

# Daily Prayer

## *Advent FERIA*

*Wednesday, December 8, 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*

God will speak peace to his people,  
to those who turn to him in their hearts.

## **The First Reading**

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,  
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;  
like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly,  
and rejoice with joy and singing.  
The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,  
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.  
They shall see the glory of the LORD,  
the majesty of our God.

Strengthen the weak hands,  
and make firm the feeble knees.  
Say to those who are of a fearful heart,  
'Be strong, do not fear!  
Here is your God.  
He will come with vengeance,  
with terrible recompense.  
He will come and save you.'

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,  
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;  
then the lame shall leap like a deer,  
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.  
For waters shall break forth in the wilderness,  
and streams in the desert;  
the burning sand shall become a pool,  
and the thirsty ground springs of water;  
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp,  
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.  
A highway shall be there,  
and it shall be called the Holy Way;  
the unclean shall not travel on it,  
but it shall be for God's people;  
no traveller, not even fools, shall go astray.  
No lion shall be there,  
nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;  
they shall not be found there,  
but the redeemed shall walk there.  
And the ransomed of the LORD shall return,  
and come to Zion with singing;  
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;  
they shall obtain joy and gladness,  
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

*Isaiah 35.1-10*

## **The Psalm**

I will listen to what the Lord God will say, ♦  
for he shall speak peace to his people and to the faithful,  
that they turn not again to folly.

Truly, his salvation is near to those who fear him, ♦  
that his glory may dwell in our land.

Mercy and truth are met together, ♦  
righteousness and peace have kissed each other;

Truth shall spring up from the earth ♦  
and righteousness look down from heaven.

The Lord will indeed give all that is good, ♦  
and our land will yield its increase.

Righteousness shall go before him ♦  
and direct his steps in the way.

*Psalm 85.8-13*

## **The Gospel Reading**

One day, while he was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting nearby (they had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem); and the power of the Lord was with him to heal. Just then some men came, carrying a paralysed man on a bed. They were trying to bring him in and lay him before Jesus; but finding no way to bring him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down with his bed through the tiles into the middle of the crowd in front of Jesus. When he saw their faith, he said, 'Friend, your sins are forgiven you.' Then the scribes and the Pharisees began to question, 'Who is this who is speaking blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?' When Jesus perceived their questionings, he answered them, 'Why do you raise such questions in your hearts? Which is easier, to say, "Your sins are forgiven you", or to say, "Stand up and walk"? But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins'—he said to the one who was paralysed—'I say to you, stand up and take your bed and go to your home.' Immediately he stood up

before them, took what he had been lying on, and went to his home, glorifying God. Amazement seized all of them, and they glorified God and were filled with awe, saying, 'We have seen strange things today.'

*Luke 5.17-26*

*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*

"Sorrow and Sighing Shall Flee Away"

*Isaiah 35*

Here we are in my favourite season of Advent. One of its appeals is that it is so counter cultural. As the rest of the world wallows in shopping for stuff, we are deep in the wilderness waiting with the prophets of old and Jesus and John the Baptist. And what are we waiting for? Why are we commanded to keep awake? How can God's promise to turn darkness into light really come true? Ah...just wait. Light another candle every Sunday. Open one more door on your Advent calendars. Flood your ears with the hymns of the season and wait!

In this era of expected instant gratification, this is not an easy thing to do, so I recommend you turn to the words of my favourite wordsmith the prophet Isaiah. He paints vivid scenes of a reclaimed world when God's vision actually can become our vision here on earth and "the wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the calf ...and a little child will lead them." Or savour these images from today's portion of Isaiah 35. "The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom...the

eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped...and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." These words capture our hearts and vision every single year but, this year as we continue on this uncertain path of Covid variants appearing and visceral hate mongering over vaccines and floods in British Columbia and... and... are we not even thirstier for these words of hope and new life which Isaiah offers?

A number of years ago I wrote my first and only psalm. It is harder to do than imagined. One of the sources I consulted suggested following the letters of the alphabet. So I did. It was the beginning of Advent, so I humbly typed in the first line.

A voice in the wilderness calls...and it continued on right through to Zion's dream coming true. I offer it to you now and invite you to write your own keeping in mind the words of Isaiah that sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

*My Advent Psalm*

*A voice in the wilderness calls,*

*Blinded eyes are opened.*

*Canes are tossed aside.*

*Deserts bloom.*

*Every valley is exalted.*

*Fears that paralyze will be gone.*

*God's vision fulfilled.*

*How gracious you are my beloved!*

*Isaiah's words ring true,*

*Jerusalem will weep no more.*

*Keep awake!*  
*Lambs will lie down with wolves.*  
*Make straight a highway in the desert.*  
*New hopes are kindled.*  
*Offerings of thanksgiving are made.*  
*Preparing the way of the Lord.*  
*Questions are asked*  
*Restoration completed.*  
*Shine forth in our lives*  
*Teach us to believe.*  
*Unite all creation.*  
*Visit us with peace.*  
  
*Wake us up!*  
*Exceed our wildest dreams.*  
*Yours is our vision,*  
*Zion's dream coming true.*

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

## **The Canticle ~ A Song of God's Herald**

God will feed his flock like a shepherd,  
and gather the lambs in his arms.

Go up to a high mountain,  
herald of good tidings to Zion; ♦  
    lift up your voice with strength,  
herald of good tidings to Jerusalem.

Lift up your voice, fear not; ♦  
    say to the cities of Judah, 'Behold your God!'

See, the Lord God comes with might, ♦  
    and his arm rules for him.

Behold, his reward is with him, ♦  
and his recompense before him.  
God will feed his flock like a shepherd, ♦  
and gather the lambs in his arms;  
He will carry them in his breast, ♦  
and gently lead those that are with young.

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 will feed his flock like a shepherd,  
and gather the lambs in his arms.*

*Isaiah 40.9-11*

*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*

Lord our God,  
through your prophets you comforted us in our weakness  
and called us to use our strengths for the good of others.  
As we pray in this season for Christ's coming,



so we ask that we would have the confidence to renew  
our own lives,  
that, through compassion and practical service,  
we may be made agents of your kingdom in our world,  
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*

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.



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