

19 June 2022 Holy Communion First Order

HYMN TIS 459 In Christ there is no east or west

The Lord be with you. **And also with you .**

Sentence

God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; and he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. Acts 10.38

Prayer of Preparation

Let us pray.

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**

Two Great Commandments

Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' Jesus said: 'This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: you shall love your neighbour as yourself.'

Lord, have mercy on us: and write your law in our hearts by your Holy Spirit.

Prayer of the Day

Pour out upon us, O God, the power and wisdom of your Spirit, so that we, who have been baptised into Christ and made your children through faith, may know your Son's power to heal, and, being made one in him, may overcome all barriers that divide us; through our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

1 Kings 19.1-4, 19.8-15 a

¹ Now Ahab told Jezebel everything Elijah had done and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. ² So Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah to say, 'May the gods deal with me, be it ever so severely, if by this time tomorrow I do not make your life like that of one of them.' ³ Elijah was afraid and ran for his life. When he came to Beersheba in Judah, he left his servant there, ⁴ while he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness. He came to a broom bush, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. 'I have had enough, Lord,' he said. 'Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors.'

⁸ So he got up and ate and drank. Strengthened by that food, he travelled for forty days and forty nights until he reached Horeb, the mountain of God. ⁹ There he went into a cave and spent the night. The Lord appears to Elijah And the word of the Lord came to him: 'What are you doing here, Elijah?' ¹⁰ He replied, 'I have been very zealous for the Lord God Almighty. The Israelites have rejected your covenant, torn down your altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too.'

¹¹ The Lord said, 'Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by.' Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. ¹² After the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper. ¹³ When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave. Then a voice said to him, 'What are you doing here, Elijah?' ¹⁴ He replied, 'I have been very zealous for the Lord God Almighty. The Israelites have rejected your covenant, torn down your altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too.' ¹⁵ The Lord said to him, 'Go back the way you came, and go to the Desert of Damascus. When you get there, anoint Hazael king over Aram.'

Psalm 42

¹ As a deer longs for the running brooks: so longs my soul for you, O God.

² My soul is thirsty for God, thirsty for the living God: when shall I come and see his face?

³ My tears have been my food day and night: while they ask me all day long 'Where now is your God?'

⁴ As I pour out my soul by myself, I remember this: how I went to the house of the Mighty One,
into the temple of God,

⁵ To the shouts and songs of thanksgiving: a multitude keeping high festival.

⁶ Why are you so full of heaviness, my soul: and why so unquiet within me?

⁷ O put your trust in God: for I will praise him yet, who is my deliverer and my God.

⁸ My soul is heavy within me: therefore, I will remember you from the land of Jordan,
from Mizar among the hills of Hermon.

⁹ Deep calls to deep in the roar of your waters: all your waves and breakers have gone over me.

¹⁰ Surely the Lord will grant his loving mercy in the daytime:
and in the night his song will be with me, a prayer to the God of my life.

¹¹ I will say to God, my rock, 'Why have you forgotten me:
why must I go like a mourner because the enemy oppresses me?'

¹² Like a sword through my bones, my enemies have mocked me:
while they ask me all day long 'Where now is your God?'

¹³ Why are you so full of heaviness, my soul: and why so unquiet within me?

¹⁴ O put your trust in God: for I will praise him yet, who is my deliverer and my God.

43

¹ Give judgement for me, O God, take up my cause against an ungodly people:
deliver me from the deceitful and unjust.

² For you are God my refuge— why have you turned me away:
why must I go like a mourner because the enemy oppresses me?

³ O send out your light and your truth, and let them lead me:
let them guide me to your holy hill and to your dwelling.

⁴ Then I shall go to the altar of God, to God my joy and my delight:
and to the harp I shall sing your praises, O God, my God.

⁵ Why are you so full of heaviness, my soul: and why so unquiet within me?

⁶ O put your trust in God: for I will praise him yet, who is my deliverer and my God.

Galatians 3.10-14, 3.23-29

¹⁰ For all who rely on the works of the law are under a curse, as it is written: 'Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law.' ¹¹ Clearly no one who relies on the law is justified before God, because 'the righteous will live by faith.'

