

WEDNESDAY

Jesus also said, 'With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable will we use for it? It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade.' *Mark 4:30-34*

Reshape us, good Lord, until in generosity, in faith, and in joyful expectation that the best is yet to come, We are truly Christ-like. Make us passionate followers of Jesus rather than passive supporters. Make our churches cells of radical discipleship and signposts of heaven, then, in us, through us, and - if need be – despite us, let your kingdom come. Amen.

Eternal God, you call us to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with wisdom and courage, not knowing where we go, but trusting that your hand is leading us, and your love supporting us, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Eternal Spirit, living God,
In whom we live and move and have our being,
all that we are, have been and shall be is known to you.
Living flame, burn into us
cleansing wind, blow through us,
fountain of water, well up within us
that we may worship you in spirit and in truth
all our days. *B.A.S.*

No one lives outside the walls of this sacred place,
existence. *St. Francis of Assisi*

Lent 2019

A Resource for Prayer and Reflection



ASH WEDNESDAY

Isaiah 58: 6-9

Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke?

Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them...?

Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,
and your healing shall spring up quickly ...

You will call, and the LORD will answer... 'Here I am.'

Create a clean heart in me, God. Dust off the unmindful activity that constantly collects there. De-clutter my heart from harsh judgements and negativity. Wash away my resistance to working through difficult relationships. Rinse off my un-loving so the beauty of my generous and kind heart can shine forth. Remove whatever keeps me from following in your compassionate footsteps. Amen. *Joyce Rupp*

Catch me in my anxious scurrying; Lord, and hold me in this Lenten season: hold my feet to the fire of your grace and make me attentive to my own mortality that I may begin to die now to those things that keep me from living with you and with my neighbours on earth; to grudges and indifference, to certainties that smother possibilities, to my fascination with false securities, to my addiction to sweatless dreams, to my arrogant insistence on how things should be; to my corrosive fear of dying someday which east away the wonder of living this day, and the adventure of losing my life in order to find it in you. *Ted Loder Guerrillas of Grace*

From the cowardice that does not face new truths, from the laziness that is content with half truths, from the arrogance that thinks it knows all truth, deliver us today, good Lord. *From the church in Kenya.*

THURSDAY

I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love one for another. John 13:34-35

Eternal One, Silence from whom my words come, Questioner from whom my questions arise; Lover of whom all my loves are hints; Disturber in whom alone I find my rest; Mystery in whose depths I find healing and myself; enfold me now in your presence; restore to me your peace; renew me through your power; and ground me in your grace. *Ted Loder Guerrillas of Grace*

God, you have made known your love through Jesus' life and words. Help us to receive his teaching, to find the fullness of that love, and bring its fragrance to others. *New Zealand Prayer Book*

Gracious Lord, as you call us to yourself, you call us into companionship with all your people. Turn our hearts and affections toward one another in charity, and let our prayer answer your own, that we may all be one. Amen. *St. Augustine's Prayer Book*

Lord, we thank you for all the light, grace and life seen and known in the church which nurtured us. Praying that still we may be set free from narrow mindedness and complacency.

Open our eyes that we may recognize the work of you Spirit among other people and under different forms. And should we yet walk in some things in separate ways, then present before us the common goal towards which we travel. *From the church in Sweden.*

You might quiet the whole world for second if you pray. And if you love, if you really love, our guns will wilt. *St. John of the Cross.*

TUESDAY

As they came near the village to which they were going, Jesus 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. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?' Luke 24:28-32

Forgiving God, your son once said that his brother, sister, mother were all who do your will. Yet even when we fail to do your will you welcome and accept us as your children. Teach us to include others as readily as you include us; for to do so is to do your heavenly will. Amen. *Iona Abbey Worship Book*

O God, your son made himself known to the his disciples in the breaking of the bread. Open the eyes of our faith, that we may see him in his redeeming work, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, on God, now and forever. Amen. *B.A.S.*

Prayer for St. Paul's: Heavenly Father, you have welcomed us into your kingdom and your hearts desire is to draw every human being to yourself. Grant us clear eyes to see people as you see them, sensitive feet to stand in their shoes, and warm smiles to welcome them into your name. Give us generous hearts, that our church becomes a foretaste of heaven where every soul you send us finds their loving home in the community of your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, Amen. *Everybody Welcome*

Look what happens to the scale when love holds it. It stops working. *Kabir*

MONDAY

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good...

Then God said, 'Let the earth put forth vegetation

And God said, 'Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures,

and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky.'

And God said, 'Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind:

Then God said, 'Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness;

God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. And on the seventh day God rested. *Gen 1:1-2:2*

O God, the only source of life and energy and wealth, teach us to conserve and not squander the riches of nature; to use aright the heritage of former generations and to plan for the welfare of our children's children. Renew our wonder, awaken our concern, and make us better stewards and more careful tenants of the world you lend us as our home.

