

AN ACT OF SPIRITUAL COMMUNION 17th October 2021
20th Sunday after Trinity

Hymn: All people that on earth do dwell

1 All people that on earth do dwell,
sing to the Lord with cheerful voice;
him serve with fear, his praise forth tell,
come ye before him, and rejoice.

2 The Lord, ye know, is God indeed;
without our aid he did us make;
we are his folk, he doth us feed,
and for his sheep he doth us take.

3 O enter then his gates with praise,
approach with joy his courts unto;
praise, laud, and bless his name always,
for it is seemly so to do.

4 For why? the Lord our God is good;
his mercy is for ever sure;
his truth at all times firmly stood,
and shall from age to age endure.

5 To Father, Son and Holy Ghost,
the God whom heaven and earth adore,
from men and from the angel-host
be praise and glory evermore.

William Kethe, (fl 1559-died 1594) Public Domain

To prepare ourselves for our worship, we reflect on the day and on our relationships.

- *What good things have come from God today?*
- *Where have I fallen short?*
- *What will I try to do differently in future?*

In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen

Let us now call to mind our sins, and ask the Lord to help us live by his values.

Lord Jesus, you heal the wounds of sin and division. Lord have mercy **Lord have mercy**

You teach us to be gentle and humble of heart. Christ have mercy **Christ have mercy**

You give us a spirit of willing service to you and to one another. Lord have mercy **Lord have mercy**

May the God of love and power forgive us and free us from our sins, heal and strengthen us by God's Spirit, and raise us to new life in Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Collect (special prayer for today)

God, our light and our salvation: illuminate our lives, that we may see your goodness in the land of the living, and looking on your beauty may be changed into the likeness of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

READINGS *Isaiah 53:4-end*

Surely he has borne our infirmities
and carried our diseases;
yet we accounted him stricken,
struck down by God, and afflicted.
But he was wounded for our transgressions,
crushed for our iniquities;
upon him was the punishment that made us whole,
and by his bruises we are healed.
All we like sheep have gone astray;
we have all turned to our own way,
and the LORD has laid on him
the iniquity of us all.
He was oppressed, and he was afflicted,
yet he did not open his mouth;
like a lamb that is led to the slaughter,
and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent,
so he did not open his mouth.
By a perversion of justice he was taken away.
Who could have imagined his future?
For he was cut off from the land of the living,

stricken for the transgression of my people.
They made his grave with the wicked
and his tomb with the rich,
although he had done no violence,
and there was no deceit in his mouth.
Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him with pain.
When you make his life an offering for sin,
he shall see his offspring, and shall prolong his days;
through him the will of the LORD shall prosper.
Out of his anguish he shall see light;
he shall find satisfaction through his knowledge.
The righteous one, my servant, shall make many righteous,
and he shall bear their iniquities.
Therefore I will allot him a portion with the great,
and he shall divide the spoil with the strong;
because he poured out himself to death,
and was numbered with the transgressors;
yet he bore the sin of many,
and made intercession for the transgressors.

Gospel Reading Mark 10:35-45

James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came forward to him and said to him, 'Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you.' And he said to them, 'What is it you want me to do for you?' And they said to him, 'Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory.' But Jesus said to them, 'You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?' They replied, 'We are able.' Then Jesus said to them, 'The cup that I drink you will drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized; but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared.'

When the ten heard this, they began to be angry with James and John. So Jesus called them and said to them, 'You know that among the Gentiles those whom they recognize as their rulers lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. But it is not so among you; but whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.'

Anthem: The Song of Christ's Glory

Christ Jesus was in the form of God
but he did not cling to equality with God.
He emptied himself taking the form of a servant
and was born in the likeness of men.
Being found in human form he humbled himself
and became obedient unto death even death on a cross.
Therefore, God has highly exalted him
and bestowed on him the name above every name

that at the name Jesus every knee should bow
in heaven and earth and under the earth;
and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord
to the glory of God the Father.
Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now and shall be forever.
Amen.

The South African Daily Office (Public Domain)

REFLECTION

In the short passage from the fourth Servant Song in Isaiah, the servant offers his life in atonement for his people's sins. His death will herald the beginning of glorification for him, and be a source of blessings for others. Reflecting on passages such as this, would have helped the early Christians understand the saving sufferings and death of Jesus.

