



Morning Prayer
3rd Sunday of Epiphany
24th January 2021

An Order for Morning Prayer on Sunday

24 January 2021

Epiphany 3

† 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

The grace of God has dawned upon the world
through our Saviour Jesus Christ,
who sacrificed himself for us to purify a people as his own.
Let us confess our sins. *cf Titus 2.11-14*

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 128

- 1 Blessed are all those who fear the Lord,
and walk in his ways.
 - 2 You shall eat the fruit of the toil of your hands;
it shall go well with you, and happy shall you be.
 - 3 Your wife within your house
shall be like a fruitful vine;
your children round your table,
like fresh olive branches.
 - 4 Thus shall the one be blest
who fears the Lord.
 - 5 The Lord from out of Zion bless you,
that you may see Jerusalem in prosperity
all the days of your life.
 - 6 May you see your children's children
and may there be peace upon Israel.
- 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

Genesis 14.17-20

¹⁷After Abram's return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley). ¹⁸And King Melchizedek of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was priest of God Most High. ¹⁹He blessed him and said,
 'Blessed be Abram by God Most High,
 maker of heaven and earth;
²⁰and blessed be God Most High,

who has delivered your enemies into your hand!’
And Abram gave him one-tenth of everything.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The reading may be followed by a time of silence.

Old Testament Canticle

A Song of the New Jerusalem

- 1 Arise, shine out, for your light has come,
the glory of the Lord is rising upon you.
- 2 Though night still covers the earth,
and darkness the peoples;
- 3 Above you the Holy One arises,
and above you God’s glory appears.
- 4 The nations will come to your light,
and kings to your dawning brightness.
- 5 Your gates will lie open continually,
shut neither by day nor by night.
- 6 The sound of violence shall be heard no longer in your land,
or ruin and devastation within your borders.
- 7 You will call your walls, Salvation,
and your gates, Praise.
- 8 No more will the sun give you daylight,
nor moonlight shine upon you;
- 9 But the Lord will be your everlasting light,
your God will be your splendour.
- 10 For you shall be called the city of God,
the dwelling of the Holy One of Israel.

Isaiah 60.1-3, 11a, 18-19, 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

John 2.1-11

¹On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. ²Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. ³When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, 'They have no wine.' ⁴And Jesus said to her, 'Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come.' ⁵His mother said to the servants, 'Do whatever he tells you.' ⁶Now standing there were six stone water-jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. ⁷Jesus said to them, 'Fill the jars with water.' And they filled them up to the brim. ⁸He said to them, 'Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward.' So they took it. ⁹When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom and said to him, ¹⁰'Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now.' ¹¹Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

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 Canticle

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

Let us pray to God, the giver of all good things to the Church and to the world.

Grant that the Church may so obey the commands of God that she may be strengthened by the good wine of his love ... May we find the mystery of grace in the life of every day.

Lord in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

We pray for the needs of the world, for fellowship and mutual care in sorrow and in joy ... Have compassion on those who have not enough for their needs, and guide those who are able to bring relief.

Lord in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

We ask for your blessing on our families ... Bless all who are recently married or soon to be married ... Give them joy at their weddings and constancy in their love.

Lord in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

We pray for the broken marriages and the families where bitter-ness has driven out love ... Revive in them the first vision of their joy and restore their love in the unbounded love of Christ.

Lord in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

Receive the souls of those who have passed through the pleasures and troubles of this world and found the good wine at last ... May they rejoice in the great wedding feast of heaven.

Lord in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

We offer our prayers in the name of Christ who gives abundantly to all who bring their need to him.

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

The Collect is said.

Almighty God,
whose Son revealed in signs and miracles
the wonder of your saving presence:
renew your people with your heavenly grace,
and in all our weakness
sustain us by your mighty power;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who 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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3rd Sunday of Epiphany

by Angus Ritchie

JESUS visits Cana immediately after gathering his first disciples (John 1.35-51). As Jean Vanier observes, another religious leader might have led new followers into the desert for a spiritual experience, or to a school to deepen their knowledge of the scriptures (Drawn into the Mystery of Jesus through the Gospel of John). Jesus, however, takes them to a week of feasting in an obscure Galilean village. There he reveals himself, and the nature of his mission, in a miracle of transformation.

At Cana, as throughout the Gospels, Jesus enters fully into the joys and sorrows of those around him. Elsewhere, he is criticised for being a “drunkard”, and keeping unrespectable company (Matthew 11.19). He also spends much time in quiet prayer, and is deeply immersed in the scriptures. But he does not use these times of retreat to evade the realities of daily life: rather, they inform and intensify his engagement with it.

For the Fourth Evangelist, the physical and spiritual are woven together. The word is always enfleshed. Therefore the physical details of the story are the key to its deeper meaning. That message, in turn, has implications for our material relationships.

The feasting at Cana would have lasted for about a week. Such celebrations were times of great revelry: the Aramaic word for “wedding feast” has the same roots as the word for “drink”.

While many residents of Galilee were involved in the production of wine, they could afford to drink it only on very special occasions. The bridegroom and his family would have saved for a long time to put on such a feast (Gerard Sloyan, Interpretation Bible Commentary: John). Running out of wine at your wedding was one of the most powerful ways in which poverty became a cause of shame.

Mary, presumably aware of these dynamics, implores her son to act when the wine runs out. The exchange between Jesus and his mother is brusque. This signifies a move from the obedience that Jesus showed his family while he lived in Nazareth (cf. Luke 2.51) to a public ministry based entirely on obedience to his heavenly Father.

When Jesus tells his mother that his hour has not yet come, he is both indicating the dependence of all his actions on the will of the Father and connecting the miracle he is about to work with the mystery of the Cross. “This hour is not yet come; that is the first thing that needs to be said. But Jesus has the power to anticipate this ‘hour’ in a mysterious sign” (Benedict XVI, Jesus of Nazareth).

Jesus’s action quietly transforms the situation of his host, restoring dignity to one of many Galilean families living in the shadow of scarcity and shame. The shortage of wine is known about by only a few people: the servants, Jesus, Mary, and his disciples. Jesus’s discretion saves the bridegroom and his family from public humiliation. Here, as elsewhere in the Gospels, Jesus’s exaltation does not come at the expense of those around him.

While its immediate effect is to rescue his host from shame, the miracle at Cana heralds a far greater work of transformation. As the eucharistic preface for this season expresses it:

In the water made wine

the new creation was revealed at the wedding feast.

Poverty was turned to riches, sorrow into joy.

The water at Cana is in jars for ritual purification. Their transformation points us to the new wine of the Kingdom: the blood that will be poured out when Jesus’s “hour” finally comes. This blood itself effects the most fundamental change of all. Fallen humanity is purified in an act that it can receive only as a sheer, unmerited gift. Because of Christ’s self-offering, sinful human beings can become his spotless bride (cf. Revelation 19.9).

This miracle both echoes and foreshadows the Last Supper. Each is a moment of transformation. Each directs our gaze to the very heart of Jesus’s mission: the “hour” of the Cross, which sets us free from sin and draws us into union with God.

At Cana, at his last supper, and at each celebration of the eucharist, Jesus reveals himself in deeds as well as words. These actions summon us to bear witness to him in our daily, material relationships, so that the abundant love of God is made known in a world still held captive by scarcity and shame.