



Morning Prayer

Wednesday December 16, 2020

Wednesday in the Third Week of Advent

Comfort, comfort my people, says our God. [Isaiah 43:1]

The Invitatory and Psalter

Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine.

² When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you ³ For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.

[Isaiah 43:1-3]

The Confession

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Renew in us this day the image of your love; renew in us in the likeness of your mercy, O God. May any refusal to forgive that lingers with us, any bitterness of soul that hardens our hearts, be softened by your graces. Renew us in the image of your love, O God, renew us in the likeness of your mercy. **Amen.**

Absolution

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through the grace of Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life.

Amen.

Opening Prayer

In the morning light, O God, may I glimpse again your image deep with me, the threads of eternal glory woven into the fabric of every man and woman. May I catch sight of the mystery of the human soul fashioned in your likeness deeper than knowing, more enduring than time. And in glimpsing these threads of light amidst the weakness and distortion of my life, let me be recalled to the strength and beauty deep in my soul. Let me be recalled to the strength and beauty of your image in every living soul. **Amen.**

Invitatory Psalm 141:1-3, 8

O LORD, I call to you; come to me quickly; * hear my voice when I cry to you.

Let my prayer be set forth in your sight as incense, *

the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.

Set a watch before my mouth, O LORD, and guard the door of my lips; *

let not my heart incline to any evil thing.

My eyes are turned to you, Lord GOD; * in you I take refuge.

Psalm 85:8-13

8 Let me hear what God the Lord will speak,

for he will speak peace to his people, to his faithful, to those who turn to him in their hearts.

9 Surely his salvation is at hand for those who fear him, that his glory may dwell in our land.

10 Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet;

righteousness and peace will kiss each other.

11 Faithfulness will spring up from the ground,

and righteousness will look down from the sky.

12 The Lord will give what is good, and our land will yield its increase.

13 Righteousness will go before him, and will make a path for his steps.

The Lessons

A Reading from the Prophet Isaiah [45:5-8, 18-25]

⁵ I am the Lord, and there is no other; besides me there is no god. I arm you, though you do not know me, ⁶ so that they may know, from the rising of the sun and from the west, that there is no one besides me; I am the Lord, and there is no other. ⁷ I form light and create darkness, I make weal and create woe; I the Lord do all these things. ⁸ Shower, O heavens, from above, and let the skies rain down righteousness; let the earth open, that salvation may spring up, and let it cause righteousness to sprout up also; I the Lord have created it. . . .

¹⁸ For thus says the Lord, who created the heavens (he is God!), who formed the earth and made it (he established it; he did not create it a chaos, he formed it to be inhabited!):

I am the Lord, and there is no other. ¹⁹ I did not speak in secret, in a land of darkness; I did not say to the offspring of Jacob, 'Seek me in chaos.' I the Lord speak the truth, I declare what is right. ²⁰ Assemble yourselves and come together, draw near, you survivors of the nations!

They have no knowledge—those who carry about their wooden idols, and keep on praying to a god that cannot save. ²¹ Declare and present your case; let them take counsel together!

Who told this long ago? Who declared it of old? Was it not I, the Lord? There is no other god besides me, a righteous God and a Savior; there is no one besides me. ²² Turn to me and be

saved, all the ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other. ²³ By myself I have sworn, from my mouth has gone forth in righteousness a word that shall not return: 'To me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.' ²⁴ Only in the Lord, it shall be said of me, are righteousness and strength; all who were incensed against him shall come to him and be ashamed. ²⁵ In the Lord all the offspring of Israel shall triumph and glory.

A Song of the Wilderness [Isaiah 35:1-7,10]

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, * the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
It shall blossom abundantly, * and rejoice with joy and singing.

They shall see the glory of the Lord, * the majesty of our God.

Strengthen the weary hands, * and make firm the feeble knees.

Say to the anxious, "Be strong, do not fear! *

Here is your God, coming with judgment to save you."

Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, * and the ears of the deaf be unstopped.

Then shall the lame leap like a deer, * and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.

For waters shall break forth in the wilderness * and streams in the desert;

The burning sand shall become a pool * and the thirsty ground, springs of water.

The ransomed of God shall return with singing, * with everlasting joy upon their heads.

Joy and gladness shall be theirs, * and sorrow and sighing shall flee away

The Second Lesson: The Gospel of Luke [7:19-23]

John sent them to the Lord to ask, 'Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?' When the men had come to him, they said, 'John the Baptist has sent us to you to ask, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" ' Jesus had just then cured many people of diseases, plagues, and evil spirits, and had given sight to many who were blind. And he answered them, 'Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offence at me.'

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God**

Canticle: A Song of Christ's Goodness

Anselm of Canterbury

Jesus, as a mother you gather your people to you; *

you are gentle with us as a mother with her children.

Often you weep over our sins and our pride, *

tenderly you draw us from hatred and judgment.

