

"This life has been given to you for repentance;
do not waste it in vain pursuits."
– *St. Isaac the Syrian (c. 613-700)*
The Ascetical Homilies

 ANGLICAN
DIOCESE
OF THE SOUTH



LENT
2021
scriptures & prayers

"Fasting cleanses the soul, raises the mind, subjects one's flesh to the spirit, renders the heart contrite and humble, scatters the clouds of concupiscence, quenches the fire of lust, and kindles the true light of chastity.

Enter again into yourself."

– St. Augustine (354-430), Bishop of Hippo

as quoted by St. Thomas Aquinas in his 'Summa Theologica'

Ash Wednesday

February 17

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 | Ps. 103 | 2 Cor. 5:20-6:10 | Mt. 6:1-6, 16-21

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

"Fasting gives birth to prophets and strengthens the powerful; fasting makes lawgivers wise. Fasting is a good safeguard for the soul, a steadfast companion for the body, a weapon for the valiant, and a gymnasium for athletes. Fasting repels temptations, anoints unto piety; it is the comrade of watchfulness and the artificer of chastity.

In war it fights bravely, in peace it teaches stillness."

– St. Basil the Great (c. 329-379), Bishop of Caesarea

On Fasting, Sermon 1

Holy Week

Maundy Thursday

John 13:1-15 or Luke 22:14-30

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

Good Friday

Hebrews 10: 1-25

Almighty God, we beseech 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.

Holy Saturday

Matthew 27:57-66 or John 19:38-42

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; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Holy Week

Monday

John 12:1-11 or Mark 14:3-9

Almighty God, whose most 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 our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Tuesday

John 12:37-38, 42-50 or Mark 11:15-19

O Lord our God, whose blessed Son gave his back to be whipped and did not hide his face from shame and spitting: Give us grace to accept joyfully the sufferings of the present time, confident of the glory that shall be revealed; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Wednesday

Matthew 26:1-5, 14-25

Assist us mercifully with your grace, Lord God of our salvation, that we may enter with joy upon the meditation of those mighty acts by which you have promised us life and immortality; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Week One

February 21 - 27

Gen. 9:8-17 | Ps. 25 | 1 Peter 3:18-22 | Mark 1:9-13

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 our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

"When He had fasted for forty days and forty nights, and afterwards was hungry, He gave an opportunity to the devil to draw near, so that He might teach us through this encounter how we are to overcome and defeat him... He met him as he approached, and meeting him, with the skill which He alone possessed, He once, twice, and a third time, threw His enemy to the ground."

– St. John Chrysostom (c. 349-407), Archbishop of Constantinople
Homily 13 on Matthew

Week Two

Feb. 28 - Mar. 6

Gen. 22:1-14 | Ps. 16 | Rom. 8:31-39 | Mark 8:31-38

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

Week Three

March 7 - 13

Ex. 20:1-21 | Ps. 19:7-14 | Rom. 7:12-25 | John 2:13-22

Heavenly Father, you have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you. Look with compassion upon the heartfelt desires of your servants, and purify our disordered affections, that we may behold your eternal glory in the face of Christ Jesus; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

"Let us then not be ashamed to confess our sins unto the Lord. Shame indeed there is when each makes known his sins, but that shame, as it were, ploughs his land, removes the ever-recurring brambles, prunes the thorns, and gives life to the fruits which he believed were dead."
– St. Ambrose (c. 337-397), Archbishop of Milan
Concerning Repentance, Book II, Chapter 1

Week Four

March 14 - 20

2 Chr. 36:14-23 | Ps. 122 | Eph. 2:1-10 | John 6:1-15

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

Week Five

March 21 - 27

Jer. 31:31-34 | Ps. 51 | Heb. 5:1-10 | John 12:20-33

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 this 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 for ever. Amen.

"But there are three things which most belong to religious actions, namely prayer, fasting, and almsgiving... This threefold round of duty, dearly beloved, brings all other virtues into action: It attains to God's image and likeness and unites us inseparably with the Holy Spirit. Because in prayer faith remains steadfast, in fastings life remains innocent, in almsgiving the mind remains kind."
– St. Leo the Great (c. 400-461), Bishop of Rome, Sermon 12

Week Six

March 28 - April 3

Isa. 52:13-53:12 | Ps. 22:1-21 | Phil. 2:5-11 | Mark 15:1-39

Almighty and everlasting God, in your tender love for us you sent your Son our Savior Jesus Christ to take upon himself 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 come to 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.