

Morning Prayer

St. Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist

September 21, 2021

Opening Sentence

Officiant Their sound has gone out into all lands,
And their message to the ends of the world. *Psalm 19:4*

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 The Lord is glorious in his saints:
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 119: 33-40*

**Teach me, O LORD, the way of your statutes,
and I will observe it to the end.**

**Give me understanding, that I may keep your law
and observe it with my whole heart.**

**Lead me in the path of your commandments,
for I delight in it.**

**Turn my heart to your decrees,
and not to selfish gain.**

**Turn my eyes from looking at vanities;
give me life in your ways.**

**Confirm to your servant your promise,
which is for those who fear you.**

**Turn away the disgrace that I dread,
for your ordinances are good.**

**See, I have longed for your precepts;
in your righteousness give me life.**

**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 Book of Proverbs

Proverbs 3: 1-6

My child, do not forget my teaching, but let your heart keep my commandments;
for length of days and years of life and abundant welfare they will give you.
Do not let loyalty and faithfulness forsake you;
bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart.
So you will find favor and good repute in the sight of God and of people.
Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight.
In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Canticle 10 The Second Song of Isaiah

Isaiah 55: 6-11

Seek the Lord while he wills to be found;
call upon him when he draws near.

Let the wicked forsake their ways
and the evil ones their thoughts;

And let them turn to the Lord, and he will have compassion,
and to our God, for he will richly pardon.

For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
nor your ways my ways, says the Lord.

For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
***so are my ways higher than your ways,
and my thoughts than your thoughts.***

For as rain and snow fall from the heavens
and return not again, but water the earth,

Bringing forth life and giving growth,
seed for sowing and bread for eating,

So is my word that goes forth from my mouth;
it will not return to me empty;

But it will accomplish that which I have purposed,
and prosper in that for which I sent it.

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 9: 9-13*

People ***Glory to you, Lord Christ.***

As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth; and he said to him, "Follow me." And he got up and followed him.

And as he sat at dinner in the house, many tax collectors and sinners came and were sitting with him and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" But when he heard this, he said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have come to call not the righteous but sinners."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Christ.

Reflection

Matthew, one of Jesus' disciples, is probably to be identified with Levi, a tax collector ("publican") mentioned by Mark and Luke. In the Gospel according to Matthew, it is said that Matthew was seated in the custom-house when Jesus bade him, "Follow me." When Jesus called him, he at once left everything, followed the Master, and later gave a dinner for him. Mark and Luke also note that Levi was a tax collector. In all three accounts, Jesus is severely criticized for eating at the same table with tax collectors and other disreputable persons.

Tax collectors were viewed as collaborators with the Roman State, extortioners who took money from their own people to further the cause of Rome and to line their own pockets. They were spurned as traitors and outcasts. The Jews so abhorred them that pious Pharisees

refused to marry into a family that had a publican as a member. Clearly, Matthew was hardly the type of man that a devout Jew would have had among his closest associates. Yet Jesus noted that it was the publican rather than the proud Pharisee who prayed the acceptable prayer, "Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner." There is frequent favorable reference to publicans in the many sayings of Jesus in the Gospel according to Matthew.

Matthew was called early in Jesus' ministry, but that he wrote the Gospel that bears his name is seriously doubted by scholars. It is, however, generally accepted that his "logia" or "sayings of Jesus" have been included in that Gospel.

It may be that the author of the First Gospel took from Matthew's work some of the numerous parables and comments that make that Gospel so popular a source for homilies and teaching. Through this Gospel, especially, Jesus speaks not only of faith and eternal life, but of duties toward one's neighbors, family, and even enemies.

Tradition has it that Matthew, having converted many persons to Christianity in Judea, traveled to the East; but there is no certain evidence for this. He has been venerated as a martyr, but the time and circumstances of his death are unknown.

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 We thank you, heavenly Father, for the witness of your apostle and evangelist Matthew to the Gospel of your Son our Savior; and we pray that, after his example, we may with ready wills and hearts obey the calling of our Lord to follow him; 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 gathered 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 9:38-50

John said to Jesus, "Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he was not following us." But Jesus said, "Do not stop him; for no one who does a deed of power in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me. Whoever is not against us is for us. For truly I tell you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you bear the name of Christ will by no means lose the reward. "If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were hung around your neck and you were thrown into the sea. If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life maimed than to have two hands and to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire. And if your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life lame than to have two feet and to be thrown into hell. And if your eye causes you to stumble, tear it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and to be thrown into hell, where their worm never dies, and the fire is never quenched. "For everyone will be salted with fire. Salt is good; but if salt has lost its saltiness, how can you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another."

Reflection on Mark 9: 38-50

This Gospel begins with John saying to Jesus, "Teacher, we saw a person who was driving out demons. We tried to stop him because he does not follow us." Are the disciples a bit jealous of this person's ability to drive out demons? Do they want to have this kind of power? Jesus says to John, "Do not prevent him. If someone performs a good deed in my name, then who can speak ill of me?" Then Jesus adds: "Whoever is not against us is for us."

Today Jesus is giving us an important instruction. He is telling us that anyone who is not against us is for us. Typically most human beings know which individuals support them. However, we also know which people may struggle with us, dislike us, or ignore us. We may allow these individuals to disrupt our internal peace and harmony. As human beings, many of us may care too much about what others think of us. Jesus, however, wants his disciples to be truly free. He does not want them to be jealous of others or to covet another's abilities and gifts.

Jesus clearly wants his disciples to appreciate their own gifts and gifts of others as well. Life is not a competition, yet many of us live as if it were. Today if you find yourself being critical of another person's actions, words, and being, **STOP!** Take a moment, breathe, and then change your reactive thoughts and your judgment. You may find that you feel more peaceful, relaxed, and calm. Judgment poisons our minds and our hearts. Release your judgment and relax and be at peace!