

THE FOURTH WEDNESDAY IN LENT
MARCH 17, 2021

Theme of the Day: “First secure your own oxygen mask.” This directive is familiar to anyone who travels on commercial airplanes. This is also Zechariah’s decree for us—today!

INVOCATION AND CALL TO WORSHIP (From selected verses in Zechariah 9:9–10)

P: In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

P: Behold, your King comes to you—

C: **Righteous and having salvation.**

P: Speaking peace to the nations.

C: **And ruling from sea to sea—**

P: To the ends of the earth!

C: **God’s kingdom comes—**

P: To us!

All: Through Jesus Christ our Lord!

HYMN

Come to Calvary’s Holy Mountain

#435:1-3

- 1 Come to Calv’ry’s holy mountain,
Sinners, ruined by the fall;
Here a pure and healing fountain
Flows for you, for me, for all,
In a full, perpetual tide,
Opened when our Savior died.

- 2 Come in poverty and meanness,
Come defiled, without, within;
From infection and uncleanness,
From the leprosy of sin,
Wash your robes and make them white;
Ye shall walk with God in light.

- 3 Come in sorrow and contrition,
Wounded, impotent, and blind;
Here the guilty, free remission,
Here the troubled, peace may find.
Health this fountain will restore;
They that drink shall thirst no more.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: Come to Calvary’s holy mountain, sinners ruined by the fall.

C: **Here, a pure and healing fountain flows for you, for me, for all.**

P: In a full, perpetual tide—

C: Opened when our Savior died!

P: Coming to Calvary's holy mountain, we confess our sins.
Silence for reflection and confession.

P: Merciful Father—

C: I am wrapped up in myself.

P: I cling to comfort and choose the easy way.

C: I want tweaking not transformation.

P: Greed, envy, intolerance and jealousy mark my life.

C: I fail to learn, and what I have learned, I fail to practice.

P: I judge others with a standard I never use for myself.

All: Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

P: Zechariah 13:1 states, "On that day there will be a fountain opened to cleanse from sin and uncleanness." Because of Christ's cross and crucifixion—Zechariah's day is today. Here, a pure and healing fountain flows for you, for me, for all. In a full, perpetual tide opened when our Savior died. In Jesus' name, you are absolved, forgiven and loved! God's kingdom comes to us—

All: Through Jesus Christ our Lord!

HYMN Come to Calvary's Holy Mountain **#435:4**

4 They that drink shall live forever;
'Tis a soul-renewing flood.
God is faithful; God will never
Break His covenant of blood,
Signed when our Redeemer died,
Sealed when He was glorified.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Let us pray. Almighty God, your crucified, risen ascended Son has sent us into the world to share the good news of your kingdom: inspire us with your Holy Spirit and fill our hearts with the fire of your love, that all who hear the Gospel may be drawn to saving faith; through Jesus Christ our Lord—

All: Amen.

THE READINGS ARE ABOUT GOD'S MISSION TO SEEK AND SAVE LOST PEOPLE

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

Zechariah 8:20–23

"Thus says the LORD of hosts: Peoples shall yet come, even the inhabitants of many cities. The inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, 'Let us go at once to entreat the favor of the LORD and to seek the LORD of hosts; I myself am going.' Many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem and to entreat the favor of the LORD. Thus says the LORD of hosts: In those days ten men from the nations of every tongue shall take hold of the robe of a Jew, saying, 'Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.' "

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

[Silence for Meditation on the Lesson]

EPISTLE LESSON

Colossians 4:2–6

Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving. At the same time, pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison— that I may make it clear, which is how I ought to speak. Conduct yourselves wisely toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.

E: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

[Silence for Meditation on the Lesson]

GOSPEL LESSON

Luke 15:1–10

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the fifteenth chapter.

C: Glory to You, O Lord.

Now the tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear [Jesus]. And the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled, saying, “This man receives sinners and eats with them.” So he told them this parable: “What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open country, and go after the one that is lost, until he finds it? And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.’ Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance. “Or what woman, having ten silver coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp and sweep the house and seek diligently until she finds it? And when she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.’ Just so, I tell you, there is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord

C: Praise to You, O Christ.

