



# Celebrate

Second Sunday in Lent  
March 16, 2025

*Though we sometimes doubt and often resist God's desire to protect and save us, our God persists. In holy baptism, God's people have been called and gathered into a God-initiated relationship that will endure. Lent provides the church with a time and a tradition in which to seek God's face again. Lent provides another occasion to behold the God of our salvation in the face of the Blessed One who "comes in the name of the Lord."*

## Prayer of the Day

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God of the covenant, in the mystery of the cross you promise everlasting life to the world. Gather all peoples into your arms, and shelter us with your mercy, that we may rejoice in the life we share in your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

## First Reading

Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18

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*God promises a childless and doubting Abram that he will have a child, that his descendants will be as numerous as the stars, and that the land of Canaan will be their inheritance. Abram's trust in God is sealed with a covenant-making ceremony, a sign of God's promise.*

After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, "Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great." <sup>2</sup>But Abram said, "O Lord GOD, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" <sup>3</sup>And Abram said, "You have given me no offspring, and so a slave born in my house is to be my heir." <sup>4</sup>But the word of the LORD came to him, "This man shall not be your heir; no one but your very own issue shall be your heir." <sup>5</sup>He brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to

count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your descendants be." <sup>6</sup>And he believed the LORD; and the LORD reckoned it to him as righteousness.

<sup>7</sup>Then he said to him, "I am the LORD who brought you from Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess." <sup>8</sup>But he said, "O Lord GOD, how am I to know that I shall possess it?" <sup>9</sup>He said to him, "Bring me a heifer three years old, a female goat three years old, a ram three years old, a turtledove, and a young pigeon." <sup>10</sup>He brought him all these and cut them in two, laying each half over against the other; but he did not cut the birds in two. <sup>11</sup>And

*continued*



In the day of trou - ble, God will give me shel - ter.

The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom then shall I fear?

The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

**2**When evildoers close in against me to devour my flesh,  
they, my foes and my enemies, will stumble and fall.

**3**Though an army encamp against me, my heart will not fear.

Though war rise up against me, my trust will not be shaken.

**4**One thing I ask of the LORD; one thing I seek;

that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life;  
to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD  
and to seek God in the temple. **R**

**5**For in the day of trouble God will give me shelter,

hide me in the hidden places of the sanctuary,  
and raise me high up on a rock.

**6**Even now my head is lifted up above my enemies who surround me.

Therefore I will offer sacrifice in the sanctuary,  
sacrifices of rejoicing; I will sing and make music to the LORD.

**7**Hear my voice, O LORD, when I call;

have mercy on me and answer me.

**8**My heart speaks your message—“Seek my face.”

Your face, O LORD, I will seek. **R**

**9**Hide not your face from me, turn not away from your servant in anger.

Cast me not away—you have been my helper;  
forsake me not, O God of my salvation.

**10**Though my father and my mother forsake me,

the LORD will take me in.

**11**Teach me your way, O LORD;

lead me on a level path, because of my oppressors.

**12**Subject me not to the will of my foes,

for they rise up against me, false witnesses breathing violence.

**13**This I believe—that I will see the goodness of the LORD

in the land of the living!

**14**Wait for the LORD and be strong.

Take heart and wait for the LORD! **R**

when birds of prey came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

<sup>12</sup>As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram, and a deep and terrifying darkness descended upon him.

<sup>17</sup>When the sun had gone down and it was dark, a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch passed between these pieces. <sup>18</sup>On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, “To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates.”

## Second Reading

Philippians 3:17—4:1

*Although Paul’s devotion to Christ has caused him to be persecuted, he does not regret the course he has taken. Writing from prison, he expresses confidence in a glorious future and encourages other Christians to follow in his footsteps.*

Brothers and sisters, join in imitating me, and observe those who live according to the example you have in us. <sup>18</sup>For many live as enemies of the cross of Christ; I have often told you of them, and now I tell you even with tears. <sup>19</sup>Their end is destruction; their god is the belly; and their glory is in their shame; their minds are set on earthly things. <sup>20</sup>But our citizenship is in heaven, and it is

from there that we are expecting a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>21</sup>He will transform the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, by the power that also enables him to make all things subject to himself.

<sup>4:1</sup>Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved.

## Gospel

Luke 13:31-35

*Neither Herod’s plotting nor Jerusalem’s resistance to maternal love will deter Jesus from his sacrificial mission.*

At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to [Jesus], “Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you.” <sup>32</sup>He said to them, “Go and tell that fox for me, ‘Listen, I am casting out demons and performing cures today and tomorrow, and on the third day I finish my work. <sup>33</sup>Yet today, tomorrow, and the next day I must be on my way, because it is impossible for a prophet to be killed outside of Jerusalem.’ <sup>34</sup>Jerusalem,

Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! <sup>35</sup>See, your house is left to you. And I tell you, you will not see me until the time comes when you say, ‘Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.’”

## Prayers of Intercession

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*The prayers are prepared locally for each occasion. The following examples may be adapted or used as appropriate.*

Led by the Spirit, let us turn to God in prayer for the church, the world, and all those in need.

*A brief silence.*

Holy God, you long to gather your church under your wings. Bless the churches of Jerusalem, and all persecuted churches, that your people may take heart and stand firm as they witness and minister in your name. God, in your mercy,  
**receive our prayer.**

Holy God, you give shelter to living things as numerous as the stars. Strengthen the voice of prophets who call humanity to faithful care for the planet, that they would not be silenced but heeded as your messengers. God, in your mercy,  
**receive our prayer.**

Holy God, you raised up leaders like Abram, Sarai, and Paul to show your people what it means to rely on your promises. Guide today's leaders to work for justice and safeguard the world for future generations. God, in your mercy,  
**receive our prayer.**

## Preparing for Next Week

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**Monday** (commemoration of Patrick, bishop, missionary to Ireland, 461) Psalm 105:1-15 [16-41] 42.  
**Tuesday** 1 Corinthians 10:1-13. **Wednesday** (Joseph, Guardian of Jesus) Matthew 1:16, 18-21, 24a.  
**Thursday** Psalm 63:1-8. **Friday** (commemoration of Thomas Cranmer, Bishop of Canterbury, martyr, 1556) Revelation 3:1-6. **Saturday** (commemoration of Jonathan Edwards, teacher, missionary to American Indians, 1758) Luke 6:43-45 **Third Sunday in Lent** Isaiah 55:1-9; Psalm 63:1-8; 1 Corinthians 10:1-13; Luke 13:1-9.

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Holy God, you are the stronghold of our life. Care tenderly for those who are ill in body or mind, and for people living in fear or need (*especially*). May all know they are not alone. God, in your mercy,  
**receive our prayer.**

Holy God, you offer us citizenship in heaven. Unite communities of faith who are divided over earthly things, that following the way of your Son, they may set aside grudges and serve their neighbors with generosity and love. God, in your mercy,  
**receive our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

Holy God, you are our light and our salvation. We give thanks for the saints who have gone before us (*especially*). Help us to trust in you as they did and to live according to their example. God, in your mercy,  
**receive our prayer.**

Receive the prayers of your people and draw all things together in your love, in the name of Jesus, who leads us from death to life.  
**Amen.**