



From Ashes to Alleluia

A congregational devotional for Lent

*May this Lenten journey draw you deeper into the life of the Holy Trinity —
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit — now and always. Amen.*

An Invitation to Keep a Holy Lent

Lent is not about doing more, but about paying attention.

This devotional has been prepared to accompany our church community through the season of Lent, from Ash Wednesday to Easter Day. It is offered as a companion for prayer and reflection, shaped by the Gospel readings of **Year A** in the Church of England's Common Worship lectionary.

You will not find a daily checklist here. Instead, this resource offers space: space to listen, to notice, to be honest, and to draw closer to God — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

For Families and Households

Each week includes a small **“For Families / Households”** box. These are offered for anyone who shares life with others — families with children, couples, house-shares, or those who simply wish for a more tactile way of praying.

They include: - A simple question to wonder about together - A short, shared practice - A one-sentence prayer for the week.

These boxes are **invitations, not expectations**. If they are helpful, use them. If they are not, please feel free to leave them. God's grace is not measured by how much we do.

A Word of Encouragement

Some weeks you may engage deeply; other weeks you may barely glance at the page. Both are part of faithful living. Lent is not a test, but a journey—a slow turning of the heart toward God.

May this resource support you as you walk with Christ, through the wilderness and the cross, into the joy of resurrection life.

How to Use This Devotional

This devotional is designed to be spacious rather than daily — inviting prayerful depth instead of pressure. Each week offers a theme rooted in the Gospel readings commonly appointed in the Church of England's Common Worship lectionary for Lent. Holy Week then slows us right down, with a short reflection for each day from Monday to Easter Day.

Each reflection includes: - **A Gospel focus** (without overloading detail) - **A short reflection** - **A gentle challenge** for daily life - **A simple prayer**

Return to each week's reflection more than once if helpful. Lent is not about rushing through—but about being honest before God.

Ash Wednesday & the Beginning of Lent

Wednesday 18th February 2026

Theme: Returning to God

Gospel focus: Matthew 6:1–6, 16–21 – True devotion seen by the Father.

Reflection: Lent begins with dust and truth. We are reminded not of our worthlessness, but of our need. Jesus calls us away from performance and into sincerity: to pray because we need God, to fast because we hunger for more than food, to give because love must move outward.

Ash Wednesday asks a hard but healing question: *Who am I when no one is watching?* God is not impressed by appearances—but deeply attentive to the heart. The Holy Trinity draws us inward this Lent: the Father who sees in secret, the Son who teaches the way of life, the Spirit who reshapes us quietly.

Challenge: Where has faith become more visible than vulnerable? Practice one hidden act of devotion this week—something only God will know.

Prayer: *Holy God, from dust you formed me and to you I return. Strip away what is false, and draw me closer to your heart. Amen.*

For Families / Households

- **Wonder together:** What helps you remember God during ordinary days?
- **A simple practice:** Place a small bowl of water on the table. Dip a finger in and make the sign of the cross, remembering God's mercy.

Prayer for the week: *Loving God, help us turn back to you. Amen.*

Space for personal thoughts, notes or drawings:

Week 1 – The Wilderness

Sunday 22nd February 2026

Theme: Temptation and Trust

Gospel focus: Matthew 4:1–11 – The temptation of Jesus.

Reflection: The wilderness is not a mistake—it is often the place of meeting. Jesus is led by the Spirit into hunger, testing, and vulnerability. Lent reminds us that faith is not proven by comfort but by trust in the Father’s word.

Jesus refuses shortcuts to power and certainty. He does not argue with temptation so much as remain rooted in relationship. The Trinity is fully present here: the Spirit leads, the Son obeys, the Father’s will is trusted.

Challenge: Notice one recurring temptation in your life—not to judge yourself, but to understand it. What might God be inviting you to trust instead?

Prayer: *Faithful God, meet me in my wilderness. Teach me to trust your word when the path feels unclear. Amen.*

For Families / Households

- **Wonder together:** When things feel hard, what helps you keep going?
- **A simple practice:** Sit quietly for half a minute. Each person may name one hard thing and one good thing from the day.

Prayer for the week: *God, be with us when things are hard. Help us to trust you. Amen.*

Space for personal thoughts, notes or drawings:

Week 2 – Born from Above

Sunday 1st March 2026

Theme: New Birth and New Life

Year A Gospel focus: John 3:1–17 – Jesus and Nicodemus.

Reflection: Nicodemus comes to Jesus by night—curious, cautious, and unsure. He knows there is something of God in Jesus, but he struggles to understand what that means for his own life. Jesus speaks not of improvement, but of transformation: being born from above, born of the Spirit.

Lent invites us to recognise that faith is not something we manufacture. New life is God’s gift. The Father loves the world into being, the Son is lifted up for its healing, and the Spirit breathes life where we least expect it.

Challenge: Where might God be inviting you not to try harder, but to begin again—trusting grace rather than effort?

Prayer: *God of new beginnings, breathe your Spirit into my life. Help me to receive the life you freely give. Amen.*

For Families / Households

- **Wonder together:** What do you think it means to begin again?
- **A simple practice:** Open a window or step outside briefly, taking a deep breath as a sign of God’s Spirit giving life.

Prayer for the week: *Loving God, thank you for your gift of new life. Amen.*

Space for personal thoughts, notes or drawings:

Week 3 – Living Water

Sunday 8th March 2026

Theme: Thirst and Fulfilment

Gospel focus: John 4:5–42 – Jesus and the Samaritan woman.

