

Thursday

Morning Prayer – Holy Innocents

Opening Sentence

Their sound has gone out into all lands, and their message to the ends of the world. Psalm 19:4

Versicle and Response

Lord, open our lips.

And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen. Alleluia.

Venite

Come, let us sing to the Lord; *

let us shout for joy to the Rock of our salvation.

Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving *
and raise a loud shout to him with psalms.

For the Lord is a great God, *
and a great King above all gods.

In his hand are the caverns of the earth, *
and the heights of the hills are his also.

The sea is his, for he made it, *
and his hands have molded the dry land.

Come, let us bow down, and bend the knee, *
and kneel before the Lord our Maker.

For he is our God,
and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand. *
Oh, that today you would hearken to his voice!

Psalms

2 Quare fremuerunt gentes?

1 Why are the nations in an uproar? *
Why do the peoples mutter empty threats?

2 Why do the kings of the earth rise up in revolt,
and the princes plot together, *
against the Lord and against his Anointed?

3 "Let us break their yoke," they say; *
"let us cast off their bonds from us."

4 He whose throne is in heaven is laughing; *
the Lord has them in derision.

5 Then he speaks to them in his wrath, *
and his rage fills them with terror.

6 "I myself have set my king *
upon my holy hill of Zion."

7 Let me announce the decree of the Lord: *
he said to me, "You are my Son;
this day have I begotten you.

8 Ask of me, and I will give you the nations for
your inheritance *
and the ends of the earth for your possession.

9 You shall crush them with an iron rod *
and shatter them like a piece of pottery."

10 And now, you kings, be wise; *
be warned, you rulers of the earth.

11 Submit to the Lord with fear, *
and with trembling bow before him;

12 Lest he be angry and you perish; *
for his wrath is quickly kindled.

13 Happy are they all *
who take refuge in him!

26 *Judica me, Domine*

1 Give judgment for me, O Lord,
for I have lived with integrity; *
I have trusted in the Lord and have not faltered.

2 Test me, O Lord, and try me; *
examine my heart and my mind.

3 For your love is before my eyes; *
I have walked faithfully with you.

4 I have not sat with the worthless, *
nor do I consort with the deceitful.

5 I have hated the company of evildoers; *
I will not sit down with the wicked.

6 I will wash my hands in innocence, O Lord, *
that I may go in procession round your altar,

7 Singing aloud a song of thanksgiving *
and recounting all your wonderful deeds.

8 Lord, I love the house in which you dwell *
and the place where your glory abides.

9 Do not sweep me away with sinners, *
nor my life with those who thirst for blood,

10 Whose hands are full of evil plots, *
and their right hand full of bribes.

11 As for me, I will live with integrity; *
redeem me, O Lord, and have pity on me.

12 My foot stands on level ground; *
in the full assembly I will bless the Lord.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

Reading

Isaiah 49:13-23

Sing for joy, O heavens, and exult, O earth;
break forth, O mountains, into singing!
For the Lord has comforted his people,
and will have compassion on his suffering ones.

But Zion said, ‘The Lord has forsaken me,
my Lord has forgotten me.’
Can a woman forget her nursing-child,
or show no compassion for the child of her womb?
Even these may forget,
yet I will not forget you.
See, I have inscribed you on the palms of my hands;
your walls are continually before me.
Your builders outdo your destroyers,*
and those who laid you waste go away from you.
Lift up your eyes all around and see;
they all gather, they come to you.
As I live, says the Lord,
you shall put all of them on like an ornament,
and like a bride you shall bind them on.

Surely your waste and your desolate places
and your devastated land—
surely now you will be too crowded for your inhabitants,
and those who swallowed you up will be far away.
The children born in the time of your bereavement
will yet say in your hearing:

‘The place is too crowded for me;
make room for me to settle.’
Then you will say in your heart,
‘Who has borne me these?’
I was bereaved and barren,
exiled and put away—
so who has reared these?
I was left all alone—
where then have these come from?’

