

**Addresses  
for  
Morning and Evening Prayer**

**according to the  
1943 Lectionary  
of the  
USA 1928 Book of Common Prayer**

**Intended for use  
by Layreaders  
in the absence of a priest**

**by Ed Pacht  
Rochester NH**

**St. Peter**

## **Morning Prayer**

### **First Lesson: Ezek 3:4-11**

*Here beginneth the fourth verse  
the third chapter of the Prophet Ezekiel*

4 And he said unto me, Son of man, go, get thee unto the house of Israel, and speak with my words unto them.

5 For thou art not sent to a people of a strange speech and of an hard language, but to the house of Israel;

6 Not to many people of a strange speech and of an hard language, whose words thou canst not understand. Surely, had I sent thee to them, they would have hearkened unto thee.

7 But the house of Israel will not hearken unto thee; for they will not hearken unto me: for all the house of Israel are impudent and hardhearted.

8 Behold, I have made thy face strong against their faces, and thy forehead strong against their foreheads.

9 As an adamant harder than flint have I made thy forehead: fear them not, neither be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house.

10 Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, all my words that I shall speak unto thee receive in thine heart, and hear with thine ears.

11 And go, get thee to them of the captivity, unto the children of thy people, and speak unto them, and tell them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear.

*Here endeth the First Lesson.*

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**Second Lesson: Acts 4:8-20**

*Here beginneth the eighth verse  
the fourth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles.*

8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel,

9 If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole;

10 Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole.

11 This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.

12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

13 Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.

14 And beholding the man which was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it.

15 But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves,

16 Saying, What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny it.

17 But that it spread no further among the people, let us straitly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name.

18 And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus.

19 But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.

20 For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.

*Here endeth the Second Lesson.*

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### **Homily**

Humanly speaking,  
 the religious leaders of Jerusalem  
 were quite right to be afraid  
 of this new movement.  
 This Jesus, their leader,  
 had been a colossal nuisance.  
 He'd missed no occasion  
 to expose their hypocrisy,  
 the inner rot that was masked by their piety,  
 and to show them for what they really were.  
 But they thought they had got rid of him  
 when they engineered His crucifixion.  
 Not so!  
 Now this Peter  
 and his ragtag group of about a hundred,  
 had poured into the streets  
 and made a few thousand new converts.

Let us pray.

Vouchsafe, O Lord, we pray thee, at the intercession of blessed Peter the Apostle, to bless and sanctify the lives of thy people, to cleanse us from the defilements of all our iniquities, to bless, protect and guide us that in words and deeds we may proclaim salvation in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end.  
 Amen.

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We heard Ezekiel speaking for the Lord,  
 speaking of His love for the flock he redeemed,  
 speaking in words that Peter also could say,  
 and all the Apostles,  
 and all the Bishops and clergy down to this day,  
 as well as every one of us  
 in the callings we receive:

*"... I will both search my sheep,  
 and seek them out. ...  
 ... will deliver them out of all places  
 where they have been scattered  
 in the cloudy and dark day.  
 ... gather them from the countries, and  
 ... bring them ... and feed them ...  
 in a good pasture ...  
 there shall they lie in a good fold, ...  
 I will feed my flock,  
 and I will cause them to lie down, ...  
 I will seek that which was lost, ...  
 and bring again that which was driven away,  
 and will bind up that which was broken,  
 and will strengthen that which was sick: ..."*

That is what the Lord promised.  
 That is what St. Peter did.  
 Is it our desire?

We enter the story  
 just after Peter had boldly healed a lame man,  
 loudly speaking the name of Jesus of Nazareth.  
 Something had to be done.  
 They arrested Peter and John  
 and ordered them to stop speaking in that name.

*"But Peter and John answered and said unto them,  
 'Whether it be right in the sight of God  
 to hearken unto you more than unto God,  
 judge ye. For we cannot but speak  
 the things which we have seen and heard.' "*

Ultimately, after some years,  
 this Peter was killed for doing just that,  
 and today's color is red in remembrance  
 of the blood he shed for His Lord.

