

Enriching Our Worship Morning Prayer *Friday, Feb. 26, 2021*

Opening Sentence: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us, but if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. *1 John 1:8, 9*

Confession:

Let us confess our sins to God.

**God of all mercy, we confess that we have sinned against you, opposing your will in our lives.
We have denied your goodness in each other, in ourselves, and in the world you have created.
We repent of the evil that enslaves us, the evil we have done, and the evil done on our behalf.
Forgive, restore, and strengthen us through our Savior Jesus Christ, that we may abide in your love and serve only your will. Amen.**

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

Leader: O God, let our mouth proclaim your praise.

People: **And your glory all the day long.**

Praise to the holy and undivided Trinity, one God: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

The Venite

Antiphon: Our God is full of compassion and mercy: **O come let us worship.**

**Come, let us sing to the Lord; * let us shout for joy to the Rock of our salvation.
Let us come before God's presence with thanksgiving * and raise to the Lord a shout with psalms.
For you are a great God; * you are great above all gods.
In your hand are the caverns of the earth, * and the heights of the hills are yours also.
The sea is yours, for you made it, * and your hands have molded the dry land.
Come, let us bow down and bend the knee, * and kneel before the Lord our Maker.
For you are our God, and we are the people of your pasture and the sheep of your hand. *
Oh, that today we would hearken to your voice!**

Antiphon: Our God is full of compassion and mercy: **O come let us worship.**

The Psalms *(choose one of the following)*

Psalm 63:1-8

**O God, you are my God; eagerly I seek you; * my soul thirsts for you, my flesh faints for you,
as in a barren and dry land where there is no water.**

**Therefore I have gazed upon you in your holy place, *
that I might behold your power and your glory.**

For your loving-kindness is better than life itself; * my lips shall give you praise.

So will I bless you as long as I live * and lift up my hands in your Name.

My soul is content, as with marrow and fatness, * and my mouth praises you with joyful lips,

When I remember you upon my bed, * and meditate on you in the night watches.

For you have been my helper, * and under the shadow of your wings I will rejoice.

My soul clings to you; * your right hand holds me fast.

Antiphon: **O God, you are my God; from break of day I seek you.**

or

Psalm 67:1-5

O God, be merciful to us and bless us, * show us the light of your countenance and come to us.

Let your ways be known upon earth, * your saving health among all nations.

Let the peoples praise you, O God; * let all the peoples praise you.

Let the nations be glad and sing for joy, * for you judge the peoples with equity and guide all the nations upon earth. Let the peoples praise you, O God; * let all the peoples praise you.

Antiphon: **Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you.**

or

Psalm 134

**Behold now, bless the LORD, all you servants of the LORD, *
you that stand by night in the house of the LORD.**

**Lift up your hands in the holy place and bless the LORD; *
the LORD who made heaven and earth bless you out of Zion.**

Antiphon: **Yours is the day, O God, yours also the night; you established the moon and the sun.**

or

Psalm 141:1-3,8ab

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.**

Antiphon: **Let my prayer be set forth in your sight as incense, the lifting up of my hands like the evening sacrifice.**

The Lessons

The First Reading: Hebrews 4:11-16

11 Let us therefore make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one may fall through such disobedience as theirs.

12 Indeed, the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing until it divides soul from spirit, joints from marrow; it is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. 13 And before him no creature is hidden, but all are naked and laid bare to the eyes of the one to whom we must render an account.

14 Since, then, we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession. 15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who in every respect has been tested as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us therefore approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

Thanks be to God.

Canticle: *The Second Song of Isaiah*

Seek the Lord while he wills to be found; * call upon him when he draws near.

Let the wicked forsake their ways * and the evil ones their thoughts;

And let them turn to the Lord, and he will have compassion, * and to our God, for he will richly pardon.

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, * nor 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.

For as rain and snow fall from the heavens * and return not again, but water the earth,

Bringing forth life and giving growth, * seed for sowing and bread for eating,

So is my word that goes forth from my mouth; * it will not return to me empty;

But it will accomplish that which I have purposed, * and prosper in that for which I sent it.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit

as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

The Gospel Reading: John 3:22-36

22. After this Jesus and his disciples went into the Judean countryside, and he spent some time there with them and baptized. 23 John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim because water was abundant there; and people kept coming and were being baptized. 24 John, of course, had not yet been thrown into prison. 25 Now a discussion about purification arose between John's disciples and a Jew. 26 They came to John and said to him, 'Rabbi, the one who was with you across the Jordan, to whom you testified, here he is baptizing, and all are going to him.' 27 John answered, 'No one can receive anything except what has been given from heaven. 28 You yourselves are my witnesses that I said, "I am not the Messiah, but I have been sent ahead of him." 29 He who has the bride is the bridegroom. The friend of the bridegroom, who

stands and hears him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom's voice. For this reason my joy has been fulfilled. 30 He must increase, but I must decrease.' 31 The one who comes from above is above all; the one who is of the earth belongs to the earth and speaks about earthly things. The one who comes from heaven is above all. 32 He testifies to what he has seen and heard, yet no one accepts his testimony. 33 Whoever has accepted his testimony has certified this, that God is true. 34 He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for he gives the Spirit without measure. 35 The Father loves the Son and has placed all things in his hands. 36 Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever disobeys the Son will not see life, but must endure God's wrath.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

Thanks be to God.

The Apostles' Creed *(read in unison)*

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 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.

Leader: Hear our cry, O God.

People: And listen to our prayer.

Leader: Let us pray.

V. Help us, O God our Savior;

R. Deliver us and forgive us our sins.

V. Look upon your congregation;

R. Give to your people the blessing of peace.

V. Declare your glory among the nations;

R. And your wonders among all peoples.

V. Do not let the oppressed be shamed and turned away;

R. Never forget the lives of your poor.

V. Continue your loving-kindness to those who know you;

R. And your favor to those who are true of heart.

V. Satisfy us by your loving-kindness in the morning;

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

The Collect: The First Sunday in Lent

Almighty God, whose blessed Son was led by the Spirit to be tempted by Satan; Come quickly to help us who are assaulted by many temptations; and, as you know the weaknesses of each of us, let each one find you mighty to save; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

For Our Enemies

O God, the Father of all, whose Son commanded us to love our enemies: Lead them and us from prejudice to truth; deliver them and us from hatred, cruelty, and revenge; and in your good time enable us all to stand reconciled before you; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

For Social Justice

Grant, O God, that your holy and life-giving Spirit may so move every human heart, that barriers which divide us may crumble, suspicions disappear, and hatreds cease; that our divisions being healed, we may live in justice and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

For Young Persons

God our Father, you see your children growing up in an unsteady and confusing world: Show them that your ways give more life than the ways of the world, and that following you is better than chasing after selfish goals. Help them to take failure, not as a measure of their worth, but as a chance for a new start. Give them strength to hold their faith in you, and to keep alive their joy in your creation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Concluding Sentence:

Glory to God whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine: Glory to God from generation to generation in the Church, and in Christ Jesus for ever and ever. **Amen.** *Ephesians 3:20,21*