Yet, the disciples really could not get their heads around the idea of this spirit of self-sacrifice. And so once again, Jesus, with great forbearance points them to the true meaning of greatness within the Kingdom of God.

The Jews looked on life as a cup that contained a mixture of sweet and bitter things. The cup of life is a cup in which sorrows and joys, sadness and happiness, laughter and tears are inseparable. So when James and John came to him with their selfish request in the belief that the kingdom of God would be based on earthly kingdoms, Jesus yet again answered them with a question. 'Are you able to drink the cup that I drink?' What he was really asking them was 'Are you prepared to go through the suffering that I am going to go through?' Of course, they maintained that they were, even though they did not know what might be in that cup, and nor were they aware of their own weakness. I wonder if they remembered this conversation later, when the time came, and they left him to drink the bitter cup alone. How often we speak in haste words that we later regret or choose to forget.

We do not know in advance what the cup of life will hold for us; it is something that gradually unfolds as we go along. But one thing is certain, it will hold some bitter things. Jesus, the innocent one, chose to drink a very bitter cup for love of us. And even for him, it was not easy. He was afraid. Three times he prayed to the Father to take the cup away from him, at the same time confessing his submission to the Father's will. He then drank the cup to the dregs. Courage is not about never being afraid. It is being afraid, and continuing despite our fear.

So when we find that our cup of life is bitter, we have no need to pretend that it is actually sweet, and 'keep that stiff upper lip'. Nor should we think that we can drink it by our own strength. Unlike the two apostles, we should not be afraid to say, 'Lord, I don't think I can drink it. But if I have to, then with your help I will.'

Whatever is in our cup of life, sweet or bitter, we need to continually remind ourselves that, drinking a cup of sacrifice and service of others is to follow Jesus, and that however difficult we may find it he is with us. Never forget whatever the situation, 'God has got this'

Amen

In humility and love, let us pray together God our Maker and Redeemer.

That all Christians may fulfil their baptismal ministry as servants, caring for the needs of others, obedient to their Lord in all things and supportive of one another in worship, prayer and deepening faith.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

That those who govern and advise may seek out God's will and the good of all in each crisis, dilemma and debate.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

That we may develop the habit of rejoicing in the opportunities to serve, and to put ourselves out for others, laying down our craving for praise and importance.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

That those who suffer in body, mind or spirit may sense the presence of Christ, know his healing and rest in his love.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

That those who have died in faith may be welcomed into the light of heaven, and that all who are walking in sin today may turn away from evil, and live.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We thank you, Lord God, for your long-suffering patience with us, and the affectionate forgiveness which lifts us to our feet whenever we stumble.

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

Prayers adapted from Susan Sayers

Gathering together all our prayers, we say the prayer that Jesus gave us

**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**

We give thanks for the saving death and resurrection of Jesus and ask him to be with us now

**Thanks be to you, Lord Jesus Christ,
for all the benefits you have given me,
for all the pains and insults you have borne for me.
Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally,**

**I ask you to come spiritually into my heart.
O most merciful redeemer, friend and brother,
may I know you more clearly, love you more dearly,
and follow you more nearly, day by day. Amen**

Hymn: Eternal father, strong to save.

1 Eternal Father, strong to save,
whose arm doth bind the restless wave,
who bidd'st the mighty ocean deep
its own appointed limits keep:
O hear us when we cry to thee
for those in peril on the sea.

2 O Saviour whose almighty word
the winds and waves submissive heard,
who walkedst on the foaming deep,
and calm amid its rage didst sleep:
O hear us when we cry to thee
for those in peril on the sea.

3 O sacred Spirit, who didst brood
upon the chaos dark and rude,
who badst its angry tumult cease,
and gavest light and life and peace:
O hear us when we cry to thee
for those in peril on the sea.

4 O Trinity of love and power,
our brethren shield in danger's hour;
from rock and tempest, fire and foe,
protect them whereso'er they go:
and ever let there rise to thee
glad hymns of praise from land and sea.

William Whiting (1825-1878) (Public Domain)

We pray God's blessing on each other

May the Lord bless you with a noble and generous heart.

May he keep you joyful in his service.

And may he lead you through the darkness of this world to the radiant glory of his kingdom.

and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be with you and remain with you, and those whom you love and pray for, this day and for evermore. **Amen**