



A Service of Repentance

The First Sunday In Lent 2009 - 10:30 am

Prelude Voluntary

Procession into Worship Hymn (Standing) HYMN #529

"In Christ there is no East or West"

All Stand

Celebrant: Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins.

People: *His mercy endures forever.*

Celebrant: Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires are known, and from you no secrets are hid. Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Celebrant: Lord have mercy.

People: *Christ have mercy.*

Celebrant: Lord have mercy.

We Proclaim the Word of God

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: *And also with you.*

Celebrant: Let us pray. *(Kneel as you are able)*

Set us free, heavenly Father, from every bond of prejudice and fear; that, honoring the steadfast courage of your servant Absalom Jones, we may show forth in our lives the reconciling love and true freedom of the children of God, which you have given us in your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one

God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

A Reading from the Prophet Isaiah (61:1-11) *(Seated)*

The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion—to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, to display his glory. They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the mined cities, the devastations of many generations. Strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, foreigners shall till your land and dress your vines; but you shall be called priests of the Lord, you shall be named ministers of our God; you shall enjoy the wealth of the nations, and in their riches you shall glory. Because their shame was double, and dishonor was proclaimed as their lot, therefore they shall possess a double portion; everlasting joy shall be theirs. For I the Lord love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the Lord has blessed. I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

The Word of the Lord.

People *Thanks be to God.*

Psalm 5: 1-8 *(Seated, responsive at the half verse)*

1 Give ear to my words, O LORD;*
consider my meditation.

2 Harken to my cry for help, my King and my God,*
for I make my prayer to you.

3 In the morning, LORD, you hear my voice;*
 early in the morning I make my appeal and watch for you.

4 For you are not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness,*
 and evil cannot dwell with you.

5 Braggarts cannot stand in your sight;*
 you hate all those who work wickedness.

6 You destroy those who speak lies;*
 the bloodthirsty and deceitful, O LORD, you abhor.

7 But as for me, through the greatness of your mercy I will go into
 your house;*
 I will bow down toward your holy temple in awe of you.

8 Lead me, O LORD, in your righteousness, because of those who lie
 in wait for me;*
 make your way straight before me.

A Reading from Paul's Second Letter to the Church at Corinth

(4:5-18) (Seated)

For we do not proclaim ourselves, we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake. For it is the God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in clay jars, so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair, persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus so that the life of Jesus may also be made visible in our mortal flesh. So death is at work in us, but life in you. But just as we have the same spirit of faith that is in accordance with scripture—"I believed, and so I spoke"—we also believe, and the one who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus, and will bring us with you into his presence. Yes, everything is for your sake, so that grace, as it extends to more and more people, may increase thanksgiving to the glory of God. So we do not lose heart. Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. For this slight momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure, because we look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen, for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal.

The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Hymn Before the Gospel (Standing) HYMN # 676
"There is a balm in Gilead"

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark

People: **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased." And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him. Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news."

The Gospel of the Lord.

People: **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

The People sit

We Respond to the Word of God

**PASTORAL LETTER TO BE READ
 IN ALL CONGREGATIONS AT
 THE START OF THE SERMON ON 1 LENT 2009**



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

This morning, in all of our congregations in the Diocese of West Virginia, we will participate in a liturgy of repentance for a long history of past wrongs resulting from the sin of racism, including the practice of slavery, segregation based on race, a system of racial discrimination and marginalization, and a culture of racial inequality. We have been charged with this responsibility by resolution of the General Convention, but in fact, it is an acknowledgment that is long overdue. We could have fulfilled this mandate through one special service, in one location, so that only those who chose to travel to attend it would be able, or would have to, experience

it. At the suggestion of the Commission to End Racism, I have asked that we all do this together, on this day. I believe that this is the right thing to do. I know that some have reservations about it, and that some are even angered by its being mandatory. I ask that you, my gathered flock and my brothers and sisters in Christ, consider some strong motivations for this decision.

Some might rightfully say that they never advocated segregation, never own slaves and have worked hard never to discriminate against people of color, so why should I be made to do this?

I do not expect anyone to take upon themselves any sin of which they are not guilty as individuals. This is about Corporate sin, not individual sin. This is about the Church in which we worship, and find Christ. This liturgy is a litany of repentance for the past and continued sin of the whole church, as an institution. It is a fact that our church tolerated slavery. It is a fact that our church, until far too late, justified and excused segregation. We even had separate bishops suffragan, in many dioceses, for work with Black congregations. As individuals, many of our clergy and lay members worked tirelessly and at great personal cost for the ideal of racial equality, and we acknowledge and honor their sacrifices. Yet, as a church, we have never actually repented of our complicity in the great wrongs that were being done; failing to stand against grave injustice constitutes complicity in that injustice. It is time that, as a church, we acknowledge this failure.

I am directing that this liturgy take place today, so that all in the Diocese may participate in this apology. Over the past many decades, the Episcopal Church has called upon each and every member to reflect and learn about the sin of racism. We continue to offer regular, day long seminar and learning events about the sin of racism. These have been mandated by our General Convention. Yet over the past two years we have had to cancel more scheduled seminars than we have held due to low registration numbers. A minority of our people have taken part.

I realize that some might consider the language to be rather strong. It is. It was a serious wrong that was committed, and it went on for a long time. I believe that it has grieved the Heart of God to witness it. It is important that we not cheapen the lives that have been wasted or wounded by ameliorating the language. If we are to repent, let us do so with full awareness of what is to be repented.

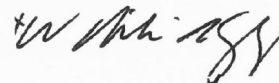
My prayer is that this will signal the beginning of the end of a process of raising awareness and acknowledgment of wrongdoing done on our behalf by our church. I see the sacramental act of penance as a wonderfully freeing experience. On bended knee, we acknowledge before God and one another our corporate sin. Rising, we allow the burden of the aftermath of that guilt to fall from our collective shoulders. Going forth into the world, we strive to relate to one another, in all our diversities, in a new way that is blind to color and freed from the limitations our enculturated thinking.

This does not mean, however, that we will have no further conversation about race and our experience of race relations in our church and in our society. But it means that our conversations will be able to take place in a setting in which we, the whole church, have acknowledged, and God has set aside, our shortcomings of the past.

I ask that you, my brothers and sisters in Christ and fellow Episcopalians, undertake to pray this liturgy with me and with one another in a spirit of community and generous-heartedness, and that you take advantage of this opportunity to pray specifically today for God to grant our nation and our church a larger heart of compassion for those we may perceive as being somehow different from ourselves. It is a day for all of us to practice seeing, more and more, the face of Christ Jesus, the very image of God, on each person we meet.

And may the love, grace, and mercy of God-- Father, Son, and Holy Spirit-- be upon you all, today and forever

In Christ,



The Rt. Rev. W. Michie Klusmeyer
Bishop of West Virginia

The Sermon (Seated) The Reverend William Carl Thomas

Preparation for the Litany of Repentance (Seated)

My Brothers and Sisters in Christ, Our Bishop requires us to mark the beginning of Lent by observing a Day of Repentance for the Sins of Slavery, Racial Segregation, and Racial Discrimination in the

Diocese of West Virginia. The 75th General Convention, meeting in Columbus, Ohio in 2006 passed a resolution which asked the church to study our church's history of participation in slavery and racial segregation. On October 3-4, 2008 our Presiding Bishop, Katharine Jefferts-Schori led a two-day solemn observance of repentance at the African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas in Philadelphia.

In the planning for that event, the church was guided by the statement of General Convention Resolution A123 which stated that "*the institution of slavery was and is a sin and a fundamental betrayal of the humanity of all persons...and that the Episcopal Church acknowledges its history of participation in this sin.*"

The church offered the Day of Repentance as a solemn and holy way to state our deep and heartfelt repentance to show that we repent both the timidity of our spirits and our unfaithfulness to the Gospel of Christ. The church came together in a place where people who were oppressed by both a society that did not value their humanity and a church that neither embraced them nor opposed their oppressors, now worship at the sanctuary established by a former slave, Absalom Jones.

At that event, our Presiding Bishop issued the following statement: "Re-examining the myths that underlie our nation's history is challenging, for they contribute a significant part of our identity. Our gathering in Philadelphia, long seen as a "city of brotherly love" and "cradle of liberty," will give us an expansive opportunity to expose ourselves to the truth behind those myths. If we begin to see more accurately, to understand the ways in which those myths have kept many in bondage, and confess the ways in which The Episcopal Church has been partner to those myths, we will indeed begin again to know that "the truth will set you free." That truth can set our faces in a new direction and lead us to seek a healed and reconciled life for all—the true meaning of *repentance*, and the dream of God."

As we gather together this morning and begin our Lenten Journey, let us be mindful of the corporate sins that we, as the church, have committed against God and one another. Let it be our response to God's Word to prayerfully examine where we have given into

temptation and failed to heed Christ's mandate when he claimed his mission – *to set the captives free*. I invite you to join me in recalling the lamentable events that scar our past, and the wounds that continue in the present. Let us seek God's forgiveness that we may be transformed more fully into the Body of Christ witnessing to God's abundant grace and love.

The Litany of Repentance *(Kneel as you are able)*

Celebrant: Let us pray.

Help us, Lord, to face demons, our powers, as you faced yours. You were a man of power who could change stones to bread, conquer kingdoms and fall from the Temple roof without harm. You spent forty days searching for the way to use your powers for the coming of the Father's Reign of Peace, Justice and Holiness. Help us to use our baptismal powers in ways that will effect change, get things done and give witness in word and deed to the Reign you so ardently desired. Help us to use our lust not to abuse or exploit but rather to discover what are our deeper hungers and thirsts so that from the desert may bloom justice and peace. Help us to overcome our sloth so that from indifference we may turn to deep concern for others who suffer and die because there is no one to turn the stones of hunger into bread, to build a society founded on justice and solidarity and to practice true religion which defends the widow and orphan and gives shelter to the stranger.

Amen.

[Frank Regan in Let Justice Roll Down – A Worship Resource for Lent, Holy Week & Easter compiled by Geoffrey Duncan (Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim Press, 2003)]

Celebrant: From the dust of the earth we were created.

***People:* To the dust we shall return.**

Celebrant: Through our sins we have destroyed and scattered the resources of the earth and her children.

***People:* May our repentance gather us into a new community,**

which cherishes the earth and all her people. Direct our hearts to better things, O God, heal us from sin and ignorance as we repent and believe the gospel.

Celebrant: Let us, express our most profound regret that the Episcopal Church lent the institution of slavery its support and justification based on scripture, and after slavery was formally abolished, continued for at least a century to support segregation and discrimination. Let us repent and apologize for our complicity in and the injury done by the institution of slavery and its aftermath. Let us acknowledge our failure to embrace the human dignity of all persons and to strive for justice and peace for all people. And, let us commit ourselves to opposing the sin of racism in personal and public life, and to work to create communities of liberation and justice.

*People: Most holy and merciful Father:
We confess to you and to one another,
And to the whole communion of saints
In heaven and on earth,
That we have sinned by our own fault
In thought, word, and deed;
By what we have done,
and by what we have left undone.*

Litanist: We have not loved you with our whole heart, and mind, and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have not forgiven others, as we have been forgiven.

People: Have mercy on us, Lord.

Litanist: We have been deaf to your call to serve, as Christ served us. We have not been true to the mind of Christ. We have grieved your Holy Spirit.

People: Have mercy on us, Lord.

Litanist: We confess to you, Lord, all our past unfaithfulness: the pride, Hypocrisy, and impatience of our lives,

People: We confess to you, Lord.

Litanist: Our self-indulgent appetite and ways, and our exploitation of other people,

People: We confess to you, Lord.

Litanist: Our anger at our own frustration, and our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves,

People: We confess to you, Lord.

Litanist: Our intemperate love of worldly goods and comforts, and our dishonesty in daily life and work,

People: We confess to you, Lord.

Litanist: Our negligence in prayer and worship, and our failure to commend the faith that is in us,

People: We confess to you, Lord.

Litanist: We treated our African-American brothers and sisters as less than human and barred them from receiving God's saving grace by barring them from entering a house of God to worship. Our failure to hear the slave's cry for freedom and equal treatment,

People: We confess to you, Lord

Litanist: For our separation of people into segregated groups in order to enhance the white Anglo-Saxon race as dominant and the arrogance and degradation which became a normal part of both community and church life,

People: We confess to you, Lord.

Litanist: Accept our repentance, Lord, for the wrongs we have done: for our blindness to human need and suffering, and our indifference to injustice and cruelty,

People: ***Accept our repentance, Lord.***

Litanist: For our waste and pollution of your creation, and our lack of concern for those who come after us,

People: ***Accept our repentance, Lord.***

Litanist: We have too often been distracted and weakened by power, greed and self-interest. The Church acknowledges that clergy and dioceses once owned slaves and benefitted from the many monetary rewards of physical and financial oppression. We have been conformed by the ways of the world rather than by allowing the gospel of Jesus Christ to transform us. For our failure to be agents for social change,

People: ***Accept our repentance, Lord.***

Litanist: We have failed to "seek and serve Christ in all persons," especially our brothers and sisters who differ from us by race. In our treatment of our African American brothers and sisters, we have not always "worked for justice and peace among all people, nor respected the dignity of every human being." For our failure to adhere to the baptismal covenant,

People: ***Accept our repentance, Lord.***

Litanist: O God, may we, the Church, by acknowledging manifold sinfulness in the support of slavery and its associated evils, hereby pledge to adopt a new spirit and application for freedom and respect, leading to redemption and reconciliation, and may we, the Church, henceforth and ever, value and love others as we do ourselves. O God, may You forgive the past and enliven

the Church with a transformed and invigorated heart, constant courage, and purposeful wisdom to effect Your enduring will.

