

Ash Wednesday Reflection

Invocation for Lent

Into the dark world
a snowdrop comes,
a blessing of hope and peace
carrying within it a green heart:
symbol of God's renewing love.
Come to inhabit our darkness, Lord Christ,
For dark and light are alike to you.
May nature's white candles of hope
Remind us of your birth
And lighten our journey
Through Lent and beyond.

Kate McIlhagga

Reflective music

Introduction

Reading...John 8: 1-11. NIVUK

²At dawn Jesus appeared again in the temple courts, where all the people gathered round him, and he sat down to teach them. ³The teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery. They made her stand before the group ⁴and said to Jesus, 'Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery. ⁵In the Law, Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?' ⁶They were using this question as a trap, in order to have a basis for accusing him.

But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his finger. ⁷When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, 'Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.' ⁸Again he stooped down and wrote on the ground.

⁹At this, those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there. ¹⁰Jesus straightened up and asked her, 'Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?'

¹¹'No one, sir,' she said.

'Then neither do I condemn you,' Jesus declared. 'Go now and leave your life of sin.'

Confession:

Before you, Jesus Christ,
We admit how and where
We have underestimated our influence,
Letting our words or silences hurt,
Abusing trust, betraying confidences.

Lord have mercy;
Christ have mercy.

We admit how and where
We have been more concerned about our image,
attracting more attention to us,
And less to you.

Lord have mercy;
Christ have mercy

We admit to how and where
We've let injustice go unchallenged
Rather than pointing to the needs of others
And fighting for a fairer world.

Lord have mercy
Christ have mercy

Lord Jesus Christ
If we have looked or longed for
An easier gospel,
A lighter cross,
A less demanding Saviour,
Then turn our eyes and avert our longing
From what we want to choose
To the one who has chosen us.

Forgive our unfaithfulness,
And, for our better living,
Give us not the remedy we desire tomorrow,
But the grace you offer today.

We ask for your love's sake.
Amen

Prayers for others.....

Let us pray for the breaking in of God's kingdom in our world today.

Lord God, because Jesus has taught us to trust you in all things,
we hold to his word and share his plea:

Your kingdom come, your will be done

Where nations budget for war,
While Christ says 'put up your sword':

Your kingdom come, your will be done

Where countries waste food and covet fashion
While Christ say, 'I was hungry...I was thirsty...:

Your kingdom come, your will be done

Where powerful governments
Claim their policies are heaven blessed,
While scripture states God helps the powerless:

Your kingdom come, your will be done

While Christians seek the kingdom
in the shape of their own church,
As if Christ has come to build
And not to break down barriers:

Your kingdom come, your will be done

Where women who speak up for their dignity
Are treated with scorn or contempt:

Your kingdom come, your will be done

Where men try hard to be tough,
Because they're afraid to be tender:

Your kingdom come, your will be done

Where we, obsessed with being adult,
Forget to become like children:

Your kingdom come, your will be done

Where our prayers falter,
Our faith weakens,
Our light grows dim:

Your kingdom come, your will be done

Where Jesus Christ calls us:

Your kingdom come, your will be done

Lord God

You have declared that your kingdom is among us.

Open our ears to hear it,

Our hands to serve it,

Our hearts to hold it,

This we pray in Jesus name.

Amen

Closing responses

For all that God can do within us,

For all that God can do without us,

Thanks be to God

For all in whom Christ lived before us,

For all in whom Christ lives beside us.

Thanks be to God

For all the Spirit wants to bring us,

For where the Spirit wants to send us,

Thanks be to God

Christ has promised to be with us

In the world as in our worship.

Amen, we go to serve Him.

Liturgy adapted from Stages on the way. Worship resources for Lent, Holy week and Easter.

Wild Goose Worship Group

A wee worship book. Fourth incarnation. Wild Goose Worship Group.