

Exposition, Evening Prayer & Benediction



WEDNESDAY 1 APRIL 2020
Wednesday of the 5th Week of Lent

EXPOSITION

O Saving Victim

*O saving victim opening wide
The gate of heaven to us below.
Our foes press on from every side
Thy strength supply, thine aid bestow.*

The priest Incenses the Blessed Sacrament

*All praise and thanks to thee ascend
For evermore blest three in one,
O grant us life that shall not end
In our true native land with thee
AMEN.*

ADORATION/MOMENT OF REFLECTION

MARK 4:35-41

When evening had come, Jesus said to the disciples, "Let us go across to the other side." And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. A great storm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. But Jesus was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" He awoke and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" Then the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. He said to them, "Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?" And they were filled with awe and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

Reflection

"When evening had come" (Mark 4:35). The Gospel passage we have just heard begins like this. For weeks now it has been evening. Thick darkness has gathered over our squares, our streets, our cities; it has taken over our lives, filling everything with a deafening silence and a distressing void, that stops everything as it passes by; we feel it in the air, we notice in people's gestures, their glances give them away. We find ourselves afraid and lost. Like the disciples in the Gospel we were caught off guard by an unexpected, turbulent storm. We have realized that we are in the same boat, all of us fragile and disoriented, but at the same time important and needed, all of us called to row together, each of us having to comfort the other. Just like those disciples, who spoke anxiously with one voice, saying "We are perishing" (v. 38), so we too have realized that we cannot go on thinking only of ourselves: only together can we do this.

It is easy to recognize ourselves in this story. What is harder to understand is Jesus' attitude. While his disciples are naturally alarmed and desperate, he is in the stern, in the part of the boat that sinks first. And what does he do? In spite of the tempest, he sleeps on soundly, trusting in the Father – the only time in the Gospels we see Jesus sleeping. When he awakes up, after calming the wind and the waters, he turns to the disciples and says: "Why are you afraid? Have you no faith?" (v. 40). In what does the lack of the disciples' faith consist, in contrast to Jesus' trust? They had not stopped believing in him; in fact, they called on him. But we see how they call on him: "Teacher, do you not care if we perish?" (v. 38). Do you not care: they think that Jesus is not interested in them, does not care about them. One of the things that hurts us and our families most when we hear it said is: "Do you not care about me?" It is a phrase that wounds and unleashes storms in our hearts. It would have shaken Jesus too. Because he, more than anyone,

cares about us. Indeed, once they have called on him, he saves his disciples from their discouragement.

“Why are you afraid? Have you no faith?” Lord, your word this evening strikes us; it is about us, all of us. In this world, that you love more than we do, we have gone ahead at breakneck speed, feeling powerful and able to do anything. Greedy for profit, we let ourselves get caught up in things, and lured away by haste. We did not stop at your reproach to us, we were not shaken awake by wars or injustice across the world, nor did we listen to the cry of the poor or of our ailing planet. We carried on regardless, thinking we would stay healthy in a world that was sick. Now that we are in a stormy sea, we implore you: “Wake up, Lord!”

“Why are you afraid? Have you no faith?” Lord, you are calling to us, calling us to faith. Which is not so much believing that you exist, but coming to you and trusting in you. This Lent your call reverberates urgently: “Be converted!”, “Return to me with all your heart” (Joel 2:12). You are calling on us to seize this time of trial as a time of choosing. It is not the time of your judgement, but of our judgement: a time to choose what matters and what passes away, a time to separate what is necessary from what is not. It is a time to get our lives back on track in relationship to you, Lord, and to others.

“Why are you afraid? Have you no faith”? Faith begins when we realize we need to be saved. We are not self-sufficient; by ourselves we founder: we need the Lord, like ancient navigators needed the stars. Let us invite Jesus into the boats of our lives. Let us hand over our fears to him so that he can conquer them. Like the disciples, we will experience that with him on board there will be no shipwreck. Because this is God’s strength: turning to the good everything that happens to us, even the bad things. He brings serenity into our storms, because with God life never dies. The Lord awakens so as to reawaken our Easter faith. We have an anchor: by his cross we have been saved. We have a rudder: by his cross we have been

redeemed. We have a hope: by his cross we have been healed and embraced so that nothing and no one can separate us from his saving love.

Embracing his cross means finding the courage to embrace all the hardships of the present time, abandoning for a moment our eagerness for power and possessions in order to make room for the creativity that only the Spirit is capable of inspiring. It means finding the courage to create spaces where everyone can recognize that they are called, and to allow new forms of hospitality, fraternity and solidarity. Embracing the Lord in order to embrace hope: that is the strength of faith, which frees us from all fear, knowing, Lord, that you care for us, never more than now.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

VESPERS (EVENING PRAYER)

Priest: O God, come to our aid.

