

## The Gathering

### Welcome - [KELVIN]

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

A warm welcome to St Mary's Cathedral in Glasgow. My name is Kelvin Holdsworth and I'm the Provost here.

Things have changed. Lent is here. And with it the invitation to change ourselves. During the 40 days and the Sundays of Lent the church invites us, nudges us and cajoles us into turning back towards God.

For God is good and loves us greatly. If that's what you need to hear today, then welcome. You join a congregation of people who need to hear it again and again.

For God is good and loves us very much indeed.

### Collect for Purity - [DAVID]

**Almighty God,  
to whom all hearts are open,  
all desires known,  
and from whom no secrets are hidden:  
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts  
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,  
that we may perfectly love you,  
and worthily magnify your holy name;  
through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.**

### Confession

[OLIVER] God is love and we are God's children.  
There is no room for fear in love.  
We love because God loved us first.

Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith.

[Silence]

**God our Father, we confess to you and to our fellow members in the Body of Christ that we have sinned in thought, word and deed, and in what we have failed to do. We are truly sorry. Forgive us our sins, and deliver us from the power of evil, for the sake of your Son who died for us, Jesus Christ, our Lord.**

[KELVIN] God, who is both power and love, forgive you and free you from your sins, heal and strengthen you by the Holy Spirit, and raise you to new life in Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **Kyrie- [OLIVER]**

*Kyrie eleison  
Christe eleison  
Kyrie eleison*

### **Collect - [KELVIN]**

God of the covenant,  
you are with us in the wilderness.

Throughout these forty days, we beg you,  
unseal for us the wellspring of your grace,  
cleanse our hearts of all that is not holy,  
and cause your gift of new life to flourish once again.

Grant this through Christ our liberator from sin,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
holy and mighty God for ever and ever. Amen

# The Ministry of the Word

## **GOSPEL: – [BELLE]**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark.  
**Glory to Christ our Saviour.**

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.'

And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. He was in the wilderness for forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.

Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.'

Give thanks to the Lord for his glorious Gospel.  
**Praise to Christ our Lord.**

## **ORGAN (FRIKKI)**

*Extract from Folk Song by C. Armstrong Gibbs*

## **Sermon [OLIVER]**

In today's Gospel, the Saviour of the World comes to humankind with great flair. The heavens were torn apart, and the Spirit descended. It couldn't have been more dramatic. A voice from heaven announced, 'You are my Son, the Beloved'.

What happened next was a fine how-do-you-do. The moment when the world should have been safe—a time of triumph and rejoicing—was followed by expulsion, isolation and a yearning for a return. Jesus was driven out into the wilderness right when folk should've been having a party.

We might find ourselves in a similar predicament during this pandemic. We've witnessed a marvellous revelation: a vaccine to vanquish our deadly foe. Rescued, we expect happily ever after. And yet, our hero's act does not rid us of all our pandemic problems. We'll be dealing with these for a long time, and their impact will affect all aspects of life.

Here, on the other side of our vaccine announcements, we may find ourselves bewildered. The hoped-for liberation from our struggle has left us unsatisfied, still searching for paradise. We continue walking (and will for some time) a desert path—not the way of victory.

Many of us long to get out of the rough country of this COVID-time and back to civilisation. The desert is fallow and inhospitable. It messes with our minds. Some feel separated from hope—un-resourced, high and dry. In this way, the wilderness is the antithesis of connectedness. But that's not what the wilderness is for people of faith—at least, not entirely. Scripture paints a picture with multiple layers.

For Moses fleeing Pharaoh's wrath, the wilderness offered refuge. It revealed God's identity to Hagar. When the people of Israel left Egypt, the desert was the stage set for miracles. And for Jesus in this Gospel, the wilderness was a space of proving and growth, honing a ministry call.

The wilderness is not merely a place of exclusion and rejection. It is also a place of healing and more profound understanding; and we can see this in our current situation. During this pandemic, preventing the spread of the virus—the method of stopping transmission and learning more about this disease—has required forced isolation. Time in the wilderness has literally saved human lives.

What today's Gospel and our pandemic lockdown show us is that the wilderness is not punishment. As difficult as it can be at times, the wilderness is a necessary place. But come on, you say, there's only so much wilderness one can take. Haven't we had enough?

