



DIOCESE OF WANGARATTA
The Parochial District of Wangaratta West and The Warbys

The Second Sunday in Lent
16th March 2025

Ante Communion 11.00 a.m.

GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

The Introduction

Open our lips, O Lord;
and we shall declare your praise.

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

Let us praise the Lord.
The Lord's name be praised.

Hymn: AHB 490/TiS 577 [tune, Kilmarnock]

- 1. Come, let us to the Lord our God
with contrite hearts return;
our God is gracious, nor will leave
the desolate to mourn.**
- 2. His voice commands the tempest forth,
and stills the stormy wave,
and though his arm be strong to smite
'tis also strong to save.**
- 3. Long has the night of sorrow reigned,
the dawn shall bring us light:
God shall appear, and we shall rise
with gladness in his sight.**
- 4. Our hearts, if God we seek to know,
shall know him and rejoice;
his coming like the morn shall be,
like morning songs his voice.**
- 5. As dew upon the tender herb,
diffusing fragrance round;
as showers that usher in the spring
and cheer the thirsty ground:**

**6. so shall his presence bless our souls
and shed a joyful light;
that hallowed morn shall chase away
the sorrows of the night.**

John Morison 1750–98.

The Beatitudes: God calls all people to follow the way of truth and life.

Silence is kept between each Beatitude.

Let us hear our Lord's blessing on those who follow him.

Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn,
for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek,
for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness,
for they shall be satisfied.

Blessed are the merciful,
for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they shall be called children of God.

Blessed are those who suffer persecution
for righteousness' sake,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

The Trisagion is said.

**Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal,
have mercy on us.**

Wash me thoroughly from my wickedness
and cleanse me from my sin:
Make me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me:
Cast me not away from your presence
and take not your holy spirit from me.

Jesus, forgive my sins.

**Forgive the sins that I can remember,
and also the sins I have forgotten.**

**Forgive the wrong actions I have committed,
and the right actions I have omitted.**

**Forgive the times I have been weak in the face of temptation,
and those when I have been stubborn
in the face of correction.**

**Forgive the times I have been proud
of my own achievements,
and those when I have failed to boast of your works.**

**Forgive the harsh judgements I have made of others,
and the leniency I have shown to myself.**

**Forgive the lies I have told to others,
and the truths I have avoided.**

**Forgive me the pain I have caused others,
and the indulgence I have shown to myself.**

Jesus have pity on me, and make me whole.

Early Irish

The priest declares God's forgiveness

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.**

God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us,
even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive
together with Christ—by grace you have been saved.

Ephesians 2.5

THE GREETING OF PEACE

Christ has reconciled us to God in one body by the cross.

We meet in his name and share his peace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you
and also with you.

The Collect

Let us pray

God of our ancestors, whose chosen servant Abraham was given faith to obey your call and go out into the unknown: endow your Church with such faith that we may follow you with courage; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

A reading from the Book Genesis [15.1–12, 17–18

The word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, ‘Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great.’

But Abram said, ‘O Lord GOD, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?’ And Abram said, ‘You have given me no offspring, and so a slave born in my house is to be my heir.’

But the word of the LORD came to him, ‘This man shall not be your heir; no one but your very own issue shall be your heir.’ He brought him outside and said, ‘Look towards heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them.’ Then he said to him, ‘So shall your descendants be.’ And he believed the LORD; and the LORD reckoned it to him as righteousness.

Then he said to him, ‘I am the LORD who brought you from Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess.’ But he said, ‘O Lord GOD, how am I to know that I shall possess it?’ He said to him, ‘Bring me a heifer three years old, a female goat three years old, a ram three years old, a turtle-dove, and a young pigeon.’ He brought him all these and cut them in two, laying each half over against the other; but he did not cut the birds in two. And when birds of prey came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away. As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram, and a deep and terrifying darkness descended upon him.

¹⁷ When the sun had gone down and it was dark, a smoking fire-pot and a flaming torch passed between these pieces. On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, ‘To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates.’

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

Psalm 27. 1, 9-12, 16-17.

**The Lord is my light and my salvation;
whom then shall I fear?:
the Lord is the stronghold of my life;
of whom shall I be afraid?**

**O Lord hear my voice when I cry:
have mercy upon me and answer me.
My heart has said of you ‘Seek his face’:
your face Lord I will seek.**

**Do not hide your face from me:
or thrust your servant aside in displeasure;
For you have been my helper:
do not cast me away or forsake me O God of my salvation.**

**But I believe that I shall surely see
the goodness of the Lord:
in the land of the living.**

**O wait for the Lord stand firm
and he will strengthen your heart:
and wait I say for the Lord.**

A Reading from the Letter of Paul to the Philippians [3. 17—4. 1]

Brothers and sisters, join in imitating me, and observe those who live according to the example you have in us. For many live as enemies of the cross of Christ; I have often told you of them, and now I tell you even with tears. Their end is destruction; their god is the belly; and their glory is in their shame; their minds are set on earthly things.

