

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

The Sunday before Lent *B*

The 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 lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **AMEN**

A reading from the second book of Kings [2. 1112]

When the LORD was about to take Elijah up to heaven by a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal. Elijah said to Elisha, 'Stay here; for the LORD has sent me as far as Bethel.' But Elisha said, 'As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.' So they went down to Bethel. The company of prophets who were in Bethel came out to Elisha, and said to him, 'Do you know that today the LORD will take your master away from you?' And he said, 'Yes, I know; keep silent.' Elijah said to him, 'Elisha, stay here; for the LORD has sent me to Jericho.' But he said, 'As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.' So they came to Jericho. The company of prophets who were at Jericho drew near to Elisha, and said to him, 'Do you know that today the LORD will take your master away from you?' And he answered, 'Yes, I know; be silent.' Then Elijah said to him, 'Stay here; for the LORD has sent me to the Jordan.' But he said, 'As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.' So the two of them went on. Fifty men of the company of prophets also went, and stood at some distance from them, as they both were standing by the Jordan. Then Elijah took his mantle and rolled it up, and struck the water; the water was parted to the one side and to the other, until the two of them crossed on dry ground. When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, 'Tell me what I may do for you, before I am taken from you.' Elisha said, 'Please let me inherit a double share of your spirit.' He responded, 'You have asked a hard thing; yet, if you see me as I am being taken from you, it will be granted you; if not, it will not.' As they continued walking and talking, a chariot of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them, and Elijah ascended in a whirlwind into heaven. Elisha kept watching and crying out, 'Father, father! The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!' But when he could no longer see him, he grasped his own clothes and tore them in two pieces.

Reader / This is the Word of the Lord *Response* / **Thanks be to God**

Psalm 50 1 – 6

R/ Our God will come and will not keep silence

The Lord, the most mighty God, has spoken
and called the world from the rising of the sun to its setting.
Out of Zion, perfect in beauty, God shines forth;
our God comes and will not keep silence.

R/ Our God will come and will not keep silence

Consuming fire goes out before him
and a mighty tempest stirs about him.
He calls the heaven above,
and the earth, that he may judge his people:

R/ Our God will come and will not keep silence

‘Gather to me my faithful,
who have sealed my covenant with sacrifice.’
Let the heavens declare his righteousness,
for God himself is judge.

R/ Our God will come and will not keep silence

A reading from the second letter of St Paul to the Corinthians [4; 3-6]

Even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For we do not proclaim ourselves; we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus’ sake. For it is the God who said, ‘Let light shine out of darkness,’ who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Reader/ This is the Word of the Lord *Response /* **Thanks be to God**

[Gradual Hymn]

Alleluia, alleluia!

From the bright cloud the Father's voice was heard:

'This is my Son, the Beloved. Listen to him!'

Alleluia!

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

Listen to the Gospel of Christ according to St Mark *Glory to you, O Lord.*

Jesus took with him Peter and James and John,
and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves.

And he was transfigured before them,
and his clothes became dazzling white,
such as no one on earth could bleach them.

And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses,
who were talking with Jesus.

Then Peter said to Jesus,

'Rabbi, it is good for us to be here;

let us make three dwellings,

one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.'

He did not know what to say, for they were terrified.

Then a cloud overshadowed them,

and from the cloud there came a voice,

'This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!'

Suddenly when they looked around,

they saw no one with them any more, but only Jesus.

As they were coming down the mountain,

he ordered them to tell no one about what they had seen,

until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead.

[St Mark 9.2–9]

This is the Gospel of the Lord **Praise to you, O Christ**

AT THE EUCHARIST TODAY

HYMNS: (*St Arvans*) 343; 178; 272; 377

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON:

Be my protector, O God,
a mighty stronghold to save me.
For you are my rock, my stronghold!
Lead me, guide me, for the sake of your name.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS:

May this oblation, O Lord, we pray, cleanse and renew us
and may it become for those who do your will
the source of eternal reward.
Through Christ our Lord. **AMEN**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION:

Celebrant : Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins
of the world. Blessed are those who are called to his supper.
**[Response : Lord I am not worthy to receive you,
but only say the word and I shall be healed.]**

POST-COMMUNION SENTENCE:

God so loved the world that he gave his Only Begotten Son,
so that all who believe in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

O holy God, we behold your glory in the face of Jesus Christ:
grant that we who are partakers at his table
may reflect his life in word and deed,
that all the world may know his power to change and save;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **AMEN.**

Notices from last Newsletter

A REMINDER THAT LENT BEGINS THIS YEAR ON FEBRUARY 14th

Please return your Palm Crosses from last year, as they are burnt to provide the ashes for the ceremonies on Ash Wednesday.

