

Daily Prayer

Feria

Wednesday, August 25, 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

O Lord, open our lips
and our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

The First Reading

You remember our labour and toil, brothers and sisters; we worked night and day, so that we might not burden any of you while we proclaimed to you the gospel of God. You are witnesses, and God also, how pure, upright, and blameless our conduct was towards you believers. As you know, we dealt with each one of you like a father with his children, urging and encouraging you and pleading that you should lead a life worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory.

We also constantly give thanks to God for this, that when you received the word of God that you heard from us, you accepted it not as a human word but as what it really is, God's word, which is also at work in you believers.

1 Thessalonians 2:9-13

The Psalm

When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, *
then were we like those who dream.

Then was our mouth filled with laughter, *
and our tongue with shouts of joy.

Then they said among the nations, *
"The Lord has done great things for them."

The Lord has done great things for us, *
and we are glad indeed.

Restore our fortunes, O Lord, *
like the watercourses of the Negev.

Those who sowed with tears *
will reap with songs of joy.

Those who go out weeping, carrying the seed, *
will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves.

Psalm 126

The Gospel Reading

'Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which on the outside look beautiful, but inside they are full of the bones of the dead and of all kinds of filth. So you also on the outside look righteous to others, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

'Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the tombs of the prophets and decorate the graves of the righteous, and you say, "If we had lived in the days of our ancestors, we would not have taken part with them in shedding the blood of the prophets." Thus you testify against yourselves that you are

descendants of those who murdered the prophets. Fill up, then, the measure of your ancestors.

Matthew 23.27-32

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 the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion,
we were like those who dream.
Then our mouth was filled with laughter,
and our tongue with shouts of joy.”

Psalm 126

Any one who knows me well, knows that I am in love with the psalms. Never has this been more true than during the long months of this pandemic. For almost thirty years I have read a psalm a morning as the beginning of my quiet time. It tends to connect me with our ancestors and their wisdom. I marvel at their way with words and their ability to tell it like it is. Whatever their current mood, they spare God none of it. Many times there are songs of praise. Things seem to be going well, so they thank their maker. But, other times....quite often actually....they forget their manners and they regale God. They shake their fists at God and ask God to do hideous things to their perceived enemies. In other words, the psalmists are just like us! No matter which psalm comes up for me each day (I just read through them chronologically) if I read it several times and sit with it in silence, some phrase catches my attention and I meditate and pray with it. It's not magic! It's one of the reasons we call scripture the living word of God. These are not dried up words salvaged from ancient times, rather they are God speaking directly to us.

Over these endless months of uncertainty, fear, loneliness and free floating anxiety that we are all living in, the psalms have become an even steadier anchor and deeper well of hope for me.

Some times I laugh right out loud when I hear the words and sometimes I am moved to tears when I resonate with the depth of despair of the writer. Today's psalm 126 is subtitled A Harvest of Joy. This seems to be exactly what we all need in these very hot days of August, when we had just begun to breathe more easily as we received our second doses of the vaccine and things seemed to be returning to some kind of normalcy...well maybe a new normal, only to be set back by fears of a new variant which seems to be launching a fourth wave.

It is at exactly these liminal moments that we need to hear the psalmist say the words of this psalm. We need to be reminded that God is the author of restoration. Our mouths will again be filled with laughter. Our tongues will shout with joy! And maybe as importantly, we need to hear our longings expressed so clearly by someone who has obviously been through times very similar to our COVID times.

“May those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy.
Those who go out weeping,
bearing the seed for sowing,
shall come home with shouts of joy,
carrying their sheaves.”

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

The Canticle ~ A Song of David

*Splendour and majesty are yours, O God;
you are exalted as head over all.*

Blessed are you, God of Israel, for ever and ever, ♦
for yours is the greatness, the power,
the glory, the splendour and the majesty.

Everything in heaven and on earth is yours; ♦
yours is the kingdom, O Lord,
and you are exalted as head over all.

Riches and honour come from you ♦
and you rule over all.

In your hand are power and might; ♦
yours it is to give power and strength to all.

And now we give you thanks, our God, ♦
and praise your glorious name.

For all things come from you, ♦
and of your own have we given you.

*Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.*

*Splendour and majesty are yours, O God;
you are exalted as head over all.*

1 Chronicles 29.10b-13,14b

*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 give thanks to God,
the God of all peoples of the earth.
For the colour and forms of your creation
and our place within it,
we bring our thanks, good Lord:
your mercy endures for ever.

For our daily food,
and for those whose work and skill
bring your good gifts to us,
we bring our thanks, good Lord:
your mercy endures for ever.

For the gifts and graces inspired in human minds and hearts;
for insight and imagination,
for the skills of research
which bring healing and fulfilment to the lives of many;
we bring our thanks, good Lord:
your mercy endures for ever.

For the light and shades of the changing seasons,
and their variety and dependability;
for new life and growth out of barrenness and decay;
we bring our thanks, good Lord:
your mercy endures for ever.

For new hope and strength in our communities,
especially in your Church and among all you call to serve you,
we bring our thanks, good Lord;
your mercy endures for ever.

For all in whose lives we see
goodness, kindness, gentleness, patience and humility,
and all the fruit of the Spirit,
we bring our thanks, good Lord:
your mercy endures for ever.

For the life we have been given,
and for all those whom you have given us to share it,
we bring our thanks, good Lord:
your mercy endures for ever.

Our prayers conclude

Lord almighty,
whose Son Jesus Christ knew the joys and sorrows of human life,
be with us in times of hope and in times of fear,
be with us in days of delight and in nights of sorrow,
be with us in new beginnings and in moments of ending,
that through all the turmoil of life
we may know you as our rock, our redeemer and our hope,
in 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 grant to the world justice, truth and peace.
Amen.

Credits:

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