All: O Lord, make haste to help us.

Priest: Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit,

All: As it was in the beginning,
is now, and ever shall be,
world without end.
Amen.

Hymn

*Lord Jesus, think on me
And purge away my sin;
From earth-born passions set me free,
And make me pure within.*

*Lord Jesus, think on me,
With care and woe oppressed;
Let me thy loving servant be
And taste thy promised rest.*

*Lord Jesus, think on me
Amid the battle's strife;
In all my pain and misery,
Be thou my health and life.*

*Lord Jesus, think on me,
Nor let me go astray;
Through darkness and perplexity
Point thou the heavenly way.*

Psalm 26 (27)

Priest: The Lord is my light and my help: whom shall I fear?

Side 1: The Lord is my light and my help;
whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the stronghold of my life;
before whom shall I shrink?

Side2: **When evil-doers draw near
to devour my flesh,
it is they, my enemies and foes,
who stumble and fall.**

Side 1: Though an army encamp against me
my heart would not fear.
Though war break out against me
even then would I trust.

Side2: **There is one thing I ask of the Lord,
for this I long,
to live in the house of the Lord,
all the days of my life,
to savour the sweetness of the Lord,
to behold his temple.**

Side 1: For there he keeps me safe in his tent
in the day of evil.
He hides me in the shelter of his tent,
on a rock he sets me safe.

Side2: **And now my head shall be raised
above my foes who surround me
and I shall offer within his tent
a sacrifice of joy.
I will sing and make music for the Lord.**

Side 1: Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit,

Side2: As it was in the beginning,
is now, and ever shall be,
world without end.
Amen.

All: The Lord is my light and my help: whom shall I fear?

Psalm 26 (27)

Priest: It is your face, O Lord, that I seek: hide not your face.

Side 1 O Lord, hear my voice when I call;
have mercy and answer.
Of you my heart has spoken:
'Seek his face.'

Side2: It is your face, O Lord, that I seek;
hide not your face.
Dismiss not your servant in anger;
you have been my help.

Side 1: Do not abandon or forsake me,
O God my help!
Though father and mother forsake me,
the Lord will receive me.

Side2: Instruct me, Lord, in your way;
on an even path lead me.
When they lie in ambush protect me
from my enemy's greed.
False witnesses rise against me,
breathing out fury.

Side 1: I am sure I shall see the Lord's goodness
in the land of the living.
Hope in him, hold firm and take heart.
Hope in the Lord!

Side2: **Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit,**

Side 1: As it was in the beginning,
is now, and ever shall be,
world without end.
Amen.

All: It is your face, O Lord, that I seek: hide not your face.

Canticle Colossians 1

Priest: He is the first-born of all creation, he is supreme over all
creatures.

Side 1: Let us give thanks to the Father,
who has qualified us to share
in the inheritance of the saints in light.

Side2: **He has delivered us from the dominion of darkness
and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son,
in whom we have redemption,
the forgiveness of sins.**

Side 1: He is the image of the invisible God,
the firstborn of all creation,
for in him all things were created, in heaven and on
earth,
visible and invisible.

Side2: **All things were created
through him and for him.
He is before all things,
and in him all things hold together.**

Side 1: He is the head of the body, the Church;
he is the beginning,
the firstborn from the dead,
that in everything he might be pre-eminent.

Side2: For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell,
and through him to reconcile to himself all things,
whether on earth or in heaven,
making peace by the blood of his cross.

Side 1: Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit,

Side2: As it was in the beginning,
is now, and ever shall be,
world without end.
Amen.

All: He is the first-born of all creation, he is supreme over all
creatures.

Short Reading Ephesians 4:32-5:2

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians

Be friends with one another, and kind, forgiving each other as readily as God forgave you in Christ. Try to imitate God as children of his that he loves and follow Christ loving as he loved you, giving himself up in our place as a fragrant offering and a sacrifice to God.

The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God

Short Responsory

Reader: I said: 'Lord, have mercy on me.'
All ***I said: 'Lord, have mercy on me.'***

Reader: 'Heal my soul, for I have sinned against you.'
All: ***I said: 'Lord, have mercy on me.'***

Reader: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.
All: ***I said: 'Lord, have mercy on me.'***

Canticle
Magnificat

Priest: Why do you want to kill me when I tell you the truth?

All: My soul glorifies the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour.
He looks on his servant in her lowliness;
henceforth all ages will call me blessed.