You comfort us in sorrow and bind up our wounds, *
in sickness you nurse us and with pure milk you feed us.
Jesus, by your dying, we are born to new life; *
by your anguish and labor we come forth in joy.
Despair turns to hope through your sweet goodness; *
through your gentleness, we find comfort in fear.
Your warmth gives life to the dead, * your touch makes sinners righteous.
Lord Jesus, in your mercy, heal us; * in your love and tenderness, remake us.
In your compassion, bring grace and forgiveness, *
for the beauty of heaven, may your love prepare us.

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Prayers

Hear our cry, O God.

And listen to our prayer.

Let us pray. God be with you.

And also with you.

Hear our cry, O God.

And listen to our prayer.

Let us pray.

Help us, O God our Savior; **deliver us and forgive us our sins.**

Look upon your congregation; **give to your people the blessing of peace.**

Declare your glory among the nations; **and your wonders among all peoples.**

Do not let the oppressed be shamed and turned away; **never forget the lives of your poor.**

Continue your loving-kindness to those who know you;

and your favor to those who are true of heart.

Satisfy us by your loving-kindness in the morning;

so shall we rejoice and be glad all the days of our life.

The Lord's Prayer

Collect of the Day

Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The Prayers of the People

Let us pray for the church and the world as we wait with hope and longing for signs of the God of Love in the darkness and conflict of our world.

We give thanks for gathering us together in this community; grant your church a discerning spirit and a watchful eye, that we may make good use of this holy time and that we may recognize your Spirit in one another and deepen our individual relationships with you together.

O Come, Emmanuel, **Your people await your coming**

We give thanks for the freedom and abundance you have given our nation; grant us wisdom to share them compassionately. Grant that our leaders and the leaders of all nations use their powers to achieve peace and justice.

O Come, Emmanuel, **Your people await your coming.**

Watch over all those who must spend this holiday season apart from their loved ones. Grant us the grace to trust the love that transcends distance and to see your larger purpose in all that we long for. Watch over our children, that they may know the peace, as well as the excitement, of your presence.

O Come, Emmanuel **Your people await your coming**

Embrace with your healing love those who are suffering from weakness in body and spirit, their caregivers and those who resent the burdens of this time. *Pause . . .* Gather into your joyful presence those who have died, especially those we now name, silently or aloud . .

Pause

O Come, Emmanuel **Your people await your coming.**

Almighty God, in Christ you make all things new. Transform the poverty of our nature by the riches of your grace, and in the renewal of our lives make known your heavenly glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

A Stewardship Prayer

Blessed be God who calls us together **Praise to God who makes us one people.**
Blessed be God who has forgiven our sin. **Praise to God who gives hope and freedom**
Blessed be God whose Word is proclaimed. **Praise to God who is revealed as love.**
Blessed be God who alone has called us.

Therefore we offer all that we are and all that we shall become.

Accept, O God, our sacrifice of praise.

Accept our thanks for all you have done.

Our hands were empty, and you filled them. Amen.

A Prayer in Time of Transition

God of growth and discovery, yours is the inspiration that has changed our lives. Yours is the power that has brought us to take new risks and face new opportunities. You shape our dreams. May your Spirit guide us in our preparations to search for a new Rector: open our eyes to what is possible and what is unfinished; open our ears to words of wisdom that assure us and challenge us; open our hearts to possibilities we have not yet imagined and to what we have neglected, that we may be both bold and humble; through Jesus Christ, our Light, our Center, our Hope. **Amen.**

A Prayer for Facing the Coronavirus

Merciful God, hear our fervent prayer for all who suffer from the coronavirus. May those who are infected receive the proper treatment and the comfort of your healing presence. May their caregivers, families and neighbors be shielded from the onslaught of the virus. Give solace to those who grieve the loss of over 300, 000 loved ones. Protect and guide those who strive to find a cure, that their work may conquer the disease and restore communities to wholeness and health. Help us to rise above fear. We ask all this in the name of your Son Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. **Amen.**

A Prayer for an End to Racism

Lord, Jesus Christ who reached across the ethnic boundaries between Samaritan, Roman and Jew, who offered fresh sight to the blind and freedom to captives, help us to break down the barriers in our community and to see the reality of racism and bigotry, and free us to challenge and uproot it from ourselves, our society and our world. **Amen.**

A Prayer of St. Chrysostom

Almighty God, you have given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplication to you; and you have promised through your well-beloved Son that when two or three are gathered together in his Name you will be in the midst of them: Fulfill now, O Lord, our desires and petitions as may be best for us; granting us in this world knowledge of your truth, and in the age to come life everlasting. **Amen.**

Blessing

May the Sun of righteousness scatter the darkness from before your path, and the blessing of God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, be with you always.

Dismissal

Go out into the world in peace; have courage; hold onto what is good; return no one evil for evil; strengthen the faint hearted; support the weak, and help the suffering; honor all people; love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**