It's time for release; it's time for a party. Only a tone-deaf Church would call us to more isolation right now. And yet, here I stand this Lent doing just that.

It may have seemed Jesus took an ill-timed desert sojourn. It may also seem like more seclusion can do no more good for us. However, I'm not convinced. Perhaps the timing of this wilderness is right. Maybe the wilderness still has more good to do, more lives to save.

So, as Christians, we step into an out-of-the-way place this Lent to enter into conversation, to learn more about God's plan, and to participate in the restoration of the human race. The wilderness is not a place without hope, nor is it without God. Angels were with Jesus then, and they are here, ministering to us now.

### **Intercessions [PAT]**

With all our heart and with all our mind, let us pray to the Lord, saying, 'Lord, have mercy.'

For the peace of the world, for the welfare of the Holy Church of God, and for the unity of all peoples, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For our Bishop, Kevin, and for all the clergy and people, of the Church of the Good Shepherd & Ascension, Hillington; of Holy Trinity & St Barnabas, Paisley and The Church of the Province of Central Africa, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For our government, for the leaders of the nations, and for all in authority, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For this City of Glasgow, for its criminal justice system - courts, witnesses, prisoners, chaplaincy, and probation services, for every

city and community, and for those who live in them, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For the good earth which God has given us, and for the wisdom and will to conserve it, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For the elderly and infirm, for the widowed and orphans, and for the sick and the suffering, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For the poor and the oppressed, for the unemployed and the destitute, for prisoners and captives, and for all who remember and care for them, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For all who have died in the hope of the resurrection - for Campbell Horne who has died recently and for Alice Jane McLean whose year's mind falls at this time, and for all the departed, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For deliverance from all danger, violence, oppression, and degradation, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

In the communion of Mary and of all the saints, let us commend ourselves, and one another, and all our life, to Christ our God.

**To you, O Lord our God.**

## Communion

**Offertory - [KELVIN]**

Lent is, at least in part, about giving. The invitation comes throughout the year to support the church. In Lent, that is reinforced by the idea that it is good to give. Giving feels good and helps to shape us into people who are generous throughout life.

If you would like to join those of us who give to St Mary's, you'll find details of how to do so on the website – [thecathedral.org.uk](http://thecathedral.org.uk) – just click on “Donate to St Mary's Cathedral”.

And thank you.

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation;  
through your goodness we have this bread to offer,  
which earth has given and human hands have made:  
it will become for us the bread of life.

**Blessed be God for ever.**

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation;  
through your goodness we have this wine to offer,  
fruit of the vine and work of human hands;  
it will become the cup of our salvation.

**Blessed be God for ever.**

### **Eucharistic Prayer - [KELVIN]**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

Worship and praise belong to you,  
maker of light and darkness.

Your wisdom draws beauty from chaos,

brings a harvest out of sorrow  
and leads the exiles home.

In Christ your Son enemies are reconciled,  
debts forgiven  
and strangers made welcome  
Your Spirit frees us to live as beloved children  
in our Father's house.

We who by Christ's power follow the way of the Cross,  
sharing the joy of his obedience,  
now offer you our praise,  
with angels and archangels and the whole company of heaven  
singing the hymn of your unending glory:

### **SANCTUS & BENEDICTUS - [OLIVER]**

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord,  
God of power and might.  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

Glory and thanksgiving be to you,  
most loving Father,  
for Christ in whom the world is reconciled.  
Lifted on the Cross,  
his suffering and forgiveness  
spanned the gulf our sins had made.  
Through that dark struggle  
death was swallowed up in victory,  
that life and light might reign.

Before he was given up to suffering and death,  
recalling the night of Israel's release,  
the night in which the sons of Egypt died,  
your Chosen One, himself the First-Born,  
freely offered his life.



At supper with his disciples  
he took bread and offered you thanks.  
He broke the bread,  
and gave it to them, saying:  
"Take, eat.  
This is my Body: it is broken for you."  
After supper, he took the cup,  
he offered you thanks,  
and gave it to them saying:  
"Drink this, all of you.  
This is my Blood of the new covenant;  
it is poured out for you, and for all,  
that sins may be forgiven.  
Do this in remembrance of me."

