

Christ the Saviour, Ealing



Spiritual Resources for
Lent 2022

Week I

*Ash Wednesday –
Saturday 5th March 2022*

Lent 2022

The season of Lent offers an opportunity for us to journey together as a community, and we hope that the resources we offer each week will be of help as we explore our faith and our commitment to Christ and his Church. This year we begin by reflecting on the nature of *The Journey*, and in subsequent weeks we will be looking at the key Christian virtues of *Faith*, *Hope* and *Love*. Our concluding week will focus on *The Journey's End* before we move into the solemn days of Holy Week, leading us through Christ's Passion to the glories of the resurrection which we celebrate at Easter.

This year our resources are once again produced in conjunction with the parish of St Matthew's Westminster. I'm grateful to colleagues for the considerable help given to make this weekly production possible, and pray that it may be a blessing to us all as we follow Our Lord through these holy days.

Fr Richard

Introduction to Lent

Lent is a season of forty days, not counting Sundays, which begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday. The English word *Lent* comes from the Anglo-Saxon word *lencten*, which means *lengthen* and refers to the lengthening days of spring. In many other languages, the word used for this season refers to the 40-day length of the season (*cuaresma* in Spanish, *carême* in French, *quaresima* in Italian) or to the fasting that characterizes it (*Fastenzeit* in German, *fastan* in Swedish, *paasto* in Finnish).

Historically, Lent began as a period of fasting and preparation for baptism by converts and then became a time for penance by all Christians. The first Sunday of Lent describes Jesus' temptation by Satan; and the sixth Sunday (Palm Sunday), Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem and his subsequent passion and death. Note that the readings during Lent, until Palm Sunday, focus primarily on the meaning of baptism and discipleship, in continuity with the season's original purpose. Because Sundays are always little Easters, the penitential spirit of Lent is tempered with joyful expectation of the Resurrection.

Holy Week is the final week of Lent, beginning with Palm Sunday and concluding with Holy Saturday. It is during these days that the readings focus primarily on the last days and suffering and death of Jesus.

The Great Three Days – also called the Triduum or Pasch – from sunset Maundy Thursday to sunset Easter Day are the climax of Lent and of the whole Christian year and a bridge into the Easter Season. This holy season proclaims the paschal mystery of Jesus Christ's passion, death, and resurrection. During these days, the community journeys with Jesus from the upper room, to the cross, to the tomb, and to the garden. They should be seen as a great and single unified service beginning with the Mass of the Last Supper on Maundy Thursday and concluding with the services of Easter Day.

Keeping Lent Faithfully

‘... and immediately the Spirit drove him into the wilderness.’ *St Mark 1. 12*

The Judean wilderness is a place like no other. The arid brown hills, almost bare of vegetation, plunge dramatically into deep ravines. The light is piercing, the silence tangible, the solitude palpable. It is a landscape to drive you mad, or into the arms of God. You can imagine Jesus there, wrestling with his vocation, a vocation spectacularly revealed when John baptised him in the river Jordan.

In going out into the wilderness Jesus was following Jewish tradition. The Jewish faith, the Jewish understanding of God was forged there, the desert was the place of revelation. In later times, many men and women would go out into the desert, leaving the world and its distractions behind, in the search for a deeper experience of God. It would become an established part of the Christian tradition - which is all very well for those with access to a desert and the time to go there. But what about the rest of us, with our busy lives, devoid of stillness, devoid of silence? Where is our wilderness experience? Where do we go to find our desert?

Well, basically, we don't need to go anywhere. Carlo Carretto, the contemporary hermit, observes: *if a person cannot go to the desert, the desert can come to the person*. The desert is all around us. Carlo Carretto goes on to explain how he prayed on an underground train, as absorbed in God as the two lovers across the compartment were in each other. However busy we are, our search for God will lead us to seek solitude, even if that solitude is only in our minds. We can speak to God and listen to him anywhere. The power of love can overcome distractions and create a desert in a crowded place.

Sometimes we may actively seek the desert, at other times the desert comes to us. As Harry Williams says: *the wilderness belongs to us. It is always lurking somewhere as part of our experience, and there are times when it seems pretty near the whole of it*. Williams is thinking of those times of depression when life seems empty and without meaning, our relationships barren, our hopes dashed: ‘most people's wilderness is inside them, not outside . . . our wilderness then is an inner isolation. It is an absence of contact. It is a sense of being alone - boringly alone, saddeningly alone, or terrifyingly alone’.

