

2018 Readings for the Season of Lent February 14 – March 31, 2018

Adapted from the Book of Common Prayer

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The Lenten season begins on Ash Wednesday, and it lasts until the Saturday before Easter Day. The last week of Lent is called Passion Week, which includes both Maundy Thursday (the institution of the Lord's Supper) and Good Friday (the crucifixion of our Lord).

Reminiscent of Jesus' fasting for forty days in the wilderness, the Lenten season lasts forty days, not counting Sundays. Lent is a time to ask God to confront our own mortality and sinfulness; to ask Him to show us our need for grace; to grow in repentance; and, to reflect on the amazing truth of the Church's participation in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

For this year, our readings focus on praying in response to God's Word. The Scripture readings show us the depth of our sin and the enormity of our Father's love for sinners, and the written prayers are "collects" (brief scripture-inspired prayers) drawn from the *Book of Common Prayer*. The written prayers are responses to the Scriptural witness and encourage us to approach God in Christ. This guide also includes, "*The Meaning of Lent*," which is a great orientation to the purpose of this season.

May you be amazed at the grace of God as you approach our Heavenly Father in these times of reflection. May we all be conformed more and more to the likeness of Jesus Christ.

Ash Wednesday, February 14 Near

"Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the LORD is coming; it is near." Joel 2:1

Almighty and everlasting God, you hate nothing you have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent: Create and make in me a new and contrite heart, that worthily lamenting my sins and acknowledging my wretchedness, I may obtain of you, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ my Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Thursday, February 15 Come After

"If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it." Luke 9:23-24

Direct us, O Lord, in all our doings with your most gracious favor, and further us with your continual help; that in all our works begun, continued, and ended in you, we may glorify your holy Name, and finally, by your mercy, obtain everlasting life through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Friday, February 16 Loose

"Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of wickedness... your righteousness shall go before you; the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard." Isaiah 58:6,8

Support us, O Lord, with your gracious favor through the fast we have begun; that as we observe it by bodily self-denial, so we may fulfill it with inner sincerity of heart; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Saturday, February 17 Physician

"Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance." Luke 5:27-32

Almighty and everlasting God, mercifully look upon our infirmities, and in all our dangers and necessities stretch forth your right hand to help and defend us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

First Sunday in Lent, February 18 Hungry

"Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry." Matthew 4:1-2

Almighty God, whose blessed Son was led by the Spirit to be tempted by Satan; Come quickly to help us who are assaulted by many temptations; and as you know the weaknesses of each of us, let each one find you mighty to save; through Jesus Christ your Son my Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Monday, February 19 Sees

"Your Father who sees in secret will reward you." Matthew 6:4,6,18

Almighty and everlasting God, mercifully increase in us your gifts of holy discipline, in almsgiving, prayer and fasting; that our lives may be directed to the fulfilling of your most gracious will; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Tuesday, February 20 Once Walked

"You once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience, among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh." Ephesians 2:2-3

Grant to your people, Lord, grace to withstand the temptations of the world, the flesh and the devil, and with pure hearts and minds to follow you, the only True God; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Wednesday, February 21 **Grow**

"Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen." II Peter 3:18

Bless us, O God, in this holy season, in which our hearts seek your help and healing; and so purify us by your discipline that we may grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Thursday, February 22 **Keep**

The LORD will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life. The LORD will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forevermore." Psalm 121:7-8

Strengthen us, O Lord, by your grace, that in your might we may overcome all spiritual enemies, and with pure hearts serve you; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Friday, February 23 **Partakers**

"He has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature." II Peter 1:4

O God, you declare your almighty power chiefly in showing mercy and pity: Grant us the fullness of your grace that we, running to obtain your promises, may become partakers of your heavenly treasure; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reign with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Saturday, February 24 **Reconcile**

"In him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross." Colossians 1:19-20

O God, by your Word you marvelously carry out the work of reconciliation: Grant that in our Lenten fast we may be devoted to you with all our hearts, and united with one another in prayer and holy love; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Second Sunday in Lent, February 25 **My**

"I will have mercy on No Mercy, and I will say to Not My People, 'You are my people'; and he shall say, 'You are my God.'" Hosea 2:23

O God, whose glory it is always to have mercy: Be gracious to all who have gone astray from your ways, and bring them again with penitent hearts and steadfast faith to embrace and hold fast the unchangeable truth of your Word, Jesus Christ your Son, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Monday, February 26 **Holy**

"By the mercies of God... present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship." Romans 12:1

Let your Spirit, O Lord, come into the midst of us to wash us with the pure water of repentance and prepare us to be always a living sacrifice to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Tuesday, February 27 **Hate & Love**

"Seek good, and not evil, that you may live; and so the LORD, the God of hosts, will be with you, as you have said. Hate evil, and love good, and establish justice in the gate." Amos 5:14-15

O God, you willed to redeem us from all iniquity by your Son: Deliver us when we are tempted to regard sin without abhorrence, and let the virtue of his passion come between us and our mortal enemy; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Wednesday, February 28 **Dwell**

"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth... 'Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God.'" Revelation 21:1,3

O God, you so loved the world that you gave your only begotten Son to reconcile earth with heaven; Grant that we, loving you above all things, may love our friends in you, and our enemies for your sake; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Thursday, March 1 **Come In**

"Who shall stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false... Lift up your heads, O gates! And be lifted up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in." Psalm 24:3-4,7

O Lord, strong and mighty, Lord of Hosts and King of glory: Cleanse our hearts from sin, keep our hands pure, and turn our minds from what is passing away; so that at the last we may stand in your holy place and receive your blessing; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Friday, March 2 **Forgive**

"Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.' And they cast lots to divide his garments." Luke 23:34

Grant, O Lord, that as your Son Jesus Christ prayed for His enemies on the cross, so we may have grace to forgive those who wrongfully or scornfully use us, that we ourselves may be able to receive your forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Saturday, March 3 **Stayed**

"You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you. Trust in the LORD forever for the LORD GOD is an everlasting rock." Isaiah 26:3-4

Grant, most merciful Lord, to your faithful people pardon and peace, that they may be cleansed from all their sins, and serve you with a quiet mind; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Third Sunday in Lent, March 4 **Whole**

*"Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it."
1 Thessalonians 5:23-24*

Almighty God, you know that I have no power in myself to help myself: Keep me both outwardly in my body and inwardly in my soul, that I may be defended from all adversities which may happen to the body, and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul; through Jesus Christ the Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Monday, March 5 **Stretched**

"Who is like you, O LORD, among the gods? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders? You stretched out your right hand; the earth swallowed them." Exodus 15:11-12

Look upon the heart-felt desires of your humble servants, Almighty God, and stretch forth the right hand of your majesty to be our defense against all our enemies; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Tuesday, March 6 **Groan**

"We ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies... We do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words." Romans 8:23,26

O Lord, we beseech you mercifully to hear us; and grant that we, to whom you have given a fervent desire to pray, may, by your mighty aid, be defended and comforted in all dangers and adversities; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Wednesday, March 7 **Prepared**

"They were strangers and exiles on the earth...they are seeking a homeland... they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city." Hebrews 11:13,14,16

Give ear to our prayers, O Lord, and direct the way of your servants in safety under your protection, that amid all the changes of our earthly pilgrimage, we may be guarded by your mighty aid; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Thursday, March 8 **Guarded**

"You, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials." 1 Peter 1:4-6

Keep watch over your Church, O Lord, with your unfailing love; and, since it is grounded in human weakness and cannot maintain itself without your aid, protect it from all danger, and keep it in the way of salvation; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Friday, March 9 **With Me**

*"Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me."
Psalm 23:4*

Grant us, O Lord our Strength, to have a True Love of your Holy Name; so that, trusting in your grace, we may fear no earthly evil, nor fix our hearts on earthly goods, but may rejoice in your full salvation; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Saturday, March 10 **Fear**

"The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, that one may turn away from the snares of death." Proverbs 14:27

O God, you know us to be set in the midst of so many and great dangers, that by reason of the frailty of our nature we cannot always stand upright: Grant us such strength and protection as may support us in all dangers, and carry us through all temptations; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Fourth Sunday in Lent, March 11 **Bread**

"Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger.'" John 6:35

Gracious Father, whose blessed Son Jesus Christ came down from heaven to be the true bread which gives life to the world: Evermore give me this bread, that he may live in me, and I in him; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Monday, March 12 **Participation**

"The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread." 1 Corinthians 10:16-17

O Lord our God, in your Holy Sacraments you have given us a foretaste of the good things of your kingdom: Direct us we pray, in the way that leads to eternal life, that we may come to appear before you in that place of light where you dwell forever with your saints; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Tuesday, March 13 **Life & Light**

"For with you is the fountain of life; in your light do we see light." Psalm 36:9

O God, with you is the well of life, and in your light we see light: Quench our thirst with living water, and flood our darkened minds with heavenly light; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Wednesday, March 14**Spread**

"Can God spread a table in the wilderness?" Psalm 78:19

O Lord our God, you sustained your people in the wilderness with bread from heaven: Feed now your pilgrim flock with the food that endures to eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Thursday, March 15**Restore**

"After you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you." 1 Peter 5:10

Almighty and most merciful God, drive from us all weakness of body, mind and spirit; that, being restored to wholeness, we may with free hearts become what you intend us to be and accomplish what you want us to do; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Friday, March 16**Abounding**

"The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, 'The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.'" Exodus 34:6

O God, you have given us the good news of your abounding love in your Son Jesus Christ: So fill our hearts with thankfulness that we may rejoice to proclaim the good tidings we have received; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Saturday, March 17**Draw Near**

"Since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water." Hebrews 10:21-22

Mercifully hear our prayers, O Lord, and spare all those who confess their sins to you; that those whose consciences are accused by sin may, by your merciful pardon, be absolved; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Fifth Sunday in Lent, March 18**Hearts**

"May our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word."

