

Daily Prayer

Feria

Wednesday, January 5, 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.

Your light springs up for the righteous

and all the peoples have seen your glory.

The First Reading

For this is the message you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. We must not be like Cain who was from the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous. Do not be astonished, brothers and sisters, that the world hates you. We know that we have passed from death to life because we love one another. Whoever does not love abides in death. All who hate a brother or sister are murderers, and you know that murderers do not have eternal life abiding in them. We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us—and we ought to lay down our lives for one another. How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help? Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action.

1 John 3. 11-18

The Psalm

O be joyful in the Lord, all the earth; ♦
serve the Lord with gladness
and come before his presence with a song.

Know that the Lord is God; ♦
it is he that has made us and we are his;
we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.

Enter his gates with thanksgiving
and his courts with praise; ♦
give thanks to him and bless his name.

For the Lord is gracious; his steadfast love is everlasting, ♦
and his faithfulness endures from generation to
generation.

Psalm 100

The Gospel Reading

The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, 'Follow me.' Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, 'We have found him about whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph from Nazareth.' Nathanael said to him, 'Can anything good come out of Nazareth?' Philip said to him, 'Come and see.' When Jesus saw Nathanael coming towards him, he said of him, 'Here is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit!' Nathanael asked him, 'Where did you come to know me?' Jesus answered, 'I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you.' Nathanael replied, 'Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!' Jesus answered, 'Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things

than these.' And he said to him, 'Very truly, I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.'

John 1.43-51

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

There is something about John's way with words. Both John's gospel and the letters have such a capacity to stand out in our minds. His voice is marked by a grace and love, that it almost drips off the page of his letter. He has a knack for weaving images that wind their way through the gospel and the letters. One of the most recognizable and beloved passages of scripture comes from his gospel: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life." (John 3:16)

I love that coincidentally (by a later division of the bible into chapters and verses) John's first letter also has a third chapter and a sixteenth verse that I find absolutely captivating, that also echoes that famous verse in some ways as well:

"We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us—and we ought to lay down our lives for one another." (1st John 3:16)

"We know love by this..." the same love that God has for the world (see John 3:16), in the sending of Jesus. Over Christmas, we celebrated the incarnation of Jesus, and we looked forward to his eventual return, and soon we will celebrate the mystery of the death and resurrection of Jesus. In the whole of his birth, life, death, resurrection, ascension, and eventual return, we find the shape and character of love that God has for the whole of the world.

"...That (Jesus) laid down his life for us..." an act of pure love, something that echoes throughout John's gospel. John talks about it when he talks about the good shepherd who gives his life for his sheep (John 10:11). Jesus' love comes at the cost of laying his life down for the sake of his sheep, for all of us.

"...And we ought to lay down our lives for one another." The new commandment that is mentioned at the start of our passage from 1st John, "Love one another." (1st John 3:11) It is the same commandment that Jesus gave to his disciples (as recorded in John 13:34-35) the night before he died.

Of course, this seems so simple at face value, *love one another*. And it is such a demanding invitation. John invites us to model our love on the love of Jesus. Lay down your life for one another. Love in a self-less, self-giving way. Love one another in that way.

John's invitation is to a life-long journey of laying our lives down for the sake of love. It is learning to die to our own selfish desires and to love in a radically different way. John's invitation is to a life of submitting our wills and desires to God, in order to learn selfless love like how Jesus loved us.

This type of love is only possible because we have experienced this love through Jesus, and we are empowered by God's grace and love to follow in truth and action into that way of self-less and self-giving love.

So as John invites us in his loving words, "Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action." (1st John 3:18). May this be an invitation not to resolve just for this new year, but as a direction for our whole lives.

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

The Canticle ~ A Song of the New Jerusalem

*Above you the Holy One arises,
and above you God's glory appears.*

Arise, shine out, for your light has come, ♦
the glory of the Lord is rising upon you.

Though night still covers the earth, ♦
and darkness the peoples;

Above you the Holy One arises, ♦
and above you God's glory appears.

The nations will come to your light, ♦
and kings to your dawning brightness.

Your gates will lie open continually, ♦
shut neither by day nor by night.

The sound of violence shall be heard no longer in your
land, ♦
or ruin and devastation within your borders.

You will call your walls, Salvation, ♦
and your gates, Praise.

No more will the sun give you daylight, ♦
nor moonlight shine upon you;

But the Lord will be your everlasting light, ♦
your God will be your splendour.

For you shall be called the city of God, ♦
the dwelling of the Holy One of Israel.

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.

Above you the Holy One arises,
and above you God's glory appears.

Isaiah 60.1-3, 11a, 18, 19, 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

We pray that Christ may be seen in the life of the Church.

You have called us into the family
of those who are the children of God.

May our love for our brothers and sisters in Christ
be strengthened by your grace.

Jesus, Lord of the Church,

in your mercy hear us.

You have called us to be a temple
where the Holy Spirit can dwell.

Give us clean hands and pure hearts

so that our lives will reflect your holiness.

Jesus, Lord of the Church,

in your mercy hear us.

You have called us to be a light to the world,
so that those in darkness come to you.

May our lives shine as a witness
to the saving grace you have given for all.

Jesus, Lord of the Church,

in your mercy hear us.

You have called us to be members of your body,
so that when one suffers, all suffer together.

We ask for your comfort and healing power
to bring hope to those in distress.

Jesus, Lord of the Church,
in your mercy hear us.

You have called us to be the Bride,
where you, Lord, are the Bridegroom.
Prepare us for the wedding feast,
where we will be united with you for ever.

Jesus, Lord of the Church,
in your mercy hear us.

Jesus, Lord of the Church,
you have called us into fellowship with all your saints.
We unite our prayers with theirs
and ask for grace to serve you with joy
where you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for all eternity.

Amen.

Our prayers conclude

Almighty God,
in Christ you make all things new;
transform the poverty of our nature by the riches of your grace,
and in the renewal of our lives
make known your heavenly glory;
through 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

Jesus, Lord of time,
hold us in your eternity.
Jesus, image of God,
travel with us the life of faith.
Jesus, friend of sinners,
heal the brokenness of our world.
Jesus, Lord of tomorrow,
draw us into your future. Amen.

Credits:

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