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The GIFT *of* SUNDAY: Lenten Evening Prayer and Mission

Wednesday, March 3, 2021

INTRODUCTION TO PRAYER

This evening we come together to pray a type of prayer that is as old as Christianity itself. Evening Prayer, also called Vespers, dates back to First Century Jerusalem when Christians gathered at certain times throughout the day to pause from their work and to pray.

The Liturgy of the Hours, also known as the Divine Office, of which Evening Prayer is a part, fulfills Jesus' command to "pray always." Through this prayer, the people of God sanctify the day by continual praise of God and prayers of intercession for the needs of the Church.

Bishops, priests, deacons, and many men and women in consecrated life pray the Liturgy of the Hours each day; however, this type of prayer rightly belongs to all of us – God's Faithful People, the Church. In praying this prayer tonight, we exercise our baptismal priesthood as we offer God a sacrifice of praise.

CALL TO PRAYER

Stand

Evening Prayer always begins with an Introductory Verse taken from Psalm 69:2 followed by the Doxology. During the invocation of the Trinity, all make a profound bow as an act of adoration.

Presider: God, + come to my assistance.

All: Lord, make haste to help me.

Presider: *(all bow)* Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:

All: *(all stand upright)* as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

HYMN

READING

Sit

Dies Domini (On Keeping the Lord's Day Holy) is an apostolic letter promulgated by Pope John Paul II on the Solemnity of Pentecost, in the year 1998, the 20th year of his Pontificate. The focus of this letter was to explain the meaning of Sunday in the light of Christian tradition, which is to make present the graces of the Paschal Mystery – the climax of salvation history.

Central to the Liturgy of the Hours is the singing or recitation of Psalms. At Evening Prayer, the psalmody consists of two psalms and a canticle (or hymn) taken from the New Testament Epistles or the Book of Revelation. In praying the Psalms, we follow the example of Jesus, since he too prayed the Psalms. The New Testament Canticles come from the earliest Christian Communities.

Psalm 62

Antiphon 1

Presider: Eagerly we await

All: the fulfillment of our hope, the glorious coming of our Savior.

Side 1:

In God alone is my soul at rest;
my salvation comes from the Lord.
God alone is my rock, my salvation,
my fortress; I shall not greatly falter.

Side 2:

How long will you all attack one alone,
break down your victim,
as you would a tottering wall,
or a tumbling fence?

Side 1:

Their plan is only to bring down someone of prominence;
they take pleasure in lies.
With their mouth they utter blessing
but in their heart they curse.

Side 2:

Be at rest, my soul, in God alone,
from whom comes my hope.
God alone is my rock, my salvation,
my fortress; I shall not falter.

Side 1:

In God is my salvation and my glory,
my rock of strength;
in God is my refuge.
Trust at all times, O people;
Pour out your hearts to God, our refuge.

Side 2:

The children of Adam are a breath,
an illusion, people of rank.
Placed on the scales, they rise;
they all weigh less than a breath.

Side 1:

Do not put your trust in oppression
nor vain hopes on plunder.
Even if riches increase,
set not your heart on them.

Side 2:

For God has said only one thing:
only two I have heard:
that to God alone belongs power
and to you, Lord, faithful love;
and that you repay each of us
according to our deeds.

All:

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

Stand

Psalm Prayer

Presider: Lord God, you reward each one according to his works. Hear us as we pour out our hearts to you seeking your grace and secure protection. We look to you for our stable hope in a constantly changing world.

All: Amen.

Antiphon

Presider: Eagerly we await

All: the fulfillment of our hope, the glorious coming of our Savior.

Psalm 67

Sit

Antiphon 2

Presider: May God turn his radiant face toward us,

All: and fill us with his blessings.

Side 1:

May God be gracious and bless us.

Let your face shed its light upon us.

So will your ways be known upon earth
and all nations learn your salvation.

Side 2:

Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you.

Side 1:

Let the nations be glad and shout for joy,
with uprightness you rule the peoples;
you guide the nations on earth.

Side 2:

Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you.

Side 1:

The earth has yielded its fruit
for God, our God, has blessed us.
May God still give us his blessing,
and be revered to all the ends of the earth.

All:

Stand

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

Psalm Prayer

Presider: Be gracious and bless us, Lord, and let your face shed its light on us,
so that we can make you known with reverence and bring forth a harvest of justice.

All: Amen.

Antiphon

Presider: May God turn his radiant face toward us,

All: and fill us with his blessings.

Canticle: Colossians 1:12-20

Sit

Antiphon 3

Presider: Through him all things were made;

All: he holds all creation together in himself.

Reader:

Let us give thanks to the Father
for having made you worthy
to share the lot of the saints
in light.

All:
He rescued us
from the power of darkness
and brought us
into the kingdom of his beloved Son.
Through him we have redemption,
the forgiveness of our sins.

Reader:
He is the image of the invisible God,
the first-born of all creatures.
In him everything in heaven and on earth was created,
things visible and invisible.

All:
All were created through him;
all were created for him.
He is before all else that is.
In him everything continues in being.

Reader:
It is he who is head of the body, the church!
he who is the beginning,
the first-born of the dead,
so that primacy may be his in everything.

All:
It pleased God to make absolute fullness reside in him
and, by means of him, to reconcile everything in his person,
both on earth and in the heavens,
making peace through the blood of his cross.

All:
(all bow) Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit:
(all stand upright) as it was in the beginning, is now,
and will be for ever. Amen.

Stand

Antiphon

Presider: Through him all things were made;
All: he holds all creation together in himself.

READING

Titus 2:11-14.

Sit

PREACHING

The Gift of Sunday

GOSPEL CANTICLE

Stand

Mary's Magnificat, from the Gospel of Luke, is sung at every celebration of Evening Prayer in both the Eastern and Western liturgical traditions. Characteristic of Luke's Gospel (1:46-55), it assures us that the Kingdom of God, in its fullness, will confound all our expectations and overturn our experiences.

Magnificat Antiphon

Presider: Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ
All: gave himself for us to deliver us from all lawlessness, and to cleanse for himself a people as his own.

A setting of the Magnificat is sung by all.

(Repeat Magnificat Antiphon)

INTERCESSIONS

The text of the intercessions is based on The Gift of Sunday, a theological reflection published with the ecclesiastical approval of Archbishop Jerome E. Listecki.

Response: Loving God, hear our prayer.

LORD'S PRAYER

CONCLUDING PRAYER

DISMISSAL

Presider: The Lord be with you.

All: And with your spirit.

Presider: May almighty God bless you,
the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Presider: Go in Peace.

All: Thanks be to God.

CLOSING SONG

(optional)

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Col. 1:12-20 and Titus 2:11-14: Excerpts from the *Lectionary for Mass for Use in the Dioceses of the United States of America, second typical edition* © 2001, 1998, 1997, 1970, Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Inc., Washington, D.C. Used with permission. All rights reserved.

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