



# Evening Prayer

Sunday, November 29, 2020

First Sunday of Advent

## THE ADVENT WREATH *(by David Miller Koblmeier, adapted with permission)*

Each year, many of us observe the tradition of lighting the candles of an Advent Wreath. These candles mark the Sundays of the season of Advent. They remind us Advent is a time for reflection as we prepare our hearts to come close to the mystery of Christmas. In most years we light a new candle each week, and the light grows brighter each Sunday. This year, however, we're doing something a little different; because light is not the only path toward Christmas. Darkness, too, can us close to the incarnation. And, perhaps, is the better path to follow in this strange and often troubling year. We begin with all the candles lit, and each week we extinguish another flame, until, gradually, we enter into the full darkness.

### *The First Candle*

Today, we extinguish the first candle as we reflect on the gift of rest. Rest happens best in darkness. In the dark, we sleep, allowing our body, heart, mind, and soul to rest and be restored. In moments of anxiety, stress, and worry, we pause and give thanks for the restful space of darkness. May we be blessed by the gift of rest.

## OPENING SENTENCE

*Officiant:* If I say, "Surely the darkness will cover me, and the light around me turn to night," darkness is not dark to you, O Lord; the night is as bright as the day; darkness and light to you are both alike.  
(Psalm 139:10,11)

## CONFESSION OF SIN

*Officiant:* Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

**People:** **Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your name. Amen.**

*Officiant:* Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. Amen.

## THE INVITATORY

*Officiant:* O God, make speed to save us.

**People:** **O Lord, make haste to help us.**

**All:** **Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen!**

## O GRACIOUS LIGHT *(Phos hilaron)*

**All:** **O gracious light, pure brightness of the everliving Father in heaven, O Jesus Christ, holy and blessed! Now as we come to the setting of the sun, and our eyes behold the vesper light, we sing your praises, O God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. You are worthy at all times to be praised by happy voices, O Son of God, O Giver of Life, and to be glorified through all the worlds.**

## PSALM 80:1-7, 16-18

Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock; \*  
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.  
In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, \*  
stir up your strength and come to help us.

Restore us, O God of hosts; \*

show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

O Lord God of hosts, \*

how long will you be angered despite the prayers of your people?

You have fed them with the bread of tears; \*

you have given them bowls of tears to drink.

You have made us the derision of our neighbors, \*

and our enemies laugh us to scorn.

Restore us, O God of hosts; \*

show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

Let your hand be upon the man of your right hand, \*

the son of man you have made so strong for yourself.

And so will we never turn away from you; \*

give us life, that we may call upon your Name.

Restore us, O Lord God of hosts; \*

show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

**All: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen!**

### **A READING FROM THE BOOK OF ISAIAH (64:1-9)**

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence--as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil--to make your name known to your adversaries, so that the nations might tremble at your presence! When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence. From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him. You meet those who gladly do right, those who remember you in your ways. But you were angry, and we sinned; because you hid yourself we transgressed. We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. There is no one who calls on your name, or attempts to take hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us, and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity. Yet, O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. Do not be exceedingly angry, O Lord, and do not remember iniquity forever. Now consider, we are all your people.

*Reader:* The Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

### **THE SECOND SONG OF ISAIAH**

*Isaiah 55:6-11*

**All: Seek the Lord while he wills to be found; call upon him when he draws near. Let the wicked forsake their ways and the evil ones their thoughts; And let them turn to the Lord, and he will have compassion, and to our God, for he will richly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor your ways my ways, says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. For as rain and snow fall from the heavens and return not again, but water the earth, Bringing forth life and giving growth, seed for sowing and bread for eating, So is my word that goes forth from my mouth; it will not return to me empty; But it will accomplish that which I have purposed, and prosper in that for which I sent it.**

**Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.**

## **A READING FROM PAUL'S FIRST LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS (1:3-9)**

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind--just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you--so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord..

*Reader:* The Word of the Lord.

**People:** Thanks be to God.

## **THE SONG OF SIMEON (*Nunc Dimittis*)**

*Luke 2:29-32*

**All:** Lord, you now have set your servant free to go in peace as you have promised; For these eyes of mine have seen the Savior, whom you have prepared for all the world to see: A Light to enlighten the nations, and the glory of your people Israel.

**Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.**

## **A READING FROM THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK (13:24-37)**

Jesus said, "In those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in clouds' with great power and glory. Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

"From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

"But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake."

*Reader:* The Word of the Lord.

**People:** Thanks be to God.

## **THE SERMON**

### **THE APOSTLES' CREED**

**All:** I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

## THE PRAYERS

*Officiant:* The Lord be with you.

**People:** And also with you.

*Officiant:* Let us pray.

**All:** Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

*Officiant:* That this evening may be holy, good, and peaceful,

**People:** We entreat you, O Lord.

*Officiant:* That your holy angels may lead us in paths of peace and goodwill,

**People:** We entreat you, O Lord.

*Officiant:* That we may be pardoned and forgiven for our sins and offenses,

**People:** We entreat you, O Lord.

*Officiant:* That there may be peace to your Church and to the whole world,

**People:** We entreat you, O Lord.

*Officiant:* That we may depart this life in your faith and fear, and not be condemned before the great judgment seat of Christ,

**People:** We entreat you, O Lord.

*Officiant:* That we may be bound together by your Holy Spirit in the communion of all your saints, entrusting one another and all our life to Christ,

**People:** We entreat you, O Lord.

## THE COLLECTS

### *The Collect of the Day*

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

### *A Collect for Sundays*

Lord God, whose Son our Savior Jesus Christ triumphed over the powers of death and prepared for us our place in the new Jerusalem: Grant that we, who have this day given thanks for his resurrection, may praise you in that City of which he is the light, and where he lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

### *A Collect for the Presence of Christ*

Lord Jesus, stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past; be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts, and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. Amen.

### *A Collect for Mission*

O God, you manifest in your servants the signs of your presence: Send forth upon us the spirit of love, that in companionship with one another your abounding grace may increase among us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## THE GENERAL THANKSGIVING

**All:** Almighty God, Father of all mercies, we your unworthy servants give you humble thanks for all your goodness and loving-kindness to us and to all whom you have made. We bless you for our

creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all for your immeasurable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ; for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. And, we pray, give us such an awareness of your mercies, that with truly thankful hearts we may show forth your praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up our selves to your service, and by walking before you in holiness and righteousness all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory throughout all ages. Amen.

#### **A PRAYER OF ST. CHRYSOSTOM**

Almighty God, you have given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplication to you; and you have promised through your well-beloved Son that when two or three are gathered together in his Name you will be in the midst of them: Fulfill now, O Lord, our desires and petitions as may be best for us granting us in this world knowledge of your truth, and in the age to come life everlasting. **Amen.**

#### **THE DISMISSAL**

*Officiant:* Let us bless the Lord.

**People:** Thanks be to God.

Glory to God whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine: Glory to him from generation to generation in the Church, and in Christ Jesus for ever and ever. Amen. (*Ephesians 3:20-21*)