

Fifth Sunday of Lent

Music: Celtic Prayer – Esther Bersweden
From the UofB Church Choir Concert 2018

Greeting

In the name of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

The Lord be with you
And also with you.

Penitence

Lord God, our maker and our redeemer,
this is your world and we are your people:
come among us and save us.

Pause for silent reflection

We have wilfully misused your gifts of creation;
Lord, be merciful:
forgive us our sin.

We have seen the ill-treatment of others
and have not gone to their aid;
Lord, be merciful:
forgive us our sin.

We have condoned evil and dishonesty
and failed to strive for justice;
Lord, be merciful:
forgive us our sin.

We have heard the good news of Christ,
but have failed to share it with others;
Lord, be merciful:
forgive us our sin.

We have not loved you with all our heart,
nor our neighbours as ourselves;
Lord, be merciful:
forgive us our sin.

Absolution

May the God of love and mercy bring you back to himself,
forgive you your sins,
and embrace you in his eternal love in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Collect

Let us pray that we may reflect the life of God.

God of compassion,
you call us out of the bindings of death
on this, our resurrection day:
make us ready to surrender
the fear in which we hide
to step into your future
alive and unashamed;
through Jesus Christ, the life of the world. **Amen.**

Old Testament Reading: Ezekiel 37.1-14

A reading from the prophet Ezekiel

The hand of the Lord came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. ²He led me all round them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. ³He said to me, 'Mortal, can these bones live?' I answered, 'O Lord God, you know.' ⁴Then he said to me, 'Prophecy to these bones, and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. ⁵Thus says the Lord God to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. ⁶I will lay sinews on you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live; and you shall know that I am the Lord.'

⁷ So I prophesied as I had been commanded; and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. ⁸I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them; but there was no breath in them. ⁹Then he said to me, 'Prophecy to the breath, prophesy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.' ¹⁰I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

|| Then he said to me, 'Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, "Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely."¹²Therefore prophesy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord God: I am going to open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. ¹³And you shall know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people. ¹⁴I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken and will act, says the Lord.'

This is the word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Taize Chant: Bless the Lord my soul

Bless the Lord, my soul
And bless God's holy name
Bless the Lord, my soul
Who leads me into life.

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Gospel Reading: John 11.1-45

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John
Glory to you, O Lord.

Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. ²Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was ill. ³So the sisters sent a message to Jesus, 'Lord, he whom you love is ill.' ⁴But when Jesus heard it, he said, 'This illness does not lead to death; rather it is for God's glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.' ⁵Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, ⁶after having heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was.

⁷ Then after this he said to the disciples, 'Let us go to Judea again.' ⁸The disciples said to him, 'Rabbi, the Jews were just now trying to stone you, and are you going there again?' ⁹Jesus answered, 'Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Those who walk during the day do not stumble, because they see the light of this world. ¹⁰But those who walk at night stumble, because the light is not in them.' ¹¹After saying this, he told them, 'Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to awaken him.' ¹²The disciples said to him, 'Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will be all right.' ¹³Jesus, however, had been speaking about his death, but they thought that he was referring merely to sleep. ¹⁴Then Jesus told them plainly, 'Lazarus is dead. ¹⁵For your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.' ¹⁶Thomas, who was called the Twin, said to his fellow-disciples, 'Let us also go, that we may die with him.' ¹⁷ When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. ¹⁸Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away, ¹⁹and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. ²⁰When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home. ²¹Martha said to Jesus, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. ²²But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him.'²³

Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.'²⁴ Martha said to him, 'I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.'²⁵ Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live,²⁶ and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?'²⁷ She said to him, 'Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world.'

28 When she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary, and told her privately, 'The Teacher is here and is calling for you.'²⁹ And when she heard it, she got up quickly and went to him.³⁰ Now Jesus had not yet come to the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him.³¹ The Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary get up quickly and go out. They followed her because they thought that she was going to the tomb to weep there.³² When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.'³³ When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved.³⁴ He said, 'Where have you laid him?' They said to him, 'Lord, come and see.'³⁵ Jesus began to weep.³⁶ So the Jews said, 'See how he loved him!' ³⁷ But some of them said, 'Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?'

38 Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it.³⁹ Jesus said, 'Take away the stone.' Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, 'Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead for four days.'⁴⁰ Jesus said to her, 'Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?' ⁴¹ So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upwards and said, 'Father, I thank you for having heard me.⁴² I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me.'⁴³ When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come out!' ⁴⁴ The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, 'Unbind him, and let him go.'⁴⁵ Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Reflection

A Lenten Creed

We believe that our lives are held within the encircling love of God, who knows our names and recognises our deepest needs.

We believe that Christ is the divine Child of the living God, and that his grace is like living waters that can never be exhausted.

We believe in the birthing, renewing, enabling Spirit of God who yearns over our welfare as a mother yearns for her child.

We believe that God is in the arid desert as well as in green pastures, and that hard times and disciplines are also loving gifts.

We believe that our journey has a purpose and a destination, and that our path leads to a human glory we cannot yet imagine.

We believe that in the church we are fellow pilgrims on the road, and that we are called to love one another as God loves us.

**This is our faith and we are humbled to profess in Jesus the Christ.
Amen**

*from **Traveling to Easter with Jesus as our Guide**,
posted on the website of Patmos Abbey - The Order of Saint Columba.
<http://www.patmosabbey.org/>*

Intercessions

The Peace

We, who were enemies
of one another and of life, have been reconciled
by the free gift of God;
for while we were still at war
God has made peace
by the blood of the cross.

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

The Lord's Prayer

**Eternal Spirit,
Earth-maker, Pain Bearer, Life-Giver,
Source of all that is and that shall be.
Father and Mother of us all,**

**Loving God, in whom is heaven:
The hallowing of your name echo through the universe!
The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world!
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!**

**Your commonwealth of peace and freedom
sustain our hope and come on earth.**

**With the bread we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.**

**In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.
From trials too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.**

**For your reign in the glory of the power that is love,
now and forever. Amen.**

Jim Cotter Lord's Prayer

Taize Chant: Nada te turbe

Nada te turbe, nada te espante
Quen a Dios tiene, nada le falta
Nada te turbe, nada te espante
Solo Dios basta

*Let nothing trouble you, let nothing scare you
He who loves God, needs nothing
Let nothing trouble you, let nothing scare you
Only God is enough*

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Closing Prayers

Jesus, Son of God, our true and only Saviour:
you died like a criminal on a cross;
but you are God who forgives.
Once broken, helpless and in pain,
you are God in whom there is hope.
You have shown us a love beyond words:
give us your forgiveness, hope and love. **Amen.**

Jesus, lord of time,
hold us in your eternity.
Jesus, image of God,
travel with us the life of faith.
Jesus, friend of sinners,
heal the brokenness of our world.
Jesus, lord of tomorrow,
draw us into your future. Amen.

Blessing and Dismissal

Listen for the word of the Lord
Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live.

May the cross be the sign
in which we begin again
to undo the cords of violence,
the misery of exclusion,
and proclaim love
without conditions;
and the blessing of God . . .

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

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