But our citizenship is in heaven, and it is from there that we are expecting a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. He will transform the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, by the power that also enables him to make all things subject to himself. Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved.

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

Gradual Hymn: AHB 289/TiS 368. Tune, Bishopthorpe.

1. **This is the day the Lord has made;
he calls the hours his own;
let heav'n rejoice, let earth be glad,
and praise surround the throne.**
2. **Today he rose and left the dead,
and Satan's empire fell;
today the saints his triumphs spread,
and all his wonders tell.**
3. **Hosanna to th' anointed King,
to David's holy son!
Help us, O Lord; descend and bring
salvation from your throne.**
4. **Blessed be the Lord, the one who came
with messages of grace,
who comes in God his Father's name
to save our sinful race.**
5. **Hosanna in the highest strains
the church on earth can raise;
the highest heavens in which he reigns
shall give him nobler praise.**

Isaac Watts 1674–1748 alt.

Part iv (based on vv.24, 26) of his paraphrase of Ps. 118

The Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke [13. 31-35]
Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.

At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to him,
'Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you.'

He said to them, 'Go and tell that fox for me, "Listen, I am casting out demons and performing cures today and tomorrow, and on the third day I finish my work. Yet today, tomorrow, and the next day I must be on my way, because it is impossible for a prophet to be killed away from Jerusalem."

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! See, your house is left to you. And I tell you, you will not see me until the time comes when you say, "Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord."

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

The Creed

Let us together affirm the faith of the Church.

**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 for reflection follows

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

God of promise and hope, we bring to you our prayers believing that with you all things are possible; hear the prayers we offer.

You promised to make Abraham the father of nations and through Sarah and Hagar your promise came to birth: hear our prayers for the nations of the world.

We pray for peace among nations, especially Israel, Palestine, Ukraine, Russia, Sudan, The Democratic Republic of the Congo; for an end to violence, cruelty and oppression;

for a just and responsible sharing of the resources of the world;
for all who commit their lives to the pursuit of justice;

God of hope, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You promised a Messiah to bring salvation to your people,
and through the obedience of Mary your promise came to birth:
hear our prayers for your holy, catholic church.

We pray for a servant church where your gospel is proclaimed in
deed and in word;

for all leaders of churches, theologians and teachers;
we pray today for the Lutheran Church in Australia, her Clergy
and People.

In the Anglican Church of Australia for The Diocese of
Newcastle, Bishop Peter Stuart (*Nicki*).

Assistant Bishops: Sonia Roulston; Charlie Murry (*Melissa*).
The Clergy and People. The Society of St Francis, Stroud.

For our Diocese, for Clarence our bishop and Michelle & family.
The Parochial District of Numurkah/Nathalia,
Locum: Gunnar Rippon (*Margaret*).

the Parish leaders and communities at St George's, Numurkah
and Holy Trinity, Nathalia.

We give thanks and pray for all Ministries of Christian Healing.
We pray for all whose witness to the Gospel is met with apathy,
ridicule or persecution, strengthen them to persevere in faith;
We pray for understanding and respect between people of all
faiths and none.

In our parishes we pray for the fellowship and outreach through
ConTACT Drop-In at Glenrowan.

We continue to pray that the Co-operating Ministry between the
Wangaratta Parishes may be guided by the Holy Spirit.

God of hope, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You promised to send a Comforter to your people, and in the
coming of the Holy Spirit your promise was fulfilled:
hear our prayers for all who are in pain or distress.

We pray for relief, comfort and healing for your suffering people;
for the poor, the hungry and the homeless;
for the lonely, the forgotten and the unwanted;
for all who grieve the loss of loved ones;
for the sick and those who care for them;

for the dying and those who watch with them.
especially remembering, Rob Butler. Warren Gould. Mark
Heaton. Gwen Benstead. Shirley Cameron. Josef. Wayne.
Michael E. Kaye McKenzie, Jenny Molders.

God of hope, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You promised that from death would come new life and in the
resurrection of your Son your promise was fulfilled:
remember, we pray, your faithful servants of every age.

We give you thanks for all who have received and believed your
promises; for those whom we love who have gone to your
heavenly presence.

We remember this week: Nancy Ellen Evans.

Rest eternal grant unto her O Lord.
And may light perpetual shine upon her.

Inspire us with the faith of Abraham, the trust of Sarah, the
courage of Hagar, the obedience of Mary and the lives of all
your saints and fill us with your grace, that in us and through us
your promises may be fulfilled.

God of hope and promise, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

The prayers conclude with

Accept our prayers though 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 173 / TiS 233. Tune Hyfrydol.

