



MISSION COMMUNITY

Together with God - Together for God

Seventh Sunday after Easter

24th May 2020

Email Sunday Service A warm welcome to all who worship with us

Introduction

Christ is Risen.

He is Risen Indeed. Alleluia!

Christ has ascended on high.

He reigns for ever. Alleluia!

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord. Alleluia!

This Hymn can be sung or said as a poem

1 All Heaven Declares

The glory of the risen Lord.

Who can compare

With the beauty of the Lord?

Refrain

Forever You will be

The Lamb upon the throne.

I gladly bow the knee

And worship You alone.

2 I will proclaim

The glory of the risen Lord.

Who once was slain

To reconcile us to God.

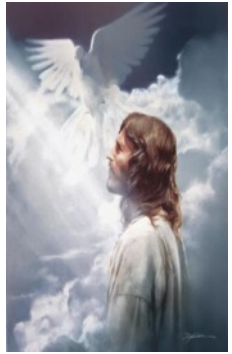
Forever You will be

The Lamb upon the throne.

I gladly bow the knee

And worship You alone. *(Repeat last refrain).*

Noel and Tricia Richards



Prayers of Penitence

Almighty God,

long-suffering and of great goodness:

I confess to you.

I confess with my whole heart

my neglect and forgetfulness of your commandments,

my wrong doing, thinking, and speaking;

the hurts I have done to others,

and the good I have left undone.

O God, forgive me, for I have sinned against you;

and raise me to newness of life;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Collect

O God the King of glory,

you have exalted your only Son Jesus Christ
with great triumph to your kingdom in heaven:

we beseech you, leave us not comfortless,

but send your Holy Spirit to strengthen us

and exalt us to the place where our

Saviour Christ is gone before,

who is alive and reigns with you,

in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

The Liturgy of the Word

Acts 1.6-14



The Ascension of Jesus

When they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?" He replied, "It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."

Matthias Chosen to Replace Judas

Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey away. When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying, Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.

Psalm 68.1-10. 33-36

**R, Sing to God, O kingdoms of the earth;
sing praises to the Lord.**

- 1 Let God arise and let his enemies be scattered;
let those who hate him flee before him.
- 2 Let them vanish like smoke
when the wind drives it away;
as the wax melts at the fire,
so let the wicked perish at the presence of God. **R,**
- 3 But let the righteous be glad and rejoice before God;
let them also be merry and joyful.
- 4 Sing to God, sing praises to his name;
exalt him who rides upon the heavens;
Yahweh is his name, rejoice before him! **R,**
- 5 Father of orphans, defender of widows,
God in his holy habitation!
- 6 God gives the solitary a home
and brings forth prisoners into freedom;
but the rebels shall live in dry places. **R,**
- 7 O God, when you went forth before your people,
when you marched through the wilderness,
- 8 The earth shook and the skies poured down rain,
at the presence of God, the God of Sinai,
at the presence of God, the God of Israel. **R,**
- 9 You sent a gracious rain, O God, upon your inheritance;
you refreshed the land when it was weary.
- 10 Your people found their home in it;
in your goodness, O God,
you have made provision for the poor. **R,**
- 33 Sing to God, O kingdoms of the earth;
sing praises to the Lord.
- 34 He rides in the heavens, the ancient heavens;
he sends forth his voice, his mighty voice. **R,**
- 35 Ascribe power to God;
his majesty is over Israel;
his strength is in the skies.
- 36 How wonderful is God in his holy places!
the God of Israel giving strength and power to his
people! Blessed be God!

**R, Sing to God, O kingdoms of the earth: sing praises
to the Lord.**

Gospel Reading: John 17.1-11

Jesus Prays for His Disciples

Jesus looked up to heaven and said, 'Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed.

'I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.

A short time of Silence may be taken

Homily

In 1 Corinthians 12.3 St Paul Says: "No one can say Jesus is Lord, except by the Holy Spirit." What he is actually saying is that whatever we do in our Christian lives cannot be done without the help of the Holy Spirit. It is easy for us to put on human intellect and reason that this is maybe not true. In our daily Christian deeds we are not always aware that the Spirit is actually helping us to do everything; is it? Sometimes we just use self discipline; don't we? But St Paul was not exaggerating.

