

Evening Prayer

April 27, 2024

Saturday after the Fourth Sunday of Easter

[ZITA OF TUSCANY, Worker of Charity, 1271]

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world; whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

John 8:12

Confession of Sin

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Silence may be kept.

Officiant and People together, all kneeling

**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.**

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

Invitatory and Psalter

All stand

Officiant
People

O God, make speed to save us.
O Lord, make haste to help us.

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.
Alleluia.

O Gracious Light

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 138

BCP p. 793

- ¹ I will give thanks to you, O LORD, with my whole heart; *
before the gods I will sing your praise.
- ² I will bow down toward your holy temple
and praise your Name, *
because of your love and faithfulness;
- ³ For you have glorified your Name *
and your word above all things.
- ⁴ When I called, you answered me; *
you increased my strength within me.
- ⁵ All the kings of the earth will praise you, O LORD, *
when they have heard the words of your mouth.
- ⁶ They will sing of the ways of the LORD, *
that great is the glory of the LORD.
- ⁷ Though the LORD be high, he cares for the lowly; *
he perceives the haughty from afar.
- ⁸ Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you keep me safe; *
you stretch forth your hand against the fury of my enemies;

your right hand shall save me.

⁹The LORD will make good his purpose for me; *
O LORD, your love endures for ever;
do not abandon the works of your hands.

Psalm 139

BCP p. 794

¹LORD, you have searched me out and known me; *
you know my sitting down and my rising up;
you discern my thoughts from afar.

²You trace my journeys and my resting-places *
and are acquainted with all my ways.

³Indeed, there is not a word on my lips, *
but you, O LORD, know it altogether.

⁴You press upon me behind and before *
and lay your hand upon me.

⁵Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; *
it is so high that I cannot attain to it.

⁶Where can I go then from your Spirit? *
where can I flee from your presence?

⁷If I climb up to heaven, you are there; *
if I make the grave my bed, you are there also.

⁸If I take the wings of the morning *
and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,

⁹Even there your hand will lead me *
and your right hand hold me fast.

¹⁰If I say, "Surely the darkness will cover me, *
and the light around me turn to night,"

¹¹Darkness is not dark to you;
the night is as bright as the day; *
darkness and light to you are both alike.

¹²For you yourself created my inmost parts; *
you knit me together in my mother's womb.

¹³I will thank you because I am marvelously made; *
your works are wonderful, and I know it well.

¹⁴My body was not hidden from you, *
while I was being made in secret
and woven in the depths of the earth.

¹⁵Your eyes beheld my limbs, yet unfinished in the womb;
all of them were written in your book; *
they were fashioned day by day,
when as yet there was none of them.

16 How deep I find your thoughts, O God! *
how great is the sum of them!
17 If I were to count them, they would be more in number than the sand; *
to count them all, my life span would need to be like yours.
18 [Oh, that you would slay the wicked, O God! *
You that thirst for blood, depart from me.
19 They speak despitefully against you; *
your enemies take your Name in vain.
20 Do I not hate those, O LORD, who hate you? *
and do I not loathe those who rise up against you?
21 I hate them with a perfect hatred; *
they have become my own enemies.
22 Search me out, O God, and know my heart; *
try me and know my restless thoughts.
23 Look well whether there be any wickedness in me *
and lead me in the way that is everlasting.]
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.

The Lessons

The First Lesson

Wisdom 7:1-14

A Reading from the Wisdom of Solomon.

