

HOLY TRINITY ANGLICAN CHURCH METCALFE, ON.

MARCH 13, 2022

LENT 2

Reverend Michael Fleming

Fr. Michael: As we come together in this sacred space to share sacred time, we acknowledge that our house of worship and our homes lie on the unceded territory of the Anishinaabe Algonquin peoples.

People: **May we seek to walk together on this land in hope, joy and reconciliation.**

Fr. Michael: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all.

People: **And also with you.**

Fr. Michael: Lent is a time for waiting for life. People: And yet there is living to do in the meantime.

Fr. Michael: Abraham and Sarah waited long for a child.

People: **They longed for a son, an heir, a continuation of their lineage.**

Fr. Michael: Like they were, so too are we called in Lent to sit in a place of patient trust.

People: **While we wait, we remember the words of the Psalmist: “The Lord is our Light and our Salvation,**

Fr. Michael: Whom shall we fear?

People: **The Lord is the stronghold of our life.**

Fr. Michael: Of whom shall we be afraid?” Come, the Lenten journey continues.

(from Liturgy and Hymns, Stephen M. Fearing 2022)

Fr. Michael: And now, as community called and gathered, together we pray – Almighty God

People: **to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hidden. 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.**

Fr. Michael: During this penitential time, we pray three times,

People: **Holy God,**

holy and mighty,

holy immortal one,

have mercy on us. (3X)

Fr. Michael: God of life present and life yet to come, as we continue this Lenten journey, remind us that our citizenship does not belong to earthly things but to your everlasting Kingdom. When we are tempted to believe that we belong to hardships and tribulations, remind us that we belong in your faithful and welcoming embrace. Even amidst the penitent journey of Lent, even amidst the confession, the honesty, the regret, even there – especially there – you are our Lord and we wait for you. **Amen** (from Liturgy and Hymns Stephen M. Fearing 2022)

Almighty God, whose son was revealed in majesty before he suffered death on the Cross, give us faith to perceive his glory, that we, being strengthened by his grace may be changed into his likeness, from glory to glory; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God now and forever. **Amen**

Reader: A reading from the Book of Genesis (Genesis 15: 1-18)

After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, "Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great." But Abram said, "O Lord God, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" And Abram said, "You have given me no offspring, and so a slave born in my house is to be my heir." But the word of the Lord came to him, "This man shall not be your heir; no one but your very own issue shall be your heir."

He brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your descendants be." And he believed the Lord; and the Lord reckoned it to him as righteousness. Then he said to him, "I am the Lord who brought you from Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess." But he said, "O Lord God, how am I to know that I shall possess it?" He said to him, "Bring me a heifer three years old, a female goat three years old, a ram three years old, a turtledove, and a young pigeon." He brought him all these and cut them in two, laying each half over against the other; but he did not cut the birds in two. And when birds of prey came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away. As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram, and a deep and terrifying darkness descended upon him. When the sun had gone down and it was dark, a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch passed between these pieces. On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates."

The Word of the Lord

People: **Thanks be to God**

Reader: God of Sarah and Abraham, inspire us to be willing to try new ventures and to dare new risks; deliver us from comfort and complacency and purge us from the temptation to listen to other voices more than your own. We thank you for the support of family and friends who encourage us on our pilgrimage to you. Amen.

THE PSALM: Psalm 27

Fr. Michael: Since God is our light and our salvation, we need not fear anyone! Since Yahweh is the strength of our life, we can act with courage. When unjust people attack us and others devour us with slander, they will stumble and fall. Though an army encamp against us, our hearts will be unafraid. Though violence be threatened against us, we will remain confident.

People: **We ask this one thing of the Lord – that we may dwell in his presence all the days of our lives. We seek above all things to behold her beauty and to study the Wisdom of her ways.**

Fr. Michael: God will hide us in secret shelter in times of trouble. The Lord will offer us sanctuary in the hidden places of holiness. El Shaddai will set us solidly on the rock of his purposes so that we cannot be shaken.

People: **God hears us when we call and answers us with great favour. God calls us to seek his face.**

Fr. Michael: We will indeed seek the face of the Lord, trusting that God will not turn away and will not withdraw from us in anger. The Lord has always been our help and will not leave us now nor forsake us. Even when our fathers and mothers withdrew their love and support, God will gather us with loving arms.

People: **Teach us your ways, O God, and make your paths plain to us. In the face of the scrutiny of all those who are hostile, do not let us give in to fear nor yield to dread. Many speak out with lies against us, threatening violence and harm. But we believe that we shall see your goodness as long as we live.**

Fr. Michael: Sisters and brothers, wait with us for El Shaddai. Be strong and let your hearts take

courage. Yes – wait with confidence for the Lord. (from Swallow's Nest by Marchene Vroon Rienstra 1996)

Reader: A reading from Paul's letter to the Church in Philippi (Philippians 3: 17 – 4:1)
Brothers and sisters, join in imitating me, and observe those who live according to the example you have in us. For many live as enemies of the cross of Christ; I have often told you of them, and now I tell you even with tears. Their end is destruction; their god is the belly; and their glory is in their shame; their minds are set on earthly things. But our citizenship is in heaven, and it is from there that we are expecting a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. He will transform the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, by the power that also enables him to make all things subject to himself. Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved.

The Word of the Lord

People: **Thanks be to God**

Reader: Jesus, you tell us that our bodies will share your glory one day. Please help us now, in this time of our radiance with you. Stay by our sides as we plow through the dark earth of our lives and make our furrows straight. Amen (re:Worship 2022 adapted by RMF)

Holy Gospel

Fr. Michael: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Fr. Michael: The Holy Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ according to the blessed St.

Luke (St. Luke 13: 31-35)

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

At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to Jesus, "Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you." He said to them, "Go and tell that fox for me, 'Listen, I am

casting out demons and performing cures today and tomorrow, and on the third day I finish my work. Yet today, tomorrow, and the next day I must be on my way, because it is impossible for a prophet to be killed outside of Jerusalem.' Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it!

How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! See, your house is left to you. And I tell you, you will not see me until the time comes when you say, 'Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

Fr. Michael: The Gospel of Christ.

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

Homily - Treasure

I was just watching a little TV when the phone rang. It was a voice from the past – an old parishioner who said that he had a problem and just needed an ear. He then began to tell me what was up and I then realized that this could not be resolved over the phone. The next morning, he came to the house and we talked.

He said that he had changed jobs since we last met and was very very happy with his work but something had happened at the office which put him into a tailspin. He said that he had been asked by his supervisor to do something which he considered if not illegal at best morally suspect. He told me that if he refused to follow instructions, his position in the firm might be downgraded at best or eliminated. Now he was facing a crisis of conscience – do what was asked or risk everything.

As he spoke, words from Jesus came to mind. Jesus had told a story about a man who stored grain in his barn, saving it for a rainy day and then spoke of fields and birds and flowers and how his Father, in his love, watched with tenderness over all creation. Jesus ended with these words: "Do not be afraid, little flock, for your father has been pleased to give you the kingdom...where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

As my friend continued to move back and forth between fear and resolve over and over again, those words from our Lord came back again and again. As he was repeating the situation and the cliff that he was standing on for the umpteenth time, I blurted out, "What do you treasure?"

He just stared at me and I was very tempted to give him some hints, some ideas but for once felt it better to just keep my mouth shut. He just sat there in silence and I watched as he twisted his hands together and stared off into space. Breaking the silence, he said, "Well..." and began listing those things that mattered in his life. As the list grew, I grabbed a piece of paper and began to write them down as they poured from his mind. When he was done, I handed him the list and asked him to put all those things into an order of importance. This is not anything new but I thought it might help him focus.... After a long time of writing, scratching out, rewriting, he handed

the paper back to me and just stared at me. Glancing at the list, I now knew that I had something with which I could begin to help him with his decision.

As I asked about each item on his list, I noticed a change in his demeanour – from being despondent, upset and a bit weepy, he became animated, excited and seemed to come alive!

Looking at the first five treasured items, I probed a little about what each meant to him. He told me that he was shocked and surprised at the order in which he had placed things for he had no idea that what had been revealed to him was that he treasured above everything else – the desire and need to be loved for who he was, to be respected for the things he did, to be fulfilled, to matter to someone, to be content.

What faced him was much more than a business decision – he was facing a life crisis in which his entire system of values was laid bare and on the line. I asked him how each of the treasures would be affected by his decision, whatever that was to be. He looked really lost and I found myself asking the inevitable clergy question, “Do you believe in God?” He hesitated – how was he going to answer a priest? “Yes”, he said, “but not as much as I used to I guess.”

I didn't go after him about his faltering faith, having been down that rabbit-hole several times in my own life. I asked him to talk about moments when his faith and belief were strong and he spoke of his childhood (even though his faith was parent-driven) and how strongly he thought he believed back then; of how in his teen years and early adulthood, he had put God on the backburner; of how he found God again in his early thirties and tried to do the best for his family by getting involved in the church; of how his ties to the institution were weakened by what he called the “politics of pious pretenders”; of how he hadn't spent much time recently even thinking about faith. As he grew up, he said, his trust in God was overtaken by his desire to succeed and how this became THE driving force in all that he said and did. He knew, he said, that doing what you were told, obeying the boss would be his way up the corporate ladder and after all, wasn't that what it was all about?