1. I will sing the wondrous story
of the Christ who died for me,
how he left the realms of glory
for the cross on Calvary.

*Yes, I'll sing the wondrous story
of the Christ who died for me,
sing it with his saints in glory,
gathered by the crystal sea.*

2. I was lost: but Jesus found me,
found the sheep that went astray,
raised me up and gently led me
back into the narrow way.

Yes, I'll sing the wondrous story . . .

3. Faint was I, and fears possessed me,
bruised was I from many a fall,
hope was gone, and shame distressed me:
but his love has pardoned all.

Yes, I'll sing the wondrous story . .

4. Days of darkness still may meet me,
sorrow's paths I oft may tread;
but his presence still is with me,
by his guiding hand I'm led.

Yes, I'll sing the wondrous story . .

5. He will keep me till the river
rolls its waters at my feet:
then he'll bear me safely over,
where the loved ones I shall meet.

Yes, I'll sing the wondrous story . . .

Arrangement © Australian Hymn Book Co
Francis Harold Rowley 1854–1952

THE SENDING OUT OF GOD'S PEOPLE

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

Hymn AHB 570/TiS 642. tune, Buessan (2)

- 1. This day God gives me strength of high heaven,
sun and moon shining, flame in my hearth,
flashing of lightning, wind in its swiftness,
depths of the ocean, firmness of earth.**
- 2. This day God sends me strength to sustain me,
might to uphold me, wisdom as guide.
Your eyes are watchful, your ears are listening,
your lips are speaking, friend at my side.**
- 3. God's way is my way, God's shield is round me,
God's host defends me, saving from ill.
Angels of heaven, drive from me always
all that would harm me, stand by me still.**
- 4. Rising, I thank you, mighty and strong One,
king of creation, giver of rest,
firmly confessing threeness of persons,
oneness of Godhead, trinity blest.**

James Quinn 1919– alt.
adapted from 'St Patrick's Breastplate'
Words by permission Cassell plc, London

The Dismissal

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.**

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

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord:
In the name of Christ. Amen.

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The Second Sunday of Lent

Genesis 15:1–12, 17–18. Philippians 3:17–4:1. Luke 13:31–end.

The question raised by Philippians 3:17 is: how on earth can the Philippian church, Gentile Christians mostly, ‘join in imitating’ Paul? The chapter so far describes how Paul came to regard his orthodox Jewish background as ‘rubbish’, and gave it up to gain Christ. What has that to do with them?

Today’s epistle urges the Philippians to adopt the same attitude to their own privileges as Paul did to his. They belonged to a Roman colony; and, though Paul could make creative use of his Roman citizenship, his gospel cut across the grain of orthodox Roman belief and practice. Fifty years earlier, the Mediterranean world hailed Augustus as ‘saviour’ and ‘lord’. He had, after all, brought peace (of a sort) to the known world, and ruled unchallenged over an unprecedentedly large empire. Roman citizens, wherever they were, cherished both their status and their security. If enemies threatened, their saviour-lord would come from the mother city to rescue them. By Paul’s day, Caesar was openly worshipped, at least in the Eastern Mediterranean.

Verses 20–21 must be read against that background. For the Christian there is only one Saviour and Lord, only one mother city, only one hope. The Philippians must be ready to abandon the imitation in order to embrace the reality. The conclusion of the argument at 4:1 (congratulations to the lectionary for getting it right), encourages them to find their identity and security in this ‘Lord’ and in nobody else.

They are, in consequence, to engage in the same holy boldness with which Jesus, at one remove, confronted Herod. Herod may only have been a tinpot little monarch compared with Caesar, but his sly threats were real enough. Jesus had sovereign confidence in God’s overarching plan: when he declares it impossible for a prophet to die outside Jerusalem, he is not making a statement about history so much as asserting that his own prophetic vocation, which his divine commissioner would safeguard, would be accomplished there and there only. He would be enthroned, however paradoxically, in Jerusalem, and Herod would be shown up as the impostor. The way of the cross, trodden by Jesus and commended by Paul, undercuts the claims of the rulers of this world.

It thereby also fulfils the ancient promise to Abram. At the start of Genesis 15, Abram doesn’t even have an heir; by the end, he has been promised both an innumerable family and a substantial territory. The former will gain the latter through the hard road of slavery and rescue, the Old Testament’s way of the cross (vv. 13–16). And, as Paul encourages the Philippians to lift their eyes to the heavenly Jerusalem, so God tells Abram to look to the starry heavens to see the wide extent of his promise. No good keeping one’s eyes on the present rulers of Egypt or Canaan, of Galilee or Rome; God’s kingdom will come on earth as in heaven, and it will come by the way of the cross.

Wright, N. T. (2000). *Twelve Months of Sundays: Reflections on Bible Readings, Year C* (pp. 42–43). Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.