

# CRACKED WIDE OPEN

Diocesan Lent Course 2021

## Session 5 – Go therefore

### Notes:

- This outline order of service is provided to assist parishes where the provision of small groups does not, for whatever reason, prove possible in Lent. (It could, if so desired, be used in addition to small groups – this is a local decision.)
- The use of this outline is another way to encourage people to engage with the filmed conversation between the two bishops and move, from that and the gospel passage, into some reflection on the ministry, mission and unity of the Church.
- As it is an act of worship consideration should be given to the use of silence and music both of which can be inserted at various places in the celebration. Local custom and the availability of resources will dictate the musical provision but – please try to use some as it introduces another dimension to the assembly.
- The use of silence should be considered particularly in relation to reflection following the filmed conversation and around the use of the suggested areas for thoughtful reflection and/or discussion.
- Local circumstances, numbers attending and current regulations and restrictions will all need to be considered by those planning the service.

*Before the session begins, place a large cross in a central position.*

In the name of the Father,  
and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

### Prayers of Penitence

Conscious of our failure to proclaim the gospel,  
let us call to mind our sins:

‘I was hungry and you gave me no food,  
I was thirsty and you gave me no drink.’  
Lord, have mercy.  
**Lord, have mercy.**

‘I was a stranger and you did not welcome me,  
naked and you did not clothe me.’  
Christ, have mercy.  
**Christ, have mercy.**

‘I was sick and you did not visit me,  
in prison and you did not come to me.’  
Lord, have mercy.  
**Lord, have mercy.**

May almighty God have mercy on us,  
forgive us our sins,

and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

### Opening Prayer

Holy God,  
our lives are laid open before you:  
rescue us from the chaos of sin  
and through the death of your Son  
bring us healing and make us whole  
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

### Readings from the Bible and 'The Church: towards a common vision'

#### John 12:20-33

<sup>20</sup> Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. <sup>21</sup> They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, 'Sir, we wish to see Jesus.' <sup>22</sup> Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. <sup>23</sup> Jesus answered them, 'The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. <sup>24</sup> Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. <sup>25</sup> Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. <sup>26</sup> Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honour. <sup>27</sup> 'Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say—"Father, save me from this hour"? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. <sup>28</sup> Father, glorify your name.' Then a voice came from heaven, 'I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.' <sup>29</sup> The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, 'An angel has spoken to him.' <sup>30</sup> Jesus answered, 'This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. <sup>31</sup> Now is the judgement of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. <sup>32</sup> And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.' <sup>33</sup> He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die.

[New Revised Standard Version – Anglicised]

#### The Church: towards a common vision

63. While tensions about moral issues have always been a concern for the Church, in the world of today, philosophical, social and cultural developments have led to the rethinking of many moral norms, causing new conflicts over moral principles and ethical questions to affect the unity of the churches. At the same time, moral questions are related to Christian anthropology, and priority is given to the Gospel in evaluating new developments in moral thinking. Individual Christians and churches sometimes find themselves divided into

opposing opinions about what principles of personal or collective morality are in harmony with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Moreover, some believe that moral questions are not of their nature “church-dividing,” while others are firmly convinced that they are.

*We listen to the Bishops’ Conversation for this session.*

*Discussion/thoughtful reflection around the following questions (they have been taken from those provided for use by groups).*

Following paragraph 63:

*How might the churches, guided by the Spirit, discern together what it means today to understand and live in fidelity to the teaching and attitude of Jesus?*

*How can the churches, as they engage together in this task of discernment, offer appropriate models of discourse and wise counsel to the societies in which they are called to serve?*

Who are the people called to bear witness in the public square?

What challenges do they face?

Bishop Will talks about how people are curious and necessarily drawn to the things that are provable. What is your experience of conversations about the meaning and purpose of life with your friends and neighbours?