Thus says the Lord God:
I will soon lift up my hand to the nations,
and raise my signal to the peoples;
and they shall bring your sons in their bosom,
and your daughters shall be carried on their shoulders.
Kings shall be your foster-fathers,
and their queens your nursing-mothers.
With their faces to the ground they shall bow down to you,
and lick the dust of your feet.
Then you will know that I am the Lord;
those who wait for me shall not be put to shame.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Canticle 9

Surely, it is God who saves me; *
I will trust in him and not be afraid.

For the Lord is my stronghold and my sure defense, *
and he will be my Savior.

Therefore you shall draw water with rejoicing *
from the springs of salvation.

And on that day you shall say, *
Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his Name;

Make his deeds known among the peoples; *
see that they remember that his Name is exalted.

Sing the praises of the Lord, for he has done great things, *
and this is known in all the world.

Cry aloud, inhabitants of Zion, ring out your joy, *
for the great one in the midst of you is the Holy One of Israel.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

Reading

Matthew 18:1-14

At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, 'Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?' He called a child, whom he put among them, and said, 'Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.

'If any of you put a stumbling-block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe to the world because of stumbling-blocks! Occasions for stumbling are bound to come, but woe to the one by whom the stumbling-block comes!

'If your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away; it is better for you to enter life maimed or lame than to have two hands or two feet and to be thrown into the eternal fire. And if your eye causes you to stumble, tear it out and throw it away; it is better for you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and to be thrown into the hell* of fire.

'Take care that you do not despise one of these little ones; for, I tell you, in heaven their angels continually see the face of my Father in heaven.* What do you think? If a shepherd has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go in search of the one that went astray? And if he finds it, truly I tell you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that never went astray. So it is not the will of your* Father in heaven that one of these little ones should be lost.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Canticle 19

O ruler of the universe, Lord God,
great deeds are they that you have done, *
surpassing human understanding.
Your ways are ways of righteousness and truth, *

O King of all the ages
Who can fail to do you homage, Lord
and sing the praises of your Name
for you only are the Holy One.

All nations will draw near and fall down before you
because your just and holy works have been revealed.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

The Apostle's 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 Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Let us pray.

The Lord's Prayer

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.

Suffrages

Show us your mercy, O Lord;
And grant us your salvation.
Clothe your ministers with righteousness;
Let your people sing with joy.
Give peace, O Lord, in all the world;
For only in you can we live in safety.
Lord, keep this nation under your care;
And guide us in the way of justice and truth.
Let your way be known upon earth;
Your saving health among all nations.

Let not the needy, O Lord, be forgotten;
Nor the hope of the poor be taken away.
Create in us clean hearts, O God;
And sustain us with your Holy Spirit.

Collect of the Day: Holy Innocents

We remember today, O God, the slaughter of the holy innocents of Bethlehem by King Herod. Receive, we pray, into the arms of your mercy all innocent victims; and by your great might frustrate the designs of evil tyrants and establish your rule of justice, love, and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen

A Collect for the Renewal of Life

O God, the King eternal, who divides the day from the night and turns the shadow of death into the morning: Drive far from us all wrong desires, incline our hearts to keep your law, and guide our feet into the way of peace; that, having done your will with cheerfulness while it was day, we may, when night comes, rejoice to give you thanks; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

For Mission

Almighty and everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of your faithful people is governed and sanctified: Receive our supplications and prayers which we offer before you for all members of your holy Church, that in their vocation and ministry they may truly and devoutly serve you; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Prayers and Intercessions

Let us pray now for our own needs and those of others.

General Thanksgiving

Almighty God, Father of all mercies, we your unworthy servants give you humble thanks for all your goodness and loving-kindness to us and to all whom you have made. We bless you for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all for your immeasurable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ; for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. And, we pray, give us such an awareness of your mercies, that with truly thankful hearts we may show forth your praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up our selves to your service, and by walking before you in holiness and righteousness all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory throughout all ages. Amen.

Benediction

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore. Amen.

2 Corinthians 13:14