

# Daily Prayer

*Feria*

*Wednesday, September 9, 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*

God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, and he has entrusted us with the message of reconciliation.

*2 Corinthians 5.19*

## The First Reading

Now concerning virgins, I have no command of the Lord, but I give my opinion as one who by the Lord's mercy is trustworthy. I think that, in view of the impending crisis, it is well for you to remain as you are. Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be free. Are you free from a wife? Do not seek a wife. But if you marry, you do not sin, and if a virgin marries, she does not sin. Yet those who marry will experience distress in this life, and I would spare you that. I mean, brothers and sisters, the appointed time has grown short; from now on, let even those who have wives be as though they had none, and those who mourn as though they were not mourning, and those who rejoice as though they were not rejoicing, and those who buy as though they had no possessions, and those who deal with the world as though they had no dealings with it. For the present form of this world is passing away.

*1 Corinthians 7.25-31*

## The Psalm

"Hear, O daughter; consider and listen closely; \*  
forget your people and your father's house.

The king will have pleasure in your beauty; \*  
he is your master; therefore do him honour.

The people of Tyre are here with a gift; \*  
the rich among the people seek your favour."

All glorious is the princess as she enters; \*  
her gown is cloth-of-gold.

In embroidered apparel she is brought to the king; \*  
after her the bridesmaids follow in procession.

With joy and gladness they are brought, \*  
and enter into the palace of the king.

"In place of fathers, O king, you shall have sons; \*  
you shall make them princes over all the earth.

I will make your name to be remembered  
from one generation to another; \*  
therefore nations will praise you for ever and ever."

*Psalm 45.11-18*

## The Gospel Reading

Then he looked up at his disciples and said:

'Blessed are you who are poor,  
for yours is the kingdom of God.

'Blessed are you who are hungry now,  
for you will be filled.

'Blessed are you who weep now,  
for you will laugh.

'Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man. Rejoice on that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven; for that is what their ancestors did to the prophets.

'But woe to you who are rich,  
for you have received your consolation.

'Woe to you who are full now,  
for you will be hungry.

'Woe to you who are laughing now,  
for you will mourn and weep.

'Woe to you when all speak well of you, for that is what their ancestors did to the false prophets.

*Luke 6.20-26*

*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**

*Jim Boyles*

In today's first lesson, Paul is concerned about the time of crisis facing the Roman world, and particularly the community at Corinth. He expressed an opinion, not really a dogma: "I think that, in view of the impending crisis, it is well for you to remain as you are."

We know something these days of a time of crisis. We're living through a pandemic that has challenged us all to monitor our actions, to wear masks, to care for one another. The Covid-19 virus instills some degree of fear in all of us. We're cautious when we go out. We choose our destination carefully. We buy our groceries with deliberate speed. We avoid crowds. We try to do all the right things to avoid the spread of disease, and to avoid catching it ourselves.

Paul concludes the passage with these words, words that perhaps touch on our situation as well: "For the present form of this world is passing away." Yes, we express hope that we can get 'back to normal', but really, there's no going back. We look forward to a time when life will be different for all of us, in one way or another. We may relax about the pandemic some day when we have a safe and effective vaccine. We may return to some of our old patterns of life, but it will be a different world, and it will be a world shaped in part by our decisions, by the choices we make.

Jesus is setting out some stark choices for us in the gospel. Luke's parallel passage to Matthew's Sermon on the Mount is not just a series of blessing statements, he also adds a list of woes. The first set, the first blessing and the first woe, are the most dramatic, I think, in our world that places such a high value on material goods, on riches. "Blessed are you who are poor... woe to you who are rich." It couldn't be much clearer.

In this time of pandemic, we have a chance, a moment, a time to assess our lives, both individually, and as a society, and make decisions that will move us forward, in the case of us Christians, towards the reign of God. "...Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." In this time of pandemic, a time of enforced quietness and isolation, we can move from Paul's panic about crisis towards Jesus' vision of how life in our midst can be better. We can make decisions to reshape our personal lives, but we also need to work to challenge our society, our political systems too, in seeking a society based on values of love and justice.

I've been thinking a lot about evictions. There have been some, and I fear that there will be many more, as families, and small businesses can't pay the rent, or can't sustain mortgage payments. It's fine to say, "blessed are the poor", but there need not be any poor. That

may be a radical statement, but it's true... a truly caring society would eradicate poverty. I would support three things: a basic annual income for all; an eviction moratorium with governmental assistance for landlords who are in financial difficulty; higher taxes, not just on the very rich, but on many of us who have much as compared to the many who have little.

This time of crisis can be a turning point for our society, in fact for the world, as pandemic levels the playing field, affecting all of us one way or another. Yes, it's safer to be rich, to be white, to be healthy, but woe to us if we pass by this opportunity and continue our ways of seeking only personal riches.

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

## **The Canticle ~ A Song of Humility**

Come, let us return to the Lord ♦  
who has torn us and will heal us.

God has stricken us ♦  
and will bind up our wounds.

After two days, he will revive us, ♦  
and on the third day will raise us up,  
that we may live in his presence.

Let us strive to know the Lord; ♦  
his appearing is as sure as the sunrise.

He will come to us like the showers, ♦  
like the spring rains that water the earth.

'O Ephraim, how shall I deal with you? ♦  
How shall I deal with you, O Judah?

'Your love for me is like the morning mist, ♦  
like the dew that goes early away.

'Therefore, I have hewn them by the prophets, ♦  
and my judgement goes forth as the light.

'For loyalty is my desire and not sacrifice, ♦  
and the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings.'

*Hosea 6.1-6*

*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 in faith to God our Father, to his Son Jesus Christ, and to the Holy Spirit, saying, "Lord, hear and have mercy.")

For the Church of the living God throughout the world, let us ask the riches of his grace.

**Lord, hear and have mercy.**

For all who proclaim the word of truth, let us ask the infinite wisdom of Christ.

**Lord, hear and have mercy.**

For all who have consecrated their lives to the kingdom of God, and for all struggling to follow the way of Christ, let us ask the gifts of the Spirit.

**Lord, hear and have mercy.**

For Elizabeth our Queen, for the Prime Minister of this country, and for all who govern the nations, that they may strive for justice and peace, let us ask the strength of God.

**Lord, hear and have mercy.**

For scholars and research-workers, that their studies may benefit humanity, let us ask the light of the Lord.

**Lord, hear and have mercy.**

For all who have passed from this life in faith and obedience,  
let us ask the peace of Christ.

**Lord, hear and have mercy.**

*We conclude our prayers*

Stir up, O Lord,  
the wills of your faithful people,  
that richly bearing the fruit of good works,  
we may by you be richly rewarded;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and forever.

*[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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