¹² The law is not based on faith; on the contrary, it says, 'The person who does these things will live by them.' ¹³ Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: 'Cursed is everyone who is hung on a pole.'

¹⁴ He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit. ²³ Before the coming of this faith, we were held in custody under the law, locked up until the faith that was to come would be revealed. ²⁴ So the law was our guardian until Christ came that we might be justified by faith. ²⁵ Now that this faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian.

²⁶ So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, ²⁷ for all of you who were baptised into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. ²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹ If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Luke 8.26-39

²⁶ They sailed to the region of the Gerasenes, which is across the lake from Galilee. ²⁷ When Jesus stepped ashore, he was met by a demon-possessed man from the town. For a long time this man had not worn clothes or lived in a house, but had lived in the tombs.

²⁸ When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell at his feet, shouting at the top of his voice, 'What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, don't torture me!' ²⁹ For Jesus had commanded the impure spirit to come out of the man. Many times it had seized him, and though he was chained hand and foot and kept under guard, he had broken his chains and had been driven by the demon into solitary places.

³⁰ Jesus asked him, 'What is your name?' 'Legion,' he replied, because many demons had gone into him. ³¹ And they begged Jesus repeatedly not to order them to go into the Abyss. ³² A large herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside. The demons begged Jesus to let them go into the pigs, and he gave them permission.

³³ When the demons came out of the man, they went into the pigs, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and was drowned. ³⁴ When those tending the pigs saw what had happened, they ran off and reported this in the town and countryside, ³⁵ and the people went out to see what had happened. When they came to Jesus, they found the man from whom the demons had gone out, sitting at Jesus' feet, dressed and in his right mind; and they were afraid.

³⁶ Those who had seen it told the people how the demon-possessed man had been cured. ³⁷ Then all the people of the region of the Gerasenes asked Jesus to leave them, because they were overcome with fear. So he got into the boat and left. ³⁸ The man from whom the demons had gone out begged to go with him, but Jesus sent him away, saying,

³⁹ 'Return home and tell how much God has done for you.' So the man went away and told all over the town how much Jesus had done for him.

Sermon

The Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father; through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures;

he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Through Christ, then, let us continually offer a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that confess his name. Hebrews 13.15

The Prayers

Let us pray for all people, and for the Church throughout the world.

God our healer, **hear our prayer.**

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.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.

Exhortation

Brothers and sisters in Christ, we who would come to the holy communion of the body and blood of our Saviour Christ must consider how St Paul exhorts us to examine ourselves before presuming to eat of that bread and drink of that cup.

For the benefit is great, if with a penitent heart and lively faith we receive that holy sacrament. We then spiritually eat the flesh of Christ and drink his blood; we dwell in Christ and he in us; we are one with Christ and Christ with us.

Yet also the danger is great, if we receive the bread and cup unworthily. Judge yourselves therefore, that you be not judged of the Lord. Repent truly of your sins, having a steadfast faith in Christ our Saviour.

Amend your lives and love your neighbour.

Above all, give hearty thanks to God for the redemption of the world by the death and passion of our Saviour Christ, truly God and truly human, who humbled himself to death on the cross for us sinners, that he might make us children of God, and raise us to eternal life.

Confession

Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, maker of all things, judge of all people, we acknowledge with shame the sins we have committed, by thought, word, and deed, against your divine majesty, provoking most justly your wrath and indignation against us.

We earnestly repent, and are heartily sorry for all our misdoings.

Have mercy on us, most merciful Father. For your Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake forgive us all that is past, and grant that we may ever hereafter serve and please you in newness of life, to the honour and glory of your name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Absolution.

Almighty God our heavenly Father, who of his great mercy has promised forgiveness of sins to all who with hearty repentance and true faith turn to him: have mercy on you; pardon and deliver you from all your sins; confirm and strengthen you in all goodness; and keep you in eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

HYMN TIS 597 Master speak Thy servant heareth

Offertory

Almighty and everliving God, we are taught by your holy apostle to make prayers and supplications and to give thanks for all people: we ask you in your mercy [to accept our alms and oblations and] to receive our sacrifice of praise which we offer to your divine majesty.

