



LENT IV

St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Raleigh, NC

March 22, 2020

Greeting by Fr. Tyrone

A Lamentation (For private meditation)

I am one who has seen affliction under the rod of God's wrath; he has driven and brought me into darkness without any light; against me alone he turns his hand, again and again, all day long. He has made my flesh and my skin waste away, and broken my bones; he has besieged and enveloped me with bitterness and tribulation; he has made me sit in darkness like the dead of long ago. He has walled me about so that I cannot escape; he has put heavy chains on me; though I call and cry for help, he shuts out my prayer; he has blocked my ways with hewn stones, he has made my paths crooked. He is a bear lying in wait for me, a lion in hiding; he led me off my way and tore me to pieces; he has made me desolate; he bent his bow and set me as a mark for his arrow. He shot into my vitals the arrows of his quiver; I have become the laughingstock of all my people, the object of their taunt-songs all day long. He has filled me with bitterness, he has sated me with wormwood. He has made my teeth grind on gravel, and made me cower in ashes; my soul is bereft of peace; I have forgotten what happiness is; so I say, "Gone is my glory, and all that I had hoped for from the Lord." The thought of my affliction and my homelessness is wormwood and gall! My soul continually thinks of it and is bowed down within me. But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. "The Lord is my portion," says my soul, "therefore I will hope in him." (Lamentations 3:1-24)

Voluntary "I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light", arrangement by Marilyn Bier

Gracious Father, whose blessed Son Jesus Christ came down from heaven to be the true bread which gives life to the world: Evermore give us this bread, that he may live in us, and we in him; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

✠ **The Holy Gospel** John 9:1-41

The holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to John.

As he walked 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?' Jesus answered, 'Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me* while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.' When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, saying to him, 'Go, wash in the pool of Siloam' (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, 'Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?' Some were saying, 'It is he.' Others were saying, 'No, but it is someone like him.' He kept saying, 'I am the man.' But they kept asking him, 'Then how were your eyes opened?' He answered, 'The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, "Go to Siloam and wash." Then I went and washed and received my sight.' They said to him, 'Where is he?' He said, 'I do not know.'

They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, 'He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see.' Some of the Pharisees said, 'This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath.' But others said, 'How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?' And they were divided. So they said again to the blind man, 'What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened.' He said, 'He is a prophet.'

The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight and asked them, 'Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?' His parents answered, 'We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.' His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, 'He is of age; ask him.'

So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, 'Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner.' He answered, 'I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.' They said to him, 'What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?' He answered them, 'I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?' Then they reviled him, saying, 'You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.' The man answered, 'Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he

does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.' They answered him, 'You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?' And they drove him out.

Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, 'Do you believe in the Son of Man?'^{*} He answered, 'And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him.' Jesus said to him, 'You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.' He said, 'Lord, I believe.' And he worshipped him. Jesus said, 'I came into this world for judgement so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind.' Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, 'Surely we are not blind, are we?' Jesus said to them, 'If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, "We see", your sin remains.

The Gospel of the Lord.

A Homily

Prayers (For individual use or with a family)

God has consecrated us in the living waters of baptism to be a holy people. That we may be ever anointed with hope and grace, let us, even in these difficult times, turn to our God in prayer, saying: God of all hope, have mercy upon us.

Today, we pray for the church, for an end to division and indignation, for all the people washed and sent by Christ, and for a renewal of God's fulfilling Spirit: God of all hope, **have mercy on us.**

We pray for all who cling to life in this age of Coronavirus awaiting the pool of grace, God of all hope, **have mercy on us.**

We pray for all who are called to govern in justice and peace, for an end to all works of darkness, for all the peoples created in God's image, and for a Spirit of wisdom and mercy to rule the mighty: God of all hope, **have mercy on us.**

We pray for all condemned to die, for all victims of illegal arrest and oppression, for all who are tortured, for their families, and for all who work for liberation: God of all hope, **have mercy on us.**

We pray for the forgotten and abandoned, for all who are in anguish, for the guilt-ridden, for all in need of the Spirit, for those struggling in addiction and for the incarcerated. God of all hope, **have mercy on us.**

We pray for the sick, the grieving, and the dying and for those in our community: especially, **Rudolph, Mindy, David, Elayne, Dave, Barbara, JoAnn, Elliot, Gary, Beth, Arlene, Abbie, Geoff, Betty Jo, Paul, Lee, Audrey, Carol, Deanna, Bob, Sophia, Sarah, Marilyns, Mary, Becca, Katie, Emma, Samuel, Rachael, Beauty and John** that they may be uplifted: God of all hope, **have mercy on us.**

For all brothers and sisters, mothers and fathers, spouses and families, friends and companions, that there may be love and mutual reverence: God of all hope, **have mercy on us.**

We pray for those celebrating birthdays: **Linda** (24th); **Lloyd**, and **Koren** (25th). God of all hope, **have mercy on us.**

For those who have died. (*Silence*) God of all hope, **have mercy on us.**

A concluding Collect is offered.

Prayer over the People

Voluntary: "Amazing Grace", setting by Sylvia Oines

The Rev. Tyrone Fowlkes, Officiant
Marcia Klinder-Badgley, Musician
David Both, IT Communications



St. Mark's Episcopal Church, 1725 N. New Hope Road, Raleigh, NC, 27604 Phone: (919) 231-6767

Website: www.stmarks-ral.org, Rector: The Rev. Tyrone Fowlkes, Rector's Email: tfowlkes@stmarks-ral.org