

Daily Prayer

Feria

Wednesday, September 23, 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

Open our hearts, O Lord, to give heed to what is said by your Son.

The First Reading

Every word of God proves true;

he is a shield to those who take refuge in him.

Do not add to his words,

or else he will rebuke you, and you will be found a liar.

Two things I ask of you;

do not deny them to me before I die:

Remove far from me falsehood and lying;

give me neither poverty nor riches;

feed me with the food that I need,

or I shall be full, and deny you,

and say, 'Who is the LORD?'

or I shall be poor, and steal,

and profane the name of my God.

Proverbs 30.5-9

The Psalm

Your word is a lantern to my feet *
and a light upon my path.

I have sworn and am determined *
to keep your righteous judgements.

I am deeply troubled; *
preserve my life, O Lord, according to your word.

Accept, O Lord, the willing tribute of my lips, *
and teach me your judgements.

My life is always in my hand, *
yet I do not forget your law.

The wicked have set a trap for me, *
but I have not strayed from your commandments.

Your decrees are my inheritance for ever; *
truly, they are the joy of my heart.

I have applied my heart to fulfil your statutes *
for ever and to the end.

Psalm 119.105-112

The Gospel Reading

Then Jesus called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal. He said to them, 'Take nothing for your journey, no staff, nor bag, nor bread, nor money—not even an extra tunic. Whatever house you enter, stay there, and leave from there. Wherever they do not welcome you, as you are leaving that town shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them.' They departed and went through the villages, bringing the good news and curing diseases everywhere.

Luke 9.1-6

We continue with 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?

The Reflection

Katy Waugh

In today's gospel reading, Luke describes what could be called a commissioning service for Jesus' twelve disciples. We read that he called them together and then gave them power over all demons, power to cure all diseases and then sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal. Sounds pretty simple right? Ha! But as if that were not a tad overwhelming as an assignment, Jesus adds the following.

“Take nothing for your journey, no staff, nor bag, nor bread, nor money—not even an extra tunic.”

There are a few more directives, but I think for our purposes today this is enough. Take nothing for the journey! He is sending them out on foot in a fairly harsh landscape to wander among villages many of whom will not be too receptive to the disciples presence let alone their proclamations. Sure, they might want the healing miracles but the message of Jesus as God's Son sent to bring in a new Kingdom on earth? Not so much.

So what are we to make of these words spoken to us this morning. I will spare you a lesson on packing lightly. Most of us are pretty practised at keeping our baggage down to the size allowed on an airplane or to what will fit in the trunk of our car or even a backpack for hiking. I assume Jesus knows this but what he is really challenging us to do is to trust that God will be with us on our journey and will provide all that we need as we go about our lives trying to be faithful to whatever God has called us to do.

I think, once again, Jesus is trying to show us that our own hopes and vision are far too small. As humans we are limited by our own understanding, our own energy, our own skills and...and... but with God working in us we can do much that may even surprise us.

Let me tell you a story from a wonderful book called *One Hundred Wisdom Stories from around the World*, by Margaret Silf. It's called Signs of Daybreak.

“A rabbi once asked his students how they could tell when night had ended and day was on its way back. Is it when you can see an animal in the distance, and can tell whether it is a sheep or a dog?

No, answered the rabbi.

Is it when you can look at a tree in the distance, and tell whether it is a fig tree or a peach tree?

No.

Well then, the students demanded, when is it?

It is when you look on the face of another human being, and see that he or she is your brother or sister. Because if you can not do that, then no matter what time it is, it is still night.”

When Jesus tells us, his disciples to take nothing with us for the journey, he is reminding us that we can only have a fulfilling trip if we are seeing differently, if we are seeing through God's eyes. This is not an easy thing to do at the best of times but in these strange pandemic days it may seem even harder. The whole world seems upside down. We are asked to keep our distance even from the people we love the most. Maybe this is a perfect time to look at the world differently and to see that we don't need much...not even an extra tunic.

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

The Canticle ~ The Beatitudes

Blessed are the poor in spirit, *
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, *
for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the gentle, *
for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for what is right, *
for they shall be satisfied.

Blessed are the merciful, *
for mercy shall be shown to them.

Blessed are the pure in heart, *
for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, *
for they shall be called children of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted in the cause of right, *
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you *
and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely for my sake.

Rejoice and be glad, *
for your reward is great in heaven.

Matthew 5.3-12

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

Almighty God,
you have created the heavens and the earth,
and ourselves in your image.
Teach us to discern your hand in all your works
and to serve you with reverence and thanksgiving;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
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 God bless the work of our hands.
Amen.

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