

Prayer Resources



for use at home
Lent & Easter 2021
The North Wakefield Benefice

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During the first and second lockdowns, we have produced booklets for use at home, and this third edition is designed to offer spiritual resources and prayers for use at home during Lent 2021 and into Easter.

We hope that by Easter all four of our churches will be open for worship in person, but this booklet is there to help you 'bridge the gap' between lockdown, individual churches going back and the whole team returning to worship.

We've included a variety of resources from different traditions, including reprinting our 'simple forms of prayer' from the first booklet, short prayers for use during Lent and Easter, acts of Spiritual Communion and prayer during the day you may want to use when you can't get to the church, and some things specific to Lent and Easter, such as the examination of conscience and an acclamation of the resurrection.

The members of the Ministry Team are available for chats, pastoral conversations and 'Spiritual MOTs' where you talk about your prayer life. Father Jonathan and Mother Jo also hear formal, sacramental confessions. We hope you have a meaningful Lent and a joyful Easter when it comes.

Simple Forms of Prayer

- Lighting a candle before you pray can help you to focus and listen.

- Jesus taught us the Lord's Prayer so that we would always have words to say. Use it!

- The "Examen". Don't let the name put you off! This is a very simple way to prayerfully review your day with God in five steps:
 1. Become aware of God's presence, or ask God to help you remember he's there with you.
 2. Review the day with gratitude (as best you can!)
 3. Pay attention to how you're feeling about it.
 4. Choose one feature of the day and pray about it.
 5. Look toward tomorrow. What do you expect the day to hold? Ask God to help you remember he's with you.

- Lectio Divina: again, if this is new to you, don't let the name put you off. Lectio helps you to read the Bible in a prayerful way. Pick a short passage of Scripture (it can be anything you like, but if you're stuck, parables of Jesus or the shorter Psalms are a good choice). Read it through, slowly, two or three times. Notice what jumps out at you,

and ask yourself, what is God saying to me here? Reflect on this for a few minutes. Then, read the passage again. Now ask yourself, what do I want to say to God? - then say it. Lastly, sit quietly and know that God is with you.

Some Collects and Other Prayers To Say during Lent

The Collect for Ash Wednesday, used every day during Lent in the old Book of Common Prayer

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God,
who hatest nothing that thou hast made,
and dost forgive the sins of all them that are penitent:
Create and make in us new and contrite hearts,
that we worthily lamenting our sins,
and acknowledging our wretchedness,
may obtain of thee, the God of all mercy,
perfect remission and forgiveness;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Prayers for the start of the Lenten journey

Almighty God,
we pray that through this season of Lent,
by prayer and study and self-discipline,
we may penetrate more deeply
into the mystery of Christ's sufferings;

that, following in the way of his cross and passion,
we may come to share
in the the glory and triumph of his resurrection;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Good Jesu,
too late have I loved thee,
nor ever yet have I wholly followed thee;
make me now at last wholly to love thee,
and out of the fullness of thine infinite love
give me all the love I might have had, had I always loved thee.
O dearest Lord, too late have I loved thee,
too late have I loved thee,
too later is it always, not to have loved thee wholly.
Now, too, I cannot love thee as I would.
O dearest Lord, who art love,
give me of thine own love,
that therewith I may wholly love thee.

A Prayer to say when in need of God's help

Almighty God,
you see that we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves:
keep us both outwardly in our bodies,
and inwardly in our souls;
that we may be defended from all adversities
 which may happen to the body,
and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul;

through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

An Eastern Orthodox prayer before the cross

We venerate the wood of thy Cross, O thou who lovest mankind, for upon it thou, the life of all, wast nailed. O Saviour, though has opened paradise who turned to thee in faith, and those hast counted him worthy of blessedness when he conessed to thee crying, 'O Lord remember me.' Accept us like him, as we cry: We all have sinned, in thy merciful kindness despise us not.

A prayer of confession

Almighty and most merciful Father,
we have wandered and strayed from your ways
like lost sheep.
We have followed too much the devices and desires
of our own hearts.
We have offended against your holy laws.
We have left undone those things
that we ought to have done;
and we have done those things
that we ought not to have done;
and there is no health in us.
But you, O Lord, have mercy upon us sinners.
Spare those who confess their faults.
Restore those who are penitent,
according to your promises declared to mankind

in Christ Jesus our Lord.

And grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake,
that we may live a disciplined, righteous and godly life,
to the glory of your holy name.

Amen.

The 'family prayer' from the Good Friday service

Almighty Father,

look with mercy on this your family
for which our Lord Jesus Christ was content to be betrayed
and given up into the hands of sinners
and to suffer death upon the cross;
who is alive and glorified with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen.

A prayer from Good Friday for the whole church

O God of unchangeable power and eternal light,
look favourably on your whole Church,
that wonderful and sacred mystery,
and by the tranquil operation of your perpetual providence
carry out the work of our salvation:
and let the whole world feel and see
that things which were cast down are being raised up
and things which had grown old are being made new
and that all things are returning to perfection
through him from whom they took their origin,
even 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.

