



ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF WANGARATTA
PAROCHIAL DISTRICT OF WANGARATTA WEST & THE WARBYS

The First Sunday in Lent
18th February 2024
11.00am Ante Communion

GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

Opening Hymn: Tune, Bangor

- 1. From ashes to the living font
your Church must journey, Lord,
Baptised in grace, in grace renewed
By your most holy word.**
- 2. Through fasting, prayer, and charity,
Your voice speaks deep within,
Returning us to ways of truth
and turning us from sin.**
- 3. From desert to the mountaintop
in Christ our way we see,
so, tempered by temptation's might
we might transfigured be.**
- 4. From ashes to the living font
your Church must journey still,
Through cross and tomb to Easter joy,
in Spirit-fire fulfilled.**

Alan J. Hommerding, b.1956;
© 1994, World Library Publications.

The Acclamation

Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins,
whose mercy endures for ever.

The Sentence

The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near;
repent, and believe in the good news.

Mark 1.15

Please kneel or be seated

Compassion and forgiveness belong to the Lord our God,
though we have rebelled and wandered far off.

Let us then ask for mercy,
confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

The Litany is said.

God the Father, **have mercy on us.**

God the Son, **have mercy on us.**

God the Holy Spirit, **have mercy on us.**

Holy Trinity, one God, **have mercy on us.**

From all evil and mischief;
from pride, vanity and hypocrisy;
from envy, hatred and malice;
and from all evil intent,
good Lord, deliver us.

From sloth, worldliness and love of money;
from hardness of heart
and contempt of your word and your laws,
good Lord, deliver us.

From sins of body and mind;
from deceits of the world, the flesh and the devil,
good Lord, deliver us.

In all times of sorrow; in all times of joy;
in the hour of our death and at the day of judgement,
good Lord, deliver us.

By the mystery of your holy incarnation;
by your birth, childhood and obedience;
by your baptism, fasting and temptation,
good Lord, deliver us.

By your ministry in word and work;
by your mighty acts of power;
and by your preaching of the kingdom,
good Lord, deliver us.

By your agony and trial; by your cross and passion;
and by your precious death and burial,
good Lord, deliver us.

By your mighty resurrection;
by your glorious ascension;
and by your sending of the Holy Spirit,
good Lord, deliver us.

Give us true repentance;
forgive us our sins of negligence and ignorance
and our deliberate sins;
and grant us the grace of your Holy Spirit to amend our lives
according to your holy word.

The Kyries

Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**
Christ, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.**
Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

The minister stands and declares God's forgiveness

God desires that none should perish,
but that all should turn to Christ, and live.
In response to his call we acknowledge our sins.
God pardons those who humbly repent,
and truly believe the gospel.
Therefore we have peace with God,
through Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.
His steadfast love endures for ever.

Grace and peace be with you
and also with you.

A greeting of peace may be shared by the congregation.

The Collect

Let us pray.
Almighty God,
whose Son fasted forty days in the wilderness,
and was tempted as we are, yet did not sin:
give us grace to direct our lives in obedience to your will,
that, as you know our weakness,
so we may know your power to save;

through Jesus Christ our Redeemer,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

A reading from the Book Genesis [9. 8-17]

Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, ‘As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you, and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark. I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.’ God said, ‘This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.’ God said to Noah, ‘This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth.’

Hear the word of the Lord,
thanks be to God.

Psalm 25. 1-10

In you, O Lord my God, have I put my hope:
**in you have I trusted, let me not be ashamed,
nor let my enemies triumph over me.**

Let none who wait for you be put to shame:
**but let those that break faith
be confounded and gain nothing.**

*Show me your ways, O Lord:
and teach me your paths.*

Lead me in the ways of your truth, and teach me:
for you are the God of my salvation.

In you have I hoped all the day long:
because of your goodness, O Lord.

Call to mind your compassion and your loving-kindness:
for they are from of old.

Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions:
but according to your mercy think on me.

*Good and upright is the Lord:
therefore will he direct sinners in the way.*

*The meek he will guide in the path of justice:
and teach the humble his ways.*

*All the paths of the Lord are faithful and true:
for those who keep his covenant and his commandments.*

A reading from the First Letter of Peter [3. 18-22]

For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit, in which also he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison, who in former times did not obey, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight people, were saved through water. And baptism, which this prefigured, now saves you—not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.

