

Unless a grain of wheat...

Take a moment to become aware of your breath as it moves in and out of your body. (pause)

As I breathe in, I breathe in the Spirit, the breath of God. (pause)

As I breathe out, I breathe out any stress or worry,

I place these into God's hands. (pause)

I place my desire before God: that I may know Jesus more intimately; that I may love him more deeply and follow him more closely. (pause)

Light a candle.

In the name of the Father...

Creator of all

Centre my mind to know your presence; to see you in every face I meet;
To hear you in every word I speak and to know you in every breath I take.

And of the Son...

The one who showed the way

Move me in the deepest parts of my being, to walk the way of
compassion;

To stay on the path;

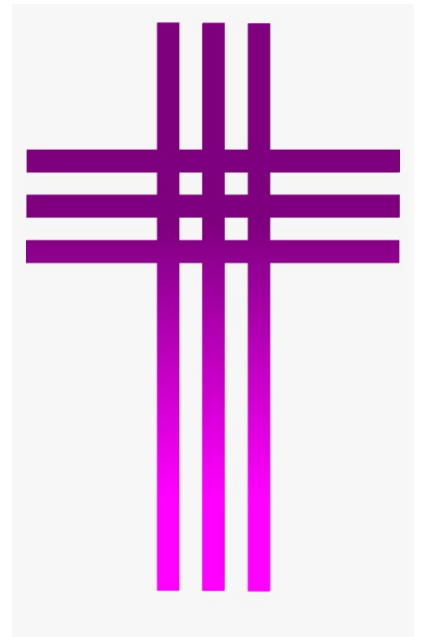
To hold close to the tender embrace of God.

And of the Holy Spirit...

Who is always with us.

May I stay open to the Spirit, gentle as the whisper of wings on my days.

I say *Amen* in love and peace.



Context

In John's Gospel, Jesus offers the gentle image of a grain of wheat—a seed that must fall into the earth, surrender its outer shell, and in the hidden darkness begin its quiet transformation. Only by letting go of what it once was, can it rise into something new, full of life and promise.

Lent invites us into this same sacred rhythm. We, too, are called to release whatever hardens us or holds us back from deeper communion with God and with one another. In the stillness of prayer, in the soil of our ordinary days, God works within us—softening, reshaping, awakening.

As the husks of old patterns fall away, the first tender shoots of new life begin to stir. We are invited not to rush, but to trust the slow work of the Spirit. And when the time is right, we rise—carrying hope, offering compassion, and sharing God's love through the simple grace of our words and actions.

Scripture

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John (12:20-33)

Among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. These approached Philip, who came from Bethsaida in Galilee, and put this request to him, 'Sir, we should like to see Jesus.' Philip went to tell Andrew, and Andrew and Philip together went to tell Jesus. Jesus replied to them:

'Now the hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.

I tell you, most solemnly,
unless a wheat grain falls on the ground and dies,
it remains only a single grain;
but if it dies,
it yields a rich harvest.

Anyone who loves his life loses it;
anyone who hates his life in this world
will keep it for the eternal life.

If a man serves me, he must follow me,
wherever I am, my servant will be there too.

If anyone serves me, my Father will honour him.

Now my soul is troubled.

What shall I say:

'Father, save me from this hour?'

But it was for this very reason that I have come to this hour.

Father, glorify your name!'

A voice came from heaven, 'I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.' People standing by, who heard this, said it was a clap of thunder; others said, 'It was an angel speaking to him.' Jesus answered, 'It was not for my sake that this voice came, but for yours.

Now sentence is being passed on this world;
now the prince of this world is to be overthrown.
And when I am lifted up from the earth,
I shall draw all men to myself.'

By these words he indicated the kind of death he would die.
The Word of the Lord.

Your imagination is a gift from God. The Holy Spirit leads prayer. You are invited to be a part of the story. In your mind's eye place yourself physically in the scene.

Reread the scripture passage slowly and contemplatively.

Imagine the place where the disciples are approached.

Who is here with you?

What can you see, smell and hear?

What do you feel?

When Jesus begins to speak, where are you located? Who are you in the scene?



What are you doing, thinking, feeling?
What did Jesus' words mean to you?
What might you say to Jesus?

Pause a few moments for prayerful reflection and allow the words of the Gospel to speak to you.

Reflection

This Gospel reading is a reflection by Jesus himself on his own death and its meaning for the world. In his life and ministry Jesus is completely committed to his Father's mission. No matter what happens, Jesus remains true to his disciples, to sinners and to the outcast. He brings the light and compassion of God into people's lives, and does so to the bitter end on the Cross. He is so faithful that he is prepared to die for his own people. Jesus sees himself as a grain of wheat that falls to the ground and dies, producing a great harvest. On the cross, 'lifted up', Jesus reveals God's infinite love that heals, reconciles and unites the world in God. Christians are also called to join Jesus in self-sacrificing love. We too are to become as the 'grain of wheat' for the life of others.

Guiding Reflection Questions

Jesus' death was an act of pure selflessness. When do you feel both the cost and the joy of giving selflessly?
What do you think about the effects of selfishness? Where does it lead us, our families and society?
How does our society deal with death and dying?
How does your faith in Jesus help you to approach this part of life?
How does Lent help you celebrate Holy Week and Easter more meaningfully?
How do you know that Jesus is alive in our world today?

Create a New Heart

Michael Mangan

Create a new heart in me,
Come and set me free,
Open my eyes to see,
You can create a new heart in me.

Show me your love and kindness,
Touch me deep within.
Wash me clean from pain, O God,
Cleans me from my sins.

Create a new heart in me,
Come and set me free,
Open my eyes to see,
You can create a new heart in me.

Fill me with joy and gladness,
Keep my spirit strong.
Open up my lips, O God,
And I will sing your song.

Create a new heart in me,
Come and set me free,



Open my eyes to see,
You can create a new heart in me.

Responding

I pray that I give with an open and selfless heart.
I pray that I remain aware of and responsive to the challenges of our time.
I pray that, wherever I am, I nurture and encourage a spirit of generosity.

Prayer

Father in heaven,
the love of your Son led him to accept the suffering of the cross
that we might glory in new life.
Change our selfishness into self-giving.
Help us to embrace the world you have given us,
that we may transform the darkness of its pain
into the life and joy of Easter.
Grant this through Christ our Lord,
Amen.

“Help one another and ever strive to serve God in a generous spirit.” Mary MacKillop 1881

As the seed bursts open,
takes root,
reaches to the sun,
bears fruit,
So too, bless us, O God. Amen
(2014, pg. 137 *Act, Love Walk*)

