



Lenten Prayer

Opening Prayer

Leader: O God, you are our life, our very being,
our peace and our joy.

All: You are our hope, our wealth, and our strength.
We come before you at this new moment in time.

Leader: O God, you are our home, our place of rest,
our heaven, our salvation.

All: You are the source of all the work of our hands,
Of all the gifts of what has been,
Of all the opportunities of what will be.
Keep us, O God, in your grace.

– Harrington & Kavanagh, *Prayer for Parish Groups*

Antiphon: My body rests in you, O loving God.

Leader: God, calm us into a quietness that heals and molds our longings and passions, our wounds and our wonderings into a more holy and human place.

Side 1: Gracious and Holy One, I come to you full of much that clutters and distracts, stifles and burdens me, and makes me a burden to others. Empty me of gnawing dissatisfactions, of anxious imaginings, of nagging prejudices, of old scores to settle and of the arrogance of being right.

Side 2: Empty me of the disguises and lies in which I hide myself from other people and from my responsibility for my neighbors and for the world. Hollow out in me a space in which I will find myself, find peace and a whole heart, a forgiving spirit and holiness, the springs of laughter, and the will to reach boldly for abundant life for myself and the whole human family.

Side 1: O God, gather me now to be with you as you are with me. Soothe my tiredness; curb my aimlessness; relieve my compulsiveness. Let me be easy for a moment. Release me from the fears and guilt, which grip me so tightly; from the expectations and opinions which I so tightly grip, that I may be open to receiving what you give, to risking something genuinely new, to learning something refreshingly different.

Side 2: Forgive me for claiming so much for myself that I leave no room for gratitude; for confusing exercises in self-importance with the acceptance of self-worth; for complaining so much about my burdens that I become a burden myself; for competing against others so insidiously that I stifle celebrating them and receiving your blessings through their gifts.

Side 1: Keep me in touch with myself, with my needs, my anxieties, with my angers, with my pains, with my brokenness—that I may claim them as my own rather than blame them on someone else.

Side 2: O Lord, deepen my wounds into wisdom; shape my weaknesses into compassion; gentle my envy into enjoyment, my fear into trust, my guilt into honesty. O God, gather me to be with you as you are with me.

– Ted Loder, *Guerrillas of Grace*

Antiphon: My body rests in you, O loving God.



Readings

Take care, first of all, of your heart, because the heart is the source of life.
– Heidegger

Yet even now, says God, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your garments.
– Joel 2:12

Lent is not about penance. Lent is about becoming, doing and changing whatever it is that is blocking the fullness of life in us right now. Lent is a summons to live anew.
– Joan Chittister, OSB

Pause for Reflection

What is God's Lenten invitation to me this year?

Sharing

Song

Quietly, peacefully let me rest in you.
Quietly, peacefully lead me back to you.

In my weakness I have strayed, drifting far from you.
In your goodness steady me, light my path to you.

Loving wisdom, you alone know how I can be
You, the hope my spirit seeks, come and set me free.

Breathe your law deep in me, plant it in my soul.
Let your justice be my song, kindness be my goal.

Happy is the heart that's free, choosing life with you.
Break the chains that bind my soul, let me walk with you.

"There is Room for Us All, Lori True

Alternate: "Turn to the Living God" from *A Place at the Table*, Lori True

Closing Prayer

God of our healing and our wholeness, renew and recreate us in your truth. Let this time of Lent bring nourishment, refreshment, and new life to our hearts and spirits. Help us to become more aware of what we need to let go of and what we need to embrace. May we come to an ever deeper appreciation of the unique and wonderful work of art which You—the Artist of each soul—created us to be. We offer this prayer in the name of Jesus your Son who died that we might live life to the full. Amen.