Hear the word of the Lord,
thanks be to God.

Gradual Hymn: AHB 506 / TiS 591. Tune, Heinlein

- 1. Forty days and forty nights
you were fasting in the wild,
forty days and forty nights
tempted, and yet undefiled:**

2. **let us your endurance share
and from earthly greed abstain,
with you watching unto prayer,
with you strong to suffer pain.**
3. **And if Satan on us press
flesh or spirit to assail,
Victor in the wilderness,
grant we may not faint or fail.**
4. **Keep, O keep us, Saviour dear,
ever constant by your side,
that with you we may appear
at the eternal Eastertide.**

George Hunt Smyttan 1822–70 and
Francis Pott 1832–1909 alt.

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark [1. 9-15]
Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, ‘You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.’

And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. He was in the wilderness for forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.

Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, ‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.’

For the Gospel of the Lord,
praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

The Nicene Creed is said, all standing.

**We believe in one God, the Father, the almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the
Father; through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary**

and became truly human.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the
Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the
dead and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son
is worshipped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

A time of Reflection on the scriptures and the Theme of the day

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Faithful God, you hear the cries of your people and answer when
we call on you: receive the prayers we offer.

Faithful God, you spared Noah and his family from the waters of
death and with every living creature established a covenant of
life: we pray for the preservation of the earth and its inhabitants,
for just and sustainable use of the earth's resources.

Deliver us, O God, from careless and greedy stewardship of your
creation, and, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Faithful God, in the waters of the flood you washed away the
wickedness of the world and brought the earth to a new
beginning: we pray for an end to corruption, exploitation and
oppression, for new hope of harmony and peace among nations.
Deliver us, O God, from pursuit of power and privilege,
and, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Faithful God, in the waters of baptism you wash us clean of all
our sin, and bring us to new life in Christ:
we pray for all who are baptised in your name,

for your ministers and all who proclaim your good news.
Deliver us, O God, from disobedience to your word,
and, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Faithful God, in the waters of the Jordan, Jesus was baptised
and named as your beloved Son: we pray for all who are dear to
us, for those with whom we live and work, learn and play, for all
whose love and care sustain our lives.
Deliver us, O God, from resentment, bitterness and an
unforgiving heart, and, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Faithful God, you offer the waters of life to all who thirst, to all
who seek relief from torment: we pray for all who are in need of
your gift of life, for those who are sick or sorrowing, the broken-
hearted, the friendless and the despairing.
Deliver us, O God, from selfish preoccupation with our own
concerns, and, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Faithful God, you prepare, in your presence, a place for all who
love you, and you offer your people the gift of everlasting life: we
remember your faithful servants of every age, those whom we
love and those from this parish who have gone before us.
Deliver us, O God, from all that would keep us apart from you,
that with all your saints and with the host of heaven, we may
come into the joy of your eternal presence.
Faithful God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who taught us to pray,

**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 for ever. Amen.**

Offertory Hymn: AHB 396 / TiS 463. Tune, Lindfield.

Refrain: *May this Lenten discipline,
which we undertake with love,
turn our minds to things above.*

1. **Sin has sundered us from God,
selfish we have grown and cold,
foolish were the ways we trod,
evil habits keep their hold. *Refrain***
2. **Now we fast that we may feast
where the Lord of Life presides;
may our hunger be increased
for the bread which he provides. *Refrain***
3. **As we keep this Lent with prayer
and from pleasures are withdrawn,
minds and bodies we prepare
for the joy of Easter dawn. *Refrain***

James Phillip McAuley 1917–76
Words by permission Curtis Brown (Aust)

THE SENDING OUT OF GOD'S PEOPLE

*The collection may be presented in silence,
or the following or another suitable prayer may be used.*

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation.
Through your goodness we have these gifts to share.
Accept and use our offerings for your glory
and for the service of your kingdom.
Blessed be God for ever.

Notices

Concluding prayer

Eternal God and Father,
**by whose power we are created,
and by whose love we are redeemed:
Guide and strengthen us by your Spirit,
that we may give ourselves to your service,
and live this day in love to one another and to you;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Notices

Concluding Hymn: TiS 252. Tune Glenfield or Cross of Jesus (136).

