

Psalm and Readings Friday 19th April 2024

Psalm 107

O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
for his steadfast love endures for ever.
Let the redeemed of the Lord say so,
those he redeemed from trouble
and gathered in from the lands,
from the east and from the west,
from the north and from the south.

Some wandered in desert wastes,
finding no way to an inhabited town;
hungry and thirsty,
their soul fainted within them.
Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble,
and he delivered them from their distress;
he led them by a straight way,
until they reached an inhabited town.
Let them thank the Lord for his steadfast love,
for his wonderful works to humankind.
For he satisfies the thirsty,
and the hungry he fills with good things.

Some sat in darkness and in gloom,
prisoners in misery and in irons,
for they had rebelled against the words of God,
and spurned the counsel of the Most High.
Their hearts were bowed down with hard labour;
they fell down, with no one to help.
Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble,
and he saved them from their distress;
he brought them out of darkness and gloom,
and broke their bonds asunder.
Let them thank the Lord for his steadfast love,
for his wonderful works to humankind.
For he shatters the doors of bronze,
and cuts in two the bars of iron.

Some were sick through their sinful ways,
and because of their iniquities endured
affliction;
they loathed any kind of food,
and they drew near to the gates of death.
Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble,
and he saved them from their distress;
he sent out his word and healed them,
and delivered them from destruction.
Let them thank the Lord for his steadfast love,
for his wonderful works to humankind.
And let them offer thanksgiving sacrifices,
and tell of his deeds with songs of joy.

Some went down to the sea in ships,
doing business on the mighty waters;
they saw the deeds of the Lord,
his wondrous works in the deep.
For he commanded and raised the stormy wind,
which lifted up the waves of the sea.
They mounted up to heaven, they went down to
the depths;
their courage melted away in their calamity;
they reeled and staggered like drunkards,
and were at their wits' end.
Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble,
and he brought them out from their distress;
he made the storm be still,
and the waves of the sea were hushed.
Then they were glad because they had quiet,
and he brought them to their desired haven.
Let them thank the Lord for his steadfast love,
for his wonderful works to humankind.
Let them extol him in the congregation of the
people,
and praise him in the assembly of the elders.

He turns rivers into a desert,
springs of water into thirsty ground,
a fruitful land into a salty waste,
because of the wickedness of its inhabitants.
He turns a desert into pools of water,
a parched land into springs of water.
And there he lets the hungry live,
and they establish a town to live in;
they sow fields, and plant vineyards,
and get a fruitful yield.
By his blessing they multiply greatly,
and he does not let their cattle decrease.

When they are diminished and brought low
through oppression, trouble, and sorrow,
he pours contempt on princes
and makes them wander in trackless wastes;
but he raises up the needy out of distress,
and makes their families like flocks.
The upright see it and are glad;
and all wickedness stops its mouth.
Let those who are wise give heed to these things,
and consider the steadfast love of the Lord.

Exodus 28:1 – 4a, 29 – 38

Then bring near to you your brother Aaron, and his sons with him, from among the Israelites, to serve me as priests—Aaron and Aaron's sons, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. You shall make sacred vestments for the glorious adornment of your brother Aaron. And you shall speak to all who have ability, whom I have endowed with skill, that they make Aaron's vestments to consecrate him for my priesthood. These are the vestments that they shall make: a breastpiece, an ephod, a robe, a chequered tunic, a turban, and a sash. When they make these sacred vestments for your brother Aaron and his sons to serve me as priests.

So Aaron shall bear the names of the sons of Israel in the breastpiece of judgement on his heart when he goes into the holy place, for a continual remembrance before the Lord. In the breastpiece of judgement you shall put the Urim and the Thummim, and they shall be on Aaron's heart when he goes in before the Lord; thus Aaron shall bear the judgement of the Israelites on his heart before the Lord continually.

You shall make the robe of the ephod all of blue. It shall have an opening for the head in the middle of it, with a woven binding round the opening, like the opening in a coat of mail, so that it may not be torn. On its lower hem you shall make pomegranates of blue, purple, and crimson yarns, all round the lower hem, with bells of gold between them all round— a golden bell and a pomegranate alternating all round the lower hem of the robe. Aaron shall wear it when he ministers, and its sound shall be heard when he goes into the holy place before the Lord, and when he comes out, so that he may not die.

You shall make a rosette of pure gold, and engrave on it, like the engraving of a signet, 'Holy to the Lord.' You shall fasten it on the turban with a blue cord; it shall be on the front of the turban. It shall be on Aaron's forehead, and Aaron shall take on himself any guilt incurred in the holy offering that the Israelites consecrate as their sacred donations; it shall always be on his forehead, in order that they may find favour before the Lord.

Luke 2:1 – 20

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.' And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

'Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favours!'

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.' So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

A prayer for this time of transition

Faithful and loving God
we hold our Benefice before you in this time of
transition.
Be with us in our waiting, in our expectation and
in our preparation.
Be with our new incumbent as he or she also
waits, expects and prepares.
Bring us together in love for you and for this
Benefice,
and be our light for the way ahead.
In Jesus' name,
Amen

The Collect of the Day

Almighty Father,
who in your great mercy gladdened the disciples
with the sight of the risen Lord:
give us such knowledge of his presence with us,
that we may be strengthened and sustained by
his risen life
and serve you continually in righteousness and
truth;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen