



**Morning Prayer**  
**2nd Sunday before**  
**Advent**  
**15<sup>th</sup> November 2020**



# An Order for Morning Prayer on Sunday

15 November 2020

2nd Sunday before Advent



## Preparation

Grace, mercy and peace  
from God our Father  
and the Lord Jesus Christ  
be with you  
**and also with you.**

This is the day that the Lord has made.  
**Let us rejoice and be glad in it.**

We have come together in the name of Christ  
to offer our praise and thanksgiving,  
to hear and receive God's holy word,  
to pray for the needs of the world,  
and to seek the forgiveness of our sins,  
that by the power of the Holy Spirit  
we may give ourselves to the service of God.

## Prayers of Penitence

Jesus says, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand.'  
So let us turn away from our sin and turn to Christ,  
confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

**Lord God,**  
**we have sinned against you;**  
**we have done evil in your sight.**  
**We are sorry and repent.**  
**Have mercy on us according to your love.**  
**Wash away our wrongdoing and cleanse us from our sin.**  
**Renew a right spirit within us**

**and restore to us the joy of your salvation;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

May the Father of all mercies  
cleanse us from our sins,  
and restore us in his image  
to the praise and glory of his name,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

Blessed is the Lord,  
**for he has heard the voice of our prayer;**

Therefore shall our hearts dance for joy  
**and in our song will we praise our God.**

Blessed are you, Lord our God,  
creator and redeemer of all;  
to you be glory and praise for ever.  
From the waters of chaos you drew forth the world.  
and in your great love fashioned us in your image.  
Now, through the deep waters of death,  
you have brought your people to new birth  
by raising your Son to life in triumph.  
May Christ your light ever dawn in our hearts  
as we offer you our sacrifice of thanks and praise.  
Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit:  
**Blessed be God for ever.**

The night has passed, and the day lies open before us;  
let us pray with one heart and mind.

*Silence is kept.*

As we rejoice in the gift of this new day,  
so may the light of your presence, O God,  
set our hearts on fire with love for you;  
now and for ever.

**Amen.**

# ¶ The Word of God

## **Psalmody**

*Psalm 90.1-8,12*

- 1 Lord, you have been our refuge  
from one generation to another.
- 2 Before the mountains were brought forth,  
or the earth and the world were formed,  
from everlasting to everlasting you are God.
- 3 You turn us back to dust and say:  
'Turn back, O children of earth.'
- 4 For a thousand years in your sight are but as yesterday,  
which passes like a watch in the night.
- 5 You sweep them away like a dream;  
they fade away suddenly like the grass.
- 6 In the morning it is green and flourishes;  
in the evening it is dried up and withered.
- 7 For we consume away in your displeasure;  
we are afraid at your wrathful indignation.
- 8 You have set our misdeeds before you  
and our secret sins in the light of your countenance.
- 12 So teach us to number our days  
that we may apply our hearts to wisdom.

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.

## First Reading

*Zephaniah 1.7,12-18*

<sup>7</sup>Be silent before the Lord GOD!

For the day of the LORD is at hand;  
the LORD has prepared a sacrifice,  
he has consecrated his guests.

<sup>12</sup>At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps,  
and I will punish the people  
who rest complacently on their dregs,  
those who say in their hearts,  
'The LORD will not do good,  
nor will he do harm.'

<sup>13</sup>Their wealth shall be plundered,  
and their houses laid waste.  
Though they build houses,  
they shall not inhabit them;  
though they plant vineyards,  
they shall not drink wine from them.

<sup>14</sup>The great day of the LORD is near,  
near and hastening fast;  
the sound of the day of the LORD is bitter,  
the warrior cries aloud there.

<sup>15</sup>That day will be a day of wrath,  
a day of distress and anguish,  
a day of ruin and devastation,  
a day of darkness and gloom,  
a day of clouds and thick darkness,  
<sup>16</sup>a day of trumpet blast and battle cry  
against the fortified cities  
and against the lofty battlements.

<sup>17</sup>I will bring such distress upon people  
that they shall walk like the blind;  
because they have sinned against the LORD,  
their blood shall be poured out like dust,  
and their flesh like dung.

<sup>18</sup>Neither their silver nor their gold

will be able to save them  
on the day of the LORD's wrath;  
in the fire of his passion  
the whole earth shall be consumed;  
for a full, a terrible end  
he will make of all the inhabitants of the earth.

