

Daily Prayer

Feria

Wednesday, December 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

Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

All flesh shall see the salvation of God

Luke 3.4, 6

The First Reading

To whom then will you compare me,

or who is my equal? says the Holy One.

Lift up your eyes on high and see:

Who created these?

He who brings out their host and numbers them,

calling them all by name;

because he is great in strength,

mighty in power,

not one is missing.

Why do you say, O Jacob,

and speak, O Israel,

'My way is hidden from the LORD,

and my right is disregarded by my God'?

Have you not known? Have you not heard?

The LORD is the everlasting God,

the Creator of the ends of the earth.

He does not faint or grow weary;
his understanding is unsearchable.
He gives power to the faint,
and strengthens the powerless.
Even youths will faint and be weary,
and the young will fall exhausted;
but those who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength,
they shall mount up with wings like eagles,
they shall run and not be weary,
they shall walk and not faint.

Isaiah 40.25-31

The Psalm

Bless the Lord, O my soul, *
and all that is within me, bless his holy name.
Bless the Lord, O my soul, *
and forget not all his benefits.
He forgives all your sins *
and heals all your infirmities;
He redeems your life from the grave *
and crowns you with mercy and loving-kindness;
He satisfies you with good things, *
and your youth is renewed like an eagle's.
The Lord executes righteousness *
and judgement for all who are oppressed.
He made his ways known to Moses *
and his works to the children of Israel.
The Lord is full of compassion and mercy, *
slow to anger and of great kindness.

He will not always accuse us, *
nor will he keep his anger for ever.

He has not dealt with us according to our sins, *
nor rewarded us according to our wickedness.

Psalm 103.1-10

The Gospel Reading

‘Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.’

Matthew 11.28-30

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

*“Come unto me, all you that are weary
and are carrying heavy burdens,
and I will give you rest.”*

~Matthew 11: 28-30

What an invitation!

Jesus is asking us to come to him and to give up the burdens we are carrying! That's a great invite even in good times when our burdens" seem to be too many things to do, too much responsibility at work or in family life or sickness. In those days we could almost check our calendars or day timers and pinpoint where the stress and worry were located. But now in these COVID days, it's more an unending river of uncertainty.

We feel unmoored from the things we used to take for granted. Most of us have learned not to freak out when we hear the climbing death rates, overcrowded hospital statistics, recent guessing games of when the miracle vaccinations will arrive. And, if you are like me, you are very aware of just how privileged our lives are. Living in Canada is a bonus to begin with. And... and... and... But I could guess that most of us could gain great comfort as we toss and turn in our beds, to hear Jesus' invitation to give our burdens to him and roll over and sleep.

And, of course, rest does not have to literally mean sleep! Rest means taking a deep breath or a lot of them until our breathing becomes regular and we start to see and hear the world through new lenses. When we do that we are entering prayer...and we are giving God a chance to do what God does best... carry our very human burdens. In this short season of Advent as we mark off the days and live in God's time waiting to be surprised by the miracle of the birth of Jesus, I invite you to breathe in and breathe out and listen for that invitation to drop your burdens and find rest in God.

I am including an Advent Psalm which I wrote a few years ago in response to a challenge to keep an Advent Alphabet! Maybe it can be part of your journey to drop your burdens and let Jesus give you rest.

My Advent Psalm

A voice in the wilderness calls.
Blinded eyes are opened.
Canes are tossed aside.
Deserts bloom.
Every valley is exalted.
Fears that paralyze will be gone.
God's vision fulfilled.

How gracious you are my Beloved.
Isaiah's words ring true,
Jerusalem will weep no more.

Keep awake!
Lambs will lie down with wolves
Make straight a highway in the desert.
New hopes are kindled.
Offerings of thanksgiving are made.
Preparing the way of the Lord.

Questions are asked
Restoration completed.
Shine forth in our lives.
Teach us to believe.
Unite all creation.
Visit us with peace

Wake us up!
Exceed our wildest dreams.
Yours is our vision,
Zion's dream coming true.

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

The Canticle ~ Song of the First-Born

Christ is the image of the unseen God, *
the first-born of all creation,
for in him were all things made, *
in heaven and on earth.

Through him and for him were all things made,
before all he exists, holds all things in one. *
The Church is his body, and he is its head.

He is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; *
in all things he alone is supreme.

God made all his fullness to dwell in him, *
to reconcile through him all creation to himself,
everything on earth and everything in heaven, *
all gathered into peace by his death on the cross.

Colossians 1.15-20

*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 our Father,

you spoke to the prophets of old
of a Saviour who would bring peace.

You helped them to spread the joyful message
of his coming kingdom.

Help us, as we prepare to celebrate his birth,
to share with those around us
the good news of your power and love.

We ask this through Jesus Christ,
the light who is coming into the world.

[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 himself, the God of peace,
make you perfect and holy,
and keep you safe and blameless, in spirit, soul and body,
for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Credits:

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The Intercessions: Church of England Coronavirus resources.

The Collect: Common Worship: Times and Seasons—Advent. © The Archbishops' Council 2005 and published by Church House Publishing.

The Concluding Sentence: Common Worship: Times and Seasons—Advent. © The Archbishops' Council 2005 and published by Church House Publishing.

The reflection: The Rev'd Katie 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