However it comes, the wilderness can be a place of spiritual growth. Gerald Vann describes how some particularly powerful spiritual experience may be followed by a period of depression, a time when it seems impossible to remain at the new heights we have so recently, if briefly, attained. This was what happened to Jesus. He experienced the exaltation of his baptism, the heavens opening, the dove descending: *This is my son, the beloved*. The Spirit drives him away from the cool river and the green valley up into those barren hills, the bottomless ravines, the blinding sunlight, the deep silence, the total solitude. Jesus there confronts the full meaning of who he is and what he must do. The Way of the Cross stretches before him. It is a time of choice, a time of decision, it is the beginning of Lent.

For us, as for Jesus, the wilderness experience is a time of trial, a time when we are put on our mettle. It has to be, if it is to be a time of growth. ‘No pain, no gain’ may be a motto for bodybuilders, but it goes for the spiritual life as well. The negative aspects of the wilderness experience will be the ones that are most obvious at first. The difficulty of making a space

for God in our busy lives, the depression, the lack of progress, the dryness, the boredom even. So much so in fact, that we lose sight of the benefits. It is as though the effect of climbing out of the ravine up the precipitous cliff wall is too much for us, the mountain top and the sunshine are so far away we forget they are there. But they are there, and that is where we belong.

Our time in the wilderness is meant to be a positive experience, whether we seek it, or whether it comes to us. The important thing is how we use it. Carlo Carretto again: 'look at the reality in which you live as a whole, a whole by means of which God speaks to you, and through which he guides you'. It is not, he says, by running away from the wilderness experience that we find God for flight from our difficulties can so often be a flight from God. To find God we need to stay where we are and change our hearts so we see things differently: 'the desert in the city is only possible on these terms - that you see things with a new eye, touch them with a new spirit, love them with a new heart'.

If we can create in our lives a space for God, a space where we can go out and meet him and be alone with him, even in the midst of our activity. Such a desert, says Carlo Carretto, expresses our search for God: 'it is a suspension bridge thrown by the soul in love with God over the dark abyss of its own spirit, over the strange deep crevasses of temptation, over the unfathomable precipices of its own fears.'

The Russians call such a place *poustinia*. It may be a desert, a hermitage, or a private place, or a corner of a busy office or a crowded tube train. A modern Russian mystic writes of *poustinia*, wherever it is: 'the desert is a place where we gather courage, where we pronounce words of truth, remembering that God is truth'. It is a place where allow the fire of God's spirit to touch our hearts and galvanise us into action: 'this desert is a holy place, a prayer beyond all prayer. It leads to the continual presence of God, and to the heights of contemplation where the soul, at peace at last, lives by the will of him whom it loves totally, absolutely, endlessly'. We have come up out of the shadows into the sunshine and the endless vista of the desert, stretching to infinity.

In Lent we allow the Holy Spirit to work on us, to drive us out into the wilderness, to actively seek out the desert experience. We put ourselves on trial as we seek a deeper understanding of God and of ourselves. We redouble our efforts to scramble up the steep bank of the ravine. Sometimes it may seem that we make little progress, even slide further back. But ahead of us is the mountain top and the sunshine, and the bright beams call us onwards. It is a call we must answer, even if to reach them we have to pass through the shadow of the Cross.

For further reading:

Carlo Carretto: *The Desert in the City*

Harry Williams: *The True Wilderness*

Gerald Vann and P K Meagher: *The Temptations of Christ*

Catherine de Hueck Doherty: *Poustinia*

I - The Journey

Ash Wednesday

March 2nd

Reading

Yet even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and relents from punishing.

Joel 2. 12-13

Reflection

*Midway upon the journey of our life
I found myself within a forest dark,
where the straight path had been lost.*

*How hard a thing it is to say,
what this forest was, savage, rough, and stern.
Just to think of it brings back my fear.*

This is how the great Italian poet Dante begins his famous poem about a journey through Hell, Purgatory, and Heaven: *The Divine Comedy*. Dante comes to realise that he has lost his way, and drifted away from his family, his friends, his work, and God. Recognizing that we too are lost is a good place to begin Lent. Jesus himself begins the journey of his ministry in the trackless desert, wrestling with temptation, and aware of his vulnerability.