Prayers before sleeping

Be present, O merciful God,
and protect us through the silent hours of this night,
so that we who are wearied
by the changes and chances of this fleeting world,
may rest upon your eternal changelessness;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God,
who at this evening hour lay in the tomb
and so hallowed the grave
to be a bed of hope for all who put their trust in you:
give us such sorrow for our sins,
which were the cause of your passion,
that when our bodies lie in the dust,
our souls may live with you forever. Amen.

Sometimes sitting in silence can be a powerful way to pray. Ask
the Holy Spirit to lead you.

A Cycle of Prayers from Jesus' Passion

These are Jesus' own prayers, taken from his words during the Last Supper, his Passion, his Crucifixion and his Resurrection. You may want to pray them as a cycle of prayers or individually.

In the Upper Room - Jesus prays for everyone who will one day believe the gospel

"I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me." (John 17.20-23)

In the Garden of Gethsemane - Jesus prays for himself and for all who face great trials

'Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me; yet, not what I want, but what you want.' (Mark 14.36)

At the Nailing - Jesus prays for his persecutors

'Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.' (Luke 23.34)

At the Darkness - Jesus prays to the Father

‘Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?’ which means, ‘My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?’ (Mark 15.34)

‘Father, into your hands I commend my spirit’ (Luke 23.46)

At Emmaus - Jesus blesses and breaks bread

As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. But they urged him strongly, saying, ‘Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.’ So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. (Luke 24.28-30)

A Form of Prayer During the Day

This is a form of prayer, sometimes called an ‘office’, which you can use on its own, or use to expand your daily ‘quiet time’ with the Bible. If you are doing the latter, then replace the suggested readings with the ones your Bible notes/ plan suggest. You might also choose to use the “Daily Eucharistic Lectionary” readings, or the readings for Morning or Evening Prayer, which are available online (<http://almanac.oremus.org>). You should always say a Psalm, but you could use a different order than the ones here. The simplest is to work through the Book of Psalms using a Psalm a day (perhaps splitting some of them).

When saying this office alone, say both the parts in plain and in bold.

O God, make speed to save us.

O Lord, make haste to help us.

Hear my prayer, O Lord, and give ear to my cry;

hold not your peace at my tears.

Praise - you could sing a hymn, listen to music, or say
Jesus, like a mother you gather your people to you;
you are gentle with us as a mother with her children.
Despair turns to hope through your sweet goodness;
through your gentleness we find comfort in fear.
Your warmth gives life to the dead,
your touch makes sinners righteous.
Lord Jesus, in your mercy heal us;
in your love and tenderness remake us.
In your compassion bring grace and forgiveness,
for the beauty of heaven may your love prepare us.

Anselm (1109)

Read a Psalm (see table)

End the Psalm with:

**Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

Bible Reading, eg

Sunday: Romans 6.3-5, Monday: Joel 2.12-14, Tuesday: I Corinthians 9.24-end, Wednesday: Romans 7.21-25a, Thursday: Isaiah 58.6-9a, Friday: Matthew 6.1-4, Saturday: Luke 10.38-end.

Intercessions: pray for the Church, the world, and for individuals.

This, or another collect is said:

Teach us, good Lord, to serve you as you deserve;
to give and not to count the cost;
to fight and not to heed the wounds;
to toil and not to seek for rest;
to labour and not to seek for any reward,
save that of knowing that we do your will. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer is said.

May God bless us and show us compassion and mercy. **Amen.**

Appendix - a weekly cycle of Psalms for Lent and Passiontide

Sunday	51.1-10
Monday	3
Tuesday	6
Wednesday	11
Thursday	12
Friday	32

Saturday	61
Sundays from 21 March	22.1-11
Monday from 22 March	43
Tuesdays from 23 March	142
Wednesday from 24 March	143
Thursdays from 25 March	23
Fridays from 26 March	69.1-13
Saturdays from 27 March	130

Common Worship: Daily Prayer - Prayer During the Day (adapted).

Some More Well-Known Bible Passages To Read

Psalm 23	Jeremiah 29.11-13
Psalm 27	Psalm 139
Isaiah 43.1-21	Habbakuk 3.17-19
Matthew 6.25-34	Matthew 11.25-29
John 14.1-7	John 17:1-26
Romans 8.18-38	Colossians 3.12-17
Philippians 4.1-13	1 Corinthians 13

A Prayer for Assurance of Christ's Presence ("An Act of Spiritual Communion").

Begin with the Collect for Ash Wednesday (p 7), and then read the Gospel for Sunday, or another appropriate passage of Scripture (e.g. Luke 22.14-30).

Examine your heart and confess your sins to God, using your own words or the prayer of confession on p 6, and then say

The Almighty and merciful Lord, grant me pardon and absolution of all my sins. Amen.

