

Friday 17 November 2023

St Hugh of Lincoln



Hugh was born at Avalon in Burgundy in 1140 and at first made his profession with the Augustinian canons but, at the age of twenty-five, became a monk at Grande Chartreuse in the French alps. King Henry II invited him to England in about 1175, to become prior of his Charterhouse foundation at Witham, Somerset. It needed reform despite its recent foundation.

Hugh was appointed to the largest diocese in England, Lincoln, in 1186. He brought huge energy to the diocese and, together with astute appointments to key posts; he revived the Lincoln schools, repaired and enlarged the cathedral, visited the See extensively, drew together the clergy to meet in synod and generally brought an efficiency and stability to the Church which was to be much emulated.

Hugh also showed great compassion for the poor and the oppressed, ensuring that sufferers of leprosy were cared for and that Jews were not persecuted. He supported his monarch while opposing any royal measures he felt extreme, all the while managing not to make an enemy of the king.

He died in London on this day in the year 1200.

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Prayers of intercession © The Archbishops' Council (adapted).

Liturgy © 2000 The Archbishops' Council.

Bible readings © the publishers of the NRSV translation.

The liturgy assumes the service is Eucharistic. The prayers of consecration appear at the end.

All the hymns are hosted on YouTube. Please click on the links to hear them.

To see service transcripts from previous weeks, please visit the page,

<http://www.medlockhead.co.uk/resources/index.htm>

Introduction and welcome

HYMN 1 All creatures of our God and King ([click on this link to hear the hymn](#))

The Welcome

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

All Amen.

The Lord be with you

All And also with you.

The Preparation

**All Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

Our Lord Jesus Christ said:

The first commandment is this:

‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is the only Lord.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,
with all your soul, with all your mind,
and with all your strength.’

And the second is this: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’

There is no other commandment greater than these.

On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

All Amen. Lord, have mercy.

Christ calls us to share the heavenly banquet of his love with all the saints in earth and heaven. Therefore, knowing our unworthiness and sin, let us confess our sins in penitence and faith, firmly resolved to keep God’s commandments and to live in love and peace with all.

All Almighty God, our heavenly Father,
we have sinned against you
and against our neighbour
in thought and word and deed,
through negligence, through weakness,
through our own deliberate fault.
We are truly sorry
and repent of all our sins.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
who died for us,
forgive us all that is past
and grant that we may serve you in newness of life
to the glory of your name. Amen.

Almighty God,
who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy upon you,
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,
and keep you in life eternal;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

The Gloria

This Gloria is sung to the tune of 'Cwm Rhondda'. Click [here](#) for the tune.

All Glory be to God in Heaven,
Songs of joy and peace we bring,
Thankful hearts and voices raising,
To creation's Lord we sing.
Lord we thank you, Lord we praise you,
Glory be to God our King:
Glory be to God our King.

Lamb of God, who on our shoulders,
Bore the load of this world's sin;
Only Son of God the Father,
You have brought us peace within.
Lord, have mercy, Christ have mercy,
Now your glorious reign begin:
Now your glorious reign begin.

**You O Son of God are Holy,
You we praise with one accord.
None in heav'n or earth is like you,
Only you are Christ the Lord.
With the Father and the Spirit,
Ever worshipped and adored:
Ever worshipped and adored.**

The Collect for St Hugh of Lincoln

O God,
who endowed your servant Hugh
with a wise and cheerful boldness
and taught him to commend to earthly rulers
the discipline of a holy life:
give us grace like him to be bold in the service of the gospel,
putting our confidence in Christ alone,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

All Amen.

First reading

A reading from the book of the Book of Wisdom

For all people who were ignorant of God were foolish by nature,
and they were unable from the good things that are seen to know the one who exists,
nor did they recognise the artisan while paying heed to his works;
but they supposed that either fire or wind or swift air
or the circle of the stars or turbulent water
or the luminaries of heaven were the gods that rule the world.
If through delight in the beauty of these things people assumed them to be gods,
let them know how much better than these is their Lord,
for the author of beauty created them.
And if people were amazed at their power and working,
let them perceive from them

how much more powerful is the one who formed them.
For from the greatness and beauty of created things
comes a corresponding perception of their Creator.
Yet these people are little to be blamed,
for perhaps they go astray
while seeking God and desiring to find him.
For while they live among his works, they keep searching
and trust in what they see because the things that are seen are beautiful.
Yet again, not even they are to be excused,
for if they had the power to know so much
that they could investigate the world,
how did they not more quickly find the Lord of these things? *Wisdom 13:1-9*

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

Second reading

A reading from the Second Letter of St John

I was overjoyed to find some of your children walking in the truth, just as we have been commanded by the Father. But now, dear lady, I ask you, not as though I were writing you a new commandment, but one we have had from the beginning, let us love one another. And this is love, that we walk according to his commandments; this is the commandment just as you have heard it from the beginning—you must walk in it.

