

Worship for 24th January

EPIPHANY 3

As God responds to our needs with generosity and blessing, we are called to echo these gifts in our own living.

Invitation to Confession:

God calls us to be a blessing for others. Humbly, and with contrite hearts, let us confess before God those times we have failed to live up to this calling.

For all the times we have perceived the needs of others and felt unable to respond.
Lord, have mercy.

For the times we have failed to be generous in our words or deeds.
Christ, have mercy.

For our failure to share with others the glorious gift of the Gospel.
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

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.

A reading from the Book of Genesis (14:17-20 NRSV)

After his 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). And King Melchizedek of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was priest of God Most High. He blessed him and said,
'Blessed be Abram by God Most High,

maker of heaven and earth;
and blessed be God Most High,
who has delivered your enemies into your hand!
And Abram gave him one-tenth of everything.

Psalm - 128 (NRSV)

Happy is everyone who fears the Lord,
who walks in his ways.
You shall eat the fruit of the labour of your hands;
you shall be happy, and it shall go well with you.

Your wife will be like a fruitful vine
within your house;
your children will be like olive shoots around your table.
Thus shall the man be blessed
who fears the Lord.

The Lord bless you from Zion.
May you see the prosperity of Jerusalem
all the days of your life.
May you see your children's children.
Peace be upon Israel!

Gospel

Alleluia, alleluia!
The kingdom of God is close at hand:
repent, and believe the Good News. Alleluia!

A reading from the Gospel according to John (2:1-11 NRSV)

On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, 'They have no wine.' And Jesus said to her, 'Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come.' His mother said to the servants, 'Do whatever he tells you.' Now standing there were six stone water-jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, 'Fill the jars with water.' And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, 'Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward.' So they took it. When 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, '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.' Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

Thought for the Day

Jesus demonstrates God's overwhelming generosity in today's parable of the wedding at Cana. How do we, in our lives, demonstrate this in the way we live? Are we generous in our thoughts as well as our actions? Are our reactions to those we meet generous or do we start from a position of suspicion and fear? God calls us to live in the house of love that will enable us to start from a more generous place.

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

Almighty Father,
whose Son our Saviour Jesus Christ is the light of the world:
may your people,
illuminated by your word and sacraments,
shine with the radiance of his glory,
that he may be known, worshipped, and obeyed
to the ends of the earth;
for he is alive and reigns, now and for ever. Amen.

Blessing

May the Father, who created heaven and earth,
give us the assurance of his love.
May the Son, who walked our path,
show us the way to life in all its fullness.
May the Holy Spirit, who breathed life into creation,
breathe life into our heart and soul, today and always.
And may the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
be upon us, now and evermore. Amen.