

Prayers

Keep us, good Lord, under the shadow of your mercy in this time of uncertainty and distress. Sustain and support the anxious and fearful and lift up all who are brought low; that we may rejoice in your comfort knowing that nothing can separate us from your love in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Holy God, you know the disorder of our sinful lives: set straight our crooked hearts, and bend our wills to love your goodness and your glory in Jesus Christ our Lord.

HYMN: Be still, for the presence of the Lord,
The holy One, is here;
Come bow before him now
with reverence and fear
In him no sin is found, we stand on holy ground.
Be still, for the presence of the Lord,
The holy One, is here.

Be still, for the glory of the Lord
Is shining all around;
He burns with holy fire,
with splendour he is crowned:
How awesome is the sight
Our radiant king of light!
Be still, for the glory of the Lord
Is shining all around.

Be still, for the power of the Lord
Is moving in this place:
He comes to cleanse and heal,
To minister his grace
No work too hard for him.
In faith receive from him.
Be still, for the power of the Lord
Is moving in this place.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father.....

Almighty God,
we thank you for the gift of your holy word.
May it be a lantern to our feet,
a light to our paths,
and a strength to our lives.
Take us and use us
to love and serve
in the power of the Holy Spirit
and in the name of your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE UNITED BENEFICE OF WALMERSLEY ROAD

**CHRIST CHURCH, WALMERSLEY
ST.JOHN with ST.MARK, BURY**

14 February 2021

The Sunday Next Before Lent:

Service at Home

You may wish to light a candle and have some reflective music playing in the background.

The Lord is good, a strong refuge when trouble comes.

God is close to those who trust in him.

Nahum 1.7

Opening Prayer – Collect for the day

Almighty Father, whose Son was revealed in majesty before he suffered death upon the cross: give us grace to perceive his glory, that we may be strengthened to suffer with him and be changed into his likeness, from glory to glory; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

GOSPEL READING: Mark 9: 2-9

Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one* on earth could bleach them. And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who were talking with Jesus. Then Peter said to Jesus, 'Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.' He did not know what to say, for they were terrified. Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, 'This is my Son, the

Beloved; listen to him!' Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them any more, but only Jesus. As they were coming down the mountain, he ordered them to tell no one about what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead.

REFLECTION – Margery Spencer

I find the event described in our gospel reading a difficult one to comprehend. Jesus being bathed in light; possibly I could account for that. An effect of sunlight perhaps but I cannot find an easy explanation for the presence of the two Old Testament figures, Moses and Elijah. The disciples were also bewildered and did not know how to respond. Impetuous Peter wanted to put up shelters to mark the spot.

I should think they were even more disconcerted when they heard the voice of God saying "This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him." This was a repetition of the words heard at the baptism of Jesus and was certainly a strong reinforcement of who Jesus was.

We all may have had wonderful mountain top experiences but none quite like this one. Jesus and his disciples would come down from the mountain with a renewed vision, strengthened for the future task.

Prior to Jesus going up the mountain, things were not going too well, initial enthusiastic response to him was fading as it was clear he was not the warrior Messiah many expected.

At this moment in time, things are not easy for us. Perhaps we should follow the example of Jesus and take time out to seek God in prayer. We needn't climb a mountain and I don't think we will see Old Testament figures, but we will find reassurance of God's love and be able to carry on with renewed enthusiasm.

Benedictus (the Song of Zechariah)

- Blessed be the Lord the God of Israel, for he has come to his people and set them free.
- He has raised up for us a mighty Saviour, born of the house of his servant David.
- Through his holy prophets God promised of old to save us from our enemies, from the hands of all that hate us.
- He promised to show mercy to our forebears and to remember his holy covenant.
- This was the oath God swore to our father Abraham: to set us free from the hands of our enemies.
- Free to worship him without fear, holy and righteous in his sight all the days of our life.
- You, my child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High, for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way.
- To give his people knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of all their sins.
- In the tender compassion of our God the dawn from on high shall break upon us,
- To shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

THE APOSTLES CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.
Amen.