Our hope is that the prayers and readings in these booklets will accompany you during Lent. To begin this journey, I suggest asking yourself three simple questions each day: Where do I feel close to God? Where do I feel far from God? What is God asking of me today? Even when we find ourselves lost, beginning to answer these questions can teach us how we can walk forward with Jesus, however lost we may feel.

Prayer

*The Ash Wednesday Collect
(traditionally this prayer is said every day in Lent)*

Almighty and everlasting God,
you hate nothing that you have made
and forgive the sins of all those who are penitent:
create and make in us new and contrite hearts
that we, worthily lamenting our sins
and acknowledging our wretchedness,
may receive from you, the God of all mercy,
perfect remission and forgiveness;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Thursday March 3rd

Reading

Trust in the Lord with all your heart,
and do not rely on your own insight.
In all your ways acknowledge him,
and he will make straight your paths.
Do not be wise in your own eyes;
fear the Lord, and turn away from evil.
It will be a healing for your flesh
and a refreshment for your body.

Proverbs 3. 5-8

Reflection

As to your Lent: don't reduce sleep. Don't get up in the cold. Practice more diligently the art of turning to God with some glance or phrase of love and trust at spare moments in the day. Read a devotional book in bed in the morning, and strive in every way to make the ordinary discipline of life of spiritual worth. Be especially kind and patient with those who irritate you.

I suggest by preference the mortification of the *tongue*. Careful guard on all amusing criticism of others, on all complaints however casual and trivial; deliberately refraining sometimes (not always!) from saying the entertaining thing. This does not mean you have to be dull or correct! But to ration this side of your life.

I doubt whether things like sitting on the least comfortable chair affect you enough to be worth bothering about. But I'm sure *custody of the tongue* could give you quite a bit of trouble and be a salutary bit of discipline, a sort of verbal hair-shirt.

Evelyn Underhill (1875-1941)
English mystical poet and author

Prayer

You, O Lord, are the God of those who repent;
reveal your goodness in me;
unworthy as I am, save me according to your great mercy,
and I will praise you all the days of my life;
for all the host of heaven sings your praise,
and yours alone is the glory for ever. Amen.

The Prayer of Manasseh

Friday March 4th

Reading

I do not turn away from your ordinances,
for you have taught me.
How sweet are your words to my taste,
sweeter than honey to my mouth!
Through your precepts I get understanding;
therefore I hate every false way.
Your word is a lamp to my feet
and a light to my path.

Psalm 119. 102-5

Reflection

People do not mortify themselves during Lent
out of a sick desire to suffer.
God did not make us for suffering.
If we fast or do penances or pray,
it is for a very positive goal:
by overcoming self
one achieves the Easter resurrection.
We do not just celebrate a risen Christ,
distinct from us,
but during Lent we prepare ourselves
to rise with him to a new life
and to become the new persons
that are what the country needs right now.
Let us not just shout slogans
about new structures;
new structures will be worthless
without new persons
to administer the new structures the country needs
and live them out in their lives.

*Óscar Romero (1917-1980), Archbishop of San Salvador
who was assassinated as he was saying Mass.*

Prayer

Almighty and eternal God,
when your people wandered in the desert
you drew a living fountain from a rock;
draw tears of repentance from our hard hearts,
that we may return to you, trusting in your compassion,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

14th Century

Saturday March 5th

Reading

Enter through the narrow gate;
for the gate is wide and the road is easy that leads to destruction,
and there are many who take it.
For the gate is narrow and the road is hard that leads to life,
and there are few who find it.

St Matthew 7. 13-14

Reflection

One who is content with what they have, and who accepts the fact that they inevitably miss very much in life, is far better off than one who has much more but who worries about all they may be missing . . . the relative perfection which we must attain to in this life if we are to live as children of God is not the twenty-four-hour-a-day production of perfect acts of virtue, but a life from which practically all the obstacles to God's love have been removed or overcome.

One of the chief obstacles to this perfection of selfless charity is the selfish anxiety to get the most out of everything, to be a brilliant success in our own eyes and in the eyes of others. We can only get rid of this anxiety by being content to miss something in almost everything we do. We cannot master everything, taste everything, understand everything, drain every experience to its last dregs. But if we have the courage to let almost everything else go, we will probably be able to retain the one thing necessary for us – whatever it may be.