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

*The reading may be followed by a time of silence.*

## **Old Testament Cantic**

### **A Song of David**

*1 Chronicles 29.10b-13, 14b*

- 1 Blessed are you, God of Israel, for ever and ever,  
for yours is the greatness, the power,  
the glory, the splendour and the majesty.
- 2 Everything in heaven and on earth is yours;  
yours is the kingdom, O Lord,  
and you are exalted as head over all.
- 3 Riches and honour come from you  
and you rule over all.
- 4 In your hand are power and might;  
yours it is to give power and strength to all.
- 5 And now we give you thanks, our God,  
and praise your glorious name.
- 6 For all things come from you,  
and of your own have we given you.

*1 Chronicles 29.10b-13, 14b*

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.

## Second Reading

*Matthew 25.14-30*

Jesus said to his disciples, <sup>14</sup>The kingdom of heaven is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; <sup>15</sup>to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. <sup>16</sup>The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. <sup>17</sup>In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. <sup>18</sup>But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. <sup>19</sup>After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. <sup>20</sup>Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, "Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents." <sup>21</sup>His master said to him, "Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master." <sup>22</sup>And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, "Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents." <sup>23</sup>His master said to him, "Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master." <sup>24</sup>Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, "Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; <sup>25</sup>so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours." <sup>26</sup>But his master replied, "You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? <sup>27</sup>Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. <sup>28</sup>So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. <sup>29</sup>For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. <sup>30</sup>As for this

worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

*The reading may be followed by a time of silence.*

Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead

**And Christ shall give you light.**

You have died and your life is hid with Christ in God.

**Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead.**

Set your minds on things that are above,  
not on things that are on the earth.

**And Christ shall give you light.**

When Christ our life appears you will appear with him in glory.

**Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead,  
and Christ shall give you light.**

## **Gospel Cantic**

### **Benedictus**

- 1 Blessed be the Lord the God of Israel,  
who has come to his people and set them free.
- 2 He has raised up for us a mighty Saviour,  
born of the house of his servant David.
- 3 Through his holy prophets God promised of old  
to save us from our enemies,  
from the hands of all that hate us,
- 4 To show mercy to our ancestors,  
and to remember his holy covenant.
- 5 This was the oath God swore to our father Abraham:  
to set us free from the hands of our enemies,

- 6 Free to worship him without fear,  
holy and righteous in his sight  
all the days of our life.
  - 7 And you, child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High,  
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way,
  - 8 To give his people knowledge of salvation  
by the forgiveness of all their sins.
  - 9 In the tender compassion of our God  
the dawn from on high shall break upon us,
  - 10 To shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of  
death,  
and to guide our feet into the way of peace. *Luke 1.68-79*
- 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.

**Sermon** (There is a reflection at the end of this booklet)

## **The Creed**

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

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
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,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come 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.**

## **¶ Prayers**

We pray for the coming of God's kingdom.

You sent your Son to bring good news to the poor,  
sight to the blind,  
freedom to captives  
and salvation to your people:  
anoint us with your Spirit;  
rouse us to work in his name.  
Father, by your Spirit  
**bring in your kingdom.**

Send us to bring help to the poor  
and freedom to the oppressed.  
Father, by your Spirit  
**bring in your kingdom.**

Send us to tell the world  
the good news of your healing love.  
Father, by your Spirit  
**bring in your kingdom.**

Send us to those who mourn,  
to bring joy and gladness instead of grief.  
Father, by your Spirit  
**bring in your kingdom.**

Send us to proclaim that the time is here  
for you to save your people.  
Father, by your Spirit  
**bring in your kingdom.**

Merciful Father,  
**accept these prayers  
for the sake of your Son,  
our Saviour Jesus Christ.  
Amen.**

*The Collect is said.*

Heavenly Father,  
whose blessed Son was revealed  
to destroy the works of the devil  
and to make us the children of God and heirs of eternal life:  
grant that we, having this hope,  
may purify ourselves even as he is pure;  
that when he shall appear in power and great glory  
we may be made like him in his eternal and glorious kingdom;  
where he is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

*The Lord's Prayer is said*

**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.  
Lead us not into temptation  
but deliver us from evil.  
  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours  
now and for ever.  
Amen.**



# The Conclusion

## The Blessing

The Lord bless us, and preserve us from all evil,  
and keep us in eternal life.

