

Guide *for* ***the* Daily Office**

For the Week of the First Sunday after the Epiphany
January 12-January 18, 2025



Private Prayers *for Before & After the Office*

Below are adaptations of the traditional prayers that were prayed before praying the Divine Office. If desired, they may be privately used before and after prayer.

Before the Office

Open, O Lord, my mouth to bless your holy Name; cleanse also my heart from all vain and wandering thoughts; enlighten my understanding; kindle my affections; that I may say this Office worthily, with attention and devotion, and so be fit to be heard in the presence of your divine Majesty. Through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end.

The Prayer of St. Gertrude

O Lord, in union with that divine intention by which you yourself on earth did render your praises to God, I desire to offer this my Office of prayer unto you.

The Our Father & the Apostles' Creed may then be prayed silently

After the Office

To God Most Holy, in his divine Majesty of Trinity in Unity; To Jesus Christ, our Lord and God made man and crucified for us; To blessed Mary Ever-Virgin, from whose glorious purity he took flesh; And to the entire Company of the Saints of God in heaven; Be praise, honour, power, and glory, from every creature on earth: And likewise to us may there be full remission of all our sins: throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

The Our Father may be prayed silently

O most gracious Jesus, I give thanks unto you with my whole heart. Be merciful to me. I offer this act of worship to your Divine Heart, that you would correct whatsoever is amiss, and supply whatever is lacking, to the praise and glory of your most holy Name, and to that of your most blessed Mother; for the salvation of my soul and for that of all your Church. Amen.

How-to use *this* Guide

This Guide is meant to help those who would like to pray the daily office. With this guide, all that you need to pray the Daily Office is a 1979 Book of Common Prayer! If you don't have one, they are available for purchase online, or for free as a PDF by searching "1979 Book of Common Prayer PDF."

There are two sections to this guide:

1. The Ordinary
2. The Propers

The Ordinary is at the beginning, and tells you the order of the typical prayers and readings for Morning and Evening Prayer every day. Page numbers are provided for convenience. Follow this for the structure of Morning & Evening Prayer.

The Propers are the readings and prayers appointed for each individual day, along with any saints being celebrated that day. This section will give you all the readings and prayers needed to pray the office.

The **Ordinary** *for* **Morning Prayer**

Introduction *Read the introduction found in the Ordinary*

Opening Sentence *Choose one of the acclamations for “At any time”* pg. 78

Invitatory *“Lord, open our lips, etc.”* pg. 80

Antiphon *use the antiphon under “On other Sundays and weekdays”* pg. 81

Venite or Jubilate pg. 82

Antiphon *repeat the antiphon*

Psalter *Read the Psalms appointed for Morning Prayer responsively by verse, pausing at the asterisk and ending with “Glory to the Father . . .”*

First Lesson *Read the first reading appointed*

First Canticle

Mondays 9: The First Song of Isaiah pg. 86

Tuesdays 13: A Song of Praise pg. 90

Wednesdays 11: The Third Song of Isaiah pg. 87

Thursday 8: The Song of Moses pg. 85

Friday 10: The Second Song of Isaiah pg. 86

Saturday 12: A Song of Creation pg. 88

Sundays & Major Feasts 16: The Song of Zechariah pg. 92

Second Lesson *Read the first reading appointed*

Second Canticle

Mondays 19: The Song of the Redeemed pg. 94

Tuesdays 18: A Song to the Lamb pg. 93

Wednesdays 16: The Song of Zechariah pg. 92

Thursday 20: Glory to God pg. 94

Friday 18: A Song to the Lamb pg. 93

Saturday 19: The Song of the Redeemed pg. 94

<i>Sundays & Major Feasts</i> 21: You are God	pg. 95
[Third Lesson <i>if there is a third lesson appointed, read it here</i>]	
Apostles' Creed	pg. 96
Lord's Prayer	pg. 97
Suffrages <i>Ordinarily, use Suffrage A. On Sundays & Major feast days, use Suffrage B.</i>	pg. 97-8
Collect(s) of the Day <i>Read the appointed collects</i>	
Collect of the Week	
<i>Mondays</i> A Collect for the Renewal of Life	pg. 99
<i>Tuesdays</i> A Collect for Peace	pg. 99
<i>Wednesdays</i> A Collect for Grace	pg. 100
<i>Thursday</i> A Collect for Guidance	pg. 100
<i>Friday</i> A Collect for Fridays	pg. 99
<i>Saturday</i> A Collect for Saturdays	pg. 99
<i>Sundays</i> A Collect for Sundays	pg. 98
Prayer for Mission <i>Choose one of the three prayers for mission</i>	pg. 100-1
Intercessions & Thanksgivings <i>Add as appointed</i>	
Silence <i>Intercessions/thanksgivings may be added, silently or aloud</i>	
[The General Thanksgiving <i>may be added here</i>]	pg. 101
A Prayer of St. Chrysostom	pg. 102
Concluding Versicle and Sentence	pg. 102

The **Ordinary** *for* **Evening Prayer**

Introduction *Read the introduction found in the Ordinary*

Opening Sentence *Choose one of the opening sentences* pg. 115-16

Confession of Sin *The confession of sin is said together in unison* pg. 116

Prayer for Forgiveness *all but priests say “us” instead of “you”* pg. 117

Invitatory *“O God, make speed to save us, etc.”* pg. 117

Phos Hilaron *Say together the “O Gracious Light”* pg. 118

Psalter *Read the Psalms appointed for Evening Prayer responsively by verse, pausing at the asterisk and ending with the “Glory to the Father . . .”*

The First Lesson *Read the first reading appointed*

The First Canticle

Mondays 8: The Song of Moses pg. 85

Tuesdays 10: The Second Song of Isaiah pg. 86

Wednesdays 12: A Song of Creation pg. 88

Thursday 11: The Third Song of Isaiah pg. 87

Friday 13: A Song of Praise pg. 90

Saturday 9: The First Song of Isaiah pg. 86

Sundays & Major Feasts The Song of Mary (*Magnificat*) pg. 119

The Second Lesson *Read the first reading appointed*

Second Canticle

Mondays-Saturdays The Song of Mary *Magnificat* pg. 119

Sundays & Major Feasts The Song of Simeon *Nunc dimittis* pg. 120

[**The Third Lesson** *if there is a third lesson appointed, read it here*]

Apostles’ Creed pg. 120

Lord’s Prayer pg. 121

Suffrages *If there is a celebration of a saint, use Suffrage B, inserting “[their name] & the Blessed Virgin Mary” in the last petition before “and all your saints”. If not, Suffrage A.* pg.121-2

The Collect(s) of the Day *Read the appointed collects*

The Collect of the Week

Mondays A Collect for Peace pg. 123

Tuesdays A Collect for Aid against Perils pg. 123

Wednesdays A Collect for Protection pg. 124

Thursday A Collect for the Presence of Christ pg. 124

Friday A Collect for Fridays pg. 123

Saturday A Collect for Saturdays pg. 123

Sundays A Collect for Sundays pg. 123

Prayer for Mission *Choose one of the three prayers for mission* pg. 100-1

Intercessions & Thanksgivings *Add as appointed*

Silence *Personal intercessions/thanksgivings may be added*

The General Thanksgiving pg. 125

A Prayer of St. Chrysostom pg. 126

Concluding Versicle and Sentence pg. 126

The Angelus

Traditionally, the Angelus is prayed once in the morning, at noon, and in the evening. For those who are comfortable, it may be prayed on its own or before or after the office.

