



Resources for Holy Wednesday

An Anglican form of Compline not based on *Common Worship*

Wednesday 8 April 2020

Readings

First reading

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah

The Lord God has given me the tongue of a teacher, that I may know how to sustain the weary with a word. Morning by morning he wakens—wakens my ear to listen as those who are taught. The Lord God has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, I did not turn backward. I gave my back to those who struck me, and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard; I did not hide my face from insult and spitting.

The Lord God helps me; therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set my face like flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame; he who vindicates me is near. Who will contend with me? Let us stand up together. Who are my adversaries? Let them confront me. It is the Lord God who helps me; who will declare me guilty?

Isaiah 50:4–9a

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

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Second reading

A reading from Letter to the Hebrews

Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such hostility against himself from sinners, so that you may not grow weary or lose heart. *Hebrews 12:1-3*

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

Gospel reading

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John

All Glory to you O Lord.

After saying this Jesus was troubled in spirit, and declared, 'Very truly, I tell you, one of you will betray me.' The disciples looked at one another, uncertain of whom he was speaking. One of his disciples—the one whom Jesus loved—was reclining next to him; Simon Peter therefore motioned to him to ask Jesus of whom he was speaking. While reclining next to Jesus, he asked him, 'Lord, who is it?'

Jesus answered, 'It is the one to whom I give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish.' When he had dipped the piece of bread, he gave it to Judas son of Simon Iscariot. After he received the piece of bread, Satan entered into him. Jesus said to him, 'Do quickly what you are going to do.' Now no one at the table knew why he said this to him. Some thought that, because Judas had the common purse, Jesus was telling him, 'Buy what we need for the festival'; or, that he should give something to the poor. So, after receiving the piece of bread, he immediately went out. And it was night.

When he had gone out, Jesus said, 'Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once.' *John 13:21-32*

This is the Gospel of the Lord

All Praise to you O Christ.

Sermon

Jesus' ministry lasted, we think, three years. During that time the number of disciples increased from a handful to maybe thousands. But the inner group he chose—the apostles—remained small. These closest friends numbered twelve. In the Jewish mindset, 'twelve' was a significant number and suggested completeness. Maybe that association came from the number of the tribes of Israel. Anyway, in today's Gospel reading Jesus is telling this close-knit group that one of them will betray him.

Much of Jewish society at this time was influenced by the Greek-language and culture of Alexander the Great's great empire. At the last supper, Jesus and his disciples would not have been seated around a table (think of Leonardo de Vinci's great painting *The Last Supper*) but on couches arranged in a broad circle, with each member lying on his left side and facing inwards. Owing to this uncomfortable position, the participants had to pick food with the right hand because the left was effectively trapped and immobile.

Jesus could only have moved his right hand when passing food. He had no choice. The posture also means that he could only have passed food to one person—the only person within immediate reach. That St John tells us Jesus passed a morsel of bread to Judas tells us that Judas was that one person within reach. But it also tells us that Judas was literally sitting at Jesus' right hand. And Jesus would have told him where to sit. Jesus was making a statement.

Scriptures tell us almost nothing about Judas except his town of origin: his name tells us he probably came from the village of Kerioth—he was 'Jude as-Kerioth'. The other apostles will have esteemed Judas because Jesus had chosen him to join this inner grouping. He was clearly numerate because he held the common purse. They will probably have heard him preach. In earlier days, Jesus gave authority to the disciples to cast out demons and to heal. And the Scriptures imply that *all* the disciples receive these same spiritual gifts.

All Jewish names have a meaning (for example, 'Jesus' means 'the Lord saves' and 'Peter' means 'rock'). The name 'Judas' is the Greek version of the Jewish name 'Jude' and means 'God is praised'. 'Judas' was a common name at the time of Jesus. Indeed, Jesus had a younger brother with the same name and who later wrote a letter we retain in our New Testament. The other disciples would probably have thought Judas' name was appropriate because God worked through him.

To summarise, Jesus chose Judas and give him many spiritual gifts. He was close to

Jesus yet turned traitor.

Taken together, the details in today's Gospel passage warn us to beware temptation. Just as the good thief could overturn a long life of sin and lawlessness and be saved in his last hours so his devout person could overturn a life of goodness and betray Jesus. Maybe that's why Jesus, when he gave us his great template of prayer leaves till last the clause, 'deliver us from temptation' because we need to hear it so often.

Compline (Night Prayer)

- The hymn can be accessed via a Youtube link. To hear it, please hover the mouse over the link, press Ctrl, and then return.
- All the verses in the psalm and nunc dimittis is split in two with a red diamond ◆. Traditionally the diamond indicates a short pause to allow the reader to reflect on the content. The pause is not necessary. But if you want to observe it

Background

The name of this ancient service comes from a Latin word which means 'completion' (*completorium*). We pronounce it name as 'com-plinn' rather than 'com-plyne'

Compline is a service of quietness and reflection before rest at the end of the day. It is most effective when the ending is indeed an ending, without additions, conversation or noise. If there is an address, or business to be done, it should come first. If said at home, participants go quietly to bed.

Introduction

O God make speed to save us

All O Lord make haste to help us

**All Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now
and shall be ever for.**

Amen.

Silence for reflection on the past day.