11 Thessalonians 2:16-17

Almighty God, you alone can bring into order the unruly wills and affections of sinners: Grant your people grace to love what you command and desire what you promise; that, among the swift and varied changes of the world, our hearts may surely there be fixed where true joys are to be found; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Monday, March 19**Now I Know**

"Elijah said, 'See, your son lives.' And the woman said to Elijah, 'Now I know that you are a man of God, and that the word of the LORD in your mouth is truth.'" 1 Kings 17:17-24

Be gracious to your people, we entreat you, O Lord, that they, repenting day by day of the things that displease you, may be more and more filled with love of you and of your commandments; and, being supported by your grace in this life, may come to the full enjoyment of eternal life in your everlasting kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Tuesday, March 20**Imperishable**

"You have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God... you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood." 1 Peter 1:23,2:5

Almighty God, through the incarnate Word you have caused us to be born anew of an imperishable and eternal seed: Look with compassion upon those who are being prepared for Holy Baptism, and grant that they may be built as living stones into a spiritual temple acceptable to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Wednesday, March 21**Remembering**

"We give thanks to God always for all of you... remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thessalonians 1:2-3

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, renew in us the gifts of your mercy; increase our faith, strengthen our hope, enlighten our understanding, widen our charity, and make us ready to serve you; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Thursday, March 22**Rushed**

"And the LORD said, 'Arise, anoint him, for this is he.' Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers. And the Spirit of the LORD rushed upon David from that day forward." 1 Samuel 16:13

O God, you have called us to be your children and have promised that those who suffer with Christ will be heirs with him in your glory: Arm us with such trust in him that we may ask no rest from his demands and have no fear in his service; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Friday, March 23**Grant**

"The LORD has anointed me...to grant to those who mourn in Zion—to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit." Isaiah 61:1,3

O Lord, you relieve our necessity out of the abundance of your great riches: Grant that we may accept with joy the salvation you bestow, and manifest it to all the world by the quality of our lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Saturday, March 24**Delay**

"Will not God give justice to his elect, who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them?" Luke 18:7

O Lord, in your goodness you bestow abundant graces on your elect: Look with favor, we entreat you, upon those who in these Lenten days are being prepared for your Holy Baptism, and grant them the help of your protection; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Palm Sunday, March 25**Share**

"I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.... that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death." Philippians 3:8,10

Almighty and ever-living God, in your tender love for the human race you sent your Son our Savior Jesus Christ to take upon him our nature, and to suffer death upon the cross, giving us the example of his great humility: Mercifully grant that we may walk in the way of his suffering, and also share in his resurrection; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Monday, March 26**Longing**

"I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God." Romans 8:18

Almighty God, whose dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain, and entered not into glory before he was crucified: Mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross, may find it none other than the way of life and peace; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Tuesday, March 27**Dishonor**

"They left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name. And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching that the Christ is Jesus." Acts 5:41-42

O God, by the passion of your blessed Son you made an instrument of shameful death to be for us the means of life: Grant us so to glory in the cross of Christ, that we may gladly suffer shame and loss for the sake of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Wednesday, March 28**Shame**

"Look to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God." Hebrews 12:2

Lord God, whose blessed Son our Savior gave his body to be whipped and his face to be spit upon: Give us grace to accept joyfully the sufferings of the present time, confident of the glory that shall be revealed; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Mundy Thursday, March 29**Pass**

"And when I see the blood, I will pass over you." Exodus 12:13

Almighty Father, whose dear Son, on the night before he suffered, instituted the Sacrament of his Body and Blood: Mercifully grant that we may receive it thankfully in remembrance of Jesus Christ our Lord, who in these holy mysteries gives us a pledge of eternal life; and who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Good Friday, March 30**Forsaken**

"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Psalm 22:1

Almighty God, we pray you graciously to behold this your family, for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed, and given into the hands of sinners, and to suffer death upon the cross; who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Saturday, March 31**Darkness**

"I am the man who has seen affliction under the rod of his wrath; he has driven and brought me into darkness without any light... he has besieged and enveloped me with bitterness and tribulation; he has made me dwell in darkness like the dead of long ago." Lamentations 3:1-2, 5-6

O God, Creator of heaven and earth: Grant that, as the crucified body of your dear Son was laid in the tomb and rested on this holy Sabbath, so we may await with him the coming of the third day, and rise with him to newness of life; who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen

Easter Sunday, April 1**Raised**

"You were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead." Colossians 2:12

Almighty God, who through your only-begotten Son Jesus Christ overcame death and opened to us the gate of everlasting life: Grant that we, who celebrate with joy the day of the Lord's resurrection, may be raised from the death of sin by your life-giving Spirit; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.