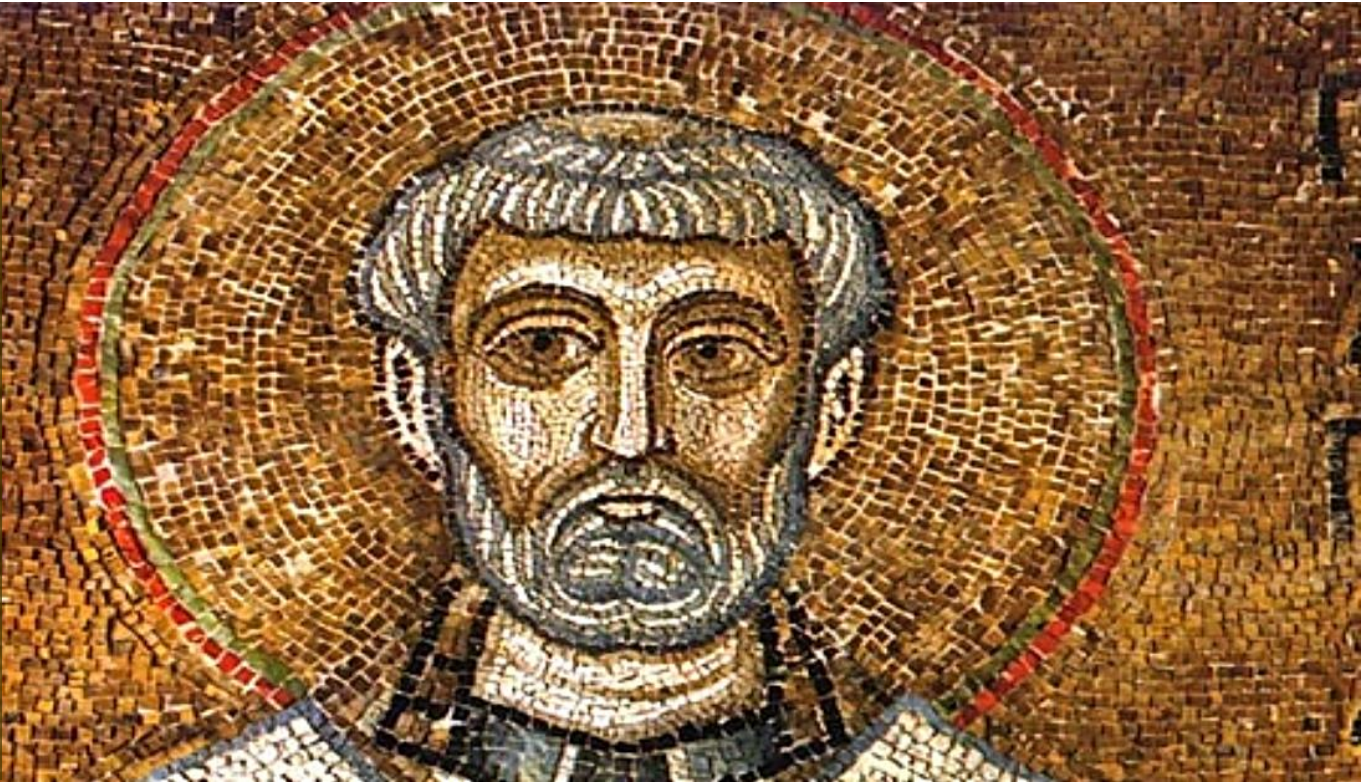


**Thursday 23 November 2023**

# St Clement of Rome

Mosaic of Clement from Saint Sophia's Cathedral, Kyiv, ca. 1000 AD.



Clement was active as an elder in the Church in Rome towards the end of the first century. He was said to have been a disciple of the apostles. He wrote an epistle to the Corinthians which witnessed to ministry in the Church and concerned their authority and duties. That letter clearly showed the authority of one senior presbyter intervening in a conflict in another Church and is full of valuable information about the history of the developing Church and its ministry at this time.

Clement's rather hierarchical view of Church order set a future pattern for episcopal practice and ministry. He seems to have been president of a 'council of presbyters' which governed the Church in Rome, and his letters are clearly written on their behalf.

A fourth-century document suggests he was exiled to the Crimea where he was executed by being thrown into the sea chained to a heavy anchor.

**Sermon** © the Revd Dr Paul Monk.

**Liturgy and prayers of intercession** © 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 For all the saints**

[\(click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)

### 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 Clement**

Creator and Father of eternity,  
whose martyr Clement bore witness with his blood  
to the love he proclaimed and the gospel that he preached:  
give us thankful hearts as we celebrate your faithfulness  
    revealed to us in the lives of your saints  
and strengthen us in our pilgrimage as we follow your Son,  
Jesus Christ our Lord,  
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 Psalms

'Often have they attacked me from my youth'

—let Israel now say—

'often have they attacked me from my youth,

yet they have not prevailed against me.

Those who plough ploughed on my back;

they made their furrows long.'

The Lord is righteous;

he has cut the cords of the wicked.

May all who hate Zion

be put to shame and turned back.

Let them be like the grass on the housetops

that withers before it grows up,

with which reapers do not fill their hands  
or binders of sheaves their arms,  
while those who pass by do not say,  
‘The blessing of the Lord be upon you!  
We bless you in the name of the Lord!’