APOSTELS’ CREED

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.**

**And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried.**

He descended into hell.

The third day He rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven

and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.

From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life T everlasting. Amen.

SERMON

“First Secure Your Own Oxygen Mask”

Zechariah 8:20–23

ALL: We pray, “Thy kingdom come.”

P: What does this mean?

C: The kingdom of God certainly comes by itself without our prayer, but we pray in this petition that it may come to us also.

P: How does God's kingdom come?

C: God's kingdom comes when our heavenly Father gives us His Holy Spirit, so that by His grace we believe His holy Word and lead godly lives here in time and there in eternity.

ALL: We pray, “Hallowed be Thy name.”

P: How is God's name kept holy?

C: God's name is kept holy when the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity, and we, as the children of God, also lead holy lives according to it. Help us to do this, dear Father in heaven! But anyone who teaches or lives contrary to God's Word profanes the name of God among us. Protect us from this, heavenly Father!

OFFERING & HYMN

Hark, the Voice of Jesus Calling

#826

1. Hark, the voice of Jesus crying, “Who will go and work today?
Fields are white and harvests waiting— Who will bear the sheaves away?”
Loud and long the Master calleth; Rich reward He offers thee.
Who will answer, gladly saying, “Here am I, send me, send me”?

2. If you cannot speak like angels, If you cannot preach like Paul,
You can tell the love of Jesus, You can say He died for all.
If you cannot rouse the wicked With the judgment’s dread alarms,
You can lead the little children To the Savior’s waiting arms.

3. If you cannot be a watchman, Standing high on Zion’s wall,
Pointing out the path to heaven, Off’ring life and peace to all,
With your prayers and with your bounties You can do what God commands;
You can be like faithful Aaron, Holding up the prophet’s hands.

4. Let none hear you idly saying, “There is nothing I can do,”
While the multitudes are dying And the Master calls for you.
Take the task He gives you gladly, Let His work your pleasure be;
Answer quickly when He calleth, “Here am I, send me, send me!”

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PRAYERS

P: Our King comes to us, righteous and having salvation. May God hear our prayers, because of our crucified and risen King—Christ Jesus.

A brief silence

P: Heavenly Father, as you first came to us, claiming us as your own, we welcome you into our lives—

C: We make ourselves available to your holy will.

P: Help us become living examples of your love in the world.

C: Open our hearts to the areas of our lives that need to change—

P: So we carry out the mission of our church—

C: *Connecting People to Jesus.*

P: Inspire us to live the Christian life—

C: In ways that are dynamic and engaging.

P: Bring renewal to our church.

C: And make us hunger and thirst for more of Jesus.

P: Give us courage when we are afraid.

C: Hope when we are discouraged.

P: And clarity in times of decision.

Additional prayers: After each petition respond...

P: Lord in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

P: They that drink shall live forever; 'tis a soul renewing flood.

C: God is faithful; God will never, break his covenant of blood.

P: Signed when our Redeemer died—

All: Sealed when he was glorified. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

BENEDICTION (From Zechariah 9:9–10)

P: Behold, your King comes to you—

C: Righteous and having salvation.

P: Speaking peace to the nations.

C: And ruling from sea to sea—

P: To the ends of the earth!

C: God's kingdom comes to us.

P: By his Spirit.

C: God's kingdom comes through us—

P: To the ends of the earth!

All: Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

Listen, God is Calling

#833

REFRAIN:

Leader: Listen,

All: listen, God is calling Through the Word inviting,
Offering forgiveness, Comfort, and joy.

Leader: Listen,

All: listen, God is calling Through the Word inviting,
Offering forgiveness, Comfort, and joy.

1. Leader: Jesus gave His mandate:

All: Share the good news

Leader: That He came to save us

All: And set us free. **Refrain**

2. Leader: Let none be forgotten

All: Throughout the world.

Leader: In the triune name of God

All: Go and baptize. **Refrain**

3. Leader: Help us to be faithful,

All: Standing steadfast,

Leader: Walking in Your precepts,

All: Led by Your Word. **Refrain**

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SILENT PRAYER Jesus, breathe Gospel power into my heart, so that others see and hear you in me and are saved. Amen.