Thanksgiving and Communion.

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to you, Lord, Mighty Creator, and Eternal God.

Therefore with angels and archangels, and with the whole company of heaven, we proclaim your great and glorious name, evermore praising you, and saying:

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Glory to you, O Lord most high.

We do not presume to come to 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 we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.

All glory to you, our heavenly Father, for in your tender mercy you gave your only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death on the cross for our redemption: who made there, by his one oblation of himself once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world; and instituted, and in his holy gospel commanded us to continue, a perpetual memory of his precious death until his coming again.

Hear us, merciful Father, we humbly pray, and grant that we who receive these gifts of your creation, this bread and this wine, according to your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of his death and passion, may be partakers of his most blessed body and blood; who on the night he was betrayed took bread¹, and when he had given you thanks, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, 'Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me.'

Likewise, after supper he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them saying, 'Drink from this, all of you; for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you and for many for the remission of sins; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.' **Amen**

The body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for you, preserve your body and soul to everlasting life

The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for you, preserve your body and soul to everlasting life.

Prayer after Communion 1

Lord and heavenly Father, we your humble servants entirely desire your fatherly goodness mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, and to grant that, by the merits and death of your Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in his blood, we and your whole Church may receive forgiveness of our sins and all other benefits of his passion.

And here we offer and present to you, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice, humbly beseeching you that all we who are partakers of this holy communion may be fulfilled with your grace and heavenly benediction.

And although we are unworthy, through our many sins, to offer you any sacrifice, yet we pray that you will accept this, our bounden duty and service, not weighing our merits but pardoning our offences, through Jesus Christ our Lord; by whom and with whom, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honour and glory are yours, Father, world without end.

Eternal God, giver of life, in the breaking of the bread we know the risen Lord.

May we who celebrate this holy feast walk in his risen light and bring new life to all creation.

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Father, we offer ourselves to you as a living sacrifice through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Send us out in the power of your Spirit to live and work to your praise and glory. Amen.

Notices

HYMN TIS 577 Come, let us to the Lord our God

Blessing.

The peace of God which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be amongst you, and remain with you always. **Amen.**



Have you ever gone through a stage of life when things were just so tough that you couldn't cope any longer? Or perhaps you got to a stage where you were barely hanging on, totally beside yourself. If that has never happened to you, you have had a blessed life but you probably know some people who have been there.

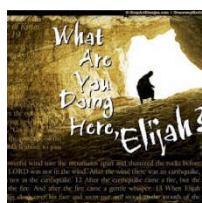
There is a bit of a theme in our readings today, did you notice we have 3 people who are going through tough times and a suggestions about how we should live from Galatians.



Elijah had been working really hard for the Lord, but he can see no results from all his work, the supposed people of God are not responding, all the rest of the servants of God have been killed and now he hears that his life is in danger. We need to remember that this comes immediately after his great triumph when he defeated the prophets of Baal, by asking God to set alight his sacrifice when no matter what the prophets of Baal did they got no response.

Elijah is burnt out, he has been working too hard and he has not taken the time to be quiet and alone with his Lord. Great downs often follow great highs. The news of the death threat is the last straw, he just runs away into the desert and wants to die. The bit of our reading that was left out is how God sent a raven with food and God instructed him to eat and drink and sleep.

The first things God does is insisit on he most basic forms of self care: sustinance and rest. Then after a couple of days where Eliojah does nothing but eat, drink and sleep the Lord instructs him to travel further to the mountain of God.



On the Mountain, God reminds him that he is there in the quiet voice. Not in the wind, the earthquake or the fire but in the soft, caring voice, in the listening heart, in the love of God.

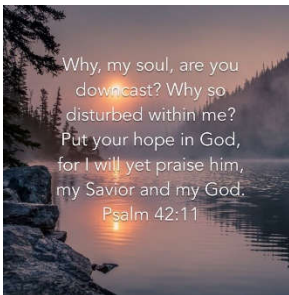
In our gospel reading we meet a man who has gone beyond breaking point, who is so broken that he lives with no clothes or house to protect him from the elements and who cannot be restrained by anything that the locals can devise. We have no idea what brought him to this point but it must have been appalling.