I also am mortal, like everyone else,
a descendant of the first-formed child of earth;
and in the womb of a mother I was moulded into flesh,
within the period of ten months, compacted with blood,
from the seed of a man and the pleasure of marriage.
And when I was born, I began to breathe the common air,
and fell upon the kindred earth;
my first sound was a cry, as is true of all.
I was nursed with care in swaddling cloths.
For no king has had a different beginning of existence;
there is for all one entrance into life, and one way out.
Therefore I prayed, and understanding was given me;
I called on God, and the spirit of wisdom came to me.
I preferred her to sceptres and thrones,
and I accounted wealth as nothing in comparison with her.
Neither did I liken to her any priceless gem,
because all gold is but a little sand in her sight,
and silver will be accounted as clay before her.
I loved her more than health and beauty,

and I chose to have her rather than light,
because her radiance never ceases.
All good things came to me along with her,
and in her hands uncounted wealth.
I rejoiced in them all, because wisdom leads them;
but I did not know that she was their mother.
I learned without guile and I impart without grudging;
I do not hide her wealth,
for it is an unfailing treasure for mortals;
those who get it obtain friendship with God,
commended for the gifts that come from instruction.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

B. A Song of Pilgrimage

Ecclesiasticus 51:13-16,20b-22

Before I ventured forth,
even while I was very young, *
I sought wisdom openly in my prayer.
In the forecourts of the temple I asked for her, *
and I will seek her to the end.
From first blossom to early fruit, *
she has been the delight of my heart.
My foot has kept firmly to the true path, *
diligently from my youth have I pursued her.
I inclined my ear a little and received her; *
I found for myself much wisdom and became adept in her.
To the one who gives me wisdom will I give glory, *
for I have resolved to live according to her way.
From the beginning I gained courage from her, *
therefore I will not be forsaken.
In my inmost being I have been stirred to seek her, *
therefore have I gained a good possession.
As my reward the Almighty has given me the gift of language, *
and with it will I offer praise to God.

A Reading from the First Letter to the Thessalonians.

Finally, brothers and sisters, we ask and urge you in the Lord Jesus that, as you learned from us how you ought to live and to please God (as, in fact, you are doing), you should do so more and more. For you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from fornication; that each one of you know how to control your own body in holiness and honor, not with lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God; that no one wrong or exploit a brother or sister in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, just as we have already told you beforehand and solemnly warned you. For God did not call us to impurity but in holiness. Therefore whoever rejects this rejects not human authority but God, who also gives his Holy Spirit to you.

Now concerning love of the brothers and sisters, you do not need to have anyone write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love one another; and indeed you do love all the brothers and sisters throughout Macedonia. But we urge you, beloved, to do so more and more, to aspire to live quietly, to mind your own affairs, and to work with your hands, as we directed you, so that you may behave properly toward outsiders and be dependent on no one.

**The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.**

15. The Song of Mary *Luke 1:46-55*

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior; *
for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.
From this day all generations will call me blessed: *
the Almighty has done great things for me,
and holy is his Name.
He has mercy on those who fear him *
in every generation.
He has shown the strength of his arm, *
he has scattered the proud in their conceit.
He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, *
and has lifted up the lowly.
He has filled the hungry with good things, *
and the rich he has sent away empty.

He has come to the help of his servant Israel, *
for he has remembered his promise of mercy,
The promise he made to our fathers, *
to Abraham and his children for ever.
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.

The Apostles' Creed

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**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

People

Officiant

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

The Lord's 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.

Suffrages B

That this evening may be holy, good, and peaceful.
We entreat you, O Lord.

That your holy angels may lead us in paths of peace and goodwill,
We entreat you, O Lord.

That we may be pardoned and forgiven for our sins and offenses,
We entreat you, O Lord.

That there may be peace to your Church and to the whole world,
We entreat you, O Lord.

That we may depart this life in your faith and fear, and not be condemned
before the great judgment seat of Christ,
We entreat you, O Lord.

That we may be bound together by your Holy Spirit in the communion of
[_____ and] all your saints, entrusting one another and all our life to
Christ,
We entreat you, O Lord.

