

Daily Prayer

St Matthew

Wednesday, September 21, 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 remember St Matthew—Apostle and Evangelist.

We begin by saying

O God, makes 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

My child, do not forget my teaching,
but let your heart keep my commandments;
for length of days and years of life
and abundant welfare they will give you.

Do not let loyalty and faithfulness forsake you;
bind them round your neck,
write them on the tablet of your heart.

So you will find favour and good repute
in the sight of God and of people.

Trust in the LORD with all your heart,
and do not rely on your own insight.
In all your ways acknowledge him,
and he will make straight your paths.

Proverbs 3.1-6

The Psalm

Teach me, O Lord, the way of your statutes ♦
and I shall keep it to the end.

Give me understanding and I shall keep your law; ♦
I shall keep it with my whole heart.

Lead me in the path of your commandments, ♦
for therein is my delight.

Incline my heart to your testimonies ♦
and not to unjust gain.

Turn away my eyes lest they gaze on vanities; ♦
O give me life in your ways.

Confirm to your servant your promise, ♦
which stands for all who fear you.

Turn away the reproach which I dread, ♦
because your judgements are good.

Behold, I long for your commandments; ♦
in your righteousness give me life.

Psalm 119.33-40

The Gospel Reading

As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth; and he said to him, 'Follow me.' And he got up and followed him.

And as he sat at dinner in the house, many tax-collectors and sinners came and were sitting with him and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, 'Why does your teacher eat with tax-collectors and sinners?' But when he heard this, he said, 'Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who

are sick. Go and learn what this means, "I desire mercy, not sacrifice." For I have come to call not the righteous but sinners.'

Matthew 9.9-13

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 Redemption

The Father has delivered us from the dominion of darkness, ♦
and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son;

In whom we have redemption, ♦
the forgiveness of our sins.

He is the image of the invisible God, ♦
the firstborn of all creation.

For in him all things were created, ♦
in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible.

All things were created through him and for him, ♦
he is before all things and in him all things hold together.

He is the head of the body, the Church, ♦
he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead.

In him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell; ♦
and through him God was pleased to reconcile all things.

Colossians 1.13-18a,19,20a

*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.*

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 through your Son
called Matthew to be your apostle and evangelist,
free us from all greed and selfish love,
that we may follow in the steps of 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.

St Matthew

Apostle and Evangelist—Holy Day

Today we honour Saint Matthew, a disciple and apostle of Christ who is traditionally believed to be the author of the first Gospel in the New Testament. According to that Gospel, Matthew was a tax-gatherer when Jesus called him; the Gospels according to Mark and Luke agree, but say that the taxgatherer's name was Levi. It is probably one and the same person, the disciple we call Matthew.

In first century Judea, tax collectors were viewed as foul collaborators who extorted money from their own people in order to sustain the Roman occupation and enrich themselves. Matthew was an outcast in his own nation, so polluted by his job that he could not take part in the worship of Israel. The fact that Jesus consorted with the likes of Matthew, and even called him into his circle of disciples, was one of the things that scandalized his fellow Jews the most.

With such a background it may be ironic that the Gospel according to Matthew is considered the most Jewish of the four versions in the New Testament. It takes the greatest pains to show that Jesus was faithful to his Jewish heritage and constantly cites Old Testament texts to prove that he did not come to abolish the law and the prophets, but to fulfill them.

Matthew's Gospel is also the work of a true literary artist who not only wrote well but also knew how to organize his materials to their best advantage. These qualities have made it, down through the centuries, the favourite version for many of the preachers, teachers, and reading public of the Church.

Credits:

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