

Daily Prayer

Jerome, Teacher of the Faith

Wednesday, September 30, 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—and remember Jerome, Teacher of the Faith, 420.

We begin by saying

And they read from the law of God clearly,
and gave the sense,
so that the people understood the Scriptures.

Nehemiah 8.8

The First Reading

All the people gathered together into the square before the Water Gate. They told the scribe Ezra to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had given to Israel. Accordingly, the priest Ezra brought the law before the assembly, both men and women and all who could hear with understanding. This was on the first day of the seventh month. He read from it facing the square before the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law. And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was standing above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up. Then Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God, and all the people answered, 'Amen, Amen', lifting up their hands. Then they bowed their heads and worshipped the Lord with their faces to the ground. Also Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub,

Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, the Levites, helped the people to understand the law, while the people remained in their places. So they read from the book, from the law of God, with interpretation. They gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading.

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 said to them, 'These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.' Then

he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, 'Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things.

Luke 24.44-48

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

From For All the Saints

Jerome was a fourth-century monk who produced the standard Latin version of Scriptures known as the Vulgate and by his own commentaries on the text had a lasting influence on the Church's interpretation of the Bible.

He was born in Italy around the year 340 and baptized as a young man. His upbringing led him to expect the best of himself, and he set his heart on spiritual perfection. His first experiment in monastic life ended in scandal; we do not know what it was all about, except that it forced him to leave his home. He then tried his vocation as a hermit in Palestine, but found that he could not endure the physical hardship it required. He eventually returned to Italy, where he became secretary to the bishop of Rome and began his lifelong work of editing and improving earlier Latin translations of Scripture in order to produce the Vulgate, whose name means "the Bible in Common Speech."

In the meantime, Jerome again moved to Palestine and settled at Bethlehem, where he gathered and ruled over a community of monks and another community of devout women. Here he wrote his commentaries on Scripture, which were to remain

standard reference works in the Latin West for over a thousand years. He died at Bethlehem in the year 420.

Jerome could exercise great charm in personal encounters, and some of this charm is reflected in his letters. But he was also a vain, pugnacious, and jealous man who could not endure someone else being thought his equal; and his jealousy (as much as his concern for orthodox teaching) led him to besmirch and finally destroy the reputations of several erstwhile friends. By common consent he is the most unlikeable person ever called a saint by the Church — and yet the Church recognizes that God may nourish the faithful by means of even the least promising instruments. So, we do not dwell on the flaws of Jerome but give thanks for the fruit of his labours as translator and scholar, because we see in them a true work of God's grace.

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

The Canticle ~ Song of Creation

Bless the Lord all you works of the Lord: ♦
sing his praise and exalt him for ever.

Bless the Lord you heavens: ♦
sing his praise and exalt him for ever.

Bless the Lord you angels of the Lord: ♦
sing his praise and exalt him for ever.

Bless the Lord all people on earth: ♦
sing his praise and exalt him for ever.

O people of God bless the Lord: ♦
sing his praise and exalt him for ever.

Bless the Lord you priests of the Lord: ♦
sing his praise and exalt him for ever.

Bless the Lord you servants of the Lord: ♦
sing his praise and exalt him for ever.

Bless the Lord all you of upright spirit: ♦
bless the Lord you that are holy and humble in heart.

The Song of the Three 35-37, 60-65

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

Merciful God,

who opened the mind of your servant Jerome
to understand the witness of your holy Scriptures,
establish your Word in our hearts, we pray,
that our offering may accord with your justice
and our service may be ruled by your love;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

[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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