

Transformation – NOW!
LENT

Welcome

by *Frances Copsey*

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Theologically speaking I'm one of the awkward squad,
always asking questions or questioning answers;
it's uncomfortable for all concerned,
especially me.
I wish it wasn't so;
I wish I could tuck myself up in tradition,
snuggle down into certainty,
learn to trust,
but I don't know how –
don't even know what the God-word means to me now.
I do know love when I meet it though.
Oh yes, I recognise Love.

Hymn: As the deer pants for the water

sung by Kathryn Crowweller, Chet Valley Churches

As the deer pants for the water
So my soul longs after You
You alone are my heart's desire
And I long to worship You

You alone are my strength, my shield
To You alone may my spirit yield
You alone are my heart's desire
And I long to worship You

I want You more than gold or silver
Only You can satisfy
You alone are the real joy giver
And the apple of my eye

You alone are my strength, my shield
To You alone may my spirit yield
You alone are my heart's desire
And I long to worship You

You're my friend and You are my brother
Even though you are a King
I love You more than any other
So much more than anything

Martin Nystrom
©1984 Universal Music

Bible Reading

James 4:1-6

from The Message

Where do you think all these appalling wars and quarrels come from? Do you think they just happen? Think again. They come about because you want your own way, and fight for it deep inside yourselves. You lust for what you don't have and are willing to kill to get it. You want what isn't yours and will risk violence to get your hands on it. You wouldn't think of just asking God for it, would you? And why not? Because you know you'd be asking for what you have no right to. You're spoiled children, each wanting your own way. You're cheating on God. If all you want is your own way, flirting with the world every chance you get, you end up enemies of God and his way. And do you suppose God doesn't care? The proverb has it that "he's a fiercely jealous lover." And what he gives in love is far better than anything else you'll find. It's common knowledge that "God goes against the wilful proud; God gives grace to the willing humble."

Reflection

by Christine Sine

God of the dispossessed
we bring to you
the lonely ones, the homeless ones,
thirsty, tired and penniless.

We have chosen to fast
Not with ashes but with actions
Not with sackcloth but in sharing
Not in thoughts but in deeds.
We will give up our abundance
To share our food with the hungry

We will give up our comfort
To provide homes for the destitute
We will give up our fashions
To see the naked clothed
We will share where others hoard
We will free where others oppress
We will heal where others harm

Then God's light will break out on us
God's healing will quickly appear
God will guide us always
God's righteousness will go before us
We will find our joy in the Lord
We will be like a well watered garden
We will be called repairers of broken walls
Together we will feast at God's banquet table

Hymn: Just as I am, without one plea

sung by St Martin's Voices

Just as I am, without one plea
but that thy blood was shed for me,
and that thou bidst me come to thee,
O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am, though tossed about
with many a conflict, many a doubt,
fightings within and fears without,
O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind;
sight, riches, healing of the mind,
Yea, all I need, in thee to find,
O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am, thou wilt receive,
wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve:
because thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am (thy love unknown
has broken every barrier down),
now to be thine, yea, thine alone,
O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am, of that free love
the breadth, length, depth, and height to prove,
here for a season, then above,
O Lamb of God, I come.

Charlotte Elliott (1789-1871)

Prayers

Litany of Humility

From the desire of being praised, Deliver me, Jesus.

From the desire of being preferred to others, Deliver me, Jesus.

From the desire of being consulted, Deliver me, Jesus.

From the desire of being approved, Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear of being humiliated, Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear of being forgotten, Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear of being ridiculed, Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear of being wronged, Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear of being suspected, Deliver me, Jesus.

That others may be loved more than I,
Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

That others may be esteemed more than I,
Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

That, in the opinion of the world, others may increase and I may decrease,
Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

That others may be chosen and I set aside,
Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

That others may be praised and I unnoticed,
Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

That others may be preferred to me in everything,
Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

That others may become holier than I,
provided that I may become as holy as I should,
Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

Rafael Cardinal Merry del Val (1865-1930)

Mary Sumner's personal prayer

All this day, O Lord, let me touch as many lives as possible for thee,
and every life I touch do thou by thy Spirit quicken, whether through
the word I speak, the prayer I breathe, or the life I live.

Amen.

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Dismissal

Gracious and patient God – we hope!
There are times when you must feel
that we were sent to try you
with our prejudice, our apathy, our intransigence,
and our refusal to receive the grace
that we are made whole by the cross of our Lord.
Forgive all our ingratitude, our small-mindedness,
our stiff necks, and bind up our brokenness.
We are without excuse,
but bold to ask pardon from our Lord
who lived his life
and died his death
and gave his flesh and blood
for the forgiveness of our sins.

David Coleman ©Wild Goose Publications

Hymn: Take up thy cross

sung by St Martin's Voices

"Take up thy cross," the Saviour said,
"if thou wouldst my disciple be;
deny thyself, the world forsake
and humbly follow after me."

Take up thy cross; let not its weight
fill thy weak spirit with alarm;
His strength shall bear thy spirit up
and brace thy heart and nerve thine arm.

Take up thy cross, then, in His strength,
and calmly every danger brave;
'twill guide thee to a better home,
and lead to victory o'er the grave.

Take up thy cross, and follow Christ
nor think till death to lay it down;
for only he who bears the cross
may hope to wear the glorious crown.

To thee, great Lord, the One in Three,
all praise for evermore ascend:
O grant us in our home to see
the heavenly life that knows no end.

Charles William Everest (1814-1877)

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Prayers next month will be on 11th April 2024 – EASTERTIDE