the cloud came a voice that said, 'This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!' When the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and in those days told no one any of the things they had seen.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sunday 10th March 2019: the FIRST SUNDAY of LENT

Collect

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. **Amen.**

A reading from the Book of Deuteronomy

Deuteronomy 26. 1-11

When you have come into the land that the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance to possess, and you possess it, and settle in it, you shall take some of the first of all the fruit of the ground, which you harvest from the land that the Lord your God is giving you, and you shall put it in a basket and go to the place that the Lord your God will choose as a dwelling for his name. You shall go to the priest who is in office at that time, and say to him, 'Today I declare to the Lord your God that I have come into the land that the Lord swore to our ancestors to give us.' When the priest takes the basket from your hand and sets it down before the altar of the Lord your God, you shall make this response before the Lord your God: 'A wandering Aramean was my ancestor; he went down into Egypt and lived there as an alien, few in number, and there he became a great nation, mighty and populous. When the Egyptians treated us harshly and afflicted us, by imposing hard labour on us, we cried to the Lord, the God of our ancestors; the Lord heard our voice and saw our affliction, our toil, and our oppression. The Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with a terrifying display of power, and with signs and wonders; and he brought us into this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. So now I bring the first of the fruit of the ground that you, O Lord, have given me.' You shall set it down before the Lord your God and bow down before the Lord your God. Then you, together with the Levites and the aliens who reside among you, shall celebrate with all the bounty that the Lord your God has given to you and to your house.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 91. 1, 2, 9-16

- 1 Whoso dwelleth under the defence of the Most High:
and abideth under the shadow of the Almighty,
2 Shall say unto the Lord 'Thou art my refuge and my stronghold:
my God in whom I trust.
9 Because thou hast said 'The Lord is my refuge':
and hast made the Most High thy stronghold,
10 There shall be no evil happen unto thee:
neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.
11 For he shall give his angels charge over thee:
to keep thee in all thy ways.
12 They shall bear thee in their hands:

that thou hurt not thy foot against a stone.
13 Thou shalt tread upon the asp and the adder:
the viper and the serpent shalt thou trample under thy feet.
14 Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him:
I will set him up because he hath known my name.
15 'He shall call upon me and I will hear him:
yea I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him and bring him to honour.
16 'With long life will I satisfy him:
and give him freely of my saving help.'

A reading from St Paul's Letter to the Romans

Romans 10. 8b-13

'The word is near you, on your lips and in your heart' (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); because if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved. The scripture says, 'No one who believes in him will be put to shame.' For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him. For, 'Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.'

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Listen to the Gospel of Christ according to Saint Luke.

Luke 4. 1-13

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished. The devil said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread.' Jesus answered him, 'It is written, "One does not live by bread alone."'

Then the devil led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And the devil said to him, 'To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.' Jesus answered him, 'It is written, "Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him."'

Then the devil took him to Jerusalem, and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, 'If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written, "He will command his angels concerning you, to protect you", and "On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone."' Jesus answered him, 'It is said, "Do not put the Lord your God to the test."' When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sunday 17th March 2019: the SECOND SUNDAY of LENT

Collect

Almighty God, you show to those who are in error the light of your truth, that they may return to the way of righteousness: grant that all who are admitted into the fellowship of Christ's religion, may reject those things that are contrary to their baptism, and follow in the way of Jesus Christ our Lord; who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

A reading from the Book of Genesis

Genesis 15. 1-12, 17, 18

After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, 'Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great.' But Abram said, 'O Lord God, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?' And Abram said, 'You have given me no offspring, and so a slave born in my house is to be my heir.' But the word of the Lord came to him, 'This man shall not be your heir; no one but your very own issue shall be your heir.' He brought him outside and said, 'Look towards heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them.' Then he said to him, 'So shall your descendants be.' And he believed the Lord; and the Lord reckoned it to him as righteousness.

Then he said to him, 'I am the Lord who brought you from Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess.' But he said, 'O Lord God, how am I to know that I shall possess it?' He said to him, 'Bring me a heifer three years old, a female goat three years old, a ram three years old, a turtle-dove, and a young pigeon.' He brought him all these and cut them in two, laying each half over against the other; but he did not cut the birds in two. And when birds of prey came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away. As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram, and a deep and terrifying darkness descended upon him.

When the sun had gone down and it was dark, a smoking fire-pot and a flaming torch passed between these pieces. On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, 'To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates.'

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 27

1 The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom then shall I fear:

the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom then shall I be afraid?

2 When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh:

they stumbled and fell to the ground.

3 Though an host of men were encamped against me, yet shall not my heart be afraid: and though there rose up war against me, yet will I put my trust in him.