Many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh; any such person is the deceiver and the anti-christ! Be on your guard, so that you do not lose what we have worked for, but may receive a full reward. Everyone who does not abide in the teaching of Christ, but goes beyond it, does not have God; whoever abides in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. *2 John 4-9*

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

Gospel reading

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke

All **Glory to you O Lord.**

Jesus said, 'Just as it was in the days of Noah, so too it will be in the days of the Son of Man. They were eating and drinking, and marrying and being given in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed all of them. Likewise, just as it was in the days of Lot: they were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building, but on the day that Lot left Sodom, it rained fire and sulphur from heaven and destroyed all of them—it will be like that on the day that the Son of Man is revealed. On that day, anyone on the housetop who has belongings in the house must not come down to take them away; and likewise anyone in the field must not turn back. Remember Lot's wife. Those who try to make their life secure will lose it, but those who lose their life will keep it. I tell you, on that night there will be two in one bed; one will be taken and the other left. There will be two women grinding meal together; one will be taken and the other left.'

Then they asked him, 'Where, Lord?' He said to them, 'Where the corpse is, there the vultures will gather.'

Luke 17:26–end

This is the Gospel of the Lord

All **Praise to you O Christ.**

Sermon

St Hugh was almost a contemporary of Francis of Assisi and Thomas à Becket. In fact, Becket precedes Hugh's story because King Henry II felt such remorse at the murder of Becket when archbishop that he established the new Carthusian order of monks in England as an act of penance, giving them a tract of good land in Somerset. The new abbey needed a capable abbot so the church summoned and appointed 'Hugh of Avalon', as he was then known.

Hugh was so successful that he was soon gaining the King's attention who later appointed Bishop of Lincoln. Indeed, he transformed everything and everyone he met with his startling humility and penetrating holiness. Friend and foe alike saw God in him ... and responded.

Hugh was a monk within the Carthusian order, which is often regarded as one of the more austere forms of monasticism in the medieval world. Its monks live in solitude for much of the time, only coming together on Sundays and holy days for the Eucharist. They spend the remainder of their time in solitary prayer and the

study of scripture. Some monks also spent a small amount of time in manual labour so, for example, each has a small garden in which to grow his own food.

This was the life St Hugh chose to live; it's not surprising that he felt a keen wrench when taken from this solitude to lead a monastery and then become the bishop of England's largest diocese. Contemporary records tell of his pleading to return to Somerset. In fact, he spent at least one long retreat there each year.

Hugh chose a spiritual life in which God was absolutely central. That life would have been hard and required much discipline, but his long hours in the monastery helped create the man described by history. Prayer was central. At first sight, it seems incredible that he could spend so many hours praying: what was he saying; what was he asking for? did he run out of petitions?

For Hugh and his movement, prayer was never a matter of words, spoken or silent, but an encounter with God. Neither does it require a particular posture, furniture, time of the day, clothing, vows, or even mood. All it needs is the desire for God.

Contemplative prayer works best when practiced without words, or at least, very few indeed. It is sometimes called 'affective prayer,' because it uses our affections and feelings. Some people call this the 'prayer of relationship', while yet others call it 'the respiration of faith'. It is also called 'prayer of the heart' or 'contemplation'.

The Bible tells us that God is the source of love; He is the embodiment of love; indeed, ultimately, He *is* love. That is His essence. So every time we seek to love, we experience something of God. Every time we try to love, we are immersed in God. He is the 'glue' in any loving relationship. Contemplative prayer therefore becomes a loving waiting on God. For this reason, the Greek Orthodox monk and hermit Brother Aidan said, 'For me, praying is "wasting time with God".' The Spanish Saint John of the Cross described such prayer using a choice metaphor in his description of contemplative prayer, *The Spiritual Canticle*: 'The iron is in the fire, and the fire is in the iron'. He's saying the love of God for us and our love for God become indistinguishable as we grow closer to God in prayer.

God draws us closer to Himself by loving prayer. As the Bible says, 'We love because he first loved us' (1 John 4;19). Think of a man standing on a canal bank, throwing a rope round a bollard on the prow of a boat and bringing it closer to land by pulling on the rope. The rope appears to move in both directions, but it's the same rope. This simple parable explores contemplative prayer: God (the 'man on the bank') starts by loving us—he throw the rope to the boat; we perceive his love—and we catch the rope; we tell God that we love Him and actively direct our love toward God—we circle a bollard with the rope and throw its free end back to

the man onshore, to God. The love we direct toward God is also God: God love us, which we then redirect back to Him.

If we truly love God, then, using the love that is God, we can actually experience God. As it says in *The Cloud of Unknowing*, a fourteenth century book of instruction on prayer for novice monks, 'By love may God be gotten and holden, but by thought never.' So, by prayer, we no longer know merely about God but actually start to know Him directly. As it says in 1 John 4:7, 'Everyone who loves has been born of God *and knows God*.' We experience His touch, which is absolutely ravishing. We grow to resemble Him. The 'looking and gazing' in today's first from the Book of Wisdom, is struggling to make this point.