People: ***O God, forgive the Church for racism and endow it with a vision and voice for justice renewed in each generation. The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice.***

Litanist: Restore us, good Lord, and let your anger depart from us;

People: ***Favorably hear us, for your mercy is great.***

Litanist: By your cross, and all the wounds you suffered

People: ***Grant us freedom in your love.***

Litanist: Accomplish in us the work of your salvation,

People: ***That we may show forth your glory in the world.***

Litanist: By the cross and passion of your Son, our Lord,

People: ***Bring us with all your saints to the joy of his resurrection.***

Celebrant: Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who desires not the death of sinners, but rather that they may turn from their wickedness and live, has given power and commandment to his ministers to declare and pronounce to his people, being penitent, the absolution and remission of their sins. He pardons and absolves all those who truly repent, and with sincere hearts believe his holy Gospel.

Therefore we beseech him to grant us true repentance and his Holy Spirit, that those things may please him which we do on this day, and that the rest of our life hereafter may be pure and holy, so that at the last we may come to his eternal joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

People: Amen.

The Nicene Creed (*Standing*)

We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

The Prayers of the People (*Kneel as you are able*)

Intercessor: Let us pray for the establishment of justice, peace, and equality for all.

People: O Lord, hear our prayer

Intercessor: Grant that the church's mission of unity through Christ for all, include all of God's creation. Grant that our souls and spirits may be filled with the knowledge that your divine presence strengthens and sustains us in this justice-making work.

People: O Lord, hear our prayer

Intercessor: Guide the leaders of the world to dedicate their lives to creating communities of justice. Guide this nation and all of its communities to put the needs of the oppressed before any self-centered wants and desires. Strengthen us as we create institutional structures, which welcome people of all races who reflect the rich diversity of God's creation.

People: O Lord, hear our prayer

Intercessor: Help us to acknowledge openly our sinful past in using slave labor to construct our churches. Transform the evil intent of profiteering through slavery into the holy work of standing against all oppression. Cleanse our hearts of feelings of superiority over those whose despair we caused and whose recovery we hinder. Give us solidarity with justice and human rights struggles and with those who live in the isolated ghettos and barrios of this nation and the world.

People: O Lord, hear our prayer

Intercessor: Help us to embrace those whose experiences of despair and isolation cause them to turn to the church for comfort and solace. Help us to create equal opportunity for all children to be loved, fed, nurtured, and educated. Help us to become agents of hope and restoration. Grant that in our journey we may be joined with a great cloud of those witnesses who have struggled mightily against oppression and gone to the eternal life of hope and reconciliation.

People: ***O Lord, hear our prayer***

The Peace

All stand

Celebrant: Blessed be Christ the Prince of Peace.

People: ***who breaks down the walls that divide.***

Celebrant: The peace of God be always with you.

People: ***Praise to Christ who unites us in peace.***

We Offer Our Gifts to God

Offertory Anthem (Seated) *Amazing Grace*

Offertory Hymn (Standing) Verse 3 HYMN #380

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below;
praise him above ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

We Give Thanks to God

Rite II - Eucharistic Prayer C

*The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ?
The bread which we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ?
Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body,
for we all partake of the one bread. (1 Cor. 10:16-17)*

369 **Lift Up Your Hearts** (Standing) Responsive

371 **Holy, Holy, Holy** (Standing) HYMNAL S-130

371 **The Great Thanksgiving continues** (Kneeling) Responsive

372 **The Great AMEN** (Kneeling) Unison

364 **The Lord's Prayer** (Kneeling) Unison

The Breaking of the Bread

364 **The Fraction** (Kneeling) HYMNAL S-158

The Communion of the People

*All who are drawn to Christ
are welcome and encouraged to receive Holy Communion*

Communion Hymn (Seated) HYMN #325

"Let us break bread together on our knees"

We Share the Gifts of God

Celebrant: The love of God in Christ Jesus has the power to set all people free. In this power, let us commit ourselves to work for the transformation of our communities.

People: ***Eternal God, giver of life, in sharing the body and blood of Christ our Savior, you give us a foretaste of what it truly means to be sisters and brothers, reconciled one to another in your Kingdom. Lift us beyond the burdens of pain and guilt as we now turn from the wrong-doings of our past. Give us the vision of the new creation as we commit to dismantling racism in personal and public life. Send us forth into the world as repairers of the breach, and strengthen us to act for justice and human dignity, as we strive for the liberation of all your people; through Christ our Lord. Amen.***

Celebrant: God, lead us, that we may stand firm in faith for justice.

People: ***Teach us love, teach us compassion.
Above all, out of love and compassion,
teach us to act. Amen.***

Celebrant: May the blessing of God who calls us together and makes us one people be upon you. May the blessing of God who has forgiven our sin give you hope and

freedom. May God whose word is proclaimed be revealed as love for us.

People: **Therefore, we offer all that we are and all that we shall become.**

We Go Forth Into the World

Procession into the World Hymn (Standing) HYMN #648

"Let my people go"

Celebrant: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude Voluntary