**Amen.**

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2nd Sunday before Advent

By the Archdeacon Mike Lodge

We can spend a lot of our time waiting and for a whole manner of things.

There are times when we are waiting for an appointment, perhaps to see a doctor, dentist or optician, waiting for an expected letter, phone call, email, or text message. We could actually be in a waiting room, having received an appointment to do whatever it might be that we are waiting for. We might also be waiting for the next bus, train or taxi, to take us on a journey. When we wait, often we do so with some sort of expectation, although there can also be much uncertainty, which means we can feel unsettled or anxious... As a result, what do you do when you are waiting; whatever you might be waiting for? How do you use your time? Do you busy yourself; find something to do to occupy you? Or do you become restless and find it difficult to settle down to do anything? Of course, sometimes we just don't know how long we will have to wait...

Waiting is the theme explored in our Bible reading and Jesus uses the parable of the talents to do this; to talk about his return, his coming again. Jesus helps us to picture a master going away, leaving his servants with responsibilities to fulfil during the time he is absent. On this occasion, there's a long time to wait, and the question is, who will be ready for the master's return. There's to be no waiting, in the standing around, idle, sort of way, but its more about getting on with the job and making the most of the opportunities entrusted to the servants. The main point being made, for us to take on board and respond to, is that the master, Jesus Christ, will return, and without warning, to see what's happened in his absence. This is expressed in the words '*Well done, good and faithful servant!*' in contrast to '*You wicked, lazy servant!*'

There are three other important points being made by Jesus.

**First**, our talents and our abilities are gifts from God. They are entrusted to us during our lifetime and we are responsible for the way in which we use them.

The Apostle Paul writes in his first Letter to the Church at Corinth - I Corinthians 12:

*<sup>4</sup> There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. <sup>5</sup> There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord.*

Paul highlights the truth that we are all different. God hasn't mass produced us in identical form. We have different personalities. We have different strengths and different weaknesses. We have different gifts to offer; Spiritual gifts and practical gifts. There are gifts of wisdom, discernment, healing, prophecy, prayer, and many others. There are gifts of administration, youth and children's work, pastoral care, making coffee, mending things. We all have gifts – no-one is without a gift – and we are responsible for the way in which we use them.

**Second**, God's gifts are given to us in order to be used, and not just for ourselves, or to meet our personal needs.

The Apostle Paul continues in his letter to the Corinthians:

*<sup>27</sup> Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.*

Paul uses the helpful imagery of the human body to emphasise our different gifts. The various parts of the human body have different, but equally essential, functions. And as I've said, we have different, but equally important gifts to offer. To fulfil its God-given purposes of worship, mission and service, the Church needs these varieties of gifts. These gifts may be summarised as different abilities, different amounts of time and different sums of money. All are required to maintain and develop the work of the Church: Being part of the decision making within the church and taking a leadership role. Contributing to the worshipping life of the church. Helping with Parish activities and events. The vital work of sharing the good news about Jesus. We can only do this effectively if we're working together, with a real sense of vision and unity, setting

aside our personal wants and focussing on shared needs. We are to use these gifts in the church and the world.

**Third**, Jesus makes it clear that the gifts that we have been given increase when we use them effectively.

If we think about any gift, skill or ability that's not used; for example, a sport - if that gift is not used, we can get 'rusty' and it takes a long time to 'get back up to speed.' The more our gifts are used the more natural they become. In contrast, if you don't use them, you'll lose them. We can seek an understanding of our gifts through the work and power of the Holy Spirit and God's will for how we should use them... Again, the apostle Paul, in his teaching about the work of God's Holy Spirit in our lives, emphasises the importance of the fruit of the Spirit in his letter to the Galatians, chapter 5:

*<sup>22</sup>But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup>gentleness and self-control.*

Jesus is impressing upon us that our faith doesn't deepen through being allowed to stagnate, but through being applied. In essence, if we have a faith, then Jesus wants us to develop it, a spiritual understanding to be deepened. Once more, quoting the Apostle Paul, this time in his letter to the Colossians, chapter 3:

*<sup>23</sup>Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, <sup>24</sup>since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.*

We are called to sacrificial service, working hard for the kingdom of God to be extended, through the word of God and our faith in action – to serve God and neighbour, not ourselves! As we recall the words of Jesus: 'Well done, good and faithful servant!'