

PRAYER AND REFLECTION

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Friday 17th April 2020



Prayer and Reflection

Opening Psalm

46:1-5

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

Therefore, we will not fear, though the earth should change,
though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea; though its
waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with its
tumult.

There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the
holy habitation of the Most High.

God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be moved; God will
help it when the morning dawns.

Prayer:

Lord God, as we come to you today, we think about the
transitions in our lives. May we be reminded of your faithful
presence in our changes.

Light of the world, as we find it hard to wander through the
unmarked desert of uncertainty, gift us with the grace of your
light to illuminate our path and warm our hearts.

God of new beginnings, keep us open to the reality of the new
things that you are doing in our lives and in our communities.

Give us the courage we need to enter fully into the challenges ahead, so that we may continue to grow into the fullness of Christ. Amen

Reading: John 20: 19–22

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit.”

Reflection:

I find it helpful to remember that Peter was standing here. He was a man who had got things wrong many times, a man keenly aware of his own need for forgiveness. I was reminded of this as I watched the YouTube showing of Jesus Christ Superstar the other day, where Peter’s betrayal is so powerfully portrayed. Peter no longer imagined that he could do anything very much by his own strength, but with Jesus’ Spirit in him he was able to start breathing again, to start dreaming again. It was no longer about what he could achieve, nor about what others would think of him, but it was about what God could do within him. He knew it wouldn’t be easy. He was still the same person, prone to get things wrong, fearful of the cost, but in the next chapter of John’s gospel we can see there was resolve in him, a new determination.

I believe Jesus still speaks today words of peace and of transformation. We cannot touch Jesus as those first disciples did, we cannot see Jesus as they saw, but Jesus still breathes his Holy Spirit into us. He breathes his Spirit into us so that we can know his peace. He breathes his Spirit into us so that we are

transformed into his likeness, so that we can be his hands, his feet, his eyes, his heart as he sends us into the world.

Jesus says to us today, “Peace be with you.” “Receive the Holy Spirit.”

I take both comfort and courage from these words for today and the days ahead and pray that you can too.

Prayer of St. Francis:

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Amen.

Blessing

The power of the Creator who brings life out of death, be in your home. The risen Christ be your constant companion. The healing embrace of the Holy Spirit encircle you so that you see resurrection ever about you today and always.

Amen