

Contemplative Prayer Form

Fourth Sunday of Lent - Year A



The Liturgy Letter

Note: This is for individual or small group use. It is intended to be a form of contemplative “Lectio Divina” based on the scripture readings for the week and the themes of the liturgical season. Repetition, silence, and intercession are utilized to allow space for focus over a short or long period of time. It may be helpful to use your fingers to count the number of scripture phrases you utter during the times of repetition. The Scripture prayer section is structured for easy use with Anglican Prayer Beads for those who might find a tactile expression to be helpful (✚ = Cross ● = Invitatory bead ◇ = Cruciform bead ● = Weeks bead).

Scripture Reading: John 9 (NIV)

As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?”

“Neither this man nor his parents sinned,” said Jesus, “but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him. As long as it is day, we must do the works of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”

After saying this, he spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man’s eyes. “Go,” he told him, “wash in the Pool of Siloam” (this word means “Sent”). So the man went and washed, and came home seeing. His neighbors and those who had formerly seen him begging asked, “Isn’t this the same man who used to sit and beg?” Some claimed that he was.

Others said, “No, he only looks like him.”

But he himself insisted, “I am the man.”

“How then were your eyes opened?” they asked.

He replied, “The man they call Jesus made some mud and put it on my eyes. He told me to go to Siloam and wash. So I went and washed, and then I could see.”

“Where is this man?” they asked him.

“I don’t know,” he said.

They brought to the Pharisees the man who had been blind. Now the day on which Jesus had made the mud and opened the man’s eyes was a Sabbath. Therefore the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. “He put mud on my eyes,” the man replied, “and I washed, and now I see.” Some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath.”

But others asked, “How can a sinner perform such signs?” So they were divided.

Then they turned again to the blind man, “What have you to say about him? It was your eyes he opened.” The man replied, “He is a prophet.”

They still did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they sent for the man’s parents. “Is this your son?” they asked. “Is this the one you say was born blind? How is it that now he can see?”

“We know he is our son,” the parents answered, “and we know he was born blind. But how he can see now, or who opened his eyes, we don’t know. Ask him. He is of age; he will speak for himself.” His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders, who already had decided that anyone who acknowledged that Jesus was the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. That was why his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.”

A second time they summoned the man who had been blind. “Give glory to God by telling the truth,” they said. “We know this man is a sinner.” He replied, “Whether he is a sinner or not, I don’t know. One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!”

Then they asked him, “What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?”

He answered, “I have told you already and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples too?”

Then they hurled insults at him and said, “You are this fellow’s disciple! We are disciples of Moses! We know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this fellow, we don’t even know where he comes from.”

The man answered, “Now that is remarkable! You don’t know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly person who does his will. Nobody has ever heard of opening the eyes of a man born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.”

To this they replied, “You were steeped in sin at birth; how dare you lecture us!” And they threw him out. Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and when he found him, he

said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?"

"Who is he, sir?" the man asked. "Tell me so that I may believe in him."

Jesus said, "You have now seen him; in fact, he is the one speaking with you."

Then the man said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshiped him.

Jesus said, "For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind." Some Pharisees who were with him heard him say this and asked, "What? Are we blind too?" Jesus said, "If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains."

Scripture Prayer:

✝ The Lord is full of compassion and mercy. Come, let us adore him.

☉ Gracious Father, whose blessed Son came down from heaven to be bread for the world and give us true life; give us this bread that he may live in us and we in him. Amen.

◇ The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters...

-Psalm 23:1-2a

- **Repeat Seven Times:**

...he refreshes my soul....

-Psalm 23:2b

◇ He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley...

-Psalm 23:3-4a

- **Repeat Seven Times:**

I will fear no evil, for you are with me...

-Psalm 23:4b

◇ You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.

-Psalm 23:5a

- **Repeat Seven Times:**

...your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

-Psalm 23:4b

◇ "Wake up, sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."

-Ephesians 5:14

- **Repeat Seven Times:**

You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

-Psalm 23:5b

◇ Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

-Psalm 23:6

- ✿ *The Lord's Prayer*

✝ May God grant us forgiveness of sins as we forgive others. Amen.

Silence + Intercessions

Lord Jesus Christ, guide us by your Spirit: gather all the nations into your care.

Keep us steady in faith and set our hearts to desire your Kingdom...

Come, Holy Spirit, heal our wounded souls and misshaped desires...

Free us from anxiety and lead us to trust you...

Guide your Church in this place and around the world...

We pray for the leaders of the nations...

Father, support those who are going through trials...

For the oppressed and lonely...

For families and friends, for all who have asked for our prayers and who pray for us...

For our country, our region (village, town...), that the Christians there may be witnesses to your life and unity...

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.