

**A Liturgy for Home**  
**Lent IV: The Path, Chapter 17**  
**March 22, 2020**

*When life's circumstances prevent us from attending Church*

**The Opening Acclamation & Confession**

*Leader* + Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins.

*People* **God's mercy endures for ever.**

*Leader* Let us confess our sins to God.

*Silence*

*People* Have mercy upon us,  
**Most merciful Father;**  
**in your compassion forgive us our sins,**  
**known and unknown,**  
**things done and left undone;**  
**and so uphold us by your Spirit**  
**that we may live and serve you in newness of life,**  
**to the honor and glory of your Name;**  
**through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

*Leader* Almighty God, have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life.

*People* **Amen.**

**The Opening Collect for *The Path*:**

*Leader* Almighty God, whose Son our Savior Jesus Christ is the light of the world: Grant that your people, illumined by your Word and Sacraments, may shine with the radiance of Christ's glory, that he may be known, worshiped, and obeyed to the ends of the earth; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

*People* **Amen.**

## A Word of Scripture

*Reader*            A reading from the Gospel of Luke

Jesus, filled with the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding country. He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone. When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. Then he began to say to them, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

*Luke 41:14-21*

*Reader*            The Word of the Lord.  
*People*            **Thanks be to God.**

## Reflection

**By Sarah Dylan Breuer**

These days, it seems that we churchy people are really into mission statements; I know a number of dioceses (dioceses and the like) in a number of denominations in which congregations are more or less required to come up with them. In this ... gospel, Jesus offers his own, in a quote from Isaiah.

Actually, Jesus is offering not a straightforward block quote from Isaiah, but a mix between two passages, substituting a clause from Isaiah 42 for a clause he finds objectionable from Isaiah 61, which is the chapter from which the brunt of Jesus' mission statement comes. But Isaiah 61:2 proclaims "the day of vengeance of our God." Jesus cuts that part, and to preserve the parallelisms of the passage, instead brings in a clause from Isaiah 42:7, "the recovery of sight to the blind." Jesus rejects John the Baptizer's contention that the coming one was coming to bring vengeance, to shovel the chaff into the fire ... , to proclaim more of the kinds of things his disciples said characterized Jesus' ministry – the kinds of things we see in summary statements like Acts 10:34-43. Jesus came to heal and reconcile, and he defined righteousness as living into that kind of infinitely forgiving relationship with others, not as dealing out punishment to wrongdoers.

That's not always appealing to us -- small wonder folks in the synagogue were upset by Jesus' reading and midrash in the synagogue in Luke 4. Jesus claims ancient prophecies and says they have been fulfilled in our hearing, but not the prophecies we sometimes find juiciest -- the ones in which our enemies, which in our hubris we are tempted to think of as God's enemies -- get their comeuppance. The bottom line is that the Word which God spoke in Creation is the same word we hear in Jesus' ministry here, and is the same word we hear in the judgment at the

climax of history, and that word is "I love you." It's the word of healing, of liberty to captives and of sight to the blind, and the first thing we blind ones will see is that it is a word for everyone. God wants that healing for everyone, and has spoken against vengeance against any of those whom God loves. That's a word of hope for all of us -- there's hope for us yet!

Thanks be to God.

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## **Response**

*Leader* With all our heart and mind, we pray to You, O Christ.

*Reader* We pray for the mission of the Church, that in faithful witness it may preach the Gospel to the ends of the earth, we pray:

*People* **Lord, hear our prayer.**

*Reader* For the peace of the world, that a spirit of respect and forbearance may grow among nations and peoples, For the poor, the persecuted, the sick, and all who suffer; for refugees, prisoners, and all who are in danger; that they may be relieved and protected, we pray:

*People* **Lord, hear our prayer.**

*Reader* For all who have commended themselves to our prayers; for our families, friends, and neighbors; that being freed from anxiety, they may live in joy, peace, and health, we pray:

*People* **Lord, hear our prayer.**

*Reader* For all who have died in the communion of your Church, and those whose faith is known to you alone, that, with all the saints, they may have rest in that place where there is no pain or grief, but life eternal, we pray:

*People* **Lord, hear our prayer.**

*Reader* For the prayers and intentions we hold in our heart — *Silence* — we pray:

*People* **Lord, hear our prayer.**

*Leader* Gathering our prayers and praise together, we pray:

*People* **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,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory,  
for ever and ever. Amen.**

*Leader* Almighty God, you know that we have no power in ourselves to help ourselves: Keep us both outwardly in our bodies and inwardly in our souls, that we may be defended from all adversities which may happen to the body, and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

*Collect for the Third Sunday in Lent*

*Leader* O Lord, support us all the day long, until the shadows lengthen, and the evening comes, and the busy world is hushed, and the fever of life is over, and our work is done. Then in thy mercy, grant us a safe lodging, and a holy rest, and peace at the last. **Amen.**

*Prayer in the Evening*

*Leader* 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.**

God of healing and hope, in Jesus you meet us in our places of pain and fear. Look with mercy on those who have contracted the new virus, on any who are vulnerable, and on all who feel in danger. Through this time of global concern, by your Holy Spirit bring out the best, not the worst, in us. Make us more aware of our interdependence on each other, and of the strength that comes from being one body in you. Through Jesus Christ, our wounded Healer. Amen.

*The Reverend Sam Wells, St Martin in the Field, London*