Several years ago it was common to talk about evangelism in terms of couplets that suggested alternatives – one that worked and the other didn’t. Like moving from maintenance **to** mission. Another was evangelism by – presence **or** proclamation. From this passage and the encounter of the Greeks with Philip, is it one or the other, or both presence **and** proclamation? What does the answer say about the parish system? How might it look in the future if designed for effective evangelistic worship and witness?

You might have touched on the question of the central importance of the sacraments last week. It would seem to be the experience of some Christian communities that any kind of ‘formal’ liturgy needs to be abandoned if you wish to be serious in reaching out to others. Do you agree?

What would this say about the journey towards full visible unity?

The proclamation of the gospel makes demands on all who hear it. This was how it was as the Word went about the highways and towns of Palestine. There are things within our common proclamation that are particularly unpalatable in today’s culture. What are they and are we free to keep silent about them?

Does being open really mean anything goes? Is this compatible with the gospel passages we have looked at this Lent?

*Response*

*Spend some time in silence looking at the cross. Think about Jesus’ sacrifice of himself for you and the whole world. What does the cross mean to you?*

Through Baptism we are called into the Body of Christ. Each one of us has a unique vocation in the Church. As you look at the cross and remember that, through the sacrifice and death

of Christ, you have been reborn and share in his risen life, renew the promises made at your baptism.

Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship,  
in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?

**With the help of God, I will.**

Will you persevere in resisting evil,  
and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?

**With the help of God, I will.**

Will you proclaim by word and example  
the good news of God in Christ?

**With the help of God, I will.**

Will you seek and serve Christ in all people,  
loving your neighbour as yourself?

**With the help of God, I will.**

Will you acknowledge Christ's authority over human society,  
by prayer for the world and its leaders,  
by defending the weak, and by seeking peace and justice?

**With the help of God, I will.**

May Christ dwell in your hearts through faith,  
that you may be rooted and grounded in love  
and bring forth the fruit of the Spirit.

**Amen.**

Intercessions

In the power of the Spirit and in union with Christ,  
let us pray to the Father.

That the world may know Jesus Christ  
as the Prince of Peace,  
we pray:

**Your kingdom come.**

That all who are estranged and without hope  
may be brought near in the blood of Christ,  
we pray:

**Your kingdom come.**

That the Church may be one in serving  
and proclaiming the gospel. We pray for Martin, our bishop and Ruth and Will, his  
suffragans,

we pray:

**Your kingdom come.**

That we may be bold to speak the word of God  
while you stretch out your hand to save,  
we pray:

**Your kingdom come.**

That the Church may be generous in giving,  
faithful in serving, bold in proclaiming,  
we pray:

**Your kingdom come.**

That the Church may welcome and support  
all whom God calls to faith,  
we pray:

**Your kingdom come.**

That all who serve the gospel may be kept in safety  
while your word accomplishes its purpose,  
we pray:

**Your kingdom come.**

That all who suffer for the gospel  
may know the comfort and glory of Christ,  
we pray:

**Your kingdom come.**

That the day may come when every knee shall bow  
and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
we pray:

**Your kingdom come.**

Almighty God,  
by your Holy Spirit you have made us one  
with your saints in heaven and on earth:  
grant that in our earthly pilgrimage  
we may ever be supported by this fellowship of love and prayer,  
and know ourselves surrounded by their witness  
to your power and mercy;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

### **The Lord's Prayer**

*(Either)*

As our Saviour 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.  
Lead us not into temptation  
but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours  
now and for ever.  
Amen.**

*(or)*

Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us  
**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name;  
thy kingdom come;  
thy will be done;  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation;  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
the power and the glory,  
for ever and ever. Amen.**

*This Collect is said*

Almighty God,  
who called your Church to witness  
that you were in Christ reconciling the world to yourself:  
help us to proclaim the good news of your love,  
that all who hear it may be drawn to you;  
through him who was lifted up on the cross,  
and reigns with you  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.  
**Amen.**

Let us bless the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**