4 One thing have I desired of the Lord that I long for:

even that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life.

5 To behold the fair beauty of the Lord:

and to seek him in his temple.

6 For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his shadow:

yea in the secret place of his dwelling shall he hide me, and set me up upon a rock of stone.

A reading from St Paul's Letter to the Philippians

Philippians 3.17- 4.1

Brothers and sisters; join in imitating me and observe those who live according to the example you have in us. For many live as enemies of the cross of Christ; I have often told you of them, and now I tell you even with tears. Their end is destruction; their god is the belly; and their glory is in their shame; their minds are set on earthly things. But our citizenship is in heaven, and it is from there that we are expecting a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. He will transform the body of our humiliation so that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, by the power that also enables him to make all things subject to himself.

Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Listen to the Gospel of Christ according to Saint Luke.

Luke 13. 31-35

Glory to you, O Lord.

At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to him, 'Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you.' 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. 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." 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! 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, O Christ.

Sunday 24th March 2019: the THIRD SUNDAY of LENT

Collect

Almighty God, whose most dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain, and entered not into glory before he was crucified: mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross, may find it none other than the way of life and peace; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

A reading from the Prophet Isaiah

Isaiah 55. 1-9

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. 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. 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. See, I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples. 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.

Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near; 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. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 63. 1-8

1 O God thou art my God:

right early will I seek thee.

2 My soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh also longeth after thee:

as in a barren and dry land where no water is.

3 Thus have I looked upon thee in thy holy place:

that I might behold thy power and glory.

4 Because thy loving-kindness is better than life itself:

therefore my lips shall give thee praise.

5 As long as I live will I magnify thee:

and lift up my hands in thy name.

6 My soul is satisfied, even as it were with marrow and fatness:

and my mouth praiseth thee with joyful lips.

7 When I remember thee upon my bed:

and think of thee in the watches of the night,

8 How that thou hast been my helper:

and under the shadow of thy wings have I found refuge,

A reading from the First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians

1 Cor 10. 1-13

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, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ. Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them, and they were struck down in the wilderness.

Now these things occurred as examples for us, so that we might not desire evil as they did. 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.' We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did, and were destroyed by serpents. And do not complain as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. 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. So if you think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall. 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.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Listen to the Gospel of Christ according to Saint Luke.

Luke 13. 1-9

Glory to you, O Lord.

At that very time there were some present who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. He asked them, 'Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them - do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others living in Jerusalem? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did.'

Then he told this parable: 'A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. So he said to the gardener, "See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?" He replied, "Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig round it and put manure on it. If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down."'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sunday 31st March 2019: MOTHERING SUNDAY

Collect

God of compassion, whose Son Jesus Christ, the child of Mary, shared the life of a home in Nazareth, and on the cross drew the whole human family to himself: strengthen us in our daily living that in joy and in sorrow we may know the power of your presence to bind together and to heal; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

A reading from the First Letter of Samuel

1 Samuel 1. 20-28

In due time Hannah conceived and bore a son. She named him Samuel, for she said, 'I have asked him of the Lord.'

The man Elkanah and all his household went up to offer to the Lord the yearly sacrifice, and to pay his vow. But Hannah did not go up, for she said to her husband, 'As soon as the child is weaned, I will bring him, that he may appear in the presence of the Lord, and remain there for ever; I will offer him as a nazirite for all time.' Her husband Elkanah said to her, 'Do what seems best to you, wait until you have weaned him; only - may the Lord establish his word.' So the woman remained and nursed her son, until she weaned him. When she had weaned him, she took him up with her, along with a three-year-old bull, an ephah of flour, and a skin of wine. She brought him to the house of the Lord at Shiloh; and the child was young. Then they slaughtered the bull, and they brought the child to Eli. And she said, 'Oh, my lord! As you live, my lord, I am the woman who was standing here in your presence, praying to the Lord. For this child I prayed; and the Lord has granted me the petition that I made to him. Therefore I have lent him to the Lord; as long as he lives, he is given to the Lord.'

She left him there for the Lord.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 127. 1-4

1 Except the Lord build the house:
their labour is but lost that build it.

2 Except the Lord keep the city:
the watchman waketh but in vain.

3 It is but lost labour that ye rise up early and so late take rest, eating the bread of your toil:

for he blesseth his beloved in their beds;

4 Lo children are an heritage from the Lord:
and the fruit of the womb is a gift that cometh from him.

A reading from the St Paul's Letter to the Colossians

Colossians 3. 12-17

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Listen to the Gospel of Christ according to Saint John.

John 19. 25-27

Glory to you, O Lord.

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, 'Woman, here is your son.' Then he said to the disciple, 'Here is your mother.' And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.