

Worship for 15th November

2nd SUNDAY BEFORE ADVENT

Rejoicing in the incredible diversity and richness of humanity, we come together to pray, to worship and to give glory to God, who has given each one of us a special talent to help us accomplish His purposes.

Invitation to Confession:

Let us now own up to our shortcomings and failings, confident of God's mercy and limitless love.

When we have not taken time to appreciate the gifts God has given to us.
Lord, have mercy.

When we don't recognise the contribution that humanity's diversity makes in the world.
Christ, have mercy.

When we have failed to use the opportunities God has given us, to share in the work of creation in the world.
Lord, have mercy.

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

Collect of the Day

Heavenly Father,
whose blessed Son was revealed
to destroy the works of the devil
and to make us the children of God and heirs of eternal life:
grant that we, having this hope,
may purify ourselves even as he is pure;
that when he shall appear in power and great glory
we may be made like him in his eternal and glorious kingdom;
where he is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen.

A reading from the Prophet Zephaniah (1:7, 12-18 NRSV)

Be silent before the Lord God! For the day of the Lord is at hand; the Lord has prepared a sacrifice, he has consecrated his guests. At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps,

and I will punish the people who rest complacently on their dregs, those who say in their hearts, 'The Lord will not do good, nor will he do harm.' Their wealth shall be plundered, and their houses laid waste. Though they build houses, they shall not inhabit them; though they plant vineyards, they shall not drink wine from them. The great day of the Lord is near, near and hastening fast; the sound of the day of the Lord is bitter, the warrior cries aloud there. That day will be a day of wrath, a day of distress and anguish, a day of ruin and devastation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of trumpet blast and battle cry against the fortified cities and against the lofty battlements. I will bring such distress upon people that they shall walk like the blind; because they have sinned against the Lord, their blood shall be poured out like dust, and their flesh like dung. Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to save them on the day of the Lord's wrath; in the fire of his passion the whole earth shall be consumed; for a full, a terrible end he will make of all the inhabitants of the earth.

Psalm 90:1-8 (NRSV)

A Prayer of Moses, the man of God.
Lord, you have been our dwelling-place in all generations.
Before the mountains were brought forth,
or ever you had formed the earth and the world,
from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

You turn us back to dust,
and say, 'Turn back, you mortals.'
For a thousand years in your sight
are like yesterday when it is past,
or like a watch in the night.

You sweep them away; they are like a dream,
like grass that is renewed in the morning;
in the morning it flourishes and is renewed;
in the evening it fades and withers.

For we are consumed by your anger;
by your wrath we are overwhelmed.
You have set our iniquities before you,
our secret sins in the light of your countenance.

Gospel

Alleluia, alleluia!
Make your home in me, as I make mine in you.
Whoever remains in me bears fruit in plenty. Alleluia.

A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew (25:14-30 NRSV)

'For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. The one who had received the five talents went off at once and

traded with them, and made five more talents. In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, "Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents." His master said to him, "Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master." And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, "Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents." His master said to him, "Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master." Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, "Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours." But his master replied, "You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Thought for the Day

Today we learn that God gives us talents according to our ability and they are perfect for the challenges we come across. Our task is to figure out what it is that God wills for our lives, to discover how we can join in God's creative work. Believe it or not, each one of us has a unique contribution to make, and everybody's contribution plays its part in the plan of salvation.

Intercessions

Take some time to reflect on your life this week. Where do you need God's presence and help? Give thanks for where you feel you have received it and pray for those situation - places and people - who are in particular need at this time.

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

An Act of Spiritual Communion

Our Father, who art in heaven...

Act of Reception

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.
I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul.

Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally,
come at least spiritually into my heart.
I embrace You as if You were already there
and unite myself wholly to You.
Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

Final Prayer

**God, the source of all holiness
and giver of all good things:
may we who have shared at this table
as strangers and pilgrims here on earth
be welcomed with all your saints
to the heavenly feast
on the day of your kingdom;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Blessing

May the Father, the creator and author of all life,
help us discover God's will for our life.
May the Son, who lived alongside us,
encourage us on our journey.
May the Holy Spirit guide us to meet the challenges set before us.
And may the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
be upon us, now and evermore. Amen.