In my world poetry is something that is really important to me. I say that as I not only love to read the works of say: W H Auden, W B Yeats, T S Elliot, Charlotte Mew, Phillip Larkin and many others - especially Seamus Heaney - but I am particularly keen to know what inspired them.

A lot of the earlier poets lived in a time when Christianity played a large part of people's lives. Church going on Sundays - Morning services and Evensong - was something that was fully expected of people to do. So a great slice of their inspiration came from 'above.' For those of us who live a spiritual life, the need for God's grace is paramount. We need that strength from God that - even when we are strong in body and mind - we don't always possess. It is especially when we are going through times of adversity and crisis - as we are presently - that we realise our limitations.

When Jesus died the disciples were like sheep without a shepherd. Before the passion they thought that they were strong, brave and not frightened easily (except in the boat on the lake). During the passion they realised that they had been weak, selfish and cowardly. But Jesus knew how they were likely to act and that they would not be prepared for the strength that they would need after his death, so Jesus told them not to do anything until they received the Holy Spirit. Once they had this bestowed on them they would have the strength and inspiration needed to go out and preach the Gospel.

I'm sure that if we are honest we can remember our own weaknesses. Whether they are from past experiences or a realisation that there are some things that we are unable to do and others can and it makes us feel a little uncomfortable.

And sometimes we can feel weak when we try to pray to God for strength, it may be the simplest of prayers but we are not sure that God will hear us.

The Saints who went before us had difficult and weak times too, but these moments aren't always times of torment and severe doubt, they often become moments of enlightenment, liberation and salvation. These are the times that can convince us of the need of the Holy Spirit.

The disciples, along with Mary, spent much time in the upper room during the nine days between the Ascension and the day of Pentecost preparing for the coming of the Holy Spirit. This preparation was a form of prayer called a Novena. A Novena is an ancient devotion that consists of 9 days of prayer. Novenas are often prayed in preparation for a feast day or for a specific intention. During this time in the Church calendar, we must try to make sure that these days of prayer are used by us. Jesus prayed for those he left behind to carry on his work and now two thousand

years later we are called to do the same and so he prays for us too.

As I said earlier we need strength from God that - even when we are strong in body and mind - we don't always possess. That strength will be given to us at Pentecost when the Holy Spirit will be with us. And like the Disciples who felt lost - just like a shepherd without his sheep - we too will have new life breathed into us. So as we wait for the Spirit coming we are to spend our time in prayer. We will find that on the day of Pentecost we too will find enlightenment, liberation and salvation. And then we too will be inspired and equipped, just as the disciples were to spread the Gospel far and wide.

A short time of Silence may be taken

Affirmation of Faith

We believe in God the Father,
from whom every family
in heaven and on earth is named.
We believe in God the Son,
who lives in our hearts through faith,
and fills us with his love.
We believe in God the Holy Spirit,
who strengthens us
with power from on high.
We believe in one God;
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Prayers

These can be formal or improvised and end with:

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.

This Hymn can be sung or said as a poem

1 Thine be the glory, risen, conqu'ring Son:
endless is the vict'ry thou o'er death hast won;
angels in bright raiment rolled the stone away,
kept the folded grave-clothes where thy body lay.

Refrain

Thine be the glory, risen, conqu'ring Son;
endless is the vict'ry thou o'er death hast won.

2 Lo! Jesus meets us, risen from the tomb;
lovingly he greets us, scatters fear and gloom;
let the church with gladness, hymns of triumph sing,
for her Lord now liveth, death hath lost its sting.

Refrain

3 No more we doubt thee, glorious Prince of life;
life is naught without thee: aid us in our strife;
make us more than conqu'rors, thro' thy deathless love:
bring us safe thro' Jordan to thy home above.

Refrain

Edmond Louis Budry (1854- 1932)

Closing Prayers

Alleluia. Christ is risen.
He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Eternal God,
our beginning and our end,
accompany us in this day's journey.
Dawn on our darkness,
open our eyes to praise you for your creation
and to see the work you set before us today.
Take us and use us to bring to others the new life
you give in Jesus Christ
our Lord.
Amen.