Jesus comes to this man, perhaps comes to this Gentile remote region on the Eastern side of the lake, for no other reason than to help this man. Throughout all the yelling, this human storm, Jesus remains calm, just as he had before the wind and the waves of the storm on the lake as they were coming here. The same quiet authority will deal with the one as with the other.



The demons give their name as 'legion' because there were so many of them, A Roman legion was comprised of five or six thousand men. Jesus is tough on the demons but he is not tough on the man. The demons go into the unclean pigs and are drowned but the man is restored to his right mind and becomes a follower of Jesus. What has happened to this man isn't just a remarkable healing; it is salvation. It is the salvation which God promised long ago, which has appeared and will be completed in Jesus. It has already reached many in Israel but now it is starting to spread further afield.



The Psalmist was also having a rough time but he knows where his help comes from: *Why are you so full of heaviness, my soul: and why so unquiet within me? ¹⁴ O put your trust in God: for I will praise him yet, who is my deliverer and my God.*

We get a few clues about what was going on in his life, his enemies are mocking him and his faith, they are deceitful and unjust and whenever he prays God does not seem to answer. We might occasionally feel that we have a little in common with him, when things are going wrong and we are desperate for answers but God does not seem to be listening. Been there done that? I certainly have.



But the Psalmist keeps trusting in God and keeps hanging on to all the memories of times when he knew God was there and when God did act to save and restore, he knows that God is faithful and will save him again so he waits, maybe not patiently but he waits trusting God as best he can.

Before Jesus came to earth people could know God and trust in God and follow him but mostly they relied on following his laws and tried to live the life Yaweh wanted by following those laws. When Jesus came, he released us from all those laws and gave us his spirit so that we could live as he wants us to live, not by following the laws but by following his spirit.



24 So the law was our guardian until Christ came that we might be justified by faith. 25 Now that this faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian.

26 So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, 28 There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

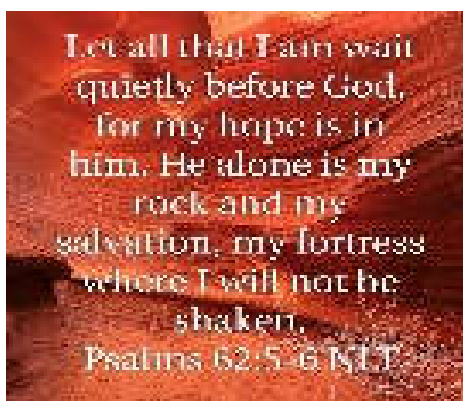
We are one, in Christ, we are heirs according to the promise. That does not mean that life will be a bed of roses, that we can expect to be happy all the time. Life was tough for Jesus, life was tough for the first disciples and life was tough for believers for a very long time after Jesus ascended to heaven. Compared to all of them we do have it easy but life is still life and things happen. Despite all the modern conveniences we still go through tough times, we might become burn out, or maybe even break down completely. This does not make us bad people, or unfit to follow Jesus.



If Elijah could spend some time with God and then be sent back to continue his work, then God can heal us and use us again. If the man who was possessed by so many demons could spend an hour or so with Jesus and then start the mission to the gentiles, (when the disciples arrived a few years later they found an active flock) then Jesus can speak into our lives.

That man quite understandably, wanted to be allowed to stay with Jesus. Not only because of this astonishing rescue but life was not easy before and probably will not be again in his home village but he is one of those to whom Jesus said "Return home and tell how much God has done for you."

Perhaps Elijah would have liked to stay and let Jezebel rule Israel, but God sent him back and when Jezebel was defeated, Israel returned to God.



God is faithful, his timing is not always what we would like but when we look back, we see that it was right. God will always walk with us through the tough times and will bring us through. In our lives, we learn from the Psalmist, and we trust God, in the midst of dark times we put our trust in God: for we will praise him yet, who is our deliverer and our God.