God of the Universe, Lord of life, give us grace to see you in all your works, in all creatures, all people, and in our hearts, that we may faithfully serve you and worthily praise your holy name, though Jesus Christ our Lord. *B.A.S.*

Man does not weave the web of life; he is merely a strand in it. What he does to the web he does to himself. The earth is precious to God, and to harm the earth is to heap contempt upon the Creator. We are part of the earth and the earth is part of us. *Chief Seattle*

FRIDAY

Blessed are those who trust in the Lord, who trust in the LORD; They shall be like a tree planted by water, sending out its roots by the stream; It shall not fear when the heat comes, and its leaves shall stay green; In the year of the draught it is not anxious, and it does not cease to bear fruit. *Jeremiah 17:7-8.*

God, help us to grow like a garden, like a song, like a tree.

Like a great old tree. Like one of those great, old trees you meet sometimes and hug, wandering lost, or enchanted, in a deep, dark forest, or an empty field.

A great, old tree with roots that reach down to the heart, roots that reach down but break the ground around the trunk and lift as if the earth can't contain the yearning. As if the earth shall arise and pass away and all shall be left in the end is Spirit.

A great, old tree with arms that shelter and shade and house such love.

A great old tree with breaks and wounds and scars but dancing and clapping its hands. Like a beautiful old woman at a wedding.

A great old tree still and centered, drawing on the living warm core of God though left stripped of everything.

God, help us to grow like a garden, like a song, like a tree.

Like one of those great, old trees you meet sometimes in a crowded forest – in an empty field. *Neil Paynter.*

Holy Spirit, giving life to all life, moving all creatures, root of all things, washing them clean, wiping out their mistakes, healing their wounds, you are our true life, luminous, wonderful, awakening the heart, from its ancient sleep. *Hildegard of Bingen*

Let nothing disturb you, nothing frighten you, all things are passing; Patient endurance attains all things; one whom God possesses wants nothing for God alone suffices. *St. Teresa of Avila*

SATURDAY

As they were leaving Jericho, a large crowd followed Jesus. There were two blind men sitting by the roadside. When they heard that Jesus was passing by, they shouted, 'Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David!' The crowd sternly ordered them to be quiet; but they shouted even more loudly, 'Have mercy on us, Lord, Son of David!' Jesus stood still and called them, saying, 'What do you want me to do for you?' They said to him, 'Lord, let our eyes be opened.' Moved with compassion, Jesus touched their eyes. Immediately they regained their sight and followed him. *Matthew 20: 29-34*

May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, give us a spirit of wisdom and revelation, as we come to know him, so that with the eyes of our hearts enlightened, we know the hope to which he has called us. *Adapted from Ephesians 1:17-18a*

O God: Give me strength to live another day.

Let me not turn coward before its difficulties or prove recreant in its duties. Let me not lose faith in other people. Keep me sweet and sound of heart, in spite of ingratitude, treachery or meanness. Preserve me from minding the little stings or giving them. Help me to keep my heart clean, and to live so honestly and fearlessly that no outward failure can dishearten me or take away the joy of conscious integrity. Open wide the eyes of my soul that I may see good in all things. Grant me this day some new vision of your truth. Inspire me with the spirit of joy and gladness; and make me the cup of strength to suffering souls; in the name of the strong Deliverer, our only Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Phillip Brooks Forward Day by Day

A man born blind can easily deny the magnificence of a vast landscape. He can easily deny all the wonders that he cannot touch, smell, taste, or hear. But one day the wind will show its kindness and remove the tiny patches that cover his eyes, and you will see God more clearly than you have ever seen yourself. *Meister Eckhart.*

SUNDAY

'Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?' Jesus said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.'" This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.' *Matthew 22:36-40*

Lord, have mercy upon us, and write both these thy laws in our hearts we beseech thee.

God of the desert, as we follow Jesus into the unknown, may we recognise the tempter when he comes; let it be your bread we eat, your world we serve and you alone we worship. *New Zealand Prayer Book.*

Sacred are you, sacred your mystery. Seekers of holiness worship you all their lives. We praise you God, ultimate sacred mystery.

The mind is your gift, wisdom a spark from you, may we grow in knowledge, insight, and understanding. We praise you God, gracious giver of awareness. Help us to find our way to your truth again, to obey you with trusting faith, to attain wholeness in your presence. We praise you, God who is always ready to help us start anew.

O compassionate one, your love is eternal. You are forever our hope. Let all the living confront you with thankfulness, delight and truth. Help us O God; sustain us.

*From of a contemporary rendering of the Jewish prayer Amidah
-Rabbi Kushner - To Life!*

The result of prayer is life. Prayer irrigates the earth and heart. *St. Francis of Assisi.*