Reflection: This Lent, Jesus meets someone overlooked, misunderstood, and thirsty—for meaning, dignity, and truth. He does not begin with correction, but with conversation. Slowly, lovingly, he reveals who he is.

The woman’s growing clarity shows us that faith often unfolds in stages. The Spirit opens understanding, the Son offers living water, and the Father seeks true worshippers. Seeing clearly begins with honesty.

Challenge: Where might God be inviting you into a more honest conversation—about faith, doubt, or longing?

Prayer: *Jesus, you meet me where I am. Give me courage to speak truthfully with you and to receive your life. Amen.*

For Families / Households

- **Wonder together:** What do you think Jesus knows about you already?
- **A simple practice:** Share a drink of water together, remembering Jesus’ promise of living water.

Prayer for the week: *Jesus, thank you for meeting us as we are. Amen.*

Space for personal thoughts, notes or drawings:

Week 4 – Seeing Clearly

Sunday 15th March 2026

Theme: From Darkness to Light

Year A Gospel focus: John 9:1–41 – Jesus heals the man born blind.

Reflection: Healing is rarely straightforward. As sight is restored, conflict follows. The man grows in faith while others retreat into fear. Lent exposes how tightly we cling to certainty, even when it blinds us.

Jesus brings light that cannot be controlled. The Spirit leads us into truth that may unsettle us, but always sets us free. The Trinity invites us to walk in the light, even when it costs us comfort.

Challenge: Ask yourself: where might I be resisting God’s light because it asks something of me?

Prayer: *Light of the world, open my eyes. Give me courage to walk in your truth. Amen.*

For Families / Households

- **Wonder together:** What helps you see clearly? What makes things confusing?
- **A simple practice:** Light a candle one evening and sit quietly, watching the flame.

Prayer for the week: *Jesus, light of the world, help us to see. Amen.*

Space for personal thoughts, notes or drawings:

Week 5 – Losing and Finding Life

Sunday 22nd March 2026

Theme: From Death to Life

Year A Gospel focus: John 11:1–45 – The raising of Lazarus.

Reflection: Jesus does not rush grief. He weeps. He waits. Then he calls life out of death. Lent brings us face to face with loss—not to overwhelm us, but to reveal God’s power where hope seems finished.

The Father’s glory is revealed, the Son calls the dead to life, and the Spirit breathes hope where despair has settled. Resurrection begins before Easter—in trust.

Challenge: Name one place in your life that feels lifeless or sealed shut. Hold it before God this week.

Prayer: *God of resurrection, stand with me in grief and call me into new life. Amen.*

For Families / Households

- **Wonder together:** What gives you hope when you feel sad or stuck?
- **A simple practice:** Step outside together, if possible, and notice signs of life—buds, birds, fresh air.

Prayer for the week: *God of life, bring hope where we need it most. Amen.*

Space for personal thoughts, notes or drawings:

Palm Sunday and the Coming Kingdom

Sunday 29th March 2026

Theme: The Unexpected King

Year A Gospel focus: Matthew 21:1–11 – The triumphal entry.

Reflection: Jesus enters Jerusalem to cheers and expectations—but not understanding. He comes as a king of peace, not conquest. Palm Sunday reveals how easily praise can turn to disappointment when God refuses our scripts.

The Trinity invites us into a kingdom shaped by humility: the Father’s purpose unfolding, the Son choosing obedience, the Spirit sustaining faith through uncertainty.

Challenge: Where might God be inviting you to trust his way rather than your expectations?

Prayer: *Humble King, help me to follow you even when your way surprises me. Amen.*

For Families / Households

- **Wonder together:** What kind of king do you think Jesus is?
- **A simple practice:** Lay coats, scarves, or paper on the floor and walk over them, remembering Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem.

Prayer for the week: *Jesus our King, help us to follow your way of peace. Amen.*

Space for personal thoughts, notes or drawings:

Holy Week: Walking with Christ

Monday – Love Poured Out

Reflection: Extravagant love often looks wasteful. Yet Jesus receives it without embarrassment. Holy Week begins by reminding us that love prepares us for loss.

Prayer: *Loving God, help me to offer my love freely, without calculation. Amen.*

Tuesday – Truth and Tension

Reflection: Jesus speaks truth even when it costs him. Holy courage is not loud—but faithful.

Prayer: *God of truth, give me courage to live honestly before you and others. Amen.*

Wednesday – The Cost of Betrayal

Reflection: Betrayal rarely begins suddenly. It grows from small distances of the heart. Lent invites us back before love grows cold.

Prayer: *Merciful God, draw me back when I wander. Heal what has grown distant. Amen.*

Maundy Thursday – Love That Serves

Reflection: Jesus kneels. God serves. Love becomes a command—not of power, but of self-giving.

Prayer: *Servant Lord, teach me to love as you love. Amen.*

Space for personal thoughts, notes or drawings:

Holy Week: Walking with Christ

Good Friday – Love That Endures

Reflection: The cross reveals a God who does not abandon suffering—but enters it fully. Here, love holds nothing back.

Prayer: *Crucified Christ, hold the pain of the world—and my own—within your love. Amen.*

Holy Saturday – Waiting in Silence

Reflection: God is still at work, even when all seems quiet. Holy Saturday teaches us to wait without despair.

Prayer: *God of hope, help me to trust you in the silence. Amen.*

Easter Day – Risen Life

Reflection: Love is stronger than death. The Trinity's work is revealed: the Father raising the Son, the Spirit breathing new life. Easter does not erase the cross—it transforms it.

Prayer: *Risen Lord, draw me into your new life. Send me out in hope, joy, and love. Amen.*

Space for personal thoughts, notes or drawings: