

Daily Prayer

Holy Cross Ember Day

Wednesday, September 15, 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

Far be it from me to glory except in the cross of our Lord
Jesus Christ.

Galatians 6.14

The First Reading

Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it stands in scripture:

'See, I am laying in Zion a stone,
a cornerstone chosen and precious;
and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.'

To you then who believe, he is precious; but for those who do not believe,

'The stone that the builders rejected
has become the very head of the corner',

and

'A stone that makes them stumble,
and a rock that makes them fall.'

They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.

Once you were not a people,
but now you are God's people;
once you had not received mercy,
but now you have received mercy.

1 Peter 2.4-10

The Psalm

His foundation is on the holy mountains. ♦
The Lord loves the gates of Zion
more than all the dwellings of Jacob.

Glorious things are spoken of you, ♦
Zion, city of our God.

I record Egypt and Babylon as those who know me; ♦
behold Philistia, Tyre and Ethiopia:
in Zion were they born.

And of Zion it shall be said, 'Each one was born in her, ♦
and the Most High himself has established her.'

The Lord will record as he writes up the peoples, ♦
'This one also was born there.'

And as they dance they shall sing, ♦
'All my fresh springs are in you.'

Psalm 87

The Gospel Reading

I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one. While I was with them, I protected them in your name that you have given me. I guarded them, and not one of them was lost except the one destined to be lost, so that the scripture might be fulfilled. But now I am coming to you, and I speak these things in the world so that they may have my joy made complete in themselves. I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one. They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth.

John 17.6-19

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

Andrew Kubl

One of the great joys of starting in a new church is getting a chance to discover the physical building. The building can tell us many stories: the brickwork, the artwork, the layers of renovations and re-imaginings. The places that gather clutter, and the places where things are all in their place. These elements tell stories of the past, the present, and speak in whispers about what might be possible. Sometimes the building has such beauty built into it that you need to see up close to really appreciate: bricks carefully assembled to make an arch, or the painted details on the ceiling, or treasured books tucked away waiting to be used.

The letter of 1st Peter talks about the community of believers being built together as living stones; being the Church. Each one collectively and individually shaped and formed for the purpose of being “a holy priesthood offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.” (1 Pet. 2:5). God is at work building us together like a building, to be the Church. Lovingly shaping us into the people who worship and offer service to God, through Jesus Christ.

Jesus is the corner stone of that structure, the starting point of the foundation of that building. The cornerstone establishes how the walls can be built straight and true. Jesus assembles us and calls us together and makes us a people. A people who have received God's mercy through the mystery of the Cross. And our life together as a church is built out and on that cornerstone.

Throughout the pandemic, (even though it can be hard to imagine or see), God has been at work shaping us into his people. Building in us desires for deeper connections, resilience, and so much more. Some of these things also might be hard to name or might still be in the process of being formed in us. And still God is at work bringing us

together shaping us with our unique gifts and talents to work together to continue that work of spiritual sacrifice, of worship and of service.

As we begin to regather in person in the coming weeks, my prayer is that we would see ourselves as a people that God is transforming and bringing together for that greater purpose, to make us a people who worship and serve, who are grounded in that firm foundation, Jesus Christ. A people who depend on each other and on Jesus. Each bringing our unique gifts and talents, to offer spiritual sacrifices, our worship and service, to God for the sake of the world.

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

The Canticle ~ A Song of God's Love

*God's love was revealed among us
so that we might live through Jesus.*

Beloved, let us love one another,
for love is of God; ♦

everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.

Whoever does not love does not know God, ♦
for God is love.

In this the love of God was revealed among us, ♦
that God sent his only Son into the world,
so that we might live through him.

In this is love,
not that we loved God but that he loved us, ♦
and sent his Son to be the expiation for our sins.

Beloved, since God loved us so much, ♦
we ought also to love one another.

For if we love one another, God abides in us, ♦
and God's love will be perfected in us.

1 John 4.7-11,12b

**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.**

*God's love was revealed among us
so that we might live through Jesus.*

*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 Creator through his child,
who suffered on the cross for the world's redemption.
Fill with your Spirit Christ's broken body, the Church ...
Give to Christian people everywhere a deep longing
to take up the cross and to understand its mysterious glory.
By the Saviour's cross and passion,
Lord, save us and help us.

Give your grace to those who preach your word to the nations ...
Help us to witness to the faith we have received
by our words and in our deeds,
and daily conform us more and more to Christ,
that we may glory in his cross.
By the Saviour's cross and passion,
Lord, save us and help us.

Look in your mercy upon the world you loved so much
that you sent your child to suffer and to die ...
Strengthen those who work to share

the reconciliation won at such a cost upon the cross.

By the Saviour's cross and passion,

Lord, save us and help us.

Bring healing by the wounds of Christ

to all who are weighed down by pain and injustice ...

Help the lonely and the betrayed, the suffering and the dying,

to find strength in the companionship of Jesus,

and in his passion to know their salvation.

By the Saviour's cross and passion,

Lord, save us and help us.

Welcome into paradise all who have left this world in your
friendship ...

According to your promises,

bring them with all your saints

to share in the benefits of Christ's death and resurrection.

By the Saviour's cross and passion,

Lord, save us and help us.

Holy God, holy and strong,

holy and immortal,

have mercy on us.

Our prayers conclude

Almighty God,

whose Son our Saviour Jesus Christ

was lifted high upon the cross

that he might draw the whole world to himself,

may we who rejoice in the mystery of our redemption

have grace to take up our cross and follow him,

who lives and reigns with you and 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

Let us pursue all that makes for peace
and builds up our common life.
Amen.

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The Intercessions: Common Worship: Festivals—Holy Cross © The Archbishops' Council 2005 and published by Church House Publishing. (adapted)

The Collect: *For All the Saints* © 2007, General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada

The Concluding Sentence: Common Worship: Daily Prayer. © The Archbishops' Council 2005 and published by Church House Publishing.

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