

A Short Act of Worship, Sunday 7 March 2021

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with us all.

Compassion and forgiveness belong to the Lord our God, though we have rebelled against him.

We confess to you our selfishness and lack of love: fill us with your Spirit.

We confess to you our fear and failure in sharing our faith: fill us with your Spirit.

We confess to you our stubbornness and lack of trust: fill us with your Spirit.

Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy.

May the Father of all mercies cleanse us from our sins, and restore us in his image to the praise and glory of his name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

God's Word:

The message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written,

'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,

and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.'

Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling-block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

(1 Corinthians 1: 18-25)

Take a few moments of silence to think about these words.

*Come, Holy Spirit, come! In flame our souls with love,
transforming every heart and home with wisdom from above.*

*Let none of us despise the humble path Christ trod,
but choose, to shame the worldly wise, the foolishness of God.*

*All-knowing Spirit, prove the poverty of pride,
by knowledge of the Father's love in Jesus crucified.
And grant us faith to know the glory of that sign,
and in our very lives to show the marks of love divine.*

*Come with the gift to heal the wounds of guilt and fear,
and to oppression's face reveal the kingdom drawing near.
Where chaos longs to reign, descend, O holy Dove,
and free us all to work again the miracles of love.*

*Spirit of truth, arise: Inspire the prophet's voice:
Expose to scorn the tyrant's lies, and bid the poor rejoice.
O Spirit, clear our sight, all prejudice remove,
and help us to discern the right, and covet only love.*

*Come, Holy Spirit, dance within our hearts today,
our earthbound spirits to entrance, our mortal fears allay.
And teach us to desire, all other things above,
that self-consuming holy fire the perfect gift of love.*

Our prayers

With confidence and trust let us pray to the Father.

For the mission of the Church, that in faithful witness it may preach the gospel to the ends of the earth.

For peace in the world ... that a spirit of respect and reconciliation may grow among nations and peoples.

For the poor, the persecuted, the sick, and all who suffer ... for refugees, prisoners, and all in danger; that they may be relieved and protected.

For those whom we have injured or offended
and for grace to amend our lives and to further the reign of God.

In communion with all those who have walked in the way of holiness.

God our Father, in your love and goodness you have taught us to come close to you in penitence prayer and generosity; accept our Lenten discipline, and when we fall by our weakness, raise us up by your unfailing mercy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

A pause for silence prayer

Our Father in heaven, (or) Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be your name ... hallowed be thy name ...

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 your Son our Lord, Amen

*Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, grant us peace.*

God, who from the death of sin raised us to new life in Christ, keep us from falling and set us in the presence of his glory; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among us and remain with us always. Amen.