If we are too eager to have everything, we will almost certainly miss even the one thing we need. Happiness consists in finding out precisely what the 'one thing necessary' may be, in our lives, and in gladly relinquishing all the rest. For then, by a divine paradox, we find that everything else is given us together with the one thing we needed.

Thomas Merton (1915-1968)
American Trappist Monk, Theologian & Poet.

Prayer

Eternal Light, shine into our hearts,
Eternal Goodness, deliver us from evil,
Eternal Power, be our support,
Eternal Wisdom, scatter the darkness of our ignorance,
Eternal Pity, have mercy upon us;
that with all our heart and mind and soul and strength
we may seek thy face and be brought by thine infinite mercy
to thy holy presence; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

St Alcuin (735-804)
Scholar, Priest & Poet.

Sunday March 6th

Each Sunday in Lent Fr Jonathan Aitken introduces one of the Penitential Psalms, beginning this week with Psalm 130.

¹ *Out of the deep have I called unto thee, O Lord, Lord, hear my voice.*

² *O let thine ears consider well the voice of my complaint.*

³ *If thou, Lord wilt be extreme to mark what is done amiss, O Lord, who may abide it?*

⁴ *For there is mercy with thee, therefore shalt thou be feared.*

⁵ *I look for the Lord; my soul doth wait for him, in his word is my trust.*

⁶ *My soul fleeth unto the Lord before the morning watch, I say, before the morning watch.*

⁷ *O Israel, trust in the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy and with him is plenteous redemption.*

⁸ *And he shall redeem Israel from all his sins.*

Psalm 130 is one of the greatest of the six Penitential Psalms. It is frequently sung, said or preached about during Lent. Among the great men of God who have said this was their favourite Psalm are Augustine of Hippo, Martin Luther, John Calvin, John Bunyan and Charles Wesley. This Psalm has a universal appeal because the experience of being 'in the depths' is such a common experience.

Almost all of us have periods in our lives when we feel submerged by problems, pressures and pain. Sometimes these are our own fault. We may have sunk into the depths because of our own choices, mistakes or sins.

But often our journeys down to the depths are not our fault at all. We can be dragged down by bereavement; by mental or physical illness; by broken relationships; by persecution or by the horrors of war of the kind we are now seeing day after day in the television coverage of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

So how do we climb out of the depths with God's help?

The first stanza of the Psalm recognises the importance of praying or crying to God. These two opening verses reverse the popular, secular expression 'when you are in a hole stop digging'. The Psalmist says in effect: 'When you are in a hole start praying'.

But how should we pray?

The next stanza (verses 3 and 4) highlight the importance of forgiving and being forgiven. And then come the most haunting verses of the Psalm (5 and 6) which are all about patience: A much underrated Christian virtue.

The poetic reference to the 'those who watch for the morning' reinforced by the familiar device of Hebrew poets', which scholars called 'parallelism' or 'double repetition' makes the point that penitence is not a quick fix.

It may be a slow and painful process. God's timetable is often not our timetable. One of the most frequent refrains through the Book of Psalms is: 'How long O Lord? How long?' And as we wait for the Lord's timing, sometimes mysteriously long timing the way of how we wait is hugely important from two angles.

First, how do we endure the depths ourselves?

Secondly, how do we support others if we see a friend, relative or neighbour going through the depths?

A verse from the Scottish poet Adam Lindsay Gordon may be helpful here:

*Life is mostly froth and bubble,
Two things stand like stone.
Kindness in another's trouble,
Courage in your own.*

The lonely soul, marooned in the depths is wise to pray with patience but to hope with certainty. The hope lies in God's word (verse 5) and in his promises.

The final verses (7-8) advise the committed people of God (Israel) to hope they will receive God's promised reward for those who pray and wait patiently in their depths. That reward is defined as God's 'power to redeem' (verse 7). It includes the liberation from the burden of all past sins (verse 8) and a new life obeying God's will.

To climb out of the depths may be a long haul and at times a painful one. I found it so during my prison sentence for perjury.

Yet I am one of a multitude of readers and prayers of this great Lenten Psalm who knows its guidance is right and that its promises are true.

