

Thursday Prayer 19th February 2026

Ely Cathedral 10.30am

Zoom

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85209298628?pwd=VDTrciGq12BVz8IuyEa34M6BRLZDIK.1>

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Lent

Welcome everybody to Thursday Prayers today.

These prayers were prepared by Christine Holt who cannot be here today.

Prayer for the Month

Loving Lord, we thank You for the endless and selfless love that You have given to us. We know that every one of Your children is known by You and loved by You, no matter what. We give thanks for the example of love we see in You. Let those that do not know Your love or those that have not experienced love as a person should, feel Your presence, hear Your word, and know Your presence, now and always.

Amen

Bible Reading: Luke 4:1-13

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, where for forty days he was tested by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished.

The devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread.” Jesus answered him, “It is written, “One does not live by bread alone.”

Then the devil led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And the devil said to him, “To you I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.” Jesus answered him, “It is written, “Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.”

Then the devil led him to Jerusalem and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written, ‘He will command his angels concerning you, to protect you,’ and ‘On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.’” Jesus answered him, “It is said, ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’” When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time.

Reflection

In this reading we remember how Jesus fasted during His 40 days and nights. When He went into the desert, guided by the Holy Spirit, to pray in the quietness.

For us to find a place of solitude, we first of all need to quieten our minds from the hullabaloo of our lives: the many tasks of life and the constant juggling of the priorities of these. From the things we like to do - and the obtaining of those things we like to have, although do not necessarily need. We need to let go of the world and make room for God.

Once we have done this, it is possible to turn our attention to our own self-examination, considering our behaviour, where we have gone wrong and how we can start to put this right. Putting God first in our lives is what is needed, but it's not always easy. Other things keep popping up and must constantly be pushed back; however, spending quality time with God in solitude, meditating, praying and repenting is how we grow our relationship with God. Taking stock of ourselves can enable a re-setting of our values and thus eventually, our behaviour.

Lent can be a time of looking inwards with God, but it can also be a time of looking outwards towards our neighbour. It's a time to remember all those less fortunate; perhaps giving to charity or participating in providing comfort where needed.

Lastly, Lent provides us with a built-in yearly rhythm to honestly acknowledge that as humans we sometimes fail in our Christian endeavours. It is a time of opportunity for growth, humility and experiencing God's mercy - and to find hope in the resurrection.

A few moments of silence.

Now The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in Heaven hallowed be thy name,
Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in Heaven,
Give us this day our daily bread
And forgive us our trespasses,
And lead us not into temptation
But deliver us from evil,
For thine is the Kingdom,
The Power and the Glory,
For ever and ever.
Amen

The hymn today is, Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us.

Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us
O'er the world's tempestuous sea;
Guard us, guide us, keep us, feed us,
For we have no help but Thee:
Yet possessing every blessing,
If our God our Father be.

Saviour, breathe forgiveness o'er us;
All our weakness Thou dost know;
Thou didst tread this earth before us;
Thou didst feel its keenest woe;
Lone and dreary, faint and weary,
Through the desert Thou didst go.

Spirit of our God, descending,
Fill our hearts with heavenly joy;
Love with every passion blending,
Pleasure that can never cloy:
Thus provided, pardoned, guided,
Nothing can our peace destroy.

Intercessions

We pray for the worldwide work of the Mothers' Union and the Worldwide President Kathleen Snow; Beverley Jullien, our chief executive and all who work at Mary Sumner House; Julia Jameson our Zonal Trustee; our Province of Canterbury and our Provincial President Comfort Fearon.

In our own Diocese of Ely, we pray for our Diocesan Vice Presidents Jean, Debbie and Hazel, the Trustees, our chaplains, branch officers and all members.

We remember our Worldwide Links: Lusaka in Zambia, Shyogwe in Rwanda, Sokoto & Ikka in Nigeria, Karimnagar in India, plus our Diocesan links with Kigali & Vellore.

We pray for the those who are suffering in the many areas of conflict around the world; And, in a moment of silence, for those known only to us who need your comfort this day.

In our Wave of Prayer we pray for Free State in South Africa; Bondo in Kenya; Ogbia & Offa in Nigeria; Swansea & Brecon in Wales; Argentina and Uruguay.

The MU Prayer and the Thursday Prayer

Loving Lord, we thank you for your love so freely given to us all.

We pray for families around the world.

Bless the work of the Mothers' Union as we seek to share your love through the encouragement, strengthening and support of marriage and family life.

Empowered by your Spirit, may we be united in prayer and worship, and in love and service, reach out as your hands across the world.

In Jesus' name. Amen

Heavenly Father, you have called us apart to share in a worldwide fellowship of Christians united in prayer. Take our prayers we humbly ask, fill them with your love and power, and use them in the cause of your glorious kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Thank you for all who came to the Cathedral today and all following us on zoom, we hope you enjoy the rest of your day and now we finish by praying the Grace together.

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all, evermore. Amen.