

Sunday 5 March 2023

Second Sunday of Lent

Hymns, Readings, and Collect

Opening Hymn: Christian, dost thou see them

Christian, dost thou see them
on the holy ground,
how the troops of Midian
prowl and prowl around?
Christian, up and smite them,
counting gain but loss;
smite them by the merit
of the holy cross.

Christian, dost thou feel them,
how they work within,
striving, tempting, luring,
goaded into sin?
Christian, never tremble;
never be down-cast;
smite them by the virtue
of the Lenten fast.

Christian, dost thou hear them,
how they speak thee fair?
'Always fast and vigil?
always watch and prayer?'
Christian, answer boldly,
'While I breathe, I pray:'
peace shall follow battle,
night shall end in day.

'Well I know thy trouble,
O my servant true;
thou art very weary,—
I was weary too;
but that toil shall make thee
some day all mine own,—
and the end of sorrow
shall be near my throne.'

St Andrew of Crete 55 AMNS

The Collect Second Sunday of Lent

Almighty God,
you show to those who are in error the light of your truth,
that they may return to the way of righteousness:
grant to all those who are admitted into the fellowship of Christ's religion,
that they may reject those things that are contrary to their profession,
and follow all such things as are agreeable to the same;
through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

The New Testament Reading

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans.

What then are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what does the scripture say? 'Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.' Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. But to one who without works trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness.

For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, as it is written, 'I have made you the father of many nations')—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

This is the word of the Lord.

Romans 4: 1–5, 13–17

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation: Bless the Lord, my soul

Bless the Lord, my soul, and bless God's holy name.
Bless the Lord, my soul, who leads me into life.

Taize Community

The Gospel

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, 'Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God.' Jesus answered him, 'Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.' Nicodemus said to him, 'How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?' Jesus answered, 'Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, "You must be born from above." The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.' Nicodemus said to him, 'How can these things be?' Jesus answered him, 'Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things? Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

St John 3: 1–17

Praise to you, O Christ.

The Creed:

Let us declare our faith in the living God.

We believe in God the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.

We believe in God the Son, who lives in our hearts through faith, and fills us with his love.

We believe in God the Holy Spirit, who strengthens us with power from on high.

We believe in one God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Offertory Hymn: In Christ alone

In Christ alone my hope is found,
he is my light, my strength, my song;
this Cornerstone, this solid Ground,
firm through the fiercest drought and storm.
What heights of love, what depths of peace,
when fears are stilled, when strivings cease!
My Comforter, my All in All,
here in the love of Christ I stand.

There in the ground his body lay,
light of the world by darkness slain;
Then bursting forth in glorious day
up from the grave he rose again!
And as he stands in victory
sin's curse has lost its grip on me,
for I am his and he is mine—
bought with the precious blood of Christ.

No guilt in life, no fear in death,
this is the power of Christ in me;
from life's first cry to final breath,
Jesus commands my destiny.
No power of hell, no scheme of man,
can ever pluck me from his hand:
till he returns or calls me home,
here in the power of Christ I'll stand.

678 AM

Anthem: God so loved the world

God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whoso believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

*John Stainer (1840–1901)
from The Crucifixion - St John 3: 16–17*

Communion Hymn: And now, O Father, mindful of the love

And now, O Father, mindful of the love
that bought us, once for all, on Calvary's tree,
and having with us him that pleads above,
we here present, we here spread forth to thee
that only offering perfect in thine eyes,
the one true, pure, immortal sacrifice.

Look, Father, look on his anointed face,
and only look on us as found in him;
look not on our misusings of thy grace,
our prayer so languid, and our faith so dim:
for lo, between our sins and their reward
we set the Passion of thy Son our Lord.

And then for those, our dearest and our best,
by this prevailing presence we appeal:
O fold them closer to thy mercy's breast,
O do thine utmost for their souls' true weal;
from tainting mischief keep them white and clear,
and crown thy gifts with strength to persevere.

And so we come: O draw us to thy feet,
most patient Saviour, who canst love us still;
and by this food, so awful and so sweet,
deliver us from every touch of ill:
in thine own service make us glad and free,
and grant us never more to part from thee.

Unde et memores 273 NEH

Dismissal: God is love

God is love: let heaven adore him;
God is love: let earth rejoice;
let creation sing before him,
and exalt him with one voice.
He who laid the earth's foundation,
he who spread the heavens above,
he who breathes through all creation,
he is love, eternal love.

God is love: and he enfoldeth
all the world in one embrace;
with unfailing grasp he holdeth
every child of every race.
And when human hearts are breaking
under sorrow's iron rod,
then they find that selfsame aching
deep within the heart of God.

God is love: and though with blindness
sin afflicts the souls of men,
God's eternal loving-kindness
holds and guides them even then.
Sin and death and hell shall never
o'er us final triumph gain;
God is love, so love for ever
o'er the universe must reign.

Blaenwern 364ii NEH