V. The Angel of the Lord announced unto Mary.

R. And she conceived by the Holy Ghost.

Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee: Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners; Now and at the hour of our death. *Amen.*

V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord.

R. Be it unto me according to thy Word.

Hail Mary . . .

V. And the Word was made flesh.

R. And dwelt among us.

Hail Mary . . .

V. Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray.

Pour thy grace into our hearts, O Lord, that we who have known the incarnation of thy Son Jesus Christ, announced by an angel to the Virgin Mary, may by his † cross and passion be brought to the glory of his resurrection; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

1 When Je - sus went to Jor - dan's stream his Fa - ther's will o -
 2 The Ho - ly Spi - rit then was shown, a dove on him de -
 3 He came by wa - ter and by blood to heal our lost con -

bey - ing, and was bap - tized by John, there came
 scend - ing; the Tri - une God is thus made known
 di - tion; he cleans - es, rec - on - ciles to God,

a voice from hea - ven say - ing, "This is my dear be -
 in Christ as love un - end - ing. He taught, he healed, he
 and gives the Great Com - mis - sion. Then let us not heed

lov - ed Son up - on whom rests my fa - vor."
 raised the dead, yet, in his great en - deav - or
 world - ly lies nor rest up - on our mer - it,

And till God's will is ful - ly done he will not bend or
 to save us, his own blood was shed; but death could hold him
 but trust in Christ who will bap - tize with wa - ter and the

wa - ver, for he is Christ the Sa - vior.
 nev - er. He rose, and lives for ev - er.
 Spi - rit that we may life in - her - it.

Words: Martin Luther (1483-1546); para. F. Bland Tucker (1895-1984), rev.

Music: *Christ unser Herr zum Jordan kam*, melody from *Geistliche gesangk Buchleyn*, 1524

87. 87. 87. 877



Sunday, Jan 12 | The First Sunday after the Epiphany: The Baptism of our Lord

Opening & Invitatory

In Morning Prayer, Use the Epiphany Opening Sentence (pg. 76) & the Venite (pg. 82) with the Epiphany Antiphon (pg. 81)

In Evening Prayer, sing or read the hymn on the previous page in place of the Phos Hilaron (the hymn is #139 in the 1982 Hymnal)

The Psalter

In Morning Prayer, Psalm 146, 147 (BCP page 803)

In Evening Prayer, Psalm 111, 112, 113 (BCP page 754)

The First Reading for Morning Prayer (*Isaiah 40:1-11*)

Reader A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins. A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken." A voice says, "Cry out!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All flesh is grass; their constancy is like the flower of the field. The grass withers; the flower fades, [[when the breath of the Lord blows upon it; surely the people are grass. The grass withers; the flower fades,]] but the word of our God will stand forever. Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good news; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good news; lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!" See, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him and his recompense before him. He will feed his flock like a shepherd;

he will gather the lambs in his arms and carry them in his bosom and gently lead the mother sheep.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People *Thanks be to God.*

The Second Reading for Morning Prayer (*Hebrews 1:1-12*)

Reader A reading from the letter to the Hebrews

Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs. For to which of the angels did God ever say, "You are my Son; today I have begotten you"? Or again, "I will be his Father, and he will be my Son"? And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, "Let all God's angels worship him." Of the angels he says, "He makes his angels winds and his servants flames of fire." But of the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, and the scepter of righteousness is the scepter of your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions." And, "In the beginning, Lord, you founded the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands; they will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like clothing; like a cloak you will roll them up, and like clothing they will be changed. But you are the same, and your years will never end."

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People *Thanks be to God.*

The First Reading for Evening Prayer (*John 1:1-7, 19-20, 29-34*)

Reader A reading from the Gospel according to St. John

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it. There was a man sent from God whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" He confessed and did not deny it, but he confessed, "I am not the Messiah." The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him and declared, "Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said, 'After me comes a man who ranks ahead of me because he was before me.' I myself did not know him, but I came baptizing with water for this reason, that he might be revealed to Israel." And John testified, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' And I myself have seen and have testified that this is the Chosen One."

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People *Thanks be to God.*

[Use the Magnificat (pg 119) as the canticle with the following antiphon before & after:

Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my Spirit upon him.]

The Second Reading for Evening Prayer

A Reading from an oration of Proclus, Patriarch of Constantinople

Christ has been revealed to the world, and has brought order to our disordered world, making it resplendent with his glory. He has taken upon himself the sin of the world, and cast down our ancient enemy. He has sanctified the flowing waters, and enlightened our souls. He has enfolded miracles with yet greater ones. For today both earth and sea share in the grace of the Saviour, and joy has spread over the face of the whole world. Today's feast is even more miraculous than the one we have just celebrated. On the feast of our Saviour's

II Sunday

birth, earth joined in the celebrations because she bore the Lord in a crib; but today on the Theophany, the sea leaped with exultant joy and danced with delight, delighting that it had received the blessing of sanctification in the midst of the Jordan. In the former celebration an immature infant was revealed to our gaze, witnessing to our own incompleteness; but today a full-grown man is to be seen, in obscure fashion pointing us to him who being perfect proceeds from the perfect God. At his birth the King put on the purple robe of a human body; today the deep swells round him like a river as if to clothe him. Come then and see new and overwhelming miracles: the Sun of Righteousness bathing in the Jordan, the fire immersed in water, and God being sanctified by human ministry. Today all creation resounds with hymns, crying out: 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.' Blessed is he who comes at all times, for this is not the first time that he has come. So who is this? Speak more clearly, I pray, blessed David. 'God is the Lord, and he has given us light.' David the prophet does not speak alone in this; in fact the apostle Paul supports his statement with his own testimony when he says: 'The grace of God has appeared with healing for all the world.' Not just to some people, but to all – that is, both Jews and Greeks equally, God has poured forth our salvation through baptism, offering to all people everywhere a common blessing in baptism. Come then, and see this strange and new flood, greater and more powerful than that which occurred in the days of Noah. There the water of the flood destroyed the human race; but here the water of the baptism, by the power of him who is baptized in it, has called back the dead to life. There the dove carried an olive branch in its beak, denoting the fragrance of the sweet-smelling savour of the Lord Christ, but here the Holy Spirit, descending in the form of a dove, reveals to us the presence of our merciful God.

Reader Here ends the lesson.

[Use the Nunc Dimittis (pg. 120) as the canticle]

The Collect

The First Sunday after the Epiphany: the Baptism of Our Lord (*from the BCP, pg. 213*)

Father in heaven, who at the baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan proclaimed him your beloved Son and anointed him with the Holy Spirit: Grant that all who

are baptized into his Name may keep the covenant they have made, and boldly confess him as Lord and Savior; who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting. *Amen.*

A Prayer for Those Affected by the Wildfires

O God, our refuge and strength, our help in times of trouble. Have mercy on the lands damaged by fires. Guard and protect first responders and those who care for others in danger. Protect those who evacuate houses, and give them shelter and encouragement to face the days to come. Strengthen those who rebuild hope, so that entire communities may face the future without fear, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

The following anthem may be said after the Collects & Prayer for Mission:

A Memorial of Baptism

The voice of the Lord is upon the waters.

The voice of the Lord is upon the waters.

Ascribe to the Lord, you gods,
ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.

The voice of the Lord is upon the waters.

The voice of the Lord is a powerful voice;
The voice of the Lord is a voice of splendor.

The voice of the Lord is upon the waters.

The Lord sits enthroned above the flood;
the Lord sits enthroned as king for evermore.

The voice of the Lord is upon the waters.

V. All of us who were baptized into Christ.

R. *Have clothed ourselves with Christ.*

Let us pray.

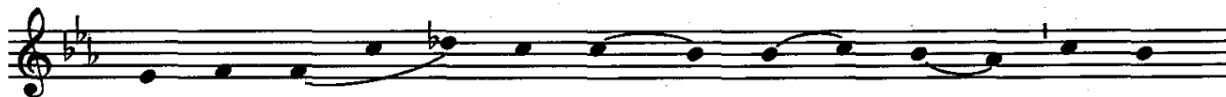
Grant, Lord God, to all who have been baptized into the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ, that, as we have put away the old life of

sin, so we may be renewed in the spirit of our minds, and live in righteousness and true holiness, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

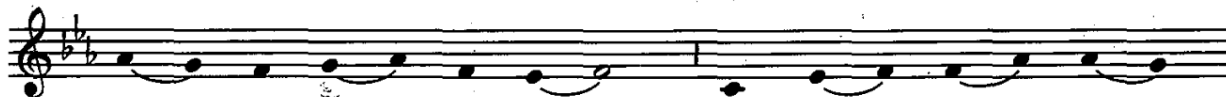
The following may be added:

You will purge me with hyssop, O Lord, and I shall be clean; you will wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

On Monday, January 13th, the following hymn may be used
in place of the Phos Hilaron in Evening Prayer:



1 Hail this joy - ful day's re - turn, hail the
2 Like to clo - ven tongues of flame on the
3 Lord, to you your peo - ple bend; un - to
4 You who did our fore - bears guide, with their



Pen - te - cos - tal morn, morn when our a -
twelve the Spi - rit came— tongues, that earth may
us your Spi - rit send; bless - ings of this
chil - dren still a - bide; grant us par - don,



scend - ed Lord on his Church his Spi - rit poured!
hear their call, fire, that love may burn in all.
sa - cred day grant us, dear - est Lord, we pray.
grant us peace, till our earth - ly wan - derings cease.

Words: Att. Hilary of Poitiers (4th cent.); tr. Robert Campbell (1814-1868), alt.
Music: *Beata nobis gaudia*, plainsong, Mode 1, *Zisterzienser Hymnar*, 14th cent.

77. 77



Monday, Jan 13 | Hilary of Poitiers, Bishop, 367

Monday of the First Week after Epiphany

Introduction

*Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers, was a prolific writer on scripture and doctrine, an orator, and a poet to whom some of the earliest Latin hymns have been attributed. Augustine called him “the illustrious doctor of the churches.” Jerome considered him “the trumpet of the Latins against the Arians.” Hilary was born in Poitiers, in Gaul, about 315, into a pagan family of wealth and power. In his writings, he describes the stages of the spiritual journey that led him to the Christian faith. He was baptized when he was about thirty. In 350, Hilary was made Bishop of Poitiers. Although he demurred, he was finally persuaded by popular acclamation. He proved to be a bishop of skill and courage. His orthodoxy was shown when, in 355, the Emperor Constantius ordered all bishops to sign a condemnation of Athanasius, under pain of exile. Hilary wrote to Constantius, pleading for peace and unity. His plea accomplished nothing, and, when he dissociated himself from three Arian bishops in the West, Constantius ordered Julian (later surnamed the Apostate) to exile him to Phrygia. There he remained for three years without complaining, writing biblical commentaries and his principal work, *On the Trinity*. Hilary was then invited by a party of “semi-Arians,” who hoped for his support, to a Council at Seleucia in Asia, largely attended by Arians. With remarkable courage, in the midst of a hostile gathering, Hilary defended the Council of Nicaea and the Nicene doctrine of the Trinity. He wrote again to Constantius, offering to debate Saturninus, the Western bishop largely responsible for his exile. The Arians feared the results of such an encounter and persuaded Constantius to simply return Hilary to Poitiers. In 360, Hilary was welcomed back to his see with great demonstrations of joy and affection. He continued his battle against Arianism, but he never neglected the needs of his people. While fierce in controversy with heretical bishops, he was always a loving and compassionate pastor to the people of his diocese. He died in Poitiers in 367. Among his disciples was Martin, later Bishop of Tours, whom Hilary encouraged in his endeavors to promote the monastic life. The hymn “Hail this day’s joyful return” (The Hymnal 1982, #223; #224) is attributed to Hilary.*

The Psalter

In Morning Prayer, Psalm 1, 2, 3 (*BCP pg. 585*)

In Evening Prayer, Psalm 4, 7 (*BCP pg. 587*)

The First Reading for Morning Prayer (*Isaiah 40:12-23*)

Reader A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah:

Who has measured the waters of the sea in the hollow of his hand and marked off the heavens with a span, enclosed the dust of the earth in a measure and weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance? Who has directed the spirit of the Lord or as his counselor has instructed him? Whom did he consult for his enlightenment, and who taught him the path of justice? [[Who taught him knowledge and showed him the way of understanding? Even the nations are like a drop from a bucket and are accounted as dust on the scales; see, he takes up the isles like fine dust. Lebanon would not provide fuel enough, nor are its animals enough for a burnt offering.]] All the nations are as nothing before him; they are accounted by him as less than nothing and emptiness. To whom, then, will you liken God, or what likeness compare with him? An idol? A workman casts it, and a goldsmith overlays it with gold and casts for it silver chains. As a gift one chooses mulberry wood —wood that will not rot— then seeks out a skilled artisan to set up an image that will not topple. Have you not known? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth? It is he who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers, who stretches out the heavens like a curtain and spreads them like a tent to live in, who brings princes to naught and makes the rulers of the earth as nothing.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

The Second Reading for Morning Prayer (*Ephesians 1:1-14*)

Reader A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Ephesians

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, To the saints who are in Ephesus and are faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People *Thanks be to God.*

The Third Reading for Morning Prayer

A Reading from the treatise *On the Trinity* by Hilary of Poitiers

When I began to search for the meaning of life, I was at first attracted by the pursuit of wealth and leisure. As most people discover there is little satisfaction in such things, and a life oriented to the gratification of greed or killing time is unworthy of our humanity. We have been given life in order to achieve something worthwhile, to make good use of our talents, for life itself points us to eternity. How otherwise could one regard as a gift from God this life which is painful, fraught with anxiety, and which starts in infancy with a blank mind and ends in the rambling conversations of the old? It is my belief that human

beings, prompted by our very nature, have always sought to raise our sights through the teaching and practice of the virtues such as patience, chastity and forgiveness, in the conviction that a good life is secured only through good deeds and good thoughts. Could the immortal God have given us life with no other horizon but death? Could the Giver of good inspire us with a sense of life only to have it overshadowed by the fear of death? Thus I sought to know the God and Father who has given us this great gift of life, to whom I felt I owed my existence, in whose service was honour, and on whom my hopes were fixed. I was inflamed by a passionate desire to apprehend or know this God. Some religions teach that there are a variety of deities, with male gods and female gods, and people trace an entire lineage of them one from another. Other religions teach that there are powerful deities and less powerful ones, each with different characteristics. Yet others claim that there is no God at all and worship nature instead, which they say came into being purely by chance vibrations and collisions. Most people, however, admit that God exists, but feel that he is ignorant or indifferent to the lot of humanity. I was reflecting on these various ideas when I chanced upon the books that, according to Jewish tradition, were written by Moses and the prophets. In them I discovered that God the creator bears witness to himself in these words: 'I am who I am.' I was amazed by the perfection of this insight which puts into intelligent language the incomprehensible knowledge of God. Nothing better suggests God as Being. 'The God who is' can have neither end nor beginning. I came to see that there is no space without God: space does not exist apart from God. God is in heaven, in hell, and beyond the seas. God lives in everything and enfolds everything. God embraces all that is, and is embraced by the universe: confined to no part within it, he encompasses all that exists. My soul drew joy from contemplating the mystery of God's wisdom, his sheer majesty, and I worshipped the eternity and immeasurable greatness of my Father and creator. But I longed also to behold his beauty. And here my mind was baffled, overcome by its own limitations, but I discovered in these words of the prophet a magnificent statement about God: 'From the greatness and beauty of created things comes a corresponding perception of their creator.' I then went on to learn the truths taught by the apostle in the fourth Gospel. I learned more about God than I had expected. I understood that my creator was God

born of God. I learned that the Word was God and was with God from the beginning. I came to know the light of the world. I understood that the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us and that those who welcomed him became children of God – not by a birth in flesh but in faith. In all this my soul had discovered a hope bigger than I had ever imagined possible. It is a gift of God offered to everyone. My soul joyfully received the revelation of this mystery because by means of my flesh I was drawing near to God; by means of my faith I was called to a new birth. I was given freedom and empowered to receive a new birth from on high.

Reader Here ends the lesson.

The First Reading for Evening Prayer (*Mark 1:1-13*)

Reader A reading from the Gospel according to St. Mark

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ. As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, “See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way, the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight,’ ” so John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And the whole Judean region and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him and were baptized by him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, “The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the strap of his sandals. I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.” In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove upon him. And a voice came from the heavens, “You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.” And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. He was in the wilderness forty days, tested by Satan, and he was with the wild beasts, and the angels waited on him.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

The Second Reading for Evening Prayer

A Reading from the Instructions of Columbanus

Moses wrote in the law: 'God made humankind in his image and likeness.' Consider, I ask you, the dignity of these words. God is all-powerful. We cannot see or understand him, describe or assess him. Yet he fashioned us from clay and endowed us with the nobility of his own image. What have we in common with God? Or earth with spirit? – for 'God is a spirit.' It is a glorious privilege that God should grant us his eternal image and the likeness of his character. Our likeness to God, if we preserve it, imparts high dignity. If we apply the virtues planted in our souls to the right purpose, we will be like God. God's commands have taught us to give him back the virtues he sowed in us in our first innocence. The first command is 'to love our Lord with our whole heart because he loved us first' from the beginning, before our existence. Loving God renews his image in us. Anyone who loves God keeps his commandments, for he said: 'If you love me, keep my commandments.' His command is that we love one another. In his own words: 'This is my command, that you love one another as I also have loved you.' True love is shown not merely 'in word, but in deed and in truth', so we must turn back our image undefiled and holy to our God and Father, for he is holy; in the words of Scripture: 'Be holy, for I am holy.' We must restore his image with love, for he is love; in John's words: 'God is love.' We must restore it with loyalty and truth, for God is loyal and truthful. The image we depict must not be that of one who is unlike God; for one who is harsh and irascible and proud would display the image of a despot. Let us not imprint on ourselves the image of a despot, but let Christ paint his image in us with his words: 'My peace I give you, my peace I leave with you.' But the knowledge that peace is good is of no benefit to us if we do not practise it. The most valuable objects are usually the most fragile; costly things require the most careful handling. Particularly fragile is that which is lost by wanton talk and destroyed with the slightest injury of a brother or sister. People like nothing better than discussing and minding the business of others, passing superfluous comments at random and criticising people behind their backs. So those who cannot say: 'The Lord has given me a discerning tongue,

that I may with a word support those who are weary' should keep silent, or if they do say anything it should promote peace.

Reader Here ends the lesson.

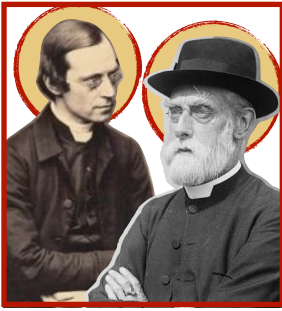
The Collect

Hilary of Poitiers (*from Lesser Feasts and Fasts*)

Keep us steadfast, Lord God, in that true faith that we professed at our baptism; that, like your servant Hilary of Poitiers, we may rejoice in having you for our Father, and may abide in your Son, in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit; for you live and reign for ever and ever as one God in Trinity of Persons. *Amen.*

A Prayer for Those Affected by the Wildfires

O God, our refuge and strength, our help in times of trouble. Have mercy on the lands damaged by fires. Guard and protect first responders and those who care for others in danger. Protect those who evacuate houses, and give them shelter and encouragement to face the days to come. Strengthen those who rebuild hope, so that entire communities may face the future without fear, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*



Tuesday, Jan 14 | **Richard Meux Benson, Priest & Vowed Religious, 1915, Charles Gore, Bishop & Vowed Religious, 1932**

Tuesday of the First Week after Epiphany

Introduction

Richard Meux Benson and Charles Gore are remembered for their role in the revival of Anglican monasticism in the nineteenth century. Richard Meux Benson was born in London in 1824. He was educated at home until he went to Christ Church, Oxford, where he studied under Edward Bouverie Pusey. He was subsequently ordained as a priest and served as vicar of the village of Cowley, not far from Oxford. In 1858 Fr. Benson conducted the first of many silent retreats for priests for which he later became well known. Also around this time, he established a church dedicated to St. John the Evangelist in Cowley, and made plans to travel to India to gather a community of missionaries to live with him in poverty. His bishop, however, urged him to stay in England, where the Oxford Movement was spreading. At this time, although there were several Anglican monastic communities for women, there were not yet any communities for men. Therefore, in 1865, Fr. Benson and Fr. S. W. O'Neill established a community that was both contemplative and externally focused, which they called the Mission Priests of St. John the Evangelist. It was the first religious order for men in the Church of England since the Reformation. Fr. Benson was named Superior, and as such, developed the Society's Rule of Life and Constitution. The brothers recited the Daily Office together, were urged to spend at least an hour in contemplation each day, and continued their priestly ministry outside of the monastery. In the late 1800s the Society spread to the United States, India, and South Africa. Fr. Benson himself visited the community in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and remained there for a number of years before returning to England, where he died in 1915. Charles Gore was born in 1853 in Wimbledon and was educated mainly at Oxford. He was ordained in 1876 and served in positions at Cuddesdon and Pusey House, Oxford, both of which were focused upon theological education and the formation of clergy. While at Pusey House, Gore founded the Community of the Resurrection, a community for men that sought to combine the rich traditions of the religious life with a lively concern for

the demands of ministry in the modern world. Gore, a prolific writer and noted theologian, was a principal progenitor of liberal Anglo-Catholicism in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Anglicanism. He was concerned to make the critical scholarship of the age available to the church, particularly with respect to the Bible. A second but no less important concern was to prick the conscience of the church and plead for its engagement in the work of social justice for all. Between 1902 and 1919, Gore served successively as bishop of the dioceses of Worcester, Birmingham, and Oxford, seamlessly uniting his vocations of bishop, monastic, and theologian. He died in 1932.

The Psalter

In Morning Prayer, Psalm 5, 6 (*BCP pg. 588*)

In Evening Prayer, Psalm 10, 11 (*BCP pg. 594*)

The First Reading for Morning Prayer (*Isaiah 40:25-31*)

Reader A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah:

To whom, then, will you compare me, or who is my equal? says the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high and see: Who created these? He who brings out their host and numbers them, calling them all by name; because he is great in strength, mighty in power, not one is missing. Why do you say, O Jacob, and assert, O Israel, "My way is hidden from the Lord, and my right is disregarded by my God"? Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the faint and strengthens the powerless. Even youths will faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted, but those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

The Second Reading for Morning Prayer (*Ephesians 1:15-23*)

Reader A reading from the Letter of St. Paul to the Ephesians

I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may perceive what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People *Thanks be to God.*

The Third Reading for Morning Prayer

A Reading from an essay entitled “The Holy Spirit and Inspiration” by Charles Gore

It is because of the gradualness of the Spirit’s method that it lays so great a strain on human patience. The spiritually-minded of all ages have tended to find the visible Church a very troubled and imperfect home. Most startling disclosures of the actual state of ecclesiastical disorder and moral collapse, may be gathered out of the Christian Fathers. Thus to found a ‘pure Church’ has been the instinct of impatient zeal since Tertullian’s day. But the instinct has to be restrained, the visible Church has to be borne with, because it is the Spirit’s purpose to provide a home for the training and improvement of the imperfect. ‘Let both grow together unto the harvest.’ ‘A bruised reed will he not break, and smoking flax will he not quench.’ The Church must have her terms of communion, moral and intellectual: this is essential to keep her fundamental principles intact, and to prevent her betraying her secret springs of strength and recovery. But short of this necessity she is tolerant. It is her note to be tolerant, morally and theologically. She is the mother, not the magistrate. No

doubt her balanced duty is one difficult to fulfil. At times she has been puritanical, at others morally lax; at times doctrinally lax, at others rigid. But, however well or ill she has fulfilled the obligations laid on her, this is her ideal. She is the guardian, the depository of a great gift, a mighty presence, which in its essence is unchanging and perfect, but is realised very imperfectly in her experience and manifested life. This is what Saint Thomas Aquinas means when he says 'that to believe in the Church is only possible if we mean by it to believe in the Spirit vivifying the Church'. The true self of the Church is the Holy Spirit, but a great deal in the Church at any date does not belong to her true self, and is obscuring the Spirit's mind. Thus the treasure is in earthen vessels, it is sometimes a light hid under a bushel; and the Church is the probation of faith, as well as its encouragement.

Reader Here ends the lesson.

The First Reading for Evening Prayer (*Mark I:14-28*)

Reader A reading from the Gospel according to St. Mark

Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the good news of God and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news." As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea, for they were fishers. And Jesus said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of people." And immediately they left their nets and followed him. As he went a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets. Immediately he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him. They went to Capernaum, and when the Sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught. They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes. Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, and he cried out, "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God." But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be quiet and come out of him!" And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, "What is

this? A new teaching—with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.” At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People *Thanks be to God.*

The Second Reading for Evening Prayer

A Reading from an oration ‘On the Love of the Poor’ by Gregory of Nazianzus

Recognise to whom you owe the fact that you exist, that you breathe, that you understand, that you are wise, and, above all, that you know God and hope for the kingdom of heaven and the vision of glory, now darkly and as in a mirror but then with greater fullness and purity. You have been made a child of God, a co-heir with Christ. Where did you get all this, and from whom? Now let me turn to what is of less importance: the visible world around us. What benefactor has enabled you to look out upon the beauty of the sky, the sun in its course, the circle of the moon, the countless number of stars, with the harmony and order that are theirs, like the music of a harp? Who has blessed you with rain, with the art of husbandry, with different kinds of food, with the arts, with houses, with laws, with states, with a life of humanity and culture, with friendship and the easy familiarity of kinship? Who has given you dominion over animals, both those that are tame and those that provide you with food? Who has made you master of everything on earth? In short, who has endowed you with all that makes humankind superior to all other living creatures? Is it not God who asks you now in your turn to show yourself generous above all other creatures and for the sake of all other creatures? Because we have received from God so many wonderful gifts, will we not be ashamed to refuse him this one thing only, our generosity? Though he is God and Lord he is not afraid to be known as our Father. Shall we for our part repudiate those who are our kith and kin? Friends, let us never allow ourselves to misuse what has been given us by God’s gift. If we do, we shall hear St Peter say: ‘Be ashamed of yourselves for holding on to what belongs to someone else. Resolve to imitate God’s justice, and no one will be poor.’ Let us not labour to heap up and hoard riches while others remain in need. If we do, the prophet

Amos will speak out against us with sharp and threatening words: 'Come now, you that say: When will the new moon be over, so that we may start selling? When will sabbath be over, so that we may start opening our treasures?' Let us put into practice the supreme and primary law of God. He sends down rain on the righteous and sinful alike, and causes the sun to rise on all without distinction. To all earth's creatures he has given the broad earth, the springs, the rivers and the forests. He has given the air to the birds, and the waters to those who live in water. He has given abundantly to all the basic needs of life, not as a private possession, not restricted by law, not divided by boundaries, but as common to all, amply and in rich measure. His gifts are not deficient in any way, because he wanted to give equality of blessing to equality of worth, and to show the abundance of his generosity.

Reader Here ends the lesson.

The Collect

Richard Meux Benson & Charles Gore (*from Lesser Feasts and Fasts*)

Gracious God, who kindled in your servants Richard Meux Benson and Charles Gore the grace to lead a revival of monastic life: Grant us also the resolve to serve you faithfully in contemplation and prayer, ministering to the world that you have made, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, in glory everlasting. *Amen.*

A Prayer for Those Affected by the Wildfires

O God, our refuge and strength, our help in times of trouble. Have mercy on the lands damaged by fires. Guard and protect first responders and those who care for others in danger. Protect those who evacuate houses, and give them shelter and encouragement to face the days to come. Strengthen those who rebuild hope, so that entire communities may face the future without fear, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*



Wednesday, Jan 15 | Wednesday of the First Week after Epiphany

The Psalter

In Morning Prayer, Psalm 119:1–24 (*BCP pg. 763*)

In Evening Prayer, Psalm 12, 13, 14 (*BCP pg. 597*)

The First Reading for Morning Prayer (*Isaiah 41:1–16*)

Reader A reading from the book of the Prophet Isaiah

Listen to me in silence, O coastlands; let the peoples renew their strength; let them approach, then let them speak; let us together draw near for judgment. Who has roused a victor from the east, summoned him to his service? He delivers up nations to him and tramples kings under foot; he makes them like dust with his sword, like driven stubble with his bow. He pursues them and passes on safely, scarcely touching the path with his feet. Who has performed and done this, calling the generations from the beginning? I, the Lord, am first and will be with the last. The coastlands have seen and are afraid; the ends of the earth tremble; they have drawn near and come. Each one helps the other, saying to one another, “Take courage!” The artisan encourages the goldsmith, and the one who smooths with the hammer encourages the one who strikes the anvil, saying of the soldering, “It is good,” and they fasten it with nails so that it cannot be moved. But you, Israel, my servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen, the offspring of Abraham, my friend; you whom I took from the ends of the earth and called from its farthest corners, saying to you, “You are my servant; I have chosen you and not cast you off”; do not fear, for I am with you; do not be afraid, for I am your God; I will strengthen you; I will help you; I will uphold you with my victorious right hand. All who are incensed against you shall be ashamed and disgraced; those who strive against you shall be as nothing and shall perish. You shall seek those who contend with you, but you shall not find them; those who war against you shall be as nothing at all. For I, the Lord your God, hold your right hand; it is I who say to you, “Do not fear, I will help you.”

Do not fear, you worm Jacob, you maggot Israel! I will help you, says the Lord; your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel. I will make of you a threshing sledge, sharp, new, and having teeth; you shall thresh the mountains and crush them, and you shall make the hills like chaff. You shall winnow them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the tempest shall scatter them. Then you shall rejoice in the Lord; in the Holy One of Israel you shall glory.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

The Second Reading for Morning Prayer (*Ephesians 2:1–10*)

Reader A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Ephesians

You were dead through the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work among those who are disobedient. All of us once lived among them in the passions of our flesh, doing the will of flesh and senses, and we were by nature children of wrath, like everyone else, but God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God—not the result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we may walk in them.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

The Third Reading for Morning Prayer

A Reading from a story about Maurus and Placid, boys entrusted to the care of St. Benedict, from the *Dialogues* of Gregory the Great

As Benedict's influence spread over the surrounding countryside because of his signs and wonders, a great number of men gathered around him to devote themselves to the service of God. Christ blessed Benedict's work and before long he had established twelve monasteries in the locality, each with an abbot and twelve monks. There were some monks whom Benedict kept with him because he felt they needed his personal guidance. It was about this time that pious noblemen from Rome first came to visit the saint and left their sons with him to be schooled in the service of God. Thus Euthicius brought his son Maurus, and a senator called Tertullus brought his son Placid, both of them very promising boys. Maurus was in fact a little older than Placid, and had already acquired solid virtue, and was soon to prove very helpful to his saintly master. But Placid was still only a child. Once while blessed Benedict was in his room, one of his monks, the boy Placid, went down to the lake to get some water. But in letting the bucket fill too rapidly, the boy lost his balance, fell into the lake and the current seized him in no time at all and carried him about a stone's throw from the shore. Though inside the monastery at the time, the man of God suddenly became aware of what was happening and shouted to Maurus: 'Hurry, Brother Maurus. The boy Placid who just went down for water has fallen into the lake and the current is carrying him off.' What followed was remarkable and unheard of since the time of Peter the apostle. Maurus asked for a blessing and on receiving it hurried out to fulfil his abbot's command. He kept on running even over the surface of the water till he reached the place where Placid was drifting helplessly. Pulling him up by the hair, Maurus dragged him to the shore, still under the impression that he was on dry land. It was only when he set foot on the ground that he looked over his shoulder and realised that he had walked across the surface of the water. He was suddenly overcome with fear and amazement at what had happened, and returned to his abbot and told him all about it. The holy man refused to take any credit for the deed and attributed it to the obedience of his disciple. Maurus, on the other hand, claimed that it was due to the wisdom of his abbot's command. He could not have been responsible for the miracle himself, he said, since he was not even aware that he was performing it. While they were carrying on this friendly banter of humility, the question was settled by the boy who had been rescued. 'When I was being dragged out of the water,' Placid said, 'I sensed the abbot's

cloak over my head; it was he whom I thought was rescuing me and bringing me to the shore.'

Reader Here ends the lesson.

The First Reading for Evening Prayer *(Mark 1:29-45)*

Reader A reading from the Gospel according to St. Mark

As soon as they left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. Now Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them. That evening, at sunset, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed by demons. And the whole city was gathered around the door. And he cured many who were sick with various diseases and cast out many demons, and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him. In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. And Simon and his companions hunted for him. When they found him, they said to him, "Everyone is searching for you." He answered, "Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also, for that is what I came out to do." And he went throughout all Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons. A man with a skin disease came to him begging him, and kneeling he said to him, "If you are willing, you can make me clean." Moved with pity, Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him and said to him, "I am willing. Be made clean!" Immediately the skin disease left him, and he was made clean. After sternly warning him he sent him away at once, saying to him, "See that you say nothing to anyone, but go, show yourself to the priest, and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded as a testimony to them." But he went out and began to proclaim it freely and to spread the word, so that Jesus could no longer go into a town openly but stayed out in the country, and people came to him from every quarter.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People *Thanks be to God.*

The Second Reading for Evening Prayer

A Reading from a treatise Against the Pagans by Athanasius of Alexandria

‘In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made through him, and without him nothing was made.’ In these words John the theologian teaches that nothing exists or remains in being except in and through the Word. Think of a musician tuning a lyre. By skill the musician adjusts high notes to low, and intermediate notes to the rest, and produces a series of harmonies. So too the wisdom of God holds the world like a lyre and joins things in the air to those on earth, and things in heaven to those in the air, and brings each part into harmony with the whole. By his decree and will he regulates them all to produce the beauty and harmony of a single, well-ordered universe. While remaining unchanged with his Father, he moves all creation by his unchanging nature, according to the Father’s will. To everything he gives existence and life in accordance with its nature, and so creates a wonderful and truly divine harmony. To illustrate this profound mystery, let us take the example of a choir of many singers. A choir is composed of a variety of men, women and children, of both old and young. Under the direction of one conductor, each sings in the way that is natural: men with men’s voices, boys with boys’ voices, old people with old voices, young people with young voices. Yet all of them produce a single harmony. Or consider the example of our soul. It moves our senses according to their several functions so that in the presence of a single object they all act simultaneously: the eye sees, the ear hears, the hand touches, the nose smells, the tongue tastes, and often the other parts of the body act as well – as, for example, the feet may walk. Although this is only a poor comparison, it gives some idea of how the whole universe is governed. The Word of God has but to give a gesture of command and everything falls into place; each creature performs its own proper function, and all together constitute one single harmonious order.

Reader Here ends the lesson.

The Collects

The First Week after the Epiphany (*from the BCP, pg. 213*)

Father in heaven, who at the baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan proclaimed him your beloved Son and anointed him with the Holy Spirit: Grant that all who are baptized into his Name may keep the covenant they have made, and boldly confess him as Lord and Savior; who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting. *Amen.*

A Prayer for Those Affected by the Wildfires

O God, our refuge and strength, our help in times of trouble. Have mercy on the lands damaged by fires. Guard and protect first responders and those who care for others in danger. Protect those who evacuate houses, and give them shelter and encouragement to face the days to come. Strengthen those who rebuild hope, so that entire communities may face the future without fear, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*



Thursday, Jan 16 | *Thursday of the First Week after Epiphany*

The Psalter

In Morning Prayer, Psalm 18: Part I (*BCP pg. 602*)

In Evening Prayer, Psalm 18: Part II (*BCP pg. 604*)

The First Reading for Morning Prayer (*Isaiah 41:17-29*)

Reader A reading from the book of the Prophet Isaiah

When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue is parched with thirst, I the Lord will answer them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers on the bare heights and fountains in the midst of the valleys; I will make the wilderness a pool of water and the dry land springs of water. I will put in the wilderness the cedar, the acacia, the myrtle, and the olive; I will set in the desert the cypress, the plane and the pine together, so that all may see and know, all may consider and understand, that the hand of the Lord has done this, the Holy One of Israel has created it. Set forth your case, says the Lord; bring your proofs, says the King of Jacob. Let them bring them and tell us what is to happen. Tell us the former things, what they were, so that we may consider them and that we may know their outcome or declare to us the things to come. Tell us what is to come hereafter, that we may know that you are gods; do good, or do harm, that we may be afraid and terrified. You, indeed, are nothing, and your work is nothing at all; whoever chooses you is an abomination. I stirred up one from the north, and he has come, from the rising of the sun he was summoned by name. He shall trample on rulers as on mortar, as the potter treads clay. Who declared it from the beginning, so that we might know, and beforehand, so that we might say, "He is right"? There was no one who declared it, none who proclaimed, none who heard your words. I first have declared it to Zion, and I give to Jerusalem a herald of good tidings. But when I look there is no one; among these there is no counselor who, when I ask, gives an answer. No, they are all a delusion; their works are nothing; their images are empty wind.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

The Second Reading for Morning Prayer (*Ephesians 2:11-22*)

Reader A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Ephesians

So then, remember that at one time you gentiles by birth, called “the uncircumcision” by those who are called “the circumcision”—a circumcision made in the flesh by human hands—remember that you were at that time without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace; in his flesh he has made both into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us, abolishing the law with its commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new humanity in place of the two, thus making peace, and might reconcile both to God in one body through the cross, thus putting to death that hostility through it. So he came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near, for through him both of us have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then, you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone; in him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

The Third Reading for Morning Prayer

A Reading from the treatise *On Spiritual Friendship* by Aelred of Rievaulx

What happiness, what security, what joy to have someone to whom you dare to speak on terms of equality as to another self; one to whom you need have no fear to confess your failings; one to whom you can unblushingly make known progress you have made in the spiritual life; one to whom you can entrust all

the secrets of your heart and before whom you can place all your plans! What, therefore, is more pleasant than so to unite to oneself the spirit of another and of two to form one, that no boasting is thereafter to be feared, no suspicion to be dreaded, no correction of one by the other to cause pain, no praise on the part of one to bring a charge of adulation from the other. 'A friend,' says the Wise Man, 'is the medicine of life.' Excellent, indeed, is that saying. For medicine is not more powerful or more efficacious for our wounds in all our temporal needs than the possession of a friend who meets every misfortune joyfully, so that, as the Apostle says, shoulder to shoulder, they 'bear one another's burdens'. Even more – each one carries his own injuries even more lightly than that of his friend. Friendship, therefore, heightens the joys of prosperity and mitigates the sorrows of adversity by dividing and sharing them. Hence, the best medicine in life is a friend. Even the philosophers took pleasure in the thought: not even water, nor the sun, nor fire do we use in more instances than a friend. In every action, in every pursuit, in certainty, in doubt, in every event and fortune of whatever sort, in private and in public, in every deliberation, at home and abroad, everywhere friendship is found to be appreciated, a friend a necessity, a friend's service a thing of utility. Friendship is a stage bordering upon that perfection which consists in the love and knowledge of God, so that from being a friend of our neighbours, we become the friend of God, according to the words of the Saviour in the gospel: 'I will not now call you servants, but my friends.'

Reader Here ends the lesson.

The First Reading for Evening Prayer (*Mark 2:1-12*)

Reader A reading from the Gospel according to St. Mark

When he returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that he was at home. So many gathered around that there was no longer room for them, not even in front of the door, and he was speaking the word to them. Then some people came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. And when they could not bring him to Jesus because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him, and after having dug through it, they let down the mat on which the paralytic lay. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the

paralytic, “Child, your sins are forgiven.” Now some of the scribes were sitting there questioning in their hearts, “Why does this fellow speak in this way? It is blasphemy! Who can forgive sins but God alone?” At once Jesus perceived in his spirit that they were discussing these questions among themselves, and he said to them, “Why do you raise such questions in your hearts? Which is easier: to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Stand up and take your mat and walk’? But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins”—he said to the paralytic—“I say to you, stand up, take your mat, and go to your home.” And he stood up and immediately took the mat and went out before all of them, so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, “We have never seen anything like this!”

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People *Thanks be to God.*

The Second Reading for Evening Prayer

A Reading from a treatise *On the Lord's Prayer* by Cyprian of Carthage

The gospel precepts are none other than instructions of God, foundations on which hope is built, firm bases for faith, fuel to rekindle the heart, guides to point out the way, and aids to the attainment of salvation. They instruct the minds of the faithful on earth in order to lead them to the kingdom of heaven. The words which God willed to let us hear from the prophets are many, but of much greater value are the words uttered by the Son, those which the Word of God who dwelled within the prophets attests with his own voice. He no longer asks that the way be prepared for the One who comes, but he comes himself to show us the way and to open it for us. Thus, we who were once blind and lacking foresight, wandering in the shadow of death, can now be enlightened by the light of grace and walk along the paths of life under the Lord's leadership and direction. Among other saving instructions and divine teachings intended for the salvation of his people, the Lord gave us the form of prayer and urged us to pray as he has instructed us. He who gave us life also taught us how to pray with that same graciousness by which he has given and bestowed on us everything else. Thus, when we speak to the Father in the prayer that his Son has taught us, we are more readily heard. Jesus had already

announced that the hour would come when true worshippers would worship the Father in spirit and in truth and he accomplished what he promised. Having received the Spirit and the truth by his sanctifying action, we can now worship in spirit and in truth through the transmission of his teaching. Indeed, could there be a more spiritual prayer than the one left us by Christ who has also sent us his Spirit? Is there a truer way of praying to the Father than the one which has come from the lips of Christ who is Truth? Let us pray, then, as God our Master has taught us. Affectionate and familiar is the prayer with which we implore God in the words of God, and reach his ear through the words of his Son. Let the Father recognise his Son's words in us when we offer up our prayer; and let him who dwells in our heart be always on our lips.

Reader Here ends the lesson.

The Collects

The First Week after the Epiphany (*from the BCP, pg. 213*)

Father in heaven, who at the baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan proclaimed him your beloved Son and anointed him with the Holy Spirit: Grant that all who are baptized into his Name may keep the covenant they have made, and boldly confess him as Lord and Savior; who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting. *Amen.*

A Prayer for Those Affected by the Wildfires

O God, our refuge and strength, our help in times of trouble. Have mercy on the lands damaged by fires. Guard and protect first responders and those who care for others in danger. Protect those who evacuate houses, and give them shelter and encouragement to face the days to come. Strengthen those who rebuild hope, so that entire communities may face the future without fear, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*



Friday, Jan 17 | Antony of Egypt, Monastic, 356

Friday of the First Week after Epiphany

Introduction

*In the third century, many Christians turned away from the corrupt and decadent society of the time and went to live in deserts or on mountains, in solitude, fasting, and prayer. Antony of Egypt was an outstanding example of this early monastic movement, but he was not merely a recluse. He is traditionally regarded as the founder of Christian monasticism because of his role as an inspirational teacher and guide, which spread the popularity of the new monastic movement considerably. Antony's parents were Christians, and he grew up to be thoughtful, devout, and introspective. When his parents died, he and his younger sister were left alone to care for a sizable estate. Six months later, while attending church, he heard the reading about the rich young man whom Christ directed to sell all that he had and give to the poor. Hearing his own call from God through this scripture, Antony at once gave his land to the villagers and sold most of his goods, giving the proceeds to the poor. Later, after meditating on Christ's exhortation, "Do not be anxious about tomorrow," he sold what remained of his possessions, placed his sister in a "house of virgins," and became an anchorite (solitary ascetic). The vocational path taken by Antony's sister is one of many indications that, although Antony has traditionally been known as the founder of monasticism, some forms of urban monastic life (particularly for women) existed even before his call to undertake a monastic vocation in the solitude of the desert. Athanasius, whose work *The Life of Antony* quickly spread Antony's fame far beyond Egypt, writes that Antony spent his days praying, reading, and doing manual labor. For a time, he was tormented by temptations and demons in various guises, but he resisted, and the demons fled. Moving to the mountains across the Nile from his village, Antony dwelt alone for twenty years. In 305, he left his cave and founded an early form of monastic communal life—a collection of cells inhabited by ascetics living under his guidance. Athanasius writes of such colonies: "Their cells, like tents, were filled with singing, fasting, praying, and working so that they might give alms, and they had love and peace with one another." Athanasius further said of Antony: "He was*

like a physician given by God to Egypt. For who met him grieving and did not go away rejoicing? Who came full of anger and was not turned to kindness? . . . What monk who had grown slack was not strengthened by coming to him? Who came troubled by doubts and failed to gain peace of mind?" Antony died in 356.

The Psalter

In Morning Prayer, Psalm 16, 17 (*BCP pg. 599*)

In Evening Prayer, Psalm 22 (*BCP pg. 610*)

The First Reading for Morning Prayer (*Isaiah 42:1-17*)

Reader A reading from the book of the Prophet Isaiah

Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations. He will not cry out or lift up his voice or make it heard in the street; a bruised reed he will not break, and a dimly burning wick he will not quench; he will faithfully bring forth justice. He will not grow faint or be crushed until he has established justice in the earth, and the coastlands wait for his teaching. Thus says God, the Lord, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and what comes from it, who gives breath to the people upon it and spirit to those who walk in it: I am the Lord; I have called you in righteousness; I have taken you by the hand and kept you; I have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to the nations, to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness. I am the Lord; that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to idols. See, the former things have come to pass, and new things I now declare; before they spring forth, I tell you of them. Sing to the Lord a new song, his praise from the end of the earth! Let the sea roar and all that fills it, the coastlands and their inhabitants. Let the desert and its towns lift up their voice, the villages that Kedar inhabits; let the inhabitants of Sela shout for joy; let them shout from the tops of the mountains. Let them give glory to the Lord and declare his praise in the coastlands. The Lord goes forth like a soldier; like a warrior he stirs up his fury; he cries out; he shouts aloud; he shows himself mighty against his foes. For a long time I have held my peace; I have kept still

and restrained myself; now I will cry out like a woman in labor; I will gasp and pant. I will lay waste mountains and hills and dry up all their herbage; I will turn the rivers into islands and dry up the pools. I will lead the blind by a road they do not know; by paths they have not known I will guide them. I will turn the darkness before them into light, the rough places into level ground. These are the things I will do, and I will not forsake them. They shall be turned back and utterly put to shame— those who trust in carved images, who say to cast images, “You are our gods.”

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People *Thanks be to God.*

The Second Reading for Morning Prayer (*Ephesians 3:1-13*)

Reader A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Ephesians

This is the reason that I, Paul, am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you gentiles, for surely you have already heard of the commission of God’s grace that was given me for you and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ. In former generations this mystery was not made known to humankind, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: that is, the gentiles have become fellow heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of God’s grace that was given me by the working of his power. Although I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given to me to bring to the gentiles the news of the boundless riches of Christ and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things, so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have access in boldness and confidence through faith in him. I pray, therefore, that you may not lose heart over my sufferings for you; they are your glory.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

The Third Reading for Morning Prayer

A Reading from *The Life of Antony* by Athanasius of Alexandria

Antony was an Egyptian by race. His parents were well born and prosperous, and since they were Christians, he also was reared in Christian manner. Following their death he was left alone with one young sister. He was about eighteen or even twenty years old, and he was responsible both for the home and his sister. Six months had not passed since the death of his parents when, going to the Lord's house as usual and gathering his thoughts, he considered while he walked how the apostles, forsaking everything, followed their Saviour, and how in the Acts of Apostles some sold what they possessed and took the proceeds and placed them at the feet of the apostles for distribution among those in need, and what great hope is stored up for such people in heaven. He went into the church pondering these things, and just then it happened that the gospel was being read, and he heard the Lord saying to the rich young man: 'If you would be perfect, go sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven.' It was as if by God's design he held the saints in his recollection, and as if the passage were read on his account. Immediately Antony went out from the Lord's house and gave to the townspeople the possessions he had from his forebears (three hundred very beautiful arourae of land) so that they would not disturb him or his sister in the least. And selling all the rest that was portable, when he had collected sufficient money, he donated it to the poor, keeping back a few things for his sister. But when, entering the Lord's house once more, he heard in the gospel the Lord saying: 'Do not be anxious about tomorrow', he could not remain any longer, but going out he gave those remaining possessions also to the needy. Placing his sister in the charge of respected and trusted virgins, and giving her over to the convent for rearing, he devoted himself from then on to the discipline rather than to the household, giving heed to himself and patiently training himself. There were not yet many monasteries in Egypt, and no monk knew at all the great desert, but each of those wishing to give attention to his life disciplined himself in isolation, not far from his own village. At first Antony also

began by remaining in places proximate to his village. And going forth from there, if he heard of some zealous person anywhere, he searched him out like the wise bee. He worked with his hands, having heard that 'he who is idle, let him not eat'. He spent what he made partly on bread, and partly on those in need. He prayed constantly, since he learned also that it is necessary to pray unceasingly in private. For he paid such close attention to what was read that nothing from Scripture did he fail to take in – rather he grasped everything, and in him the memory took the place of books. Living his life in this way, Antony was loved by all. People used to call him 'God-loved', and some hailed him as 'son', and others as 'brother'.

Reader Here ends the lesson.

The First Reading for Evening Prayer (*Mark 2:13-22*)

Reader A reading from the Gospel according to St. Mark

Jesus went out again beside the sea; the whole crowd gathered around him, and he taught them. As he was walking along, he saw Levi son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax-collection station, and he said to him, "Follow me." And he got up and followed him. And as he sat at dinner in Levi's house, many tax collectors and sinners were also sitting with Jesus and his disciples, for there were many who followed him. When the scribes of the Pharisees saw that he was eating with sinners and tax collectors, they said to his disciples, "Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?" When Jesus heard this, he said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician but those who are sick; I have not come to call the righteous but sinners." Now John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting, and people came and said to him, "Why do John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?" Jesus said to them, "The wedding attendants cannot fast while the bridegroom is with them, can they? As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast on that day. "No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old cloak; otherwise, the patch pulls away from it, the new from the old, and a worse tear is made. Similarly, no one puts new wine into old wineskins;

otherwise, the wine will burst the skins, and the wine is lost, and so are the skins, but one puts new wine into fresh wineskins.”

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People *Thanks be to God.*

The Second Reading for Evening Prayer

A Reading from a commentary on St Paul’s Letter to the Romans by Cyril of Alexandria

Though many, we are one body, and members one of another, united by Christ in the bonds of love. ‘Christ has made Jews and Gentiles one by breaking down the barrier that divided us, and abolishing the law with its precepts and decrees.’ This is why we should all be of one mind, and if one member suffers some misfortune