

# Daily Prayer

*Feria*

*Wednesday, March 24, 2021*

*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 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*

We look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal.

*2 Corinthians 4.18*

## **The First Reading**

Then Nebuchadnezzar in furious rage commanded that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego be brought in; so they brought those men before the king. Nebuchadnezzar said to them, 'Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods and you do not worship the golden statue that I have set up? Now if you are ready when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, drum, and entire musical ensemble to fall down and worship the statue that I have made, well and good. But if you do not worship, you shall immediately be thrown into a furnace of blazing fire, and who is the god that will deliver you out of my hands?'

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered the king, 'O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to present a defence to you in this matter. If our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire and out of your hand, O king, let him

deliver us. But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods and we will not worship the golden statue that you have set up.'

Then Nebuchadnezzar was so filled with rage against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego that his face was distorted. He ordered the furnace to be heated up seven times more than was customary, and ordered some of the strongest guards in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and to throw them into the furnace of blazing fire. So the men were bound, still wearing their tunics, their trousers, their hats, and their other garments, and they were thrown into the furnace of blazing fire. Because the king's command was urgent and the furnace was so overheated, the raging flames killed the men who lifted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. But the three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down, bound, into the furnace of blazing fire.

Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished and rose up quickly. He said to his counsellors, 'Was it not three men that we threw bound into the fire?' They answered the king, 'True, O king.' He replied, 'But I see four men unbound, walking in the middle of the fire, and they are not hurt; and the fourth has the appearance of a god.' Nebuchadnezzar then approached the door of the furnace of blazing fire and said, 'Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out! Come here!' So Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came out from the fire. And the satraps, the prefects, the governors, and the king's counsellors gathered together and saw that the fire had not had any power over the bodies of those men; the hair of their heads was not singed, their tunics were not harmed, and not even the smell of fire came from them. Nebuchadnezzar said, 'Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent his angel and delivered his servants who trusted in him. They disobeyed the king's

command and yielded up their bodies rather than serve and worship any god except their own God.

*Daniel 3.13-28*

## **The Psalm**

The earth is the Lord's and all that fills it, ♦  
the compass of the world and all who dwell therein.

For he has founded it upon the seas ♦  
and set it firm upon the rivers of the deep.

'Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord, ♦  
or who can rise up in his holy place?'

'Those who have clean hands and a pure heart, ♦  
who have not lifted up their soul to an idol,  
nor sworn an oath to a lie;

'They shall receive a blessing from the Lord, ♦  
a just reward from the God of their salvation.'

Such is the company of those who seek him, ♦  
of those who seek your face, O God of Jacob.

*Psalm 24.1-6*

## **The Gospel Reading**

Then Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, 'If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.' They answered him, 'We are descendants of Abraham and have never been slaves to anyone. What do you mean by saying, "You will be made free"?''

Jesus answered them, 'Very truly, I tell you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin. The slave does not have a permanent place in the household; the son has a place there for ever. So if the Son

makes you free, you will be free indeed. I know that you are descendants of Abraham; yet you look for an opportunity to kill me, because there is no place in you for my word. I declare what I have seen in the Father's presence; as for you, you should do what you have heard from the Father.'

They answered him, 'Abraham is our father.' Jesus said to them, 'If you were Abraham's children, you would be doing what Abraham did, but now you are trying to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. This is not what Abraham did. You are indeed doing what your father does.' They said to him, 'We are not illegitimate children; we have one father, God himself.' Jesus said to them, 'If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and now I am here. I did not come on my own, but he sent me. Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot accept my word. You are from your father the devil, and you choose to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks according to his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies. But because I tell the truth, you do not believe me. Which of you convicts me of sin? If I tell the truth, why do you not believe me? Whoever is from God hears the words of God. The reason you do not hear them is that you are not from God.'

*John 8.31-47*

*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*

When we were allowed back in stores last week, I was very quick to return to my favourite bookstore, Book City on the Danforth! I felt like a young child on Christmas morning. I am a book lover, not just an avid reader or a conscientious follower of what's new and trendy. Nope, I live for books and, I do have a fairly large library which has always been a boon for my friends, but during this past year people have come my way as though I am the latest hub. Door Dash can't be far behind!. All through the pandemic people have told me I can order books online and I have to follow up by saying that I don't know what I want until it falls off a bookshelf for me in a store. Last week, the first book to make that leap was one by John O'Donohue called To Bless the Space Between Us.

