

Daily Prayer

Gregory the Illuminator

Wednesday, March 23, 2022

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—and remember Gregory the Illuminator, Bishop of Armenia, 332.

We begin by saying

O God, make speed to save us.

O Lord, make haste to help us.

Hear my prayer, O Lord, and give ear to my cry;

hold not your peace at my tears.

The First Reading

Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, 'Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way. For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, "To an unknown god." What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. From one ancestor he made all nations to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, so that they would search for God and perhaps grope for him and find him—though indeed he is not far from each one of us. For "In him we live and

move and have our being”; as even some of your own poets have said,

“For we too are his offspring.”

Since we are God’s offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals. While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.’

Acts 17.22-31

The Psalm

By the word of the Lord were the heavens made ♦
and all their host by the breath of his mouth.

He gathers up the waters of the sea as in a waterskin ♦
and lays up the deep in his treasury.

Let all the earth fear the Lord; ♦
stand in awe of him, all who dwell in the world.

For he spoke, and it was done; ♦
he commanded, and it stood fast.

The Lord brings the counsel of the nations to naught; ♦
he frustrates the designs of the peoples.

But the counsel of the Lord shall endure for ever ♦
and the designs of his heart from generation to
generation.

Psalm 33.6-11

The Gospel Reading

'Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

'You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled under foot.

'You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

Matthew 5.11-16

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

From *For All the Saints*

Today we honour Gregory the Illuminator, the Apostle of the Armenians, who illumined his nation with the light of the gospel. In fact, it was through his ministry that Armenia became the first kingdom in the ancient world to make Christianity its official religion.

He was born in Armenia in the middle of the third century, but spent his childhood and youth in a neighbouring, Greek-speaking country, where he was raised a Christian. Around the year 280 he returned to Armenia and after many adversities succeeded in converting King Ti-ri-da'-tes, who then gave him every assistance in rooting out paganism and establishing Christianity among the Armenian people. Twenty years or so after the beginning of his mission

Gregory was ordained bishop; he spent the next three decades consolidating his work until his death around the year 332.

Despite horrible persecutions in this century, when millions of Armenians were done to death by the Turks, the Church that Gregory founded remains strong and vital. Let us therefore give thanks for his life, and for the grace which God gave to him for bringing a whole nation to new birth in Christ.

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

The Canticle ~ A Song of Peace

*Spirit of God, teach us your ways,
that we may walk in the paths of peace.*

Come, let us go up to the mountain of God, ♦
to the house of the God of Jacob;

That God may teach us his ways, ♦
and that we may walk in his paths.

For the law shall go out from Zion, ♦
and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

God shall judge between the nations, ♦
and shall mediate for many peoples.

They shall beat their swords into ploughshares, ♦
and their spears into pruning hooks.

Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, ♦
neither shall they learn war any more.

O people of Jacob, come: ♦
let us walk in the light of the Lord.

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.
*Spirit of God, teach us your ways,
that we may walk in the paths of peace.*

Isaiah 2.3-5

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

For the one holy catholic and apostolic Church throughout the world, we pray to you, Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the mission of the Church, that in faithful witness it may preach the gospel to the ends of the earth, we pray to you, Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For those preparing for baptism, for our catechumens and for their teachers and sponsors, we pray to you, Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For peace in the world, that a spirit of respect and reconciliation may grow among nations and peoples, we pray to you, Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the poor, the persecuted, the sick, and all who suffer; for refugees, prisoners, and all in danger; that they may be relieved and protected, we pray to you, Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For all whom we have injured or offended, we pray to you, Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For grace to amend our lives and to further the reign of God,
we pray to you, Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

Our prayers conclude

Almighty God,
who raised up your servant Gregory the Illuminator
to kindle the people of Armenia
with the light of your gospel,
shine in our hearts, we pray,
that we also in our generation
may show forth your praise,
who called us out of darkness
into your marvellous light;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
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

This is love, not that we loved God.

But that he loved us and sent his Son.

He is the sacrifice for our sins,

that we might live through him.

If God loves us so much

we ought to love one another.

If we love one another

God lives in us.

Credits:

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

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

The reflection: For All the Saints

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