Prayer

Father
I abandon myself into your hands;
Do with me as you will.
Whatever you do, I thank you now.
I am ready for all, everything I accept,
If only your will be done in me
And in all your creatures;
I desire nothing else, my God.
Into your hands I commend my spirit;
I give you my soul
with all the love of my heart,
For I love you, my God, and so need to give,
To surrender myself into your hands
without measure
And with confidence beyond all questioning
Because you are my Father.

*Charles de Foucauld (1858-1916)
Priest, Hermit & Martyr*

Monday March 7th

Reading

The Lord went in front of them in a pillar of cloud by day,
to lead them along the way,
and in a pillar of fire by night, to give them light,
so that they might travel by day and by night.
Neither the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night
left its place in front of the people.

Exodus 13. 21-22

Reflection

Journeying is an art because if we're always in a hurry, we get tired and don't arrive at our journey's goal. If we stop, we don't go forward and we also miss the goal. Journeying is precisely the art of looking toward the horizon, thinking where I want to go but also enduring the fatigue of the journey, which is sometimes difficult. ... There are dark days, even days when we fail, even days when we fall ... but always think of this: Don't be afraid of failures. Don't be afraid of falling. What matters in the art of journeying isn't not falling but not staying down. Get up right away and continue going forward. This is what's beautiful: This is working every day, this is journeying as humans. But also, it's bad walking alone: It's bad and boring. Walking in community, with friends, with those who love us, that helps us. It helps us to arrive precisely at that goal, that 'there where' we're supposed to arrive.

Pope Francis

Prayer

My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me.
I cannot know for certain where it will end.
Nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think I am following your will
does not mean that I am actually doing so.
But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you.
And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing.
I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire.
And I know that if I do this, you will lead me by the right road
though I may know nothing about it.
Therefore I will trust you always though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death.
I will not fear, for you are ever with me, and you will never leave me to face my perils alone.

Thomas Merton (1915-1968)

American Trappist Monk, Theologian & Poet.

Tuesday March 8th

Reading

Seek the Lord while he may be found,
call upon him while he is near;
let the wicked forsake their way,
and the unrighteous their thoughts;
let them return to the Lord, that he may have mercy on them,
and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

Isaiah 55. 6-7, 12

Reflection

The spirit of the world is restless, and wishes to do everything. Let us leave it to itself. Let us have no desire to choose our own paths, but walk in those which God may be pleased to prescribe for us. Let us regard ourselves as unworthy that he should make use of us, or that others should think of us, and then all will be well with us. Let us offer ourselves to him to do and to suffer all things for his glory and the establishment of his Church. He asks for nothing else. If he desires results, they rest with him and not with us.

Let us courageously extend the confines of our heart and will in his presence and let us not decide upon doing this thing or that until God has spoken. Let us implore him to grant us the grace to labour meanwhile to practise those virtues that Our Lord practised.

St Vincent de Paul (c1580-c1659)

French priest who devoted his life to helping the poor.

The self-denial involved in the period of Lent isn't about just giving up chocolates or beer; it's about trying to give up a certain set of pictures of God which are burned into our own selfish wants.

Rowan Williams (b1950)

Former Archbishop of Canterbury

Prayer

Bring us, O Lord God, at our last awakening into the house and gate of heaven, to enter into that gate and dwell in that house, where there shall be no darkness nor dazzling, but one equal light; no noise nor silence, but one equal music; no fears nor hopes, but one equal possession; no ends nor beginnings, but one equal eternity: in the habitations of thy majesty and glory, world without end. Amen.

John Donne (1571 - 1631)

Anglican Priest & Poet, Dean of St Paul's.

Wednesday March 9th

Reading

I stayed on the mountain for forty days and forty nights, as I had done the first time. And once again the Lord listened to me. The Lord was unwilling to destroy you. The Lord said to me, 'Get up, go on your journey at the head of the people, that they may go in and occupy the land that I swore to their ancestors to give them.'

Deuteronomy 10. 10-11

Reflection

To be grateful is to recognize the Love of God in everything he has given us - and he has given us everything. Every breath we draw is a gift of his love, every moment of existence is a grace, for it brings with it immense graces from him.

Gratitude therefore takes nothing for granted, is never unresponsive, is constantly awakening to new wonder and to praise of the goodness of God. For the grateful person knows that God is good, not by hearsay but by experience. And that is what makes all the difference.

Thomas Merton (1915-1968)
American Trappist Monk, Theologian & Poet.

