

Daily Prayer

Catherine of Siena

Wednesday, April 29, 2020

We enter into a time of quiet. We offer to God our selves and in the silence know that God embraces us as God's very own. We offer to God our hopes and our concerns through our prayers and in the silence listen for God. Today is the memorial of Catherine of Siena, reformer and spiritual teacher, 1380.

We begin by saying

To you I lift up my eyes,
to you enthroned in the heavens,
until you show us your mercy

Psalm 123.1, 3b

The Psalm

Your love, O Lord, reaches to the heavens, *
and your faithfulness to the clouds.

Your righteousness is like the strong mountains,
your justice like the great deep; *
you save both man and beast, O Lord.

How priceless is your love, O God! *
your people take refuge under the shadow of your wings.

They feast upon the abundance of your house; *
you give them drink from the river of your delights.

For with you is the well of life, *
and in your light we see light.

Continue your loving-kindness to those who know you, *
and your favour to those who are true of heart.

Psalm 36.5-10

The Reading

We continue with the reading and the reflection that follows. In silence we ask what the reading has to say to us today. Is there something in the reflection that draws us more deeply into the reading? What does God have to say to us? What do we have to ask God?

He said to his disciples, 'Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat, or about your body, what you will wear. For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds! And do not keep striving for what you are to eat and what you are to drink, and do not keep worrying. For it is the nations of the world that strive after all these things, and your Father knows that you need them. Instead, strive for his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.

'Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

Luke 12.22-24, 29-32

The Reflection

Katy Waugh

Good morning and welcome to our midweek service. I love these services held around lunch time on Wednesdays and Fridays. The numbers are small and we gather in worship close to each other around the altar. Many of us are regulars. Some of us have carved out this time from our regular work day and others have wandered in off Bloor Street to look around and have stayed. Others are troubled souls who have just come to find some solace or at least quiet.

We often celebrate Saints Days which allows us a glimpse into the life of a faithful follower of Christ from another era long gone.

Today we are celebrating the life of Catherine of Siena, a faithful Dominican nun of the fourteenth century who spent her life caring for the most marginalized people of her day. And the gospel lesson chosen to exemplify her life is this from Luke 12 in which we hear Jesus telling his disciples not to worry. He asks them this question. "Can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life: If you can not do so small a thing as that, why do you worry about the rest?"

Don't worry! Such an easy thing to say to some one else or even to sing! Don't worry...be happy! But a lot harder to actually live out especially in these liminal uncertain times in which we find ourselves. Try saying that to someone whose loved one is isolated in a nursing home or dying without the comfort of a loving family at the bedside, or people who wonder where the rent money will come from, or whether they will ever be employed again...or...or...or... There are so many scenarios that feed our own natural capacities for worrying even when times are " normal."

I'm sure that like me, in these times, you are seeing everything through a new lens and hearing things differently. This can be a good thing.

What if we actually took Jesus' promise seriously when he reminds us that God knows what we need and God will provide for us so we can let go of our worrying and live in the fullness of life God envisions for us?

I know! Too much to ask in these very scary times when we are living in the big wake up call that the world is very small?

We need to be reminded that God only has us very flawed, weak and scared human beings to work through to bring hope and healing and new life right now. If we live in fear we close down, we block out the rest of the world and live in our very small dark caves. Fear is the greatest destroyer of possibilities so let's pray this

morning that like St Catherine of Siena we can be open to God's promise of new life leaning heavily on God who keeps reminding us not to worry.

When the time is right, we conclude our time of silence with the canticle

The Canticle ~ Song from Jeremiah

Hear the word of the Lord, O nations; *

tell it on the far-off shores:

“He who scattered Israel will gather *
and guard them as a shepherd his flock.”

For the Lord has ransomed Jacob, *
redeemed them from a foe too strong.

They will come and sing for joy on Zion's height, *
radiant at the bounty of the Lord:

the grain, the new wine, the oil, *
the young of flock and herd.

Their life like a watered garden, *
they will never want again.

Then will maidens show their joy in the dance; *
men, young and old, will rejoice.

I shall turn their mourning into gladness, *
give comfort and joy for their sorrow.

I shall satisfy the priests with abundance, *
and fill my people with my bounty.

Jeremiah 31.10-14

We continue in prayer for those people and situations that we hold up before God (The Intercessions) and continue with the concluding collect, the Lord's prayer and the closing sentences.

The Intercessions

Let us pray to the Lord,
who is our refuge and stronghold.

For the health and well-being of our nation,
that all who are fearful and anxious
may be at peace and free from worry:

Lord, hear us,

Lord, graciously hear us.

For the isolated and housebound,
that we may be alert to their needs,
and care for them in their vulnerability:

Lord, hear us,

Lord, graciously hear us.

For our homes and families,
our schools and young people,
and all in any kind of need or distress:

Lord, hear us,

Lord, graciously hear us.

For a blessing on our local community,
that our neighbourhoods may be places of trust and friendship,
where all are known and cared for:

Lord, hear us,

Lord, graciously hear us.

We commend ourselves, and all for whom we pray,
to the mercy and protection of God.

Merciful Father,

accept these prayers

for the sake of your Son,

our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

We conclude our prayers

Everlasting God,
you kindled such holy love
in the heart of your servant Catherine
that she devoted her life to the poor and the sick
and to the peace and unity of your Church.
Grant us strength to meditate
upon the passion of your Son,
that we may work in the image of his compassion
until we rejoice in the revelation of his glory;
who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

[let us pray as our Saviour taught us,]

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.
Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and for ever. Amen

We conclude

May I continue to dwell in Christ.
So that when he appears,
I may be confident and unashamed before him
At his coming. Amen

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The reflection: The Rev'd Katy Waugh

Church of the Redeemer

162 Bloor Street West Toronto, ON M5S 1M4

416.922.4948

office@theredeemer.ca

www.TheRedeemer.ca

Twitter: @theRedeemerTO

Facebook: theRedeemerTO

Instagram: theRedeemerTO