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All Almighty God,
long-suffering and of great goodness.
I confess to you,
I confess with my whole heart
my neglect and forgetfulness of your commandments,
my doing wrong, thinking and speaking;
the hurts I have done to others,
and the good I left undone.
O God, forgive me, for I have sinned against you;
and raise me to newness of life,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

May almighty God have mercy on us,
forgive us our sins,
and raise us to everlasting life,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

Hymn [Bind us together Lord](#) (please click on this link to hear the hymn)

**Bind us together, Lord
Bind us together
With cords that cannot be broken
Bind us together, Lord
Bind us together
Bind us together in love**

**There is only one God,
There is only one King
There is only one body,
That is why we Sing.**

Bind us together ...

**Made for the glory of God,
Purchased by his precious Son;
Born with the right to be clean,
For Jesus the victory has won.**

Bind us together ...

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**You are the family of God,
You are the promise divine;
You are God's Chosen desire,
You are the glorious new wine.**

Bind us together ...

The Word of God

One or more of the following psalms may be used.

Psalm 88

- 1 O Lord, God of my salvation, ♦
I have cried day and night before you.
- 2 Let my prayer come into your presence; ♦
incline your ear to my cry.
- 3 For my soul is full of troubles; ♦
my life draws near to the land of death.
- 4 I am counted as one gone down to the Pit; ♦
I am like one that has no strength,
- 5 Lost among the dead, ♦
like the slain who lie in the grave,
- 6 Whom you remember no more, ♦
for they are cut off from your hand.
- 7 You have laid me in the lowest pit, ♦
in a place of darkness in the abyss.
- 8 Your anger lies heavy upon me, ♦
and you have afflicted me with all your waves.
- 9 You have put my friends far from me ♦
and made me to be abhorred by them.
- 10 I am so fast in prison that I cannot get free; ♦
my eyes fail from all my trouble.

- 11 Lord, I have called daily upon you; ♦
I have stretched out my hands to you.
- 12 Do you work wonders for the dead? ♦
Will the shades stand up and praise you?
- 13 Shall your loving-kindness be declared in the grave, ♦
your faithfulness in the land of destruction?
- 14 Shall your wonders be known in the dark ♦
or your righteous deeds in the land where all is forgotten?
- 15 But as for me, O Lord, I will cry to you; ♦
early in the morning my prayer shall come before you.
- 16 Lord, why have you rejected my soul? ♦
Why have you hidden your face from me?
- 17 I have been wretched and at the point of death from my youth; ♦
I suffer your terrors and am no more seen.
- 18 Your wrath sweeps over me; ♦
your horrors are come to destroy me;
- 19 All day long they come about me like water; ♦
they close me in on every side.
- 20 Lover and friend have you put far from me ♦
and hid my companions out of my sight.

**All Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen**

Sentences from Scripture

Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the LORD alone. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. *Deuteronomy 6:4-7*

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Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.

All Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.

For you have redeemed me, Lord God of truth.

All I commend my spirit.

Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.

**All Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen**

Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.

The Nunc dimittis (the Song of Simeon)

**All Save us, O Lord, while waking,
and guard us while sleeping,
that awake we may watch with Christ
and asleep may rest in peace.**

1 Now, Lord, you let your servant go in peace: ♦
your word has been fulfilled.

2 My own eyes have seen the salvation ♦
which you have prepared in the sight of every people;

3 A light to reveal you to the nations ♦
and the glory of your chosen people. *Luke 2.29-32*

**All Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen**

**All Save us, O Lord, while waking,
and guard us while sleeping,
that awake we may watch with Christ
and asleep may rest in peace.**

Prayers of intercession

The refrain after each prayer is the Taizé chant, 'O Lord hear my prayer':

**O Lord, hear my prayer,
O Lord, hear my prayer;
when I call answer me.**

**O Lord, hear my prayer,
O Lord, hear my prayer;
come and listen to me.**

**O Lord, hear my prayer,
O Lord, hear my prayer;
when I call answer me.**

**O Lord, hear my prayer,
O Lord, hear my prayer;
come and listen to me.**

For a choral version of the chant, please click on this link [O Lord hear my prayer](#)

Holy God, who call your people to sustain the weary
and protect the oppressed.

Uphold us in our concern and strengthen us,
that we may not only speak our prayers but act on behalf of their fulfilment.

All O Lord hear my prayer

Most Holy One,
grant that we may be counted as members of the great cloud of witnesses
who live with justice and compassion,
and reveal your divine glory before all people.

All O Lord hear my prayer

Troubled God, in every generation you call your people to contend
against the brutality of sin and betrayal.

Keep us steadfast even in our fear and uncertainty,
that we may follow where Jesus has led the way.

All O Lord hear my prayer

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The Collect for Holy Wednesday

Lord, you let us convert you
into currency and commodity
so that you can pay the price
beyond all accounting:
may we offer our misused powers to you
knowing that you can transform them,
knowing that even this betrayal is still a kiss:
through Jesus Christ,
the passion of God.

All Amen

Silence is kept.

Visit this place, O Lord, we pray,
and drive far from it the snares of the enemy.
May your holy angels dwell with us and guard us in peace,
and may your blessing be always upon us; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen

**All 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 for ever.
Amen**

The Conclusion

As watchmen wait for the morning,
so do our souls long for you, O Christ.
Come with the dawning of the day,
and make yourself known to us in the breaking of bread;
for you are God for ever and ever.

All Amen

The Lord grant us a quiet night and a perfect end.