The Collect of the Day

O God, whose Son Jesus is the good shepherd of your people; Grant that when
we hear his voice we may know him who calls us each by name, and follow where

he leads; who, with you and the Holy Spirit, lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

[Zita of Tuscany, Worker of Charity, 1271]

Merciful God, who has given to us all things necessary for life and godliness; Grant that we, like your servant Zita, may be faithful in the exercise of our duties and that, whatever you give us to do, we may do it heartily to you for the honor and glory of your Name; through him who has called us to virtue, Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord. Amen **Amen.**

A Collect for Saturdays

O God, the source of eternal light: Shed forth your unending day upon us who watch for you, that our lips may praise you, our lives may bless you, and our worship on the morrow give you glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

A Prayer for Mission

O God and Father of all, whom the whole heavens adore: Let the whole earth also worship you, all nations obey you, all tongues confess and bless you, and men and women everywhere love you and serve you in peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Here may be sung a hymn or anthem.

Authorized intercessions and thanksgivings may follow.

Prayers of the People

A Prayer in Time of Great Sickness and Mortality

O most mighty and merciful God, in this time of mortal sickness, we flee to you for comfort. Deliver us, we implore you, from our peril; give strength and skill to all those who minister to the sick; bring success to the measures used for their cure; and grant that, perceiving how frail and uncertain our life is, we may apply our hearts to that heavenly wisdom which leads to eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

For the Oppressed

Look with pity, O heavenly Father, upon the people in this land who live with injustice, terror, disease, and death as their constant companions. Have mercy upon us. Help us to eliminate our cruelty to these our neighbors. Strengthen those who spend their lives establishing equal protection of the law and equal opportunities for all. And grant that every one of us may enjoy a fair portion of the riches of this land; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Before the close of the Office one or both of the following may be used

A General Thanksgiving (2007 Version) BCP 836

Accept, O Lord, our thanks and praise for all that you have done for us. We thank you for the splendor of the whole creation, for the beauty of this world, for the wonder of life, and for the mystery of love.

We thank you for the blessing of family and friends, and for the loving care which surrounds us on every side.

We thank you for setting us at tasks which demand our best efforts, and for leading us to accomplishments which satisfy and delight us.

We thank you also for those disappointments and failures that lead us to acknowledge our dependence on you alone.

Above all, we thank you for your Son Jesus Christ; for the truth of his Word and the example of his life; for his steadfast obedience, by which he overcame temptation; for his dying, through which he overcame death; and for his rising to life again, in which we are raised to the life of your kingdom.

Grant us the gift of your Spirit, that we may know Christ and make him known; and through him, at all times and in all places, may give thanks to you in all things. *Amen.*

Then may be said

Let us bless the Lord. Alleluia, alleluia.

Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

The Officiant may then conclude with one of the following

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore. **Amen.**

2 Corinthians 13:14

[Zita of Tuscany]

Worker of Charity, 1271

Zita was born in the early thirteenth century in the village of Montsegradi in Tuscany; she died on April 12, 1271. Zita was born into a poor family, but one in which the Christian faith was emphasized. One of her uncles was a hermit, a sister became a nun, and the entire family was faithful in worship together, both at church and in their home.

At the age of twelve she entered the service of the Fatinelli family in Lucca. Although little more than a child, she maintained the serious faith that she had been taught by her family. Scrupulous in the exercise of her domestic duties, she embodied Paul's advice in Colossians 3:23, "Whatever your task, put yourselves into it, as done for the Lord and not for your masters." Her earnest diligence, however, was first met with scorn from both her employers and her fellow servants. Nevertheless, she continued faithfully in her work and exhibited a peace that surpassed comprehension. Through her perseverance in doing good, she eventually earned the respect and affection of the whole household.

In due course, the once despised servant became the housekeeper. As head of the household staff, Zita demonstrated such Christlike benevolence that she came to be venerated throughout Lucca even before her death. Mindful of the poverty in which she had been raised, she gave away most of her income to those in need.

After her death, the popularity of her cult spread as far as England, where she is called Sitha; images of her may be found in churches throughout southern England. In popular piety, she is often entreated in order to find lost keys.