*Psalm 219*

This is the Word of the Lord

**All Thanks be to God.**

## **Second reading**

A reading from the Revelation of St John the Divine

I saw in the right hand of the one seated on the throne a scroll written on the inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals; and I saw a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice, ‘Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?’ And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it. And I began to weep bitterly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it. Then one of the elders said to me, ‘Do not weep. See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals.’

Then I saw between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders a Lamb standing as if it had been slaughtered, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. He went and took the scroll from the right hand of the one who was seated on the throne. When he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell before the Lamb, each holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. They sing a new song:

‘You are worthy to take the scroll  
and to open its seals,  
for you were slaughtered and by your blood you ransomed for God  
saints from every tribe and language and people and nation;  
you have made them to be a kingdom and priests serving our God,  
and they will reign on earth.’

*Revelation 5:1–10*

This is the Word of the Lord

**All Thanks be to God.**

**HYMN 2 Kyrie Eleison** (‘Lord have mercy’) ([click on this link to hear the hymn](#))

## Gospel reading

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke

**All**    **Glory to you O Lord.**

As he came near and saw the city, Jesus wept over it, saying, 'If you, even you, had only recognized on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. Indeed, the days will come upon you, when your enemies will set up ramparts around you and surround you, and hem you in on every side. They will crush you to the ground, you and your children within you, and they will not leave within you one stone upon another; because you did not recognize the time of your visitation from God.'

*Luke 19:41-44*

This is the Gospel of the Lord

**All**    **Praise to you O Christ.**

## Sermon

An unbroken line exists between ourselves back to Jesus and his first disciples. Each disciple represents a single link in that enormously long chain, with Clement being one of the extremely few from near the chain's beginning for whom we have a name.

The image of a chain is a good visual analogy for the transmission of the Gospel because the links in a chain must overlap just as there needs to be a good overlap between the lives of successive generations of disciples for a fruitful transmission of the Gospel. My life overlapped with that of the person who taught me the faith; their life overlapped with the lives of those who inspired them; and so on.

A strong chain requires big links that overlap significantly. There is a myth that says conversion occurs through chance events and that people see Jesus in us straightaway. In fact, we transmit the faith when we truly become part of a person's life and they get to know us ... only then do they see past a façade and discern the inner Christian life we live. The greater the overlap, the stronger the chain. That 'overlap' therefore means time together with fun and food as well as faith and fellowship. In just the same way that our lives were entwined with the lives of those who inspired us, so we need to be part of the lives of those we inspire if we wish to pass on the faith to them.

The purpose of a chain is to bear a weight, hold a load, or transmit a force. To do so, the chain must be taut or stretched for the force at one end to transfer to the other, so a bicycle will not move if its chain is limp and a pulley cannot lift any weight until there is a tension across the chain. Similarly, there is always an effort

required in transferring the faith: we must pray, guard ourselves, go out of our way in the 'overlap' of sharing our lives with others. The shorthand word that encompasses all this God-inspired effort is 'love'.

A chain is only as good as its weakest link. Even if some of its links are strong, the defects of others can cause the entire chain to fail. Clement of Rome was clearly a strong 'link' in this particular chain because the faith did transfer through him to the next generation; and there must have been a great many other strong links to have spanned the ages and continents that separate him from us. But as we think of ourselves, are we a strong or a weak link, are we transmitting the Gospel or does it strop with us?

But a chain does not transmit its own power but, rather, helps transmit power from one source or site to another. Similarly, we may be part of the transmission of the Gospel but its power belongs to God. For that reason, we need not fear being weak. True discipleship always acknowledges that the strength and power we display belong to God. It can be spiritually disastrous to mistake the power of the Gospel for our own. We must therefore pray often if the power of Jesus is to pass through us.

As Advent approaches, we recognise how an unbroken line chain of faith links Jesus in his first-century incarnation and his return as Lord and King. The links of that chain include our generation and include us. Are we willing to be that chain, and help pass on the faith?

## 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**

Loving heavenly Lord, help us to follow the real Jesus. Give us the courage to leave behind all the many, many imposter Jesuses.

Lord in your mercy

**All Hear our prayer.**

Loving Heavenly Lord, help your Church to reflect you. Help us to put aside compromise with the world and return to you everything that is properly yours.

Lord in your mercy

**All Hear our prayer.**

Loving Heavenly Lord, help the world to stop worshipping itself and to transfer its worship to you. We pray for those who, like Caesar long ago, who take the glory that is yours.

Lord in your mercy

**All Hear our prayer.**

Loving heavenly Lord, we pray for those who are poorly, whether in body, mind, or spirit. We pray especially for those whose healing requires a readjustment of life: show them how to turn to you.

Lord in your mercy

**All Hear our prayer.**

Loving heavenly Lord, we pray for those who have today passed from this world and into the next. We pray for their families, friends and all you mourn them.

Lord in your mercy

**All Hear our prayer.**

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 I want to serve the purpose of God in my generation** [\(click here\)](#)

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 We have a Gospel to proclaim** [\(click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)

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 Clement 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 our Redeemer,  
whose Church was strengthened  
by the blood of your martyr Clement:  
so bind us, in life and death, to Christ's sacrifice  
that our lives, broken and offered with his,  
may carry his death and proclaim his resurrection in the world;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**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.