

1. Stones into Bread

The Fountain thirsts, the Bread is hungry here
The Light is dark, the Word without a voice.
When darkness speaks it seems so light and clear.
Now He must dare, with us, to make a choice.
In a distended belly's cruel curve
He feels the famine of the ones who lose
He starves for those whom we have forced to starve
He chooses now for those who cannot choose.
He is the staff and sustenance of life
He lives for all from one Sustaining Word
His love still breaks and pierces like a knife
The stony ground of hearts that never shared,
God gives through Him what Satan never could;
The broken bread that is our only food.

2. All the Kingdoms of the World

'So here's the deal and this is what you get:
The penthouse suite with world-commanding views,
The banker's bonus and the private jet
Control and ownership of all the news
An 'in' to that exclusive one percent,
Who know the score, who really run the show
With interest on every penny lent
And sweeteners for cronies in the know.
A straight arrangement between me and you
No hell below or heaven high above
You just admit it, and give me my due
And wake up from this foolish dream of love...'
But Jesus laughed, 'You are not what you seem.
Love is the waking life, you are the dream.'

A Gathering Prayer

Loving God, thank you
for drawing us together to be your people.
Help us, as we meet together,
to see ourselves as you see us.
Give us faith to hear your words of love
beyond some of the hard realities of our lives.
May your Holy Spirit guide and inspire us
to recognise your presence in all we do. **Amen**

A Prayer of Confession

Beloved Lord Jesus, you stepped from water to wilderness,
from God's voice to the taunting voice of the enemy. In the
wilderness of today's world, we face many enemies, many
temptations. Forgive us for succumbing to selfishness, greed,
lust, anger, power.

Lord most high, forgive us, we pray. (repeated twice more after a bidding)

Prayers of intercession

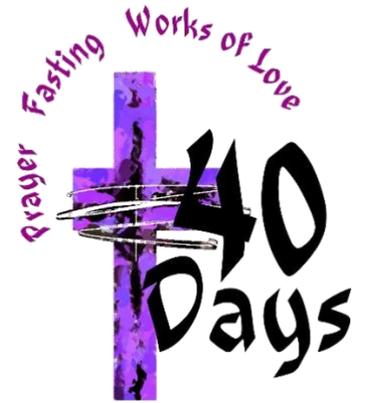
As we walk into the long weeks of Lent,
we begin a journey into the wilderness: may your Spirit rest upon us.
We travel from suffering to hope: may your Spirit rest upon us
We travel through death to new life: may your Spirit rest upon us.
As we look to the example of Jesus,
who in the wilderness chose the difficult path,
help us to know that you are with us -
though the way ahead may be hard and we so often falter and fail.
strengthen us for the journey ahead,
and teach us to trust in you.
Your kingdom comes near to those who call on your name;
your pathway is surrounded by love.

Teach us to walk in it (Other prayers are offered, concluding with:)

O Lord,

**In love you made us; in love you call us; in love you lead us -
through this world, through sorrow and joy, until we see you face to face.
Your kingdom comes near to those who call on your name;**

Your pathway is surrounded by love. **Teach us to walk in it. Amen.**



3. On the Pinnacle

'Temples and Spires are good for looking down from;
You stand above the world on holy heights,
Here on the pinnacle, above the maelstrom,
Among the few, the true, unearthly lights.
Here you can breathe the thin air of perfection
And feel your kinship with the lonely star,
Above the shadow and the pale reflection,
Here you can know for certain who you are.
The world is stalled below, but you could move it
If they could know you as you are up here,
Of course they'll doubt, but here's your chance to prove it
Angels will bear you up, so have no fear....'
'I was not sent to look down from above
It's fear that sets these tests and proofs, not Love.'



[A Trilogy of Sonnets for the First Sunday of Lent](#) by Malcom Guite

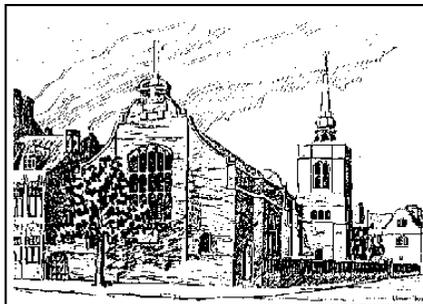
During the present lockdown, there are no Sunday services and St George's Church remains closed.

You are invited to join the Chaplain for worship on Zoom this **Sunday at 10.30am**: link attached to this email.

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a copy of this onto others
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St George's Memorial Church Ieper

**February 21st 2021
First Sunday of Lent**

Genesis 9.8-17; 1 Peter 3.18-22; **Mark 1.9-15**
Copy and paste readings into the online Oremus Bible here:
<https://bible.oremus.org/>

Mountain top to wilderness

In Mark's fast moving style, it is 'immediately' after Jesus' baptism that he is 'driven' into the wilderness. The baptism shows God's affirmation of Jesus as God's beloved Son. This is in stark contrast to the tough temptations Jesus then faces in the wilderness. Placing them like this Mark indicates that baptism prepared Jesus not only for his future ministry but also to endure hardship.

Knowing his identity in God is thus more important for Jesus than what he does. Likewise our identity and individuality, as children of God - accepting that we are both known and loved by God - will help us cope with these difficult 'wilderness' experience of temptation and doubt, however and wherever they may come our way.



'Sharing God's Peace for all Nations through the Gospel.'