



BULLETIN INSERTS

March 17, 2019 – Lent 2 (C)

Life Transformed: The Way of Love in Lent - PRAY

Drawing on the ancient practice of setting aside Lent as a period of study and preparation for living as a Christian disciple, we are pleased to present weekly teachings from *Life Transformed: The Way of Love in Lent*. Learn more at episcopalchurch.org/life-transformed.

READ Exodus 14:10-15:1

The story of the Exodus is one of the most important baptismal stories in the whole Bible. In the blessing over the water, which we PRAY at every baptism, we remember that the Hebrews were liberated from bondage in Egypt through water. Exodus is also the only reading that is specifically required in the Easter Vigil because of the way God delivered Israel through the Red Sea and the pillar of fire that lit the way for God's people. That pillar is echoed in the Easter fire, which shines in our darkness at the vigil. The Exodus event holds a seminal place in the recitation of God's liberating action – the common thread woven throughout the vigil and the Bible itself.

One of the most intriguing aspects of this powerful story is the way prayer has been woven through every step the Israelites took in their path to liberation. When they were afraid and even doubted, their prayer was heard by God who told them that he would not abandon them. When they were about to be overtaken by the Egyptians, their prayer for deliverance was answered. Moses was given the power to part the sea, and they crossed on dry land. Finally, when they were safe, the prophet Miriam led a prayer of rejoicing and thanksgiving with song and dancing. Each of these prayers is important to the story and to the relationship built between God and God's people.

In the early Church, Lent was a time for catechumens (those who were preparing to be baptized) to learn about the Christian life. The outline of the faith that they would follow was called a catechism, and we still have a similar form in our Book of Common Prayer today (pp. 845-862). In particular, our catechism describes the role of prayer in Christian life, including the seven types of prayer:

- **Adoration:** We lift up our hearts and minds to God, asking nothing but to enjoy God's presence.
- **Praise:** We praise God, not to obtain anything, but because God's Being draws praise from us.
- **Thanksgiving:** We offer gratitude to God for all the blessings of this life, for our redemption, and for whatever draws us closer to God.
- **Penitence:** In penitence, we say we are sorry, confess our sins, and make amends and life change wherever possible.
- **Oblation:** We offer ourselves, our lives and labors, in union with Christ, for God's purposes.
- **Intercession:** We bring before God the needs of others.
- **Petition:** We present our own needs, that God's will may be done.

Each of these forms of prayer will help you grow and bring you into a closer relationship with God. In fact, Scripture tells us that even when we don't know how to pray, "the Holy Spirit will intercede for us" and teach our heart how to pray in "sighs too deep for words" (Romans 8:26).

REFLECT: *Prayer* is one of the essential components of walking the Way of Love. Yet, some people can find it intimidating, frustrating, or hard to practice. Which of the prayer styles from the catechism speak to you? Is there one that comes naturally?

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