As we draw these threads together, we see how Hugh of Lincoln was a godly man because he immersed himself in God. And all of us are invited to do the same.

The Creed

Do you believe and trust in God the Father,
the source of all being and life,
the one for whom we exist?

All We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Son,
who took our human nature,
died for us and rose again?

All We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit,
who gives life to the people of God
and makes Christ known in the world?

All We believe and trust in him.

This is the faith of the Church.

All This is our faith.

**We believe and trust in one God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Amen.**

Prayers of intercession

Yes, the kisses of St Martin
healed the bodies of the lepers
but with me,
it is the other way,
the kisses of the lepers,
heal my sick soul. *St Hugh of Lincoln*

Loving Lord, we pray for all who are entrusted to govern and make decisions for the common good. Give them the wisdom, the strength and the will to act justly, and with kindness and humility in the service of others.

Lord in your mercy

All Hear our prayer

Loving Lord, we pray for family, friends, neighbours and all in our communities ... we are all your children and you love us all equally. Help us to see your face in all those we meet, and to remember, and act on, your commandment to love one another.

Lord in your mercy

All Hear our prayer

Loving Lord, we pray for all who are suffering ... in body mind or spirit. Help us to be your agents of comfort and support, ever mindful of the needs of others, and so play our part in bringing the assurance of your healing presence.

Lord in your mercy

All Hear our prayer

Loving Lord, receive into the courts of heaven all who have died ... those known to us and those known only to you. Comfort all who mourn and bring us all, at the last, to the joys of eternal life with you.

Lord in your mercy

All Hear our prayer

Loving Lord, we thank you for the gift of love and the gift of one another, may we treat each other with renewed respect and reverence.

Merciful Father,

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

The peace

Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and his name shall be called the Prince of Peace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you,

All And also with you.

HYMN 3 Come and see the King of Love ([click on this link to hear the hymn](#))

The liturgy of the Communion Service appears below

The Dismissal

May Christ who makes saints of sinners,
who has transformed those we remember today,
raise and strengthen you that you may transform the world;
and the blessing of God the Almighty:
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be with you now and remain with you always.

All Amen

HYMN 4 Adoramus ([click on this link to hear the hymn](#))

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All In the name of Christ.

Amen.

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

Eucharistic Prayer (prayer E)

The Lord be with you

All and also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

All We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
always and everywhere to give you thanks,
holy Father, almighty and eternal God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
And now we give thanks, most gracious God,
surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses
and glorified in the assembly of your saints.
The glorious company of apostles praise you.
The noble fellowship of prophets praise you.
The white-robed army of martyrs praise you.
We, your holy Church, acclaim you.
In communion with angels and archangels,
and with all who served you on earth and worship you now in heaven,
we raise our voice to proclaim your glory,
for ever praising you and saying:

**All Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

We praise and bless you, loving Father,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord;
and as we obey his command,
send your Holy Spirit,
that broken bread and wine outpoured
may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son.

On the night before he died he had supper with his friends
and, taking bread, he praised you.

He broke the bread, gave it to them and said:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

When supper was ended he took the cup of wine.
Again he praised you, gave it to them and said:
Drink this, all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant,
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did,
in him we plead with confidence his sacrifice made once for all upon the cross.

Bringing before you the bread of life and cup of salvation,
we proclaim his death and resurrection
until he comes in glory.

Great is the mystery of faith:

All Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

Lord of all life,
help us to work together for that day
when your kingdom comes
and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth.

Look with favour on your people,
gather us in your loving arms
and bring us with St Hugh and all the saints
to feast at your table in heaven.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father,
for ever and ever.

All Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**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.**

Breaking of the Bread

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

**All Though we are many, we are one body,
because we all share in one bread.**

**All Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
grant us peace.**

Draw near with faith.

Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ
which he gave for you,
and his blood which he shed for you.

Eat and drink in remembrance that he died for you,
and feed on him in your hearts
by faith with thanksgiving.

All We do not presume
to come to this your table, merciful Lord,
trusting in our own righteousness,
but in your manifold and great mercies.
We are not worthy
so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table.
But you are the same Lord
whose nature is always to have mercy.
Grant us therefore, gracious Lord,
so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ
and to drink his blood,
that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body
and our souls washed through his most precious blood,
and that we may evermore dwell in him,
and he in us.
Amen.

Communion is distributed.

Prayer after Communion

God, shepherd of your people,
whose servant Hugh revealed the loving service of Christ
in his ministry as a pastor of your people:
by this eucharist in which we share
awaken within us the love of Christ
and keep us faithful to our Christian calling;
through him who laid down his life for us,
but is alive and reigns with you, now and for ever.

All **Amen**

All **Almighty God,**
we thank you for feeding us
with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.
Through him we offer you our souls and bodies
to be a living sacrifice.
Send us out in the power of your Spirit
to live and work
to your praise and glory.
Amen.