

# Sunday Reflections

## February 1<sup>st</sup> 2026 - Candlemas

### Preparation

All: This is the day that the Lord has made.  
Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Through the brokenness of Christ, we become one body  
as one body we now gather in the name of Christ to offer our praise and thanksgiving, to receive God's  
holy word, to pray for the needs of the world,  
and to seek the forgiveness of our sins, that by the power of the Holy Spirit  
we may give ourselves to the service of God.

### Our Confession

*The sun of righteousness has dawned with healing in his wings. Let us come to the light of Christ,  
confessing our sins in penitence and faith.*

All: Jesus Christ, risen Master and triumphant Lord, we come to you in sorrow for our sins, and confess to  
you our weakness and unbelief.

We have lived by our own strength, and not by the power of your resurrection.  
In your mercy, forgive us, hear us and help us.

We have lived by the light of our own eyes, as faithless and not believing.  
In your mercy, forgive us, hear us and help us.

We have lived for this world alone, and doubted our home in heaven.  
In your mercy, forgive us, hear us and help us.

*Be still for a moment in confession and in receiving God's Grace in Christ*

All: May Almighty God, who in Jesus Christ has given us a kingdom that cannot be destroyed, forgive us  
our sins, open our eyes to God's truth, strengthen us to do God's will and give us the joy of his  
kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Risen Lord.

**Amen.**

### The opening prayer

All: The night has passed, and the day lies open before us; let us pray with one heart and mind.

*Silence is kept.*

All: As we rejoice in the gift of this new day, so may the light of your presence, O God, set our hearts on fire  
with love for you; now and for ever. Amen.

## The Psalm 24.7-10 *We say the psalm aloud*

Lift up your heads, O gates; be lifted up, you everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.

'Who is the King of glory?'

'The Lord, strong and mighty, the Lord who is mighty in battle.'

Lift up your heads, O gates; be lifted up, you everlasting doors;

and the King of glory shall come in.

'Who is this King of glory?'

'The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory.'

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,

as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen

## Scripture Reading Hebrews 2.10-18

<sup>10</sup> It was fitting that God, for whom and through whom all things exist, in bringing many children to glory, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through sufferings. <sup>11</sup> For the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one Father. For this reason, Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters, <sup>12</sup> saying,

'I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters, in the midst of the congregation I will praise you.'

<sup>13</sup> And again, 'I will put my trust in him.'

And again, 'Here am I and the children whom God has given me.'

<sup>14</sup> Since, therefore, the children share flesh and blood, he himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil,<sup>15</sup> and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death. <sup>16</sup> For it is clear that he did not come to help angels, but the descendants of Abraham. <sup>17</sup> Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people. <sup>18</sup> Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.

*At the end of the reading we say:*

All: This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

## Gloria

All: Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth.

Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

## The Gospel Luke 2.22-40

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord <sup>23</sup> (as it is written in the law of the Lord, 'Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord'), <sup>24</sup> and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, 'a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons.'

<sup>25</sup> Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. <sup>26</sup> It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. <sup>27</sup> Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was

customary under the law, <sup>28</sup> Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, <sup>29</sup> 'Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; <sup>30</sup> for my eyes have seen your salvation, <sup>31</sup> which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, <sup>32</sup> a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.'

<sup>33</sup> And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. <sup>34</sup> Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, 'This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed <sup>35</sup> so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.'

<sup>36</sup> There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband for seven years after her marriage, <sup>37</sup> then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshipped there with fasting and prayer night and day. <sup>38</sup> At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem. <sup>39</sup> When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. <sup>40</sup> The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favour of God was upon him.

*At the end of the reading we say:*

All: This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

## A Reflection for the day

The book of Hebrews is often overlooked for the those of Romans and 1 and 2 Corinthians. Is it because we know they are written by Paul and there is no author attributed to Hebrews? Might it be because there is talk of 'High Priests' and even that it is titled Hebrews that throws a largely Gentile church towards other books? Whichever, we are diminished in our understanding of God, of salvation and of our own selves if we ignore it. It was 'fitting' we read that God should enable the 'pioneer' of the faith to journey, as we all do, through the temptation to turn from the ways of God, to live as people walking in ways in opposition of God's as those of 'ME' instead of 'WE', and 'I' instead of 'US'.

This 'pioneer' perseveres in the ways of God such that he is able to save, to sanctify – as Simeon declares in the temple at Jesus' presentation before his eyes is God's 'salvation, prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.' All are become the children of God, for in Christ all have the one 'Father'.

To make the atonement, to offer the one oblation of himself, once offered, a full and sufficient sacrifice the Father sent His son, to share divine 'son-ship'; not that we become as it were, divine beings but we have a full relationship made possible with God, in a familial manner. To do this meant sharing our existence, our nature, it meant becoming one with us, of flesh and blood.

Flesh and blood is what humanity have in common, and into communion Christ came sharing with us in life and in death. Whilst be subject to temptation as we all are, yet without sin his sacrifice brought destruction to the master of death, the devil, and removes the bondage of fear in death – as Paul says 'where now of death is your sting?', for in Christ nothing can separate us from the love of God!

It is no surprise that at the Last Supper Jesus offers to us symbolism through which to remember the great gift set before us in his work as the Christ. But more, symbols to remind us of the great calling we, who are called sisters and brother, who pray to the Father, have in how we live the faith each day.

As Jesus breaks bread and passes the cup he calls us to remember that he his flesh and blood in each and every way that we are. He goes from that place to offer His flesh and blood in sacrifice for all, that they may be called 'children', sisters and brothers who call God 'Our Father'; and who have no shame in that – for he is not ashamed of us.

As we break bread and drink wine we are reminded of our calling to share in the work of the God the father's purposes in this age. The calling we have, as brothers and sister, to offer our lives as 'living sacrifices, sent in

the power of the Spirit, to live and work to the praise and glory of God'.

As Jesus shared fully in our existence, in our flesh and blood, and offered himself as a redeeming sacrifice, so we are to share fully with one another, not to live as 'ME' or 'I', but as 'WE' and 'US' for anything else is 'not properly to ne human'!

## The Creed

All: 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.

## Prayers *We make our intercessions*

In the power of the Spirit and in union with Christ let us pray to the Father.

Strengthen Michael and Fiona our Bishops and those who seek to serve you in this diocese. May they be filled with the spirit of wisdom and serve you as the first disciples. *Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.*

We Pray for the King, Prime Minister, and all World leaders, that they may have wisdom and lead us into justice and peace. *Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.*

We pray for nations at war, that they may reconcile their differences and live in peace.  
*Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.*

We pray for the homeless, hungry and starving, that their needs may be satisfied.  
*Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.*

Let us pray for our families, friends, and neighbours that we may bring light and hope in the darkest places.  
*Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.*

We pray for the sick, suffering and dying ..... and we give thanks and pray for those who use their skill and risk their lives to care for them. *Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.*

Hear us as we remember those who have died..... According to your promises grant them joy in your eternal kingdom. *Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.*

Rejoicing in the fellowship of all your saints, we commend ourselves and the whole creation to your unfailing love. Amen.

## The Collect

All: Lord Jesus Christ, light of the nations and glory of Israel; make your home among us, and present us pure and Holy, to your heavenly Father, your God, and our God. **Amen.**

*Gathering our prayers and praises into one, let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us*

All: 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, the power, and the glory  
for ever and ever. Amen.

## The Conclusion

All: Christ, as a light illumine and guide me this day. Christ, as a shield overshadow me.  
Christ under me, Christ over me; Christ beside me on my left and my right.  
This day be within and without me. Amen.