

Daily Prayer

Feria

Wednesday, August 5, 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 we hold in our prayers the ordinary moments in life—the trials and the joys.

We begin by saying

You O Lord are my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in you and I am helped; therefore my heart dances for joy, and in my song I will praise you.

Psalm 28.8

The First Reading

At that time, says the LORD, I will be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people.

Thus says the LORD:

The people who survived the sword

found grace in the wilderness;

when Israel sought for rest,

the LORD appeared to him from far away.

I have loved you with an everlasting love;

therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you.

Again I will build you, and you shall be built,

O virgin Israel!

Again you shall take your tambourines,

and go forth in the dance of the merry-makers.

Again you shall plant vineyards

on the mountains of Samaria;

the planters shall plant,
and shall enjoy the fruit.
For there shall be a day when sentinels will call
in the hill country of Ephraim:
'Come, let us go up to Zion,
to the LORD our God.'

For thus says the LORD:

Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob,
and raise shouts for the chief of the nations;
proclaim, give praise, and say,
'Save, O LORD, your people,
the remnant of Israel.'

Jeremiah 31.1-7

The Psalm

I lift up my eyes to the hills; *
from where is my help to come?
My help comes from the Lord, *
the maker of heaven and earth.
He will not let your foot be moved *
and he who watches over you will not fall asleep.
Behold, he who keeps watch over Israel *
shall neither slumber nor sleep;
The Lord himself watches over you; *
the Lord is your shade at your right hand,
So that the sun shall not strike you by day, *
nor the moon by night.
The Lord shall preserve you from all evil; *
it is he who shall keep you safe.

The Lord shall watch over your going out and
your coming in, *
from this time forth for evermore.

Psalm 121

The Gospel Reading

We continue with the gospel reading and the reflection that follows. In silence, we ask what the readings have 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?

Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, 'Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon.' But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, 'Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us.' He answered, 'I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.' But she came and knelt before him, saying, 'Lord, help me.' He answered, 'It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs.' She said, 'Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table.' Then Jesus answered her, 'Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish.' And her daughter was healed instantly.

Matthew 15.21-28

The Reflection

The hill never seemed to end. I had set out determined to run as far up it as I could, thinking perhaps I could even reach the top. And so, the pattern began: uphill, plateauing for a while, running down a bit, running up more, plateauing, another dip down and yet, I never seemed to reach the top of the hill. What made me think I could get to the summit and yet, I persisted. When I set out I don't think I really knew that it wasn't just the challenge of running up the

hill that I was seeking. There was something more I needed the answer to. There came a moment that I just stopped running. I was almost in tears because this seemed to be so emblematic of that moment in my life. Constantly moving and yet never quite getting to the place I wanted to be.

I looked up. There was still so much hill to climb. How much further did I need to go? How many more cycles of hill, plateau, descent would get me where I thought I wanted to be? And then I turned around. What lay before me took my breath away. I was so much further up the hill than I had imagined. All around me were fields and woodlands, the vast St Lawrence River a mere thread on the horizon and the expanse of sky stretching in all directions.

Ah.

*I lift up my eyes to the hills;
from where is my help to come?
My help comes from the Lord,
the maker of heaven and earth.*

I had lifted my eyes to the hills not knowing what it was that I was looking for and yet, in that moment there was an answer. I was not alone.

The thing about the experience of running that seemingly endless hill is that it wasn't just for that moment. It has become a touchstone for me. There have been times – significant and fleeting – where I have been reminded of that moment of turning around and seeing the magnitude of all that is before me and that I'm not alone. God is with me.

There is a reminder in this for each of us. The God of heaven and earth, of hills and valley, of sun and moon—the God who watches over each of us is there. In these days of pandemic when loneliness and worry are met with unexpected visits and moments of grace. When hopes and dreams are not met and new opportunities

emerge. God is there. In the sorrow and in the joy. In the times of challenge and in the times of hope. God is there.

What are the moments in your life when you have wondered where the hope is and been reminded,

*I lift up my eyes to the hills;
from where is my help to come?
My help comes from the Lord,
the maker of heaven and earth.*

May you be reminded of those moments when you have looked around you and known that God, maker of heaven and earth watches over 'your going out and your coming in, from this time forth for evermore.'

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

The Canticle ~ A 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

God of all delight, grant us that joy
which none can take from us,
of having a work to do,
a life to live;
that joy in believing
which will carry us through temptation,
anxiety and grief. Amen.

[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 God grant to the world justice, truth and peace.
Amen. Alleluia.

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