“But now”, he said, “I dunno...I just don't know what to do.”

As he went back into silence, I thought of the encounter Jesus had with a rich and ambitious young man who wanted a share of the kingdom and was mightily disappointed when Jesus said that to do that he would have to let go of the stuff of his life and refocus on what truly mattered in life. Jesus promised the man that when he did that, he would find Jesus waiting for him, ready, willing and able to continue the kingdom journey with him. I told my friend that story and ended it with the image of Jesus and the young man standing at a crossroads, embracing and weeping together as Jesus said, “Don't be afraid – my Father and I are with you every step of the way.”

Not every one of us faces so serious a crisis as this old friend of mine did. But we all face the question of what our treasured treasures are and how we live lives that give us meaning and joy and hope and love.

I don't know how my friend decided and I hope that sometime soon he will call and let me know. In this time of unknowing about his future, he has given me a gift – of wondering what are my treasures and whether my heart and those things that matter the most to be are beating as one. Making the list, facing the list, is something worthy of Lent.

Fr. Michael: Faith means betting your life that something is true and we are willing to bet our life in declaring, I believe in God the Father Almighty.

People: **creator of heaven and earth I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.**

He 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, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again

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

Leader: God our shelter and strength, you are a mighty and wondrous God, breathing life into emptiness and calling us from the depths to proclaim your righteousness from the highest mountaintop. Sing sing your power and your praise for it is right that we do so and this fills our hearts with joy. We stand firm in your protection for you are our Light and our Salvation.

People: **Lord, let your Light shine within us so we may serve others.**

Leader: Why do you shower us with your grace? Why do you bother to love such broken people as we are? Is there no end to your mercy? Often, we have received the gift of your grace but never enacted it. Often, we have heard your Word but never absorbed it. Often, we have seen opportunities for discipleship but have never taken the difficult road. We do not deserve your grace and yet you distribute it without ceasing. Do not hide your face from us Lord. Hear us, your servants for we believe that we shall see and feel your goodness.

People: **Lord, let your Light shine within us so we may serve others.**

Leader: Strengthen us as we wait and wander on this Lenten path. Be with all your Church on her pilgrimage into grace, remembering especially today in our diocese St. Paul's, Almonte and their priest The Reverend Jonathon Kouri. In our Companion Diocese of Jerusalem, we pray for St. Paul's Church, Shefa'Amr, Israel.

Encourage us when we feel lost, calm us when we feel panic, comfort us when we feel hopeless.

Be gracious to us and answer us as we pray today for those in deep wells of depression and anxiety; for those who pray and do not hear your answer; for those who cannot find the entryway into prayer; for those filled with emptiness and with no sense of self-worth; for all those who offer their time in works of justice; for those whose lives we hold deep in the hiddenness of our hearts (LEAVE A MOMENT FOR SILENT PRAYER); for those of our parish family who have asked us to pray for them Meredith and Mike, Scott and Betty, Howard and Irene, Marjorie, Sarah, Zachariah, Roy, Jeanette and Cheryl.

People: **Lord. Let your Light shine so we may serve others**

Leader: Today, we pray especially for the peoples of Ukraine and Russia, that the terrible events which are being played out in the name of greed and terror may cease and that the peoples of both nations, and all those who live near them, may be restored to peace and wholeness.

Leader: God of our path and our protection, teach us your ways and lead us to a level place where we might follow your Son Jesus, in whose name we pray. Amen

Fr. Michael: When we offer God our confession, we join the beautiful work of reconciliation, which begins with our reconciling with God. Trusting in our Partner in Grace, let us pray, beginning within the silent place of our heart... God of tender mercies,

People: **we admit that sometimes we do not know what to do with ourselves. We become angry at the slightest insult and imagine great vengeance upon those who hurt us. We laze about in the good news of our faith and do not consider the deep commitment required to be a people of faith. We too often care for ourselves and not for others. Forgive us, we pray. Help us to repent, reconcile with those with whom we have either anger or ambivalence. Make us whole again, we pray**

Fr. Michael: Sisters and brothers, hear the good news and see the grace of God. You are forgiven; you are loved. Go and live in the light of love in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

And the peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: **And also with you.**

WE SHARE PEACE AND RECONCILIATION AMONG OUR SISTERS AND BROTHERS IN THIS SACRED SPACE.

