

Morning Prayer

September 14, 2022

Holy Cross Day

Opening Hymn *Lift High the Cross*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZgcaigsoNug>

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.***

Officiant The Lord has shown forth his glory:
Come let us adore him.

Venite

Psalm 95: 1-7

**Come, let us sing to the Lord;
let us shout for joy to the Rock of our salvation.**

**Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving
and raise a loud shout to him with psalms.**

**For the Lord is a great God,
and a great King above all gods.**

**In his hand are the caverns of the earth,
and the heights of the hills are his also.**

**The sea is his, for he made it,
and his hands have molded the dry land.**

**Come, let us bow down, and bend the knee,
and kneel before the Lord our Maker.**

**For he is our God,
and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand.
Oh, that today you would hearken to his voice!**

The Psalm Appointed *(appointed for the day)*

Psalm 98

**Sing to the LORD a new song,
for he has done marvelous things.**

**With his right hand and his holy arm
has he won for himself the victory.**

**The LORD has made known his victory;
his righteousness has he openly shown in the sight of the nations.**

**He remembers his mercy and faithfulness to the house of Israel,
and all the ends of the earth have seen the victory of our God.**

**Shout with joy to the LORD, all you lands;
lift up your voice, rejoice, and sing.**

**Sing to the LORD with the harp,
with the harp and the voice of song.**

**With trumpets and the sound of the horn
shout with joy before the King, the LORD.**

**Let the sea make a noise and all that is in it,
the lands and those who dwell therein.**

**Let the rivers clap their hands,
and let the hills ring out with joy before the LORD,
when he comes to judge the earth.**

**In righteousness shall he judge the world
and the peoples with equity.**

**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 Paul's Letter to the Philippians

Philippians 2: 5-11

Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,
who, though he was in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself,
taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness.
And being found in human form,
he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death — even death on a cross.
Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name,
so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

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 forever. Amen.

The Gospel

Gospeller

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John

John 12:31-36

People

Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Jesus said, "Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself." He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die. The crowd answered him, "We have heard from the law that the Messiah remains forever. How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?" Jesus said to them, "The light is with you for a little longer. Walk while you have the light, so that the darkness may not overtake you. If you walk in the darkness, you do not know where you are going. While you have the light, believe in the light, so that you may become children of light."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Christ.

Reflection

The historian Eusebius, in his *Life of Constantine*, tells how that emperor ordered the erection of a complex of buildings in Jerusalem "on a scale of imperial magnificence," to set forth as "an object of attraction and veneration to all, the blessed place of our Savior's resurrection." The overall supervision of the work—on the site where the Church of the Holy Sepulchre now stands—was entrusted to Constantine's mother, the empress Helena. In Jesus' time, the hill of

Calvary had stood outside the city; but when the Roman city which succeeded Jerusalem, Aelia Capitolina, was built, the hill was buried under tons of fill. It was during the excavations directed by Helena that a relic, believed to be that of the true cross, was discovered.

Constantine's shrine included two principal buildings: a large basilica, used for the Liturgy of the Word, and a circular church, known as "The Resurrection"—its Altar placed on the site of the tomb—which was used for the Liturgy of the Table, and for the singing of the Daily Office. Toward one side of the courtyard which separated the two buildings, and through which the faithful had to pass on their way from Word to Sacrament, the exposed top of Calvary's hill was visible. It was there that the solemn veneration of the cross took place on Good Friday; and it was there that the congregation gathered daily for a final prayer and dismissal after Vespers.

The dedication of the buildings was completed on September 14, 335, the seventh month of the Roman calendar, a date suggested by the account of the dedication of Solomon's temple in the same city, in the seventh month of the Jewish Calendar, hundreds of years before (2 Chronicles 7:8–10).

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 Almighty God, whose Son our Savior Jesus Christ was lifted high upon the cross that he might draw the whole world to himself: Mercifully grant that we, who glory in the mystery of our redemption, may have grace to take up our cross and follow him; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, in glory everlasting. ***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, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. ***Amen.***

Spiritual Communion

Let us pray together a prayer for Spiritual Communion:

Lord Jesus, we believe that you are truly present in the Blessed Sacrament. We are grateful to know there are many ways to experience your presence, but in whatever way we do, we know you come into our hearts, minds and souls. Unite my heart with those of my family of faith 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: Luke 16: 1-13

Jesus said to the disciples, "There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was squandering his property. So he summoned him and said to him, 'What is this that I hear about you? Give me an accounting of your management, because you cannot be my manager any longer.' Then the manager said to himself, 'What will I do, now that my master is taking the position away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. I have decided what to do so that, when I am dismissed as manager, people may welcome me into their homes.' So, summoning his master's debtors one by one, he asked the first, 'How much do you owe my master?' He answered, 'A hundred jugs of olive oil.' He said to him, 'Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it fifty.' Then he asked another, 'And how much do you owe?' He replied, 'A hundred containers of wheat.' He said to him, 'Take your bill and make it eighty.' And his master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly; for the children of this age are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than are the children of light. And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of dishonest wealth so that when it is gone, they may welcome you into the eternal homes.

"Whoever is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much; and whoever is dishonest in a very little is dishonest also in much. If then you have not been faithful with the dishonest wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? And if you have not been faithful with what belongs to another, who will give you what is your own? No slave can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth."

Reflection on Luke 16: 1-13

The parable of the dishonest manager sets the scene in true Lukan fashion: "There was a rich man," thus communicating the privileged corner of society in which the parable takes place. However, the rich man is not the focus of the story; his manager is the main character of this passage. Having squandered away his master's property, the manager is set to lose his job. Unable to work and unwilling to beg, the manager searches for a way to fix his predicament. He rushes to two of his master's debtors and has them cut their debt, one as much as half, so that "people may welcome [him] into their homes" when he loses his job.

As the text continues, the master recognizes the manager's dishonesty and, in fact, praises him. Why would Luke include a story that seems to valorize dishonesty, even to the point of comparing and contrasting the shrewdness of the "children of light" (i.e., believers) with the "children of this age"?

Perhaps we are called to reflect on the (at least partial) forgiveness of debt that the manager offers the master's debtors. The story leaves open the details of the transaction, and we are left to wonder: Did the manager falsify records to give to the master, or did he pay them from his own account? This is, admittedly, a generous view of the manager's last actions on the job, but the fact remains—two substantial debts were cut. Such a level of debt forgiveness can

bring with it new life and freedom, and perhaps the debtors were given just that. The redemption found in the Kingdom of God, as the Lukan Jesus' parables proclaim, comes about in surprising, unexpected ways. Perhaps then, even the manager, if he is welcomed into homes as he hopes, will be redeemed, too.

- Have you ever been surprised by the way redemption has come about?
- How might we remain open to the possibility of God redeeming that which seems beyond redemption?