

Morning Prayer

Leo the Great, Bishop of Rome, 461

November 10, 2021

Opening Sentence

Officiant Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart
be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer. *Psalm 19:14*

The Invitatory and Psalter

Officiant Lord, open our lips.

People ***And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.***

Officiant and People ***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.***

Officiant Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness:
Come let us adore him.

Jubilate *Psalm 100*

**Be joyful in the Lord, all you lands;
serve the Lord with gladness
and come before his presence with a song.**

**Know this: The Lord himself is God;
he himself has made us, and we are his;
we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.**

**Enter his gates with thanksgiving;
go into his courts with praise;
give thanks to him and call upon his Name.**

**For the Lord is good;
his mercy is everlasting;
and his faithfulness endures from age to age.**

The Psalm Appointed (*appointed for the day*)

Psalm 77: 11-15

**I will call to mind the deeds of the LORD;
I will remember your wonders of old.**

**I will meditate on all your work,
and muse on your mighty deeds.**

**Your way, O God, is holy.
What god is so great as our God?**

**You are the God who works wonders;
you have displayed your might among the peoples.**

**With your strong arm you redeemed your people,
the descendants of Jacob and Joseph.**

**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

A Reading from the Second Letter of Timothy

2 Timothy 1: 6-14

For this reason I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you through the laying on of my hands; for God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline.

Do not be ashamed, then, of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel, relying on the power of God, who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace. This grace was given to us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. For this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher, and for this reason I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed, for I know the one in whom I have put my trust, and I am sure that he is able to guard until that day what I have entrusted to him. Hold to the standard of sound teaching that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. Guard the good treasure entrusted to you, with the help of the Holy Spirit living in us.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Canticle 9 The First Song of Isaiah

Isaiah 12: 2-6

Surely, it is God who saves me;
I will trust in him and not be afraid.

For the Lord is my stronghold and my sure defense,
and he will be my Savior.

Therefore you shall draw water with rejoicing
from the springs of salvation.

And on that day you shall say,
Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his Name;

Make his deeds known among the peoples;
see that they remember that his Name is exalted.

Sing the praises of the Lord, for he has done great things,
and this is known in all the world.

Cry aloud, inhabitants of Zion, ring out your joy,
for the great one in the midst of you is the Holy One of 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.

The Gospel

Gospeller The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew. *Matthew 5: 13-19*
People ***Glory to you, Lord Christ.***

“You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled under foot.

“You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Christ.

Reflection

When Leo was born, about the year 400, the Western Roman Empire was almost in shambles. Weakened by barbarian invasions and by a totally inefficient economic and political system, the structure that had been carefully built by Augustus had become a chaos of internal warfare, subversion, and corruption.

The social and political situation notwithstanding, Leo received a good education, and was ordained deacon, with the responsibility of looking after Church possessions, managing the grain dole, and generally administering finances. He won considerable respect for his abilities, and a contemporary of his, Cassian, described him as “the ornament of the Roman Church and the divine ministry.”

In 440, Leo was unanimously elected Pope, despite the fact that he was absent at the time on a mission in Gaul. His ability as a preacher shows clearly in the 96 sermons still extant, in which he expounds doctrine, encourages almsgiving, and deals with various heresies, including the Pelagian and the Manichean systems.

In Gaul, Africa, and Spain, Leo’s strong hand was felt as he issued orders to limit the powers of one over-presumptuous bishop, confirmed the rights of another bishop over his vicars, and selected candidates for holy orders. Leo’s letter to the Council of Chalcedon in 451 dealt so effectively with the doctrine of the human and divine natures of the One Person of Christ that

the assembled bishops declared, "Peter has spoken by Leo," and affirmed his definition as orthodox teaching. (See page 864 of the Prayer Book.)

With similar strength of spirit and wisdom, Leo negotiated with Attila when the Huns were about to sack Rome. He persuaded them to withdraw from Italy and to accept an annual tribute. Three years later, Genseric led the Vandals against Rome. Again Leo negotiated. Unable to prevent pillaging by the barbarians, he did dissuade them from burning the city and slaughtering its inhabitants. He worked, thereafter, to repair the damage, to replace the holy vessels in the desecrated churches, and to restore the morale of the Roman people.

The Apostles' Creed

Officiant and People

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.

***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.

V. Show us your mercy, O Lord;

R. ***And grant us your salvation.***

V. Clothe your ministers with righteousness;

R. ***Let your people sing with joy.***

V. Give peace, O Lord, in all the world;

R. ***For only in you can we live in safety.***

V. Lord, keep this nation under your care;

R. ***And guide us in the way of justice and truth.***

V. Let your way be known upon earth;

R. ***Your saving health among all nations.***

V. Let not the needy, O Lord, be forgotten;

R. ***Nor the hope of the poor be taken away.***

V. Create in us clean hearts, O God;

R. ***And sustain us with your Holy Spirit.***

The Collect of the Day

Officiant O Lord our God, grant that your Church, following the teaching of your servant Leo of Rome, may hold fast the great mystery of our redemption, and adore the one Christ, true God and true Man, neither divided from our human nature nor separate from your divine Being; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. ***Amen.***

Prayers of Intercession and Thanksgiving

Officiant Almighty and everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of your faithful people is governed and sanctified: Receive our supplications and prayers which we offer before you for all members of your holy Church, that in their vocation and ministry they may truly and devoutly serve you; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. ***Amen.***

Spiritual Communion

Let us pray together a prayer for Spiritual Communion:

Blessed Jesus, I believe that we are fed with the spiritual food of your Body and Blood. Since I cannot receive You physically today, I now desire to receive you spiritually into my soul. Unite my heart with those of my community who cannot gather in person to celebrate the great meal of thanksgiving and make us all one with you. May this spiritual communion strengthen my faith and grant me confidence in your loving care now and forever. Amen.

The General Thanksgiving

Officiant 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 ourselves 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.**

Officiant Let us bless the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Officiant 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.**

Bible Study

Gospel: Mark 13: 1-8

As Jesus came out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, "Look, Teacher, what large stones and what large buildings!" Then Jesus asked him, "Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left here upon another; all will be thrown down."

When he was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked him privately, "Tell us, when will this be, and what will be the sign that all these things are about to be accomplished?" Then Jesus began to say to them, "Beware that no one leads you astray. Many will come in my name and say, 'I am he!' and they will lead many astray. When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed; this must take place, but the end is still to come. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various places; there will be famines. This is but the beginning of the birthpangs."

Reflection on Mark 13: 1-8

The stones of the Western Wall of the Jerusalem Temple, which can still be seen standing today, were and are rather impressive. In fact, some are 30 feet long. These were surely the stones to which Jesus' disciples were referring. Jesus uses their observation about the stones to springboard into a prophecy concerning the nation and people who were dear to him. This is appropriate in the context of his approaching execution. While modern Western people often speak of life "flashing before our eyes" before death, ancient Near Eastern people believed that in the days before death one gained powers of prognostication. Jesus exhibits that here. What follows from Jesus is an example of apocalyptic thought and discourse.

"Apocalyptic" was a literary form common in the biblical period (see, for example, the Book of Daniel and Revelation), but alien to those of us in the modern world. Apocalyptic literature uses certain vocabulary and imagery, in this case earthquakes, wars, famines, etc., to convey a larger truth. Jesus is telling us to beware and persevere in times of hardship and trial, because no power can prevail against the power of Almighty God.

- Where/how do you find spiritual comfort/nourishment in Jesus' apocalyptic discourse in today's gospel?
- How do you relate, from your own experience, to what Jesus says in verse 8, "This is but the beginning of the birth pangs"?