- 1. When he was baptized in Jordan
Jesus knew his chosen role:
ready now for time of testing
in the desert of the soul.**
- 2. Starved of bread to feed the body,
starved of rest to feed the brain,
starved of friends to feed the spirit,
Jesus daily bore the strain.**
- 3. During six long weeks of trial
evil masquerades as good:
points false roads to instant lordship,
tempts him with the Word of God.**
- 4. He attacks the great impostor:
evil shall not win the day!
Ready now to serve his calling,
sets his face Jerusalem way.**
- 5. When our turn comes to be tempted,
as we meet each vital choice,
make us wise and make us willing,
Lord of life, to heed your voice.**

Bernard Arthur Braley 1924–
Words by permission Stainer & Bell, London

The Grace

**The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
be with us all. Amen.**

Dismissal

**Go in the peace of Christ.
Thanks be to God.**

(Continued from page 12)

The first three Gospels all bear witness to a turning point in Jesus's ministry, where he had to go into the desert to find out what he was for. Matthew and Luke spell this out quite compellingly. (John, as so often, has a different pattern entirely, and does not mention the wilderness experience.) Mark is, as usual, brief to the point of curtness. But this Gospel does include a detail that the other two do not. Mark says that Jesus was 'with the wild beasts'. At his baptism, God speaks with a love that is to compel everything that follows in Jesus's ministry, and Jesus's response is to go into the desert, with the wild beasts. I do not wish to romanticize animals. It may be that Mark only wants us to see Jesus's vulnerability. But it is tempting to see more in this phrase. It is tempting to read it in the context of the stories of Creation and Flood, and to see Jesus accepting his destiny as the one who is to fulfil the Creator's intention. The wild beasts do not try to protect themselves from God, or from the effects of our Fall. They accept death and disease, and they do not fight against their mortality. It is as though they are one kind of paradigm of acceptance. They accept that they have no control over their fate.

But Jesus is another kind of paradigm. He too is about to accept his part, and to relinquish control, so as to acknowledge dependence upon God alone. But his is the acceptance that is to bring God and humanity together again, as at the beginning.

Our Lenten discipline cannot bring us back to Adam's state, or even Noah's, but it can help us to accept, with gratitude, our creation and re-creation in Christ.

Williams, J. (2005). Lectionary Reflections: Year B (pp. 42–44). SPCK.

The First Sunday of Lent

When God makes his covenant with creation after the flood, it is a covenant not just with Noah and his family, or even with all future human beings, but with ‘every living creature that is with you’ (v. 10). What’s more, God goes on to emphasize this, by detailing all the creatures who are to be involved in this new covenant. Every time the covenant is mentioned, the living creatures are deliberately included (see Genesis 9:12, 15, 16, 17). It is as though Noah’s action then binds human and animal destiny together for ever.

But, of course, Genesis has already suggested, in its first creation story, that that was always God’s intention. When God makes human beings in chapter 1, he does so expressly saying that human beings are to be responsible for ‘every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth’ (Genesis 1:26). According to Genesis, human beings have always been closely bound up with the rest of the created order, so when Noah takes animals into the ark to preserve them, he is exercising the proper stewardship for which people were created. It is his duty and his joy to care for what God has made. So when God tells Noah that the new covenant is to include the rest of creation too, God could not have paid him a higher compliment. ‘Thank you, Noah,’ he is saying, ‘You are helping the world to be the way it should be.’

This intimate and necessary connection between the human creation and the rest of what God has made is part of what Lent is supposed to help us rediscover. So much of our human lives is constructed around the premise that we can isolate and protect ourselves from the forces that beset the rest of the world. We build houses to shield ourselves from the elements, we generate electricity to keep out the dark and make night and day bend to our will, we develop medicines to keep death at bay—the list is endless. And when the forces of nature break through and we have to submit to them, we are outraged.

Lent challenges us to remove some of our safety nets. Most of us do that in very small ways. We give up alcohol, or chocolate or (my own vice) coffee, and it is frightening how hard it is to manage without these inessential luxuries. Many human beings, of course, manage daily without such cushions. But Lent is not just an exercise in breast-beating and self-testing. Its basic questions are: ‘What are you for?’ ‘What do you depend on?’ ‘Where do you get your self-definition?’

The story of Noah is perfectly clear about the proper answers to that. All life is utterly dependent upon God. If God did not choose to preserve it, it would not be. If you depart from that basic fact, then you have lost the possibility of finding out your purpose.