O'Donohue is an Irish writer who has written many best sellers all of which I have read, but this one was new to me. In it, he puts a new spin on what a blessing is and isn't. He is very quick to broaden our understanding of the word from the familiar formal use of the word which often is reserved for ordained ministers or the head of the family at the dinner table. Instead he writes these words.

“ There is a quiet light that shines in every heart which enables us to recognize and receive our very presence here as blessing.....It would be infinitely lonely to live in a world without blessing. The word itself evokes a sense of warmth and protection; it suggests that no life is alone or unreachable.”

And, he talks about how in order to be ready to receive a blessing or to give a blessing we have to be open to surprises and new beginnings.”

Today's psalm reminds us that blessings will come to us if we search out God.

“All these will be blessed by the  
Heart of Love,  
and renewed through forgiveness.  
Such is the promise to those  
who seek God's face.”

In these very unsettling times in which we are now living, I find I am relying more and more on just such blessings as I search to find God in my every day world. As I read John O'Donohue's collection of blessing for every occasion, I decided to try my own hand at writing a few. Mine are pretty mundane but definitely heartfelt. Sometimes it is wonderful to express your own ideas and yearnings to God but often, it is amazing to have someone else's words.

Here are a few verses from one of his blessings which may help you start a new day.

“All that is eternal in me  
Welcomes the wonder of this day,  
The fields of brightness it creates  
Offering time for each thing  
To arise and illuminate.

I place on the altar of dawn;  
The quiet loyalty of breath,  
The tent of thought where I shelter,  
Waves of desire I am shore to  
And all beauty drawn to the eye.

May my mind come alive today  
To the invisible geography  
That invites me to new frontiers,  
To break the dead shell of yesterdays,  
To risk being disturbed and changed.

May I have the courage today  
To live the life that I would love,  
To postpone my dream no longer  
But do at last what I came here for  
And waste my heart on fear no more."

Does this sound a tad odd to your ear in these Covid times?

Maybe. But it also serves as a reminder that God is always with us and blessing us, if only we are open to surprises and new ways of seeing.

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

## **The Canticle ~ Bless the Lord**

Blessed are you, the God of our ancestors, ♦  
worthy to be praised and exalted for ever.

Blessed is your holy and glorious name, ♦  
worthy to be praised and exalted for ever.

Blessed are you, in your holy and glorious temple, ♦  
worthy to be praised and exalted for ever.

Blessed are you who look into the depths, ♦  
worthy to be praised and exalted for ever.

Blessed are you, enthroned on the cherubim, ♦  
worthy to be praised and exalted for ever.

Blessed are you on the throne of your kingdom, ♦  
worthy to be praised and exalted for ever.

Blessed are you in the heights of heaven, ♦  
worthy to be praised and exalted for ever.

*The Song of the Three 29-34*

*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**

With confidence and trust let us pray to our God.

For the one holy catholic and apostolic Church ...

let us pray to our God.

Lord of compassion,

**in your mercy hear us.**

For the mission of the Church,

that in faithful witness it may preach the gospel

to the ends of the earth,

let us pray to our God.

Lord of compassion,

**in your mercy hear us.**

For peace in the world ...

that a spirit of respect and reconciliation may grow

among nations and peoples,

let us pray to our God.

Lord of compassion,

**in your mercy hear us.**

For the poor, the persecuted, the sick, and all who suffer ...

for refugees, prisoners, and all in danger;

that they may be relieved and protected,

let us pray to our God.

Lord of compassion,

**in your mercy hear us.**

For those whom we have injured or offended,

let us pray to our God.

Lord of compassion,

**in your mercy hear us.**



For grace to amend our lives and to further the reign of God,  
let us pray to our God.  
Lord of compassion,  
**in your mercy hear us.**

In communion with all those who have walked in the way of  
holiness ...  
let us pray to our God.  
Lord of compassion,  
**in your mercy hear us.**

God our Father,  
in your love and goodness  
you have taught us to come close to you in penitence  
with prayer, fasting and generosity;  
accept our Lenten discipline,  
and when we fall by our weakness,  
raise us up by your unfailing mercy;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

*Our prayers conclude*

Almighty God,  
whose most dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain,  
and entered not into glory before he was crucified;  
mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross,  
may find it none other than the way of life and peace;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of 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 the Father,  
who does not despise the broken spirit,  
give to you a contrite heart.

**Amen.**

May Christ,  
who bore our sins in his body on the tree,  
heal you by his wounds.

**Amen.**

May the Holy Spirit,  
who leads us into all truth,  
speak to you words of pardon and peace.

**Amen.**

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