

Daily Prayer

Thomas More, Lawyer

Wednesday, July 6, 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.

We begin by saying

O God, make speed to save us.

O Lord, make haste to help us.

Make me to know your ways, O Lord.

and teach me your paths.

The First Reading

Now who will harm you if you are eager to do what is good? But even if you do suffer for doing what is right, you are blessed. Do not fear what they fear, and do not be intimidated, but in your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord. Always be ready to make your defence to anyone who demands from you an account of the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and reverence. Keep your conscience clear, so that, when you are maligned, those who abuse you for your good conduct in Christ may be put to shame.

1 Peter 3.13-16

The Psalm

Princes have persecuted me without a cause, ♦
but my heart stands in awe of your word.

I am as glad of your word ♦
as one who finds great spoils.

As for lies, I hate and abhor them, ♦
but your law do I love.

Seven times a day do I praise you, ♦
because of your righteous judgements.

Great peace have they who love your law; ♦
nothing shall make them stumble.

Lord, I have looked for your salvation ♦
and I have fulfilled your commandments.

My soul has kept your testimonies ♦
and greatly have I loved them.

I have kept your commandments and testimonies, ♦
for all my ways are before you.

Psalm 119.161-168

The Gospel Reading

Then they sent to Jesus some Pharisees and some Herodians to trap him in what he said. And they came and said to him, 'Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality, but teach the way of God in accordance with truth. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not? Should we pay them, or should we not?' But knowing their hypocrisy, he said to them, 'Why are you putting me to the test? Bring me a denarius and let me see it.' And they brought one. Then

he said to them, 'Whose head is this, and whose title?' They answered, 'The emperor's.' Jesus said to them, 'Give to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's.' And they were utterly amazed at him.

Mark 12.13-17

In silence, we ask what the readings have to say to us today. Is there something that draws us more deeply into the reading? What does God have to say to us? What do we have to ask God?

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

The Canticle ~ A Song of the Word of the Lord

*Return to the Lord who will have mercy,
to our God, who will richly pardon.*

*Seek the Lord while he may be found, ♦
call upon him while he is near;*

*Let the wicked abandon their ways, ♦
and the unrighteous their thoughts;*

*Return to the Lord, who will have mercy; ♦
to our God, who will richly pardon.*

*'For my thoughts are not your thoughts, ♦
neither are your ways my ways,' says the Lord.*

*'For as the heavens are higher than the earth, ♦
so are my ways higher than your ways
and my thoughts than your thoughts.*

*'As the rain and the snow come down from above, ♦
and return not again but water the earth,*

*'Bringing forth life and giving growth, ♦
seed for sowing and bread to eat,*

*'So is my word that goes forth from my mouth; ♦
it will not return to me fruitless,*

'But it will accomplish that which I purpose, ♦
and succeed in the task I gave it.'

Isaiah 55.6-11

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.

Return to the Lord who will have mercy,
to our God, who will richly pardon.

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

That this and all our days
may be full of your praise:

we pray to you, O Lord.

That you will keep us this day without sin:

we pray to you, O Lord.

That we may walk before you
in the paths of righteousness and peace:

we pray to you, O Lord.

That you will bless your people
and lift them up for ever:

we pray to you, O Lord.

That you will guide and protect us by your Holy Spirit
and bring us with your saints to glory everlasting:

we pray to you, O Lord.

Let us commend ourselves, and all for whom we pray,
to the mercy and protection of God.

Our prayers conclude

Almighty God,
who strengthened Thomas More
to be in office a king's good servant
but in conscience your servant first,
grant us in all our doubts and uncertainties
to feel the grasp of your holy hand
and to live by faith in your promise
that you shall not let us be lost;
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

May Christ our Saviour give us peace.
Amen.

Thomas More

Lawyer—Commemoration

Thomas More was an English lawyer and statesman who was beheaded in 1535 because he chose loyalty to the Pope over submission to his King. As he said to his daughter when she visited him in prison: "God's grace hath strengthened me hitherto and made me content in my heart to lose goods, land, and life too, rather than to swear against my conscience."

For almost twenty years More had enjoyed brilliant success in law and politics. He entered the House of Commons and made a name for himself as a critic of royal policies. Nevertheless he became Speaker of the House and even gained the warm respect of King Henry VIII. At the same time, More gained international fame as a model of the true Renaissance Catholic. He was hailed for the learning and wit he displayed in his writing and conversation; and it was well known that he observed a constant round of intense prayer and strict fasting in his private life. His reputation for political integrity and devout wisdom was rewarded in 1529, when the King appointed him Lord Chancellor of England.

Soon afterwards Henry VIII began to insist on the independence of the Church of England. More sided with those who defended the claims of the Pope and resigned as Lord Chancellor. He retired into private life, but his international fame was so great that the King demanded his public support. When More refused to swear an oath which violated his convictions, the King had him tried on a charge of high treason and sentenced to death. As he stood on the scaffold, More said: "I die the King's good servant, but God's first."

From *For All the Saints*

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