

Daily Prayer

Saint Thomas the Apostle

Wednesday, July 3, 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.

Make me to know your ways, O Lord,

and teach me your paths.

The First Reading

Do not, therefore, abandon that confidence of yours; it brings a great reward. For you need endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised. For yet 'in a very little while,

the one who is coming will come and will not delay;
but my righteous one will live by faith.

My soul takes no pleasure in anyone who shrinks back.'
But we are not among those who shrink back and so are lost, but among those who have faith and so are saved.

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

Hebrews 10.35-11.1

The Psalm

When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, ♦
then were we like those who dream.

Then was our mouth filled with laughter ♦
and our tongue with songs of joy.

Then said they among the nations, ♦
'The Lord has done great things for them.'

The Lord has indeed done great things for us, ♦
and therefore we rejoiced.

Restore again our fortunes, O Lord, ♦
as the river beds of the desert.

Those who sow in tears ♦
shall reap with songs of joy.

Those who go out weeping, bearing the seed, ♦
will come back with shouts of joy,
bearing their sheaves with them.

Psalm 126

The Gospel Reading

But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, 'We have seen the Lord.' But he said to them, 'Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.'

A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' Then he said to Thomas, 'Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.' Thomas

answered him, 'My Lord and my God!' Jesus said to him, 'Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.'

John 20.24-29

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 and
continue with the concluding collect, the Lord's prayer and the closing sentences.*

The Intercessions

We pray for the flourishing of God's gifts to his Church, saying:
Lord of the Church,
in your mercy hear us.

God our Father, you give us gifts that we may work together
in the service of your Son:
bless the leaders of your Church,
that they may be firm in faith,
and humble before you.

Lord of the Church,
in your mercy hear us.

Bless those who teach,
that they may increase our understanding,
and be open to your word for them.

Lord of the Church,
in your mercy hear us.

Bless those who minister healing,

that they may bring wholeness to others,
yet know your healing in themselves.
Lord of the Church,
in your mercy hear us.

Bless those through whom you speak,
that they may proclaim your word in power,
yet open their ears to your gentle whisper.
Lord of the Church,
in your mercy hear us.

Bless those who work in your world today,
that in the complexity of their daily lives
they may live for you, fulfil your purposes,
and seek your kingdom first.
Lord of the Church,
in your mercy hear us.

Bless those who are uncertain of their gifts
and those who are powerless in this world's eyes,
that they may be made strong in your gift of the Holy Spirit.
Lord of the Church,
hear our prayer,
and make us one in heart and mind
to serve you with joy for ever. Amen.

Our prayers conclude

Almighty and everliving God,
who strengthened your apostle Thomas
with faith in the resurrection of your Son,
strengthen us when we doubt,
and make us faithful disciples
of Jesus Christ our risen Lord;
who with you, O Father, and the Holy Spirit
lives and reigns eternally.

[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 God grant to the world justice, peace and truth.

Amen.

Saint Thomas the Apostle

Holy Day

Saint Thomas was a disciple who followed Jesus from Galilee to Jerusalem. The first three Gospels list his name among the twelve apostles but say nothing more about him. It is in the Fourth Gospel that Thomas gains prominence — and even some notoriety. According to John, when Jesus began his final journey to Jerusalem, Thomas understood what it meant and said to his fellow disciples, “Let us also go, that we may die with him.” But after the resurrection, Thomas refused to believe that the other disciples had seen the risen Jesus. His doubt was quashed in the most dramatic way; and in John’s account the risen Lord drove the point home by telling Thomas: “You have believed because you have seen me; blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe.”

In the New Testament the appearances of the risen Lord are proof that God’s saving purpose had entered its final stage. By appearing to his disciples, Jesus anticipated the still greater revelation when all the peoples of the earth will see him in glory and acknowledge him as Lord.

So Thomas was not wrong in his desire to behold and touch the Lord. But he made seeing the precondition of believing rather than its fulfillment. What blessing could he expect if, like the rest of the world, he postponed faith until the second coming, when sight will leave the world no choice but to believe that Jesus rose from the dead? Those who have not seen and yet believe therefore have a unique freedom in this present age; they shall not experience the final revelation as an eternity of compelled obedience but as the everlasting moment of creation’s fulfillment.

Jesus had mercy on Thomas and healed his desire even as he granted it. In the same way we who honour the doubting apostle may pray for the healing of our own desires, that they might become a source of freedom and not of constraint when God shall fulfill our faith with the vision of Christ in glory.

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