



Growing Faith

27 - Spring | 3 March 2025

Lent Reflection

Written by Miss Targett

In Matthew chapter 6, Jesus tells us how to give alms, how to pray, and how to fast – the three practices we must especially focus on in the period of Lent.

These practices help to prepare our hearts for the most important feast in the Christian calendar – Easter.

Almsgiving, prayer and fasting help us to love God and our neighbour better, by demonstrating our love through the sacrifice of our resources, time and bodily desires.

Practising charity is encouraged even more during Lent because it helps us to focus on our Christian duty to love others as ourselves and be reminded of Christ's sacrificial love for us which He demonstrated on the Cross. Jesus gives us clear advice for how we should help those in need: "... when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you" (Mt 6:3-4). Jesus calls out the "hypocrites" who announce their almsgiving "with trumpets", telling us that why we do things is just as important as the things we do. Almsgiving does not have to involve giving money. We can give food, time, and love to those who need it, in Jesus's name. Whatever we give this Lent, we must make sure we are doing it for God, and not to make ourselves look better.

Similarly, Jesus tells us that we should pray "in secret" (Mt 6:6) and not to "heap up empty phrases" (Mt 6:7). Prayer is about speaking to God from the heart, because He "knows what you need before you ask him" (Mt 6:8). This Lent, we can try to give more of our time to God in prayer, which will help us grow in our relationship with Him. Taking Jesus's advice, we should not show off about our prayer, but remember the real reason we pray.

Finally, Jesus says that "whenever" we fast we should do so "in secret" (Mt 6:18). Can I give up something for Jesus this Lent, remembering what Jesus gave up for me? Fasting helps us as Christians to be less attached to this world, and more focused on God. Rather than boasting about what we have given up for Lent, we can take comfort in knowing that God is aware of what we have given up for Him.

However we choose to give alms, pray, and fast this Lent, we should remember Who we are doing it for. God wants our hearts, not our lip service (Mt 15:8). Charity, prayer and fasting are ways in which can get closer to God, as long as we do them for God, and not to make ourselves look better. We can offer our small sacrifices in secret, and our "Father who sees in secret will reward you" (Mt 6:18).



Youth Church Update

(Every Wednesday, 3:30-4:15pm).

We have an exciting line-up for our youth church this half term as we move into Lent.

Ash Wednesday is the first Wednesday of March and so in line with our normal practice, will be a Eucharist service. All in the congregation will be given the opportunity to receive ashes if they so wish.

19th March will see Tom Humphreys, one of our Year 12 students, preach.

Then 2nd April, the final week of term and another Eucharist service, will see us host Andy Milne from the Church Army's Missional youth church network (MYCN). This is a group we have been a part of since our inception, so we are really looking forward to welcoming Andy to our youth church.

Every other week our youth church small groups are continuing to look at the C. Of E.'s 'Bread of Life' course. This is proving to be extremely helpful to our faith journey.

All parents and other family members are welcome to attend any of our public worship services on the first and third Wednesday of every month. It would be great to see you there if you can make it.

A Prayer

By Tessa L. Beveridge-Y7

Dear God,

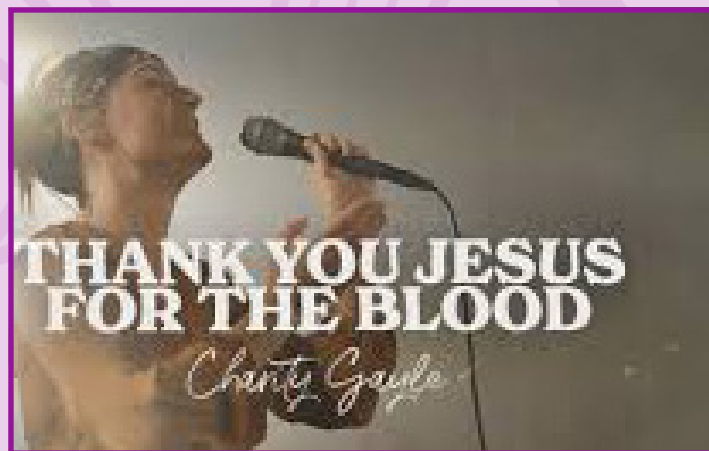
Please help us and guide us during this period of Lent as we count up the days to when you gave the biggest sacrifice and gift anyone could ask for.

Thank you for giving everything up for us and thank you for helping us learn to appreciate what we have.

Help us to use this time of Lent to grow closer to You through prayer, sacrifice and acts of kindness, leading us to Easter and your death and Resurrection.

Amen

Song for reflection



Charity Gayle

Thank You Jesus for the Blood (Live)

Church Support

Church Services

Every Friday night from 7-9pm we have a Brave Youth Group (free of charge) for ages 11-16. We have fun, play games, chill and have some free hot chocolate whilst listening to a short message about life from a Christian perspective!

To find us at: Brave Church, Watson St, Oswaldtwistle, Lancashire, BB5 3HH, UK.

Please visit these church websites to see when their services are taking place:

Great Harwood Christian Fellowship: [Website](#)

St John's and St Augustine's Church, Huncoat: [YouTube channel](#)

St Peter and St Paul's Church, Rishton: [Facebook Page](#)

St. John's Church, Baxenden: [Website](#)

Peel Street Baptist Church: [Website](#)

Ernest Street Baptist Church: [Website](#)

All Saints Church, Clayton-le-Moors: [Facebook Page](#)

St James' Church, Clitheroe: [Website](#)

Burnley Life Church: [Website](#)

St Mary Magdalen's Church, Accrington: [Website](#)

St Andrew's Church, Accrington: [Website](#)

St Peter's Church, Accrington: [Website](#)

Brave Church: [Website](#)

Trinity Church, Great Harwood: [Website](#)



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