**We now obey your Son's command.  
We recall his blessed passion and death,  
his glorious resurrection and ascension;  
and we look for the coming of his Kingdom.  
Made one with him, we offer you these gifts  
and with them ourselves,  
a single, holy, living sacrifice.**

Hear us, most merciful Father,  
and send your Holy Spirit upon us  
and upon this bread and this wine,  
that, overshadowed by his life-giving power,  
they may be the Body and Blood of your Son,  
and we may be kindled with the fire of your love  
and renewed for the service of your Kingdom.

**Help us, who are baptised into the fellowship of Christ's Body  
to live and work to your praise and glory;  
may we grow together in unity and love  
until at last, in your new creation,  
we enter into our heritage  
in the company of the Virgin Mary,**

**the apostles, and prophets,  
and of all our brothers and sisters living and departed.**

Through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
with whom, and in whom,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
all honour and glory be to you,  
Lord of all ages,  
world without end.

**Amen.**

### **Breaking of the Bread**

The living bread is broken for the life of the world.  
**Lord, unite us in this sign.**

### **Lord's Prayer [OLIVER]**

As our Saviour has taught us,  
so we pray:

**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those  
who sin against us.  
Do not bring us  
to the time of trial  
but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power  
and the glory are yours,  
now and for ever.  
Amen.**

## **Communion - [KELVIN]**

God is with us wherever we are.

As we gaze in adoration we feed on God in our hearts and minds  
that we may in turn feed the world.

O God, even as this broken bread was scattered over the hills, and  
was gathered together and became one, so let Your Church be  
gathered together from the ends of the earth into your kingdom; for  
yours is the glory and the power through Jesus Christ for ever.

**Amen.**

## **Music at Communion - [FERGUS & JUSTINE]**

As water to the thirsty,  
as beauty to the eyes,  
as strength that follows weakness,  
as truth instead of lies,  
as songtime and springtime  
and summertime to be,  
so is my Lord,  
my living Lord,  
so is my Lord to me.

Like calm in place of clamor,  
like peace that follows pain,  
like meeting after parting,  
like sunshine after rain,  
like moonlight and starlight  
and sunlight on the sea,  
so is my Lord,  
my living Lord,  
so is my Lord to me.

As sleep that follows fever,  
as gold instead of grey,  
as freedom after bondage,  
as sunrise to the day,  
as home to the traveler

and all we long to see,  
so is my Lord,  
my living Lord,  
so is my Lord to me.

*Timothy Dudley Smith*

### **Post Communion Prayer - [DAVID]**

Faithful God, in this holy bread you increase our faith and hope and love. Lead us in the path of Christ who is your Word of life. We ask this in his name. Amen

### **Blessing - [KELVIN]**

My thanks go to everyone who has made this service happen this week.

My prayer for you this week is that you'll be a different person by next Sunday to the person you are today. For that is partly what Lent is about. Turning to God so that God can change us – forming us and shaping us day by day and week by week.

Don't forget that there's a feedback form on the online worship page on the website – [thecathedral.org.uk/worship](http://thecathedral.org.uk/worship) if you would like to get in touch about anything you have seen in this video.

But now the blessing ...

Christ give you grace to grow in holiness, to deny yourselves, take up your cross, and follow him; and the blessing; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.

**Amen.**

### **Voluntary - [Steven]**

*Prelude and Fugue in e (BWV 533) - JS Bach*

A hymn and materials for Young Church are available on the online worship page at [www.thecathedral.org.uk/worship](http://www.thecathedral.org.uk/worship).

There is an online coffee hour on Sunday at 1 pm. Details in the weekly congregational email. Sign up for emails at [www.thecathedral.org.uk](http://www.thecathedral.org.uk)

**Image used before the sermon**

*Master of Sir John Fastolf (French, active before about 1420 - about 1450)*

*The Baptism of Christ, about 1430–1440, Tempera colors, gold leaf, and ink on parchment*

*Leaf: 12.1 × 9.2 cm (4 3/4 × 3 5/8 in.), Ms. 5 (84.ML.723), fol. 22v*

*The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, Ms. 5, fol. 22v*