

2020 LENTEN
INDIVIDUAL DEVOTION



CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the Holy Trinity, ✠ one God,
who brings us safely through the sea,
who gives us water from the rock,
who leads us into the land of milk and honey. Amen.

Through the power of the Holy Spirit,
God promises to heal me and forgive me

Silence is kept for reflection and self-examination

For self-centered living,
and for failing to walk with humility and gentleness;
For longing to have what is not mine,
and for when my heart is not at rest:

Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on me.

For misuse of human relationships,
and for my unwillingness to see the image of God in others;
For jealousies that divide families, communities, and nations;
and for rivalries that create strife and warfare:

Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on me.

For reluctance in sharing the gifts of God,
and for carelessness with the fruits of creation;
For hurtful words that condemn,
and for angry deeds that harm;
For idleness in witnessing to Jesus Christ,
and for squandering the gifts of love and grace:

Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on me.

God, who is rich in mercy,
loved me even when I were dead in sin,
and made me alive together with Christ.

I remember and affirm that in the name of ✠ Jesus Christ, my sins are forgiven.

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the God of creation!
My heart is longing to offer up sweet adoration.
Melody make; dulcimer, harp, now awake.
Sound forth your praise, ev'ry nation.

Praise the Almighty, o'er all life so wondrously reigning,
and, as on wings of an eagle, uplifting, sustaining.
Have you not seen? All that is needful has been
sent by God's gracious ordaining.

Praise the Almighty, who prospers your work and defends you;
see from the heavens the showers of mercy God sends you.
Ponder anew what the Almighty can do;
Infinite Love here befriends you.

Praise the Almighty! In wonder my spirit is soaring!
All that has life and breath, come now with praises outpouring.
Let the amen sound from God's people again,
gladly forever adoring.

Text: Joachim Neander, 1650-1680; tr. composite
Text © 2000 Augsburg Fortress.

PRAYER

Almighty God, by the power of the Spirit you have knit your servants into the one body of your Beloved Child, Jesus. Look with favor upon me in my commitment to serve in Christ's name. Give me courage, patience, and vision; and strengthen all in their Christian vocation of witness to the world, and of service to others; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

FIRST READING

Isaiah 40:1-11

¹ "Console my people, give them comfort,"
says your God.

² "Speak tenderly to Jerusalem's heart,
and tell it
that its time of service is ended,
that its iniquity is atoned for,
that it has received from YHWH's hand
double punishment for all its sins."

³ A voice cries out,
"Clear a path through the wilderness for YHWH!
Make a straight road through the desert for our God!"

⁴ Let every valley be filled in,
every mountain and hill be laid low;

let every cliff become a plain,
and the ridges become a valley!
⁵ Then the Glory of YHWH will be revealed,
and all humankind will see it.”
The mouth of YHWH has spoken!
⁶ A voice commands, “Cry out!”
and I answer, “What will I say?”
—“All flesh is grass
and its beauty is like the wildflowers:
⁷ the grass withers
and the flower wilts
when the breath of YHWH blows on them.
How the people are like grass!
⁸ Grass withers, and flowers wilt,
but the promise of our God will stand forever.
⁹ Go up on a high mountain,
you who bring good news to Zion!
Shout with a loud voice,
you who bring good news to Jerusalem!
Shout without fear,
and say to the towns of Judah
“Here is your God!”
¹⁰ YHWH, O Sovereign one,
you come with power,
and rule with a strong arm!
You bring your reward with you,
and your reparation comes before you.
¹¹ Like a shepherd you feed your flock,
gathering the lambs and holding them close,
and leading mother ewes with gentleness.

PRAYER

Eternal God, amid all the turmoil and changes of the world your love is steadfast and your strength never fails. In this time of danger and trouble, be to us a sure guardian and rock of defense. Guide all leaders with your wisdom, comfort those in distress, and grant us courage and hope to face the future; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

¹ Jesus again was manifested to the disciples at Lake Tiberias. This is how the appearance took place. ² Assembled were Simon Peter, Thomas “The Twin,” Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, Zebedee’s children, and two other disciples. ³ Simon Peter said to them, “I am going out to fish.” “We will join you,” they replied, and went off to get into their boat. All through the night they caught nothing. ⁴ Just after daybreak, Jesus was standing on the shore, though none of the disciples knew it was Jesus. ⁵ He said to them, “Have you caught anything, friends?” “Not a thing,” they answered. ⁶ “Cast your net off to the starboard side,” Jesus suggested, “and you will find something.” So they made a cast and caught so many fish that they could not haul the net in. ⁷ Then the disciple whom Jesus loved cried out to Peter, “It is the Teacher!” Upon hearing this, Simon Peter threw on his cloak—he was naked—and jumped into the water. ⁸ Meanwhile the other disciples brought the boat to shore, towing the net full of fish. They were not far from land—no more than a hundred yards. ⁹ When they landed, they saw that a charcoal fire had been prepared, with fish and some bread already being grilled. ¹⁰ “Bring some of the fish you just caught,” Jesus told them. ¹¹ Simon Peter went aboard and hauled ashore the net, which was loaded with huge fish—one hundred fifty-three of them. In spite of the great number, the net was not torn. ¹² “Come and eat your meal,” Jesus told them. None of the disciples dared to ask, “Who are you?”—they knew it was the Savior. ¹³ Jesus came over, took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. ¹⁴ This marked the third time that Jesus had appeared to the disciples after being raised from the dead. ¹⁵ When they had eaten their meal, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon ben-John, do you love me more than these?” Peter said, “Yes, Rabbi, you know that I am your friend.” Jesus said, “Feed my lambs.” ¹⁶ A second time Jesus put the question, “Simon ben-John, do you love me?” Peter said, “Yes, Rabbi, you know that I am your friend.” Jesus replied, “Tend my sheep.” ¹⁷ A third time Jesus asked him, “Simon ben-John, do you love me as a friend would?” Peter was hurt because Jesus asked, “Do you love me?” a third time. So he said, “You know everything, Rabbi. You know that I am your friend.” Jesus said, “Feed my sheep. ¹⁸ The truth of the matter is, when you were young, you put on your own belt and walked where you liked; but when you get old, you will stretch out your hands and someone else will put a belt around you and take you where you do not want to go.” ¹⁹ With these words, Jesus indicated the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then the Savior said, “Follow me.”

MEDITATION ON A HYMN*Tú has venido a la orilla / You Have Come Down to the Lakeshore*video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1hxDwKlww8Y>

Tú has venido a la orilla;
no has buscado ni a sabios, ni a ricos;
tan sólo quieres que yo te siga.

You have come down to the lakeshore
seeking neither the wise nor the wealthy,
but only asking for me to follow.

Señor, me has mirado a los ojos;
sonriendo, has dicho mi nombre.
En la arena he dejado mi barca;
junto a ti buscaré otro mar.

Sweet Lord, you have looked into my eyes;
kindly smiling, you've called out my name.
On the sand I have abandoned my small boat;
now with you, I will seek other seas.

Tú sabes bien lo que tengo:
en mi barca no hay oro no espadas;
tan sólo redes y mi trabajo.

You know full well what I have, Lord:
neither treasure nor weapons for conquest,
just these my fish nets and will for working.

Tú, Pescador de otros mares,
ansia eterna de almas que esperan.
Amigo bueno, que así me llamas.

You who have fished other waters;
you, the longing of souls that are yearning:
O loving Friend, you have come to call me.

Text: Cesáreo Gabaráin, 1936-1991; tr. Madeleine Forell Marshall, b. 1946

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Gracious God, keep your church firm in faith, so that we might trust in your goodness even when the way is difficult and the future is uncertain. Sustain all lay leaders, bishops, pastors, deacons, and all who seek to serve you in Christ's name.

Comforting God, hold close those who are seeking call. The wait can be difficult and the path unclear. Give consolation to those who are struggling, zeal to those whose faith is lagging, clarity to those seeking answers, and a measure of grace for all who wait.

Creating God, keep us ever mindful of our co-dependency with each other, and with all of creation. Call us to repentance from our ways that harm the soil, water, plants, and creatures with which we share our planet. Bring healing and relief to the earth.

Bring peace and healing to nations and cities struck by the COVID-19 pandemic, and those who are seeking to make good decisions. Inspire all leaders to make decisions with the most vulnerable in mind; be with those in the medical field caring for patients and family members caring for and worried about loved ones. Open us all to be instruments of your holy peace.

Other prayers may be included

Into your hands, gracious God, I commend all for whom I pray, trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ, the Savior. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

pray as below, or in the language and translation of your heart

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 forever. Amen.

REMEMBRANCE OF ORDINATION VOWS AND CONSECRATION PROMISES

For all the baptized:

Trusting in the love, grace and mercy of God, through Jesus Christ, I am resolved to continue in the covenant God made with me in Holy Baptism:

to continue to renounce the devil and all the forces that defy God, the powers of this world that rebel against God, and the ways of sin that draw me from God;
to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed;
and to serve all people following the example of Jesus Christ.

For the Rostered Ministers of Word and Sacrament

Trusting in the love, grace and mercy of God, through Jesus Christ, and resting in the call I have to Rostered Ministry in the ELCA I am resolved:

to continue to preach faithfully and teach diligently the Word of God as it is found in the Holy Scriptures and taught in the confessions of the Church;
to be a faithful minister of the mysteries of God, to baptize, to celebrate at the Eucharist and at other services with sincere devotion;
to make a sincere endeavor to live according to the Word of God, so as to serve God in truth as a shepherd of the flock entrusted to me by the Good Shepherd;
to love, serve, and pray for God's people, nourishing them with the Word of God and with the Holy Sacraments, leading them in faithful service and holy living, that together we may give faithful witness to the world.

For the Rostered Ministers of Word and Service

Trusting in the love, grace and mercy of God, through Jesus Christ, and resting in the call I have to Rostered Ministry in the ELCA I am resolved:

to continue my ministry in the confidence that it comes from God;
to continue in my use of the means of grace and prayer, to be faithful in my study of the Holy Scriptures, and to continue to preach faithfully and to diligently teach the Word of God;

to continue to witness to Jesus Christ in word and deed, to pray for God's people, and by my own example encourage others in faithful service and holy living; and to continue in God's care, to seek to grow in love for those I serve, strive for excellence in my skills, and adorn the Gospel of God with a godly life.

For all the baptized:

God, you have brought me to this place, and gifted me with skills and talents; continue to guide, inspire, and challenge me in my work in the world, on behalf of the gospel. Amen.

MEDITATION ON A HYMN

Guide Me Ever, Great Redeemer

ELW 618

video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pxkRekf6zvo>

Guide me ever, great Redeemer,
pilgrim through this barren land.
I am weak, but you are mighty;
hold me with your pow'rful hand.
Bread of heaven, bread of heaven,
feed me now and evermore,
feed me now and evermore.

Open now the crystal fountain
where the healing waters flow;
let the fire and cloudy pillar
lead me all my journey through.
Strong deliv'rer, strong deliv'rer,
shield me with your mighty arm,
shield me with your mighty arm.

When I tread the verge of Jordan,
bid my anxious fears subside;
death of death and hell's destruction,
land me safe on Canaan's side.
Songs and praises, songs and praises,
I will raise forevermore,
I will raise forevermore.

Text: William Williams, 1717-1791; tr. William Williams and Peter Williams, 1722-1796, alt.

PRAYER OF BLESSING

The crucified Christ,
the one who shatters our brittle fear,
draws all people to God's glory
and makes me a servant living for the world;
bless me ✝ and grant me peace. Amen.

Biblical Texts are from *The Inclusive Bible: The First Egalitarian Translation*. Priests for Equality. Rowan & Littlefield Publishers, Lanham, MD, 2007.

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Benediction is from *Prayers for an Inclusive Church*, Steven Shakespeare (Church Publishing, 2009)

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