Prayer

Batter my heart, three-person'd God, for you
As yet but knock, breathe, shine, and seek to mend;
That I may rise, and stand, o'erthrow me, and bend
Your force, to break, blow, burn and make me new.
I, like an usurp'd town, to another due,
Labor to admit you, but Oh, to no end,
Reason your viceroy in me, me should defend,
But is captiv'd, and proves weak or untrue.
Yet dearly I love you, and would be loved fain,
But am betroth'd unto your enemy:
Divorce me, untie, or break that knot again,
Take me to you, imprison me, for I
Except you enthrall me, never shall be free,
Nor ever chaste, except you ravish me.

John Donne (1571 - 1631)
Anglican Priest & Poet, Dean of St Paul's.

Thursday March 10th

Reading

Then Moses summoned Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel: 'Be strong and bold, for you are the one who will go with this people into the land that the Lord has sworn to their ancestors to give them; and you will put them in possession of it. It is the Lord who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed.'

Deuteronomy 31. 7-8

Reflection

God has entrusted me to do him some definite service; he has committed some work to me which he has not committed to another. I have my mission - I may never know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next.

I am a link in a chain, a bond of connection between persons. He has not created me for naught. I shall do good, I shall do his work. I shall be an angel of peace, a preacher of truth in my own place while not intending it - if I do but keep his commandments.

Therefore I will trust him. Whatever, wherever I am, I can never be thrown away. If I am in sickness, my sickness may serve him; in perplexity, my perplexity may serve him; if I am in sorrow, my sorrow may serve him. He does nothing in vain. He knows what he is about. He may take away my friends, he may throw me among strangers. He may make me feel desolate, make my spirits sink, hide my future from me - still he knows what he is about.

St John Henry, Cardinal Newman (1801-1890)
Priest, Theologian & Cardinal

Prayer

Let nothing disturb you,
Let nothing frighten you,
All things are passing away:
God never changes.
Patience obtains all things
Whoever has God lacks nothing;
God alone suffices.

St Teresa of Ávila (1515-1582)
Spanish Nun & Mystic

Friday March 11th

Reading

He has told you, O mortal, what is good;
and what does the Lord require of you
but to do justice, and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God?

Micah 6.8

Reflection

This seems a cheerful world, Donatus, when I view it from this fair garden, under the shadow of these vines. But if I climbed some great mountain and looked out over the wide lands, you know very well what I would see. Brigands on the high road, pirates on the seas, in the amphitheatres men murdered to please the applauding crowds, under all roofs misery and selfishness. It is really a bad world Donatus, an incredibly bad world. Yet in the midst of it I have found a quiet and holy people. They have discovered a joy which is a thousand times better than any pleasure of this sinful life. They are despised and persecuted, but they care not. They have overcome the world. These people, Donatus, are the Christians ... and I am one of them.

St Cyprian (210-258)

Bishop of Carthage writing to Donatus

Prayer

Lord make us instruments of thy peace.
Where there is hatred let us sow love;
Where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is doubt, faith;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light;
Where there is sadness, joy.
Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled,
as to console; to be understood, as to understand;
to be loved, as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive,
in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and in dying that we are born to eternal life.

St Francis of Assisi (1181-1226)

Saturday March 12th

Reading

Then Jesus called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal. He said to them, 'Take nothing for your journey, no staff, nor bag, nor bread, nor money – not even an extra tunic.

St Luke 9. 1-3

Reflection

May today there be peace within.
May you trust God that you are exactly where you are meant to be.
May you not forget the infinite possibilities that are born of faith.
May you use those gifts that you have received,
and pass on the love that has been given to you.
May you be content knowing you are a child of God.
Let this presence settle into your bones,
and allow your soul the freedom to sing, dance, praise and love.
It is there for each and every one of us.

St Teresa of Ávila (1515-1582)
Spanish Nun & Mystic

Prayer

I am two people;
and one is filled with longing
to serve thee utterly, and one is afraid.
O Lord, have compassion upon me.
I am two people;
and one will labour to the end,
and one is weary already.
O Lord, have compassion upon me.
I am two people;
and one knows the suffering of the world,
and one knows only his own.
O Lord, have compassion upon me
and may the Spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ
fill my heart and the hearts of all people everywhere.

Prayer of St Martin-in-the-Fields