The Almighty works marvels for me.
Holy his name!
His mercy is from age to age,
on those who fear him.

He puts forth his arm in strength
and scatters the proud-hearted.
He casts the mighty from their thrones
and raises the lowly.

He fills the starving with good things,
sends the rich away empty.

He protects Israel, his servant,
remembering his mercy,
the mercy promised to our fathers,
to Abraham and his sons for ever.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning,
is now, and ever shall be,
world without end.
Amen.

All: Why do you want to kill me when I tell you the truth?

Prayers and intercessions

Priest: God our Father knows all the needs of his people, but he wants us to give first place to his kingdom. Let us proclaim his greatness in our prayer.

All: *May your kingdom come in all its justice.*

Priest: Holy Father, you gave us Christ as the shepherd of our souls; may your people always have priests who care for them with his great love.

All: *May your kingdom come in all its justice.*

Priest: Grant that Christians will prove brothers to the sick; show them the features of your Son in the faces of those who suffer.

All: *May your kingdom come in all its justice.*

Priest: Help those who do not believe in the gospel to come into your Church;
build it up in love to manifest your goodness everywhere.

All: *May your kingdom come in all its justice.*

Priest: Father, we know that we are sinners; grant us your forgiveness and reconcile us with your Church.

All: *May your kingdom come in all its justice.*

Priest: With deep concern in this time of the Coronavirus: for the recovery of those infected, for the safety of those caring for them, and for those engaged in research

All: *May your kingdom come in all its justice.*

Priest: May the dead enter eternal life, especially those who have died of the coronavirus, may they abide with you for ever.

All: *May your kingdom come in all its justice.*

All: 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.

Priest: God of mercy,
shed your light on hearts that have been purified by penance,
and in your goodness give us a favourable hearing when you move us to pray.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

BENEDICTION

The priest kneeling in front of the Blessed Sacrament say:

Prayer in Time of Crisis

Almighty and all-merciful God,
lover of the human race, healer of all our wounds,
in whom there is no shadow of death,
save us in this time of crisis;
grant wisdom and courage to our leaders;
watch over all medical people
as they tend the sick and work for a cure;
stir in us a sense of solidarity beyond all isolation;
if our doors are closed, let our hearts be open.
By the power of your love destroy the virus of fear,
that hope may never die
and the light of Easter, the triumph of life,
may shine upon us and the whole world.
Through Jesus Christ, the Lord risen from the dead,
who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

Presider: Holy Mary, health of the sick.

All: pray for us.

Presider: St Joseph, guardian of us all.

All: pray for us.

Down in Adoration Falling

*Down in adoration falling,
This great sacrament we hail;
Ancient types have long departed
Newer rites of grace prevail
Faith for all defects supplying
Where the feeble senses fail.*

The priest Incenses the Blessed Sacrament

Glory let us give and blessing
To the Father and the Son,
honour, might and praise addressing
while eternal ages run;
Equal praise to him confessing
who proceeds from both as one.
AMEN

Presider: You have given them bread from heaven
All: *Having in itself all delight.*

Presider: Let us pray.
O God, Who in this wonderful Sacrament
have left us a memorial of your passion,
grant us we pray,
so revere the sacred mysteries of your Body and Blood
that we may always experience in ourselves
the fruits of your Redemption.
Who live and reign with God the Father
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God for ever and ever.

All: *Amen.*

The priest blesses everyone with the Blessed Sacrament

The Divine Praises

Blessed be God.
Blessed be His Holy Name.
Blessed be Jesus Christ, true God and true Man.
Blessed be the Name of Jesus.
Blessed be His Most Sacred Heart.
Blessed be His Most Precious Blood.
Blessed be Jesus in the most Holy Sacrament of the Altar.
Blessed be the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete.
Blessed be the great Mother of God, Mary most Holy.
Blessed be her Holy and Immaculate Conception.
Blessed be her glorious Assumption.
Blessed be the name of Mary, Virgin and Mother.
Blessed be St. Joseph, her most chaste spouse.
Blessed be God in His Angels and in His Saints.

REPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

- 1 Soul of my Saviour, sanctify my breast,
body of Christ, be thou my saving guest,
blood of my Saviour, bathe me in thy tide,
wash me with water flowing from thy side.
- 2 Strength and protection may thy Passion be,
O blessèd Jesu, hear and answer me;
deep in thy wounds, Lord, hide and shelter me,
so shall I never, never part from thee.
- 3 Guard and defend me from the foe malign,
in death's dread moments make me only thine;
call me and bid me come to thee on high
where I may praise thee with thy saints for ay.

Source: Ancient and Modern: hymns and songs for refreshing worship #462