

Third Sunday in Lent Sunday, March 04, 2018

The Collect: Almighty God, you know that we have no power in ourselves to help ourselves: Keep us both outwardly in our bodies and inwardly in our souls, that we may be defended from all adversities which may happen to the body, and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Old Testament: Exodus 20:1-17 read from the New Revised Standard Version Bible

Then God spoke all these words: I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; you shall have no other gods before me.

You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and the fourth generation of those who reject me, but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments.

You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not acquit anyone who misuses his name.

Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work. But the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it.

Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.

You shall not murder.

You shall not commit adultery.

You shall not steal.

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

The Word of the Lord

Psalm 19 read from The Episcopal Church Book of Common Prayer

1 The heavens declare the glory of God, * and the firmament shows his handiwork.

2 One day tells its tale to another, * and one night imparts knowledge to another.

3 Although they have no words or language, * and their voices are not heard,

4 Their sound has gone out into all lands, * and their message to the ends of the world.

5 In the deep has he set a pavilion for the sun; * it comes forth like a bridegroom out of his chamber; it rejoices like a champion to run its course.

6 It goes forth from the uttermost edge of the heavens and runs about to the end of it again; * nothing is hidden from its burning heat.

7 The law of the Lord is perfect and revives the soul; * the testimony of the Lord is sure and gives wisdom to the innocent.

8 The statutes of the Lord are just and rejoice the heart; * the commandment of the Lord is clear and gives light to the eyes.

9 The fear of the Lord is clean and endures for ever; * the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.

10 More to be desired are they than gold, more than much fine gold, * sweeter far than honey, than honey in the comb.

11 By them also is your servant enlightened, * and in keeping them there is great reward.

12 Who can tell how often he offends? * cleanse me from my secret faults.

13 Above all, keep your servant from presumptuous sins; let them not get dominion over me; * then shall I be whole and sound, and innocent of a great offense.

14 Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, * O Lord, my strength and my redeemer.

**Epistle: 1 Corinthians 1:18-25 read from the New Revised Standard Version Bible
Anglicised**

For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written, 'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.'

Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling-block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

The Word of the Lord

Gospel: John 2:13-22 read from the Revised Standard Version Bible

The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple he found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons, and the money-changers at their business. And making a whip of cords, he drove them all, with the sheep and oxen, out of the temple; and he poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables. And he told those who sold the pigeons, "Take these things away; you shall not make my Father's house a house of trade." His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for thy house will consume me."

The Jews then said to him, “What sign have you to show us for doing this?”

Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” The Jews then said, “It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?” But he spoke of the temple of his body. When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word which Jesus had spoken.

The Gospel of the Lord

Closing Prayer: On March 8th we remember Geoffrey Anketell Studdert-Kennedy, Priest read from *A Great Cloud of Witnesses*

Geoffrey Studdert-Kennedy was born in Leeds, England, in 1883, one of nine children. His father, Willilam Studdert-Kennedy, was the vicar in Leeds. Geoffrey earned a degree in classics and divinity in 1904 at Trinity College, Dublin. After his ordination, he served parishes in Rugby and Worcester.

At the outbreak of the First World War, Studdert-Kennedy volunteered as a chaplain to soldiers on the Western Front. Along with the spiritual comfort he gave to the wounded and dying, he was famous for handing out Woodbine cigarettes to the soldiers, who called him “Woodbine Willie”.

He received the military Cross in 1917 for conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty during the attack on Messines Ridge on the Somme. He had volunteered for a number of tasks carried out under heavy fire, including bringing in three wounded men from the battlefield. One story retold by the BBC tells of him crawling out to a working party putting up wire in front of their trench. A nervous soldier challenged him, asking who he was, and he said 'The Church'. When the soldier asked what 'The Church' was doing out there, he replied 'Its job.'

Studdert-Kennedy's religious poetry is represented in the lyric of the hymn, “Not here for high and holy things” found in *The Hymnal 1982, #9*. His verse, some based on his experience as a war-time military chaplain, was published in the volumes *Rough Rhymes of a Padre*, in 1918 and *More Rough Rhymes* in 1919. He also published a collection of sermons entitled *I*

Believe: Sermons on the Apostles Creed in 1928. His later poems and prose works express the Christian socialism and pacifism he adopted during his war years. He eventually worked for the Industrial Christian Fellowship. On one of his speaking tours on their behalf, he became ill and he died in Liverpool on March 8th, 1929.

Let us pray: Glorious God, we give thanks for high and holy things as well as the common things of earth. Awaken us to recognize your presence in each other and in all creation, so that we, like Geoffrey Studdert-Kennedy, may love and magnify you as the holy, undivided Trinity; who lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**