

WORSHIP at HOME prepared by St. Maxentius

4TH BEFORE ADVENT ~ SUNDAY 31 OCTOBER 2021

Here below we have an outline of our service for you to follow at home if you can't be with us. Choose a quiet reflective space and to make it more meaningful have a cross, bible and candle to make your sacred space.

INTRODUCTION

Good morning everyone I hope you are all well, we are now in the season immediately before advent, but of course we have our All Saints / All Souls days to come. It is a time of remembrance. Although it can make us sad to think of those we have lost, we should also be thankful for the time that they had with us and remember good times with a smile.

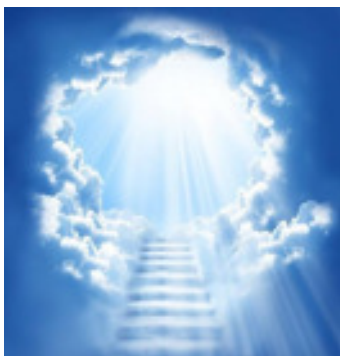
On Sunday 14th November there will be remembrance services across our Team and poppies will soon be on sale in our churches.

Today's Intercessions are by Joyce Armstrong and the Reflection is by Jan Bennett.

PRAYER OF PREPARATION

God is spirit. **Let us worship him in spirit and truth**
The Lord is with us. **Let us praise his name together.**

PRAYER OF PENITENCE 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 us to the joy of your salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



THE GLORIA Glory to God in the highest and peace to his people on earth. Lord God, heavenly king, almighty God and Father. We worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory. Lord Jesus Christ only son of the Father Lord God Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: have mercy upon us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most high, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

THE COLLECT Almighty and eternal God, you have kindled the flame of love in the hearts of the saints: grant to us the same faith and power of love, that, as we rejoice in their triumphs, we may be sustained by their example and fellowship; 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 NEW TESTAMENT READING Revelation 21: 1-6a

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, 'See, the home of God is among mortals.

He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away.'

And the one who was seated on the throne said, 'See, I am making all things new.' Also he said, 'Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true.' Then he said to me, 'It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

THE GOSPEL MARK 12, 28-34

Hear the word of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark. **Glory to you O Lord.**

One of the scribes came near and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, he asked him, 'Which commandment is the first of all?' Jesus answered, 'The first is, "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength." The second is this, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." There is no other commandment greater than these.' Then the scribe said to him, 'You are right, Teacher; you have truly said that "he is one, and besides him there is no other"; and "to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the strength", and "to love one's neighbour as oneself",—this is much more important than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices.' When Jesus saw that he answered wisely, he said to him, 'You are not far from the kingdom of God.' After that no one dared to ask him any question. This is the Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you O Christ.**

REFLECTION by Jan Bennett

The previous text to this reading tells about Jesus trying to explain about death and resurrection and the kingdom of heaven. He is then questioned by one of the scribes, an educated man, about which of the Jewish laws was the most important.

The Jews have 613 laws and rules which cover everything in their life, from who to marry, what to eat, how to prepare food, when to work, to how to live their life etc. The laws were brought to them from Moses and it was sacrilege to go against these rules, was this scribe trying to test Jesus or was he trying to change the subject from the complexities of death and resurrection? We don't really know but it certainly has made an impact on how Christians behave. The scribe actually tells

Jesus that he is right which seems a bit shocking, after all who is he that can try to be an equal to the Son of God, or even be so condescending to him. Of course we cannot take his answer literally as some of the meaning may have been lost in the translation, but Jesus' answer now is a major part of the Christian faith, in that if we are not sure of the right thing to do we only have to remember those two commandments.

When teaching this to Year 8 children in school, we analysed how we could love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, and we used a double page in their exercise books and illustrated the quote with all the things we could do to show our commitment to this greatest commandment. The children of course all fell for the neighbour as just being someone who lived near to them and not every other human being on this earth. They found it very difficult then to show their love or kindness to those who had hurt them or people they didn't like or respect and of course quite a discussion ensued about it.

Of course it makes perfect sense to not discard Moses' law but to make it simpler and much more practical to follow. Every one of the 10 commandments fits into loving God and loving others. Again the children were confused on how they could show love, compassion, kindness, generosity or even just give help to others and how this would help us keep this important part of our faith to serve God.

So when it comes to that part in our service where we hear this quote, it's easy to say, but the width of its application is tremendous and it is worth taking a bit of time to see if we are fulfilling those two commandments in as many ways as we are able.

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; 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 OF INTERCESSION

Here we pray for the church, for the world, those in need and those who have died, You can follow your own prayers or these below on today's theme.



Almighty God, we come together as those you have called into fellowship to be your people and to share in the rich inheritance of your saints. We pray for all the saints on earth, all those walking as friends of Jesus through the light and shadow of life, in grassy meadows and scaling bare rock; that we may all persevere with joy supporting one another along the way.

Lord in your mercy

Hear our prayer

We pray for all the kingdoms and nations of the earth for their leaders and their people, their policies and needs, that under God's overarching love they may learn his ways and his will. Lord in your mercy **Hear our prayer**

We pray for those we love and care for and who those love and pray for us, for the wisdom to learn from all we experience in this life, so that we are not damaged, but rather grow from the difficult times. Lord in your mercy **Hear our prayer**

We pray for those who are suffering. We think of all those too weak to pray; for all who are searching for life's meaning and those who find it hard to believe they are loved and cherished by the living God. Lord in your mercy **Hear our prayer**

We pray for all those who have died in faith, giving thanks for the shining lives of the saints, and asking that with them we may come to share in the endless joy of heaven. Lord in your mercy **Hear our prayer**

With thankfulness we celebrate the transforming love of God, which can take us as we are and make us into what God can already see we could become.

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

THE LORD'S PRAYER



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 forever. Amen.

THE BLESSING

The Lord bless us and watch over us,

the Lord make his face shine upon us and be gracious to us

The Lord look kindly on us and give us peace and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, The Son and the Holy Spirit, be with us now and for evermore. **Amen.**