**The celebration of the Eucharist on Ash Wednesday (14th) will be at 10 a.m.
at St Arvan's**

What's On

St Arvans Drop in Tea & Chat

2.30–4 p.m. at the Meeting Rooms

Everyone Welcome

February 17th and usually every second Saturday of the month

Childrens activity table

For assistance or a lift

please ring Diane on 628084

Our thanks to all who helped at the last very successful event!

The Severn Wye Ministry Area Prayer Group meets each Thursday at 7.30 p.m.

All are welcome!

For details see

www.severnwyema.co.uk

***THIS YEAR'S
LENT COURSE ***

**INTRODUCTION TO
Christian Meditation**

"Be still and know that I am God" Ps.46:10

A SIX-WEEK LENT COURSE

There is a choice between an Evening Session or a Daytime Session

Monday Evenings 19 February to 25 March at 7.30 – 8.45 pm

at The Cedars, Chapel Lane, Pwllmeyric, NP16 6LE

or

Tuesday afternoons 20 February to 26 March at 2.45 - 4.00 pm

at St.Thomas Becket Church Room, Shirenewton

This course provides an opportunity for those interested in finding out about Christian Meditation to experience the practice in a small group, to learn about its origins, and to discover its relevance as a form of prayer for the contemporary world.

For more information contact

Canon Chris Blanchard

- email: frchris2@icloud.com

Tel 07711961237

World Community for Christian Meditation

What can we do before Lent Begins?

Anything worth doing is worth preparing for. The purpose of Lent is to prepare ourselves so that God's grace will help transform our lives, giving us greater freedom, a greater joy, and a deeper desire for love and service.

Lent can truly be a season of grace for us if we give ourselves to it with our whole hearts. In few weeks days before Lent, we should begin to prepare our hearts and minds by realising how much we wish to grow in freedom, how much we need to lighten our spirits and experience true joy, and how much some parts of our lives really are in need of change.

However, If we imagine Lent as an "ordeal" or a time we dread in some way, then we've probably already prepared ourselves not to get very much out of it.

Lent begins early this year. Ash Wednesday is on 14th February - and we need to be ready to hit the ground running on that day, rather than just beginning to think about how we can use the season ahead of us. Before we get to Ash Wednesday, we should start asking ourselves some basic questions - "What does God want us to receive from him this Lent? This question may require that we slow down a little bit and so be able to listen to him and to others.

Too often, Ash Wednesday can be like any other day, except that we manage to get to church and get ashes on our foreheads. Is there anything we can do so that the symbolism of Ash Wednesday becomes a reality? How will we make prayer, self-denial and acts of service a part of our lives as we prepare for Easter?

.Ash Wednesday is a very good place to put into action what we have planned.

It doesn't take a lot of time to prepare for the beginning of Lent. It's just a matter of wanting to do it , and focus - God can do a great deal with that. We can give God more of a space within which to touch our hearts if we begin to establish some simple patterns of prayer and self-discipline.

May the Lord bless us all on this coming Lenten journey towards the joy of Easter.

Ministry Area Prayer

Dear Lord,

we thank you for the opportunity

to work together as a Ministry Area.

May we engage with each other

with faith and encouragement.

May we manage each situation

with wisdom and mutual respect.

May we serve with integrity,

creativity and purpose.

May we speak with openness

and gentleness.

May we offer our gifts, time

and finances with generosity.

May we face each challenge

with courage and the desire

to grow through it.

May we all be drawn deeper

into our relationship with you

and be known as your disciples.

Help us to show your love, proclaim

your Good News and grow your Kingdom in this place.

We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. **AMEN**

A Prayer for Ukraine

written by Ukrainian Christians

O Lord our God, look down with mercy on the Ukrainian people. Protect and save them from the unjust aggressors who seek to subdue them. Grant them steadfast trust in your mercy and protection.

O Mother of God, who gave us your miraculous icon at Zarvanytsia, intercede for the Ukrainian people, who run to the shelter of your mercy

in their times of need.

O Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Grant peace and protection to the people of Ukraine. Give them strength and courage to defend what is good, right, and holy. Keep them safe from harm and provide for all their needs, both temporal and spiritual.

Hear our prayers, O Lord, and deliver us from distress, for You are merciful and compassionate and love mankind. To you we give glory: the Father,

the Son, and the Holy Spirit,

now and for ever. **Amen.**