The Prophet Ezekiel could well  
 have been speaking directly to Peter,  
 and to us in the First Lesson:

*"[They] will not hearken unto thee; ...  
 Behold,  
 I have made thy face strong against their faces,  
 and thy forehead strong against their foreheads.  
 As an adamant harder than flint  
 have I made thy forehead:  
 fear them not, neither be dismayed at their looks,  
 though they be a rebellious house.  
 Moreover he said unto me,  
 Son of man,  
 all my words that I shall speak unto thee  
 receive in thine heart, and hear with thine ears.*

*And go, get thee to them of the captivity,  
unto the children of thy people,  
and speak unto them, and tell them,  
Thus saith the Lord GOD;  
whether they will hear,  
or whether they will forbear.*

You see, the mighty of this world  
have reason to fear  
when the truth of God is proclaimed.  
In the blinding light of Truth  
they are shown for who they are,  
just as the priests and the Pharisees were in those days.  
It's no better today.  
In China, in Islamic countries, in other places,  
Christians are under attack,  
rightly seen as a threat to the powers that be,  
for whether in hypocrisy or in honesty,  
their program is in opposition to that of God.  
Even here, who has not noticed  
the increasing difficulties being placed in the way  
of the proclamation of the Gospel of Christ  
and of its living out in the world?

Things don't really change very much.  
Humanity is a fallen race.  
Sin, evil, and oppression abound,  
and there is no human power  
that can eliminate the problem.  
The world needs a savior.

There is a Savior, Christ Jesus the Lord.  
We, just as surely as St. Peter,  
every one of us,  
have been sent into this world

There was that terrible betrayal  
and the Master knew that too.  
It didn't look as though he loved Him.  
Peter grieved, perhaps with more tears.

And, for the third time Jesus said,  
"Feed my sheep."  
Maybe He was telling him,  
"You failed me then, but there is work to do,  
and you won't fail me now."

Peter had succumbed to his fears on that day,  
but that was not going to happen at the end.  
Our Lord promised him what he had tried to avoid,  
and promised it as a badge of honor,  
and an entrance into glory.  
"When you are old,  
you will stretch forth your hands,  
(on a cross, he meant), and die.

Today once again, nearly two thousand years later,  
we remember that day.  
The color is red, red for the blood of a martyr,  
spilled and mingled with that of his Lord.

That death came when he was indeed old,  
when he had spent a lifetime feeding the sheep,  
serving the church for which the Savior had died,  
preaching the Word as manna from heaven,  
sharing the meal of the Body and Blood,  
leading on the highway of holiness,  
as a faithful undershepherd of the Lord's flock.

21 Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do?

22 Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me.

*Here endeth the Second Lesson.*

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### **Homily**

Peter had denied the Lord three times, just as Jesus had predicted, even though he'd hotly argued, "Never!". That's how he showed his famous boldness, while the most important and most unfair trial of all time was underway, while His Lord was tried, sentenced, and executed. The rooster crowed, and Peter cried.

After He had risen from the dead, Jesus firmly but gently called Peter to task, graciously allowing him to take back his horrible words of a few days before.

Three times Jesus quietly asked, "Peter, do you love me?" Three times Peter responded, "You know I do." thoroughly pained that Jesus was asking. The third time, perhaps, he remembered. Yes, his Lord knew that he loved him, but what evidence was there?

to speak of Him,  
and to show by our lives and actions,  
the truth, power, and hope  
of His Cross and Resurrection.

Let us go forth in the Name  
and in the power of Christ,  
with the indwelling presence of the Spirit  
to do the work He has left for us to do,  
knowing that, as we do so,  
we are supported by the prayers  
of St. Peter and all the saints in heaven.

Let us pray.

Vouchsafe, O Lord, we pray thee, at the intercession of blessed Peter the Apostle, to bless and sanctify the lives of thy people, to cleanse us from the defilements of all our iniquities, to bless, protect and guide us that in words and deeds we may proclaim salvation in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

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## Evening Prayer

### **First Lesson: Ezek 34:11-16**

*Here beginneth the eleventh verse  
of the thirty-fourth chapter of the Prophet Ezekiel.*

11 For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out.

12 As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day.

13 And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country.

14 I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel.

15 I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord GOD.

16 I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy the fat and the strong; I will feed them with judgment.

*Here endeth the First Lesson.*

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### **Second Lesson: John 21:15-22**

*Here beginneth the fifteenth verse  
of the twenty-first chapter  
of the Gospel according to St. John.*

15 So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.

16 He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

17 He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

18 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdest thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not.

19 This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me.

20 Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee?