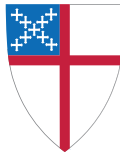


THE
Episcopal
CHURCH



Morning Meditation
March 26, 2020

Introduction

Good morning and welcome to this meditation from St. Bart's in midtown Manhattan. I'm the Reverend Susan Anderson-Smith, Associate Rector for Justice and Reconciliation here. During this time of anxiety and isolation, I hope you find solace and comfort in the beauty of this sacred space.

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

Lord God, almighty and everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day: Preserve us with your mighty power, that we may not fall into sin, nor be overcome by adversity; and in all we do, direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Reading

A reading from the Gospel of Mark.

Jesus called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." And he said to them, "Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see that the kingdom of God has come with power."

Response to the Reading

Oscar Romero reflects, "We live in a time of struggle between truth and lies, between sincerity, which almost no one believes in still, and hypocrisy and intrigue. Let's not be afraid, brothers and sisters; let's try to be sincere, to love truth; let's try to model ourselves on Christ Jesus. It is time for us to have a great sense of selection, of discernment."

Harvey Cox adds, "God is present in the confusion and dislocation of the world. One encounters God not by turning one's back on that world but by plunging into it with the faith that the divine-human encounter occurs in the midst of the encounter of human with human, especially in the struggle to create signs of the coming of God's reign of peace and justice."

The Collect of the Day

Let us pray.

Almighty and most merciful God, drive from us all weakness of body, mind, and spirit; that, being restored to wholeness, we may with free hearts become what you intend us to be and accomplish what you want us to do; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Prayer for the Sick

Compassionate God: You so loved the world that you sent us Jesus to bear our infirmities and afflictions. Through acts of healing, he revealed you as the true source of health and salvation. For the sake of your Christ who suffered and died for us, conquered death, and now reigns with you in glory, hear the cry of your people. Have mercy on us, make us whole, and bring us at last into the fullness of your eternal life. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say:

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.

The Blessing

May we who have been touched by the saving power of Christ be his body for the world, his hands to bring blessing, his senses to glory, in the promise of creation restored; and the blessing of God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer be upon you this day and remain with you always. Amen.

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