

Daily Prayer

Martyrs of the 20th Century

Wednesday, April 24, 2024

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.

Hear our voice, O Lord, according to your faithful love,

according to your judgement give us life.

The First Reading

Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that is taking place among you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice in so far as you are sharing Christ's sufferings, so that you may also be glad and shout for joy when his glory is revealed. If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the spirit of glory, which is the Spirit of God, is resting on you. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, a criminal, or even as a mischief-maker. Yet if any of you suffers as a Christian, do not consider it a disgrace, but glorify God because you bear this name. For the time has come for judgement to begin with the household of God; if it begins with us, what will be the end for those who do not obey the gospel of God? And 'If it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinners?' Therefore, let those suffering in accordance with God's will entrust themselves to a faithful Creator, while continuing to do good.

1 Peter 4.12-19

The Psalm

As for me, I am poor and in misery; ♦
your saving help, O God, will lift me up.

I will praise the name of God with a song; ♦
I will proclaim his greatness with thanksgiving.

This will please the Lord more than an offering of oxen, ♦
more than bulls with horns and hooves.

The humble shall see and be glad; ♦
you who seek God, your heart shall live.

For the Lord listens to the needy, ♦
and his own who are imprisoned he does not despise.

Let the heavens and the earth praise him, ♦
the seas and all that moves in them;

Psalm 69.31-36

The Gospel Reading

...they will mock him, and spit upon him, and flog him, and kill him; and after three days he will rise again.'

James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came forward to him and said to him, 'Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you.' And he said to them, 'What is it you want me to do for you?' And they said to him, 'Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory.' But Jesus said to them, 'You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?' They replied, 'We are able.' Then Jesus said to them, 'The cup that I drink you will drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized;

Mark 10.34-39

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 Faith

God raised Christ from the dead,
the Lamb without spot or stain.

Blessed be the God and Father ♦
of our Lord Jesus Christ!

By his great mercy we have been born anew to a living
hope ♦
through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

Into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled and
unfading, ♦
kept in heaven for you,

Who are being protected by the power of God through
faith, ♦
for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

You were ransomed from the futile ways of your ancestors ♦
not with perishable things like silver or gold

But with the precious blood of Christ ♦
like that of a lamb without spot or stain.

Through him you have confidence in God,
who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, ♦
so that your faith and hope are set on God.

1 Peter 1.3-5,18,19,21

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 raised Christ from the dead,
the Lamb without spot or stain.

*We continue in prayer for those people and situations that we hold up before God and
continue with the concluding collect, the Lord's prayer and the closing sentences.*

The Intercessions

We pray to Jesus who is present with us to eternity.
Jesus, light of the world,
bring the light and peace of your gospel to the nations ...
Jesus, Lord of life,
in your mercy, hear us.

Jesus, bread of life,
give food to the hungry ...
and nourish us all with your word.
Jesus, Lord of life,
in your mercy, hear us.

Jesus, our way, our truth, our life,
be with us and all who follow you in the way ...
Deepen our appreciation of your truth
and fill us with your life.
Jesus, Lord of life,
in your mercy, hear us.

Jesus, Good Shepherd who gave your life for the sheep,
recover the straggler,
bind up the injured,
strengthen the sick

and lead the healthy and strong to new pastures.

Jesus, Lord of life,
in your mercy, hear us.

Jesus, the resurrection and the life,
we give you thanks for all who have lived and believed in you ...
Raise us with them to eternal life.

Jesus, Lord of life,
in your mercy, hear us,
accept our prayers, and be with us always.
Amen.

Our prayers conclude

Almighty God,
who chose what is weak in the world
to shame the strong,
teach us to honour
your Martyrs of the Twentieth Century,
that we may stand fast in your truth,
proclaim your salvation in the world,
and fulfil your commandments in love;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who is alive 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 the risen Christ grant us the joy of eternal life.

Amen.

Martyrs of the 20th Century

Memorial

Martyrs are Christians who have been put to death because they chose to remain faithful to the gospel and counted “the truth as it is in Jesus” dearer than life itself. In the twentieth century more Christians suffered for this reason than at any other time in the Church’s history — there are the three million Armenian Christians who died under Turkish brutality during the first World War; the million Orthodox who perished in the Soviet Union in the 1920’s and 30’s; the unknown number of Albanians who disappeared in their government’s efforts to suppress Christianity; the hundreds of Germans, both Protestants and Catholics, who died because they resisted Hitler and his Nazi regime; the Burmese Christians who were killed simply because they believed in Christ; the hundreds of African Christians who suffered because they condemned the terrorism of colonial authorities and black nationalists alike; and the many who were killed because their Christian witness made them oppose racism or social and economic injustices.

If we were not careful, the sheer number of martyrs might stagger our efforts to remember them, and why and how they died. So, today’s memorial is meant to be a small act of resistance, a refusal to be silent in the face of terror and injustice. We collect our intentions around a thankful remembrance of the Christian Martyrs of the Twentieth Century and learn anew the ancient truth, that “the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church.”

Credits:

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