Then say

In union, O Lord with the faithful at every altar of your Church, where the Holy Eucharist is celebrated, I desire to offer you praise and thanksgiving. I present to you my soul and body with the earnest wish that I may always be united to you. And since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, I ask you to come spiritually into my heart. I unite myself to you, and embrace you with all the affections of my soul. Let nothing ever separate you from me. May I live and die in your love. Amen.

(“The Armed Forces Prayerbook” (The Episcopal Church USA), 1951, adapted).

You might like to sit in silence for a while. Finish your time of prayer by saying the Lord’s Prayer.

An Examination of Conscience

In the Roman Catholic Church, an examination of conscience is used as a preparation for confession. If you go to confession, you may find this a helpful way of preparing, but you can also use it as a way of thinking about your life, how you live it and whether you are making space to love

God and your neighbour. There are many ways of going through how you live your life. Often they use the Ten Commandments or the Seven Deadly Sins, but we offer two here, one using the Ten Commandments and one based on the seven themes of Catholic Social Teaching.

A Brief Examination of Conscience based on the Ten Commandments

I am the Lord your God: you shall not have strange Gods before me.

Have I treated people, events, or things as more important than God?

You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.

Have my words, actively or passively, put down God, the Church, or people?

Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day.

Do I go to Mass every Sunday and on Holy Days of Obligation (when safe to do so)? Do I avoid, when possible, work that impedes worship to God, joy for the Lord's Day, and proper relaxation of mind and body? Do I look for ways to spend time with family or in service on Sunday?

Honor your father and your mother.

Do I show my parents due respect? Do I seek to maintain good communication with my parents where possible? Do I criticize them for lacking skills I think they should have?

You shall not kill.

Have I harmed another through physical, verbal, or emotional means, including gossip or manipulation of any kind?

You shall not commit adultery.

Have I respected the physical and sexual dignity of others and of myself?

You shall not steal.

Have I taken or wasted time or resources that belonged to another?

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

Have I gossiped, told lies, or embellished stories at the expense of another?

You shall not covet your neighbor's spouse.

Have I honored my spouse with my full affection and exclusive love?

You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

Am I content with my own means and needs, or do I compare myself to others unnecessarily?

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An Examination of Conscience based on Catholic Social Teaching

Life and Dignity of the Human Person

Do I respect the life and dignity of every human person from conception through natural death?

Do I recognize the face of Christ reflected in all others around me whatever their race, class, age, or abilities?

Do I work to protect the dignity of others when it is being threatened?

Am I committed to both protecting human life and to ensuring that every human being is able to live in dignity?

Call to Family, Community, and Participation

Do I try to make positive contributions in my family and in my community?

Are my beliefs, attitudes, and choices such that they strengthen or undermine the institution of the family?

Am I aware of problems facing my local community and involved in efforts to find solutions? Do I stay informed and make my voice heard when needed?

Do I support the efforts of poor persons to work for change in their neighborhoods and communities? Do my attitudes and interactions empower or disempower others?

Rights and Responsibilities

Do I recognize and respect the economic, social, political, and cultural rights of others?

Do I live in material comfort and excess while remaining insensitive to the needs of others whose rights are unfulfilled?

Do I take seriously my responsibility to ensure that the rights of persons in need are realized?

Do I urge those in power to implement programs and policies that give priority to the human dignity and rights of all, especially the vulnerable?

God's Concern for the Poor and Vulnerable

Do I give special attention to the needs of the poor and vulnerable in my community and in the world?

Am I disproportionately concerned for my own good at the expense of others?

Do I engage in service and advocacy work that protects the dignity of poor and vulnerable persons?

The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers

As a worker, do I give my employer a fair day's work for my wages? As an owner, do I treat workers fairly?

Do I treat all workers with whom I interact with respect, no matter their position or class?

Do I support the rights of all workers to adequate wages, health care, holidays and sick leave? Do I affirm their right to form or join unions or worker associations?

Do my purchasing choices take into account the hands involved in the production of what I buy? When possible, do I buy products produced by workers whose rights and dignity were respected?

Solidarity

Does the way I spend my time reflect a genuine concern for others?

Is solidarity incorporated into my prayer and spirituality? Do I lift up vulnerable people throughout the world in my prayer, or is it reserved for only my personal concerns?

Am I attentive only to my local neighbors or also those across the globe?

Do I see all members of the human family as my brothers and sisters?

Care for God's Creation

Do I live out my responsibility to care for God's creation?

Do I see my care for creation as connected to my concern for poor persons, who are most at risk from environmental problems?

Do I litter? Live wastefully? Use energy too freely? Are there ways I could reduce consumption in my life?

Are there ways I could change my daily practices and those of my family, school, workplace, or community to better conserve the earth's resources for future generations?

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An Acclamation of the Resurrection

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

He is risen indeed. Alleluia.

Praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

He has given us new life and hope.

He has raised Jesus from the dead.

God has claimed us as his own.

He has brought us out of darkness.

He has made us light to the world.

Alleluia. Christ is risen.
He is risen indeed. Alleluia.