Fr. Michael: God of Wisdom, may the light of your eternal Word our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ guide us to your glory; we ask this in his blessed name. Amen

Fr. Michael: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Fr. Michael: Lift up your hearts.

People: **We lift them to the Lord.**

Fr. Michael: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Fr. Michael: Eternal God, source of all being, we give you thanks and praise for your faithful love. You call us into friendship with you and with one another to be your holy people, a sign of your presence in the world. When those we trust betray us, unfaithfully you remain with us. When we injure others, you confront us in your love and call us to the oaths of righteousness. You stand with the weak and those who are broken and alone whom you have always welcomed home, making the first last and the last first. Therefore, we raise our voices with angels and archangels, forever praising you and saying,

People: **Holy, holy, holy Lord,**

God of power and might,

Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

Fr. Michael: Blessed are you, O holy One; when Hagar was driven into the wilderness, you followed her and gave her hope. When Joseph was sold into bondage, you turned malice to your people's good. When you called your children out of slavery you brought them through the wilderness into the promised land. When your people were taken into exile, you wept with them by the river of Babylon and carried them home.

People: **Restore us, O God. Let your face shine!**

Fr. Michael: At the right time, you sent your Anointed One to stand with the poor, the outcasts and the oppressed. Jesus touched lepers and the sick, and healed them. He accepted water from a woman of Samaria and offered her the water of new life. Christ knew the desolation of the Cross and opened the way for all humanity into the redemption of your reconciling love.

On the night he was betrayed, Jesus at supper with his friends took bread, gave you thanks, broke the bread, gave it to them and said, "Take and eat: this is my Body which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper, he took the cup of wine, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them and said, "Drink this, all of you: this is my blood of the new covenant which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Loving and Holy One, recalling Christ's death and resurrection, we offer you these gifts, longing for the bread of tomorrow and the wine of the age to come. Therefore we proclaim our hope,

People: **Dying, you destroyed our death; rising, you restored our life. Lord Jesus, come in glory.**

Fr. Michael: Pour out your Spirit on these gifts, that through them you may sustain us in our hunger for your peace. We hold before you all those whose lives are marked by suffering, our sisters and brothers, remembering with particular pain today the children of the Ukraine. When we are broken and cast aside, embrace us in your love.

People: **Restore us O God, let your face shine!**

Fr. Michael: Through Christ, with Christ and in Christ in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honour and glory are yours, O Source of all life now and forever.

People: **Amen**

(Supplementary Eucharistic Prayer 2 Anglican Church of Canada 2001)

Fr. Michael: And now as Jesus has gifted to his Church, we pray,

People: **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.

Fr. Michael: We break this bread.

People: **Communion in Christ's Body once broken.**

Fr. Michael: Let your Church be the wheat which bears its fruit in dying.

People: **If we have died with him, we shall live with him. If we hold firm, we shall reign with him.**

WE SHARE IN THE GIFTS OF GOD WITH OUR SISTERS AND BROTHERS IN THE LORD.

Fr. Michael: Creator of heaven and earth, we thank you for these holy mysteries which bring us now a share of the life to come through Jesus our Lord. Amen

Fr. Michael: Lord God our Father, Creator: we thank you for the gift of this parish of Holy Trinity, for those who come here seeking you and for those who minister from this sacred space. Inspire us with your vision to set our roots deeply and firmly in the faith, that we may be stewards of justice in all creation. Lord God Jesus, Saviour and Redeemer, we thank you for your continuing presence in our parish family. Inspire us to seek you in Scripture, the Sacraments and one another, that we may be faithful to your call to evangelism and love. Lord God, Holy Spirit, Sustainer and Renewer: we thank you for all the wondrous gifts you have poured upon us. Inspire us to serve you in body and in spirit; help us to share our gifts of time, creativity, talents, finances and resources; open us to your renewing, life-giving power. O God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – we praise you, we love you, we seek you and we serve you in the name of Jesus, our Redeemer, Friend and Brother. Amen

Fr. Michael: And Glory to God,

People: **whose power working in us,**

can do infinitely more

than we can ask or imagine.

Glory to God from generation to generation, in the Church and in Christ Jesus, for ever and ever. Amen

Fr. Michael: May peace be within us, may peace be around us; may peace be beside us, may peace be between us. May we walk peacefully with Mother Earth and may the peace of God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – fill our days and nights and this good earth we call our home. Amen

(Diann L. Neu (adapted) from The Flowering of the Soul)

Worship follows the Holy Eucharist in the Book of Alternative Services.
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