

Daily Prayer

Advent Feria

Wednesday, December 1, 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 mouths shall proclaim your praise.
Reveal among us the light of your presence
that we may behold your power and glory.

The First Reading

On this mountain the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples
a feast of rich food, a feast of well-matured wines,
of rich food filled with marrow, of well-matured wines
strained clear.

And he will destroy on this mountain
the shroud that is cast over all peoples,
the sheet that is spread over all nations;
he will swallow up death for ever.

Then the Lord God will wipe away the tears from all faces,
and the disgrace of his people he will take away from all
the earth,
for the Lord has spoken.

It will be said on that day,

Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, so that he might save us.

This is the Lord for whom we have waited;
let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

Isaiah 25.6-9

The Psalm

The Lord is my shepherd; ♦
therefore can I lack nothing.

He makes me lie down in green pastures ♦
and leads me beside still waters.

He shall refresh my soul ♦
and guide me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil; ♦
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

You spread a table before me
in the presence of those who trouble me; ♦
you have anointed my head with oil
and my cup shall be full.

Surely goodness and loving mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life, ♦
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Psalm 23

The Gospel Reading

After Jesus had left that place, he passed along the Sea of Galilee, and he went up the mountain, where he sat down. Great crowds came to him, bringing with them the lame, the maimed, the blind, the mute, and many others. They put them at his feet, and he cured them, so that the crowd was amazed when they saw the mute speaking, the maimed whole, the lame walking, and the blind seeing. And they praised the God of Israel.

Then Jesus called his disciples to him and said, 'I have compassion for the crowd, because they have been with me now for three days and have nothing to eat; and I do not want to send them away hungry, for they might faint on the way.' The disciples said to him, 'Where are we to get enough bread in the desert to feed so great a crowd?' Jesus asked them, 'How many loaves have you?' They said, 'Seven, and a few small fish.' Then ordering the crowd to sit down on the ground, he took the seven loaves and the fish; and after giving thanks he broke them and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. And all of them ate and were filled; and they took up the broken pieces left over, seven baskets full. Those who had eaten were four thousand men, besides women and children. After sending away the crowds, he got into the boat and went to the region of Magadan.

Matthew 15.29-39

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

Presence With the Lame, Maimed, Blind, Mute and Many Others

Jesus went up the mountain. The crowds followed and gathered around him, having heard of his miraculous healing powers and his growing reputation as a thoughtful and powerful teacher and prophet. Jesus healed that day, spreading hope and joy and health. The crowd were amazed, and they praised God.

That scene in itself is worthy of consideration. Jesus, we're told, had compassion on the crowd since they'd been with him for three days but had nothing to eat. A very hungry gathering after three days, I would think! So he expresses his concern to the disciples, and they devise a plan. They gather a few remaining loaves and two fish that were found among the crowd, and Jesus blesses them and shares the abundance with all the people, so that they are filled, and still much remains. In this account there were four thousand, not counting the women and children. Perhaps it's a Trump-like exaggeration, but still a lot of people.

Today as I reflect on this passage one person comes to mind. In the 1970s I had the privilege for nine years of working across the hall from the church's Primate, Ted Scott. He was an intense and energetic man who always lectured the staff on managing their time and caring for their partners and families, as he was rushing off to catch a plane for his next extended travel to a far corner of the country, or indeed to a far corner of the world. Ted was an ecumenist. Before being elected Primate in 1971 he was Bishop of Kootenay in BC, and in the days when church union with the United Church was on the agenda, he led the way in establishing many shared parishes – United and Anglican – living and working together. On his watch church union was shelved, much to his disappointment.

Ted was one who like Jesus had time for the people on the fringes of society. In spite of a heavy schedule, he would meet and listen to those in need, those with impaired capacity, a poet, I remember, who had no income, who would regularly drop in to see his mentor, Ted. He attended Jean Vanier retreats. I first met him at a conference near Ottawa with a title we wouldn't see these days, "Clergy and their Wives". He was a caring and a committed man, committed to the ministry as modeled by Jesus in today's passage.

Ted was a champion of the church's call for social justice, In his time many social justice ecumenical coalitions were established to take up the cause and challenge the dominant society and governments to act as Jesus would, in caring for others, in moving our systems to more justice-oriented policies, urging compassion for those in need, and those forgotten or ignored. He had a profound and lasting influence on our church, on our country, and indeed on the world.

I was with Ted in Nairobi in 1975 when he was elected as Moderator of the World Council of Churches. The Canadian delegation to the Council's Assembly was pressured by so many others to support his nomination, as he was somewhat reluctant, and had promised to keep his focus on his Canadian duties. In the end, he agreed, and served for the next seven years as Moderator on this prominent international stage.

I think of Ted as I think of Jesus today, models for us as we shape our lives, which so often drawn into a very worldly morass with little room or concern for the lame, the maimed, the blind, the mute and many others. Glad for Redeemer's outreach through Common Table, as one very important community outreach. Glad for the witness of our national church when it expresses its concern for

justice issues on the national stage. Glad for each of us as we take this lesson to heart and find our ways to be with others in need.

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

The Canticle ~ A Song of the Wilderness

*Lift up your voice with strength,
O herald of good tidings.*

The wilderness and the dry land shall rejoice, ♦
the desert shall blossom and burst into song.

They shall see the glory of the Lord, ♦
the majesty of our God.

Strengthen the weary hands, ♦
and make firm the feeble knees.

Say to the anxious, 'Be strong, fear not,
your God is coming with judgement, ♦
coming with judgement to save you.'

Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, ♦
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;

Then shall the lame leap like a hart, ♦
and the tongue of the dumb sing for joy.

For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, ♦
and streams in the desert;

The ransomed of the Lord shall return with singing, ♦
with everlasting joy upon their heads.

Joy and gladness shall be theirs, ♦
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

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.

*Lift up your voice with strength,
O herald of good tidings.*

Isaiah 35.1,2b-4a,4c-6,10

*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

Watchful at all times,
let us pray for strength to stand with confidence
before our Maker and Redeemer.
That God may bring in his kingdom with justice and mercy, saying
Show us your mercy

And grant us your salvation.

That God may establish among the nations
his sceptre of righteousness,

Silence is kept

Show us your mercy

And grant us your salvation.

That we may seek Christ in the Scriptures
and recognize him in the breaking of the bread,

Silence is kept

Show us your mercy

And grant us your salvation.

That God may bind up the brokenhearted, restore the sick
and raise up all who have fallen,

Silence is kept

Show us your mercy

And grant us your salvation.

That the light of God's coming may dawn
on all who live in darkness and the shadow of death,

Silence is kept

Show us your mercy

And grant us your salvation.

That, with all the saints in light,
we may shine forth as lights for the world,

Silence is kept

Show us your mercy

And grant us your salvation.

We commend ourselves and all for whom we pray
to the mercy and protection of maker and redeemer:

Silence is kept

Show us your mercy

And grant us your salvation.

Our prayers conclude

God of glory,
whose Son looked on the brokenness of this world in love,
and in his mercy came to bring us healing and peace,
grant us grace to long for his coming again,
that our hearts would be opened by his compassion,
and our world would be reconciled by his inspiration,
through the same 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

Christ the Sun of Righteousness shine upon us,
scatter the darkness from before our path
and make us ready to meet him when he comes in glory.
Amen.

Credits:

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The Collect: *The Canterbury Book of New Parish Prayers* © 2021, M.J. Kramer, Canterbury Press

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

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