

HOME WORSHIP FOR 7 MARCH, THE THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

OPENING PRAYER

Into our comfortable ways, O God, breathe rigorous reflection.

Into our ordered ways, O God, breathe lively innovation.

Into our worldly ways, O God, breathe hints of holiness.

Into our self-seeking ways, O God, breathe the notion of sacrifice, that we may walk the Lenten walk with Jesus, calmly, purposefully, and without fear. Amen.

Jesus took the hard road that led to Jerusalem. We give thanks, O God that we too can take the faithful way.

The disciple friends of Jesus were with him on that journey. We give thanks, O God, for the friends who stay with us in the testing times.

Jesus was prepared to confront the evil one of his day. We give thanks, O God, for those who speak out against power and injustice today.

Jesus could face the cruel cross because you were with him. We give thanks, O God, that in our Lenten challenges you are there – a rock, a leader, and the promise of eternal love. Amen.

CONFESSION AND WORDS OF ASSURANCE

There is an anger of prejudice that keeps us from listening to another person's point of view. Give us, O God, a willingness to listen, even when we disagree with what is being said.

There is an unexpressed anger that keeps feelings and emotions buried within. Give us, O God, the confidence to reveal those sentiments we find most difficult to put into words.

There is an anger that masks our own insecurity and doubt. Give us, O God, a faithful confidence that allows us to believe in ourselves, as you believe in us.

There is a selfish anger that will not share in our churches, our villages and with the needy world. Grant us, O God, a generosity of spirit that will share with those whose need is great, but whose names we may never know.

(In silence allow God to show you the times and ways you have put yourself before others)

Give us, O God, the insight that enables us to know the difference between rage and heartfelt, justified anger. Give us, O God, the willingness to reflect on those feelings of anger that are ours. Enable us to express our anger straightforwardly and constructively.

Bless us with those who are able to receive our hard feelings, both as an individual and as a member of the church.

By dealing with our feelings, peace will be ours. Thanks be to God! Amen!

MEMORY VERSE – try to memorise this verse from today’s readings.

Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple.... ‘Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father’s house a market-place!’ His disciples remembered that it was written, ‘Zeal for your house will consume me.’ (John 2: 15-17)

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

We pray for the Church the Body of Christ, with all its collected gifts and weaknesses; give us the grace to recognise that in your Spirit we are one, and curb any tendency to division.

May we hear you, Lord: and want to obey.

We pray for the world in all its beauty and richness; give us the desire to share our planet’s food and resources, to care for its people’s well-being, and to foster peace and justice for all.

May we hear you, Lord: and want to obey.

We pray for those we love – those we see each day and those we miss; help us to cherish one another as we live the loving way of your commands.

May we hear you, Lord: and want to obey.

We pray for all the victims of selfish or violent acts, and for those whose lives are trapped in sin. We pray for all whose bodies and minds have difficulties functioning. Make us more sensitive to their needs.

May we hear you, Lord: and want to obey.

We give thanks for the loving example of Jesus, who was obedient even to death and strengthens us in all goodness.

Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

CLOSING PRAYER

We will experience God’s blessing as compassionate needs are met, as the distressed are supported, as the lonely find a friend, and as the call to justice is heard.

Are you ready to follow the challenging way of Jesus Christ? Will you choose between justice and injustice? Will you speak out for what is right? Will you experience the disapproval of those who want only a quiet life? Will you conquer your fear? Will you feel the weight of the cross? Then you are ready!

To him who is able to keep us from falling and to present us without blemish before the presence of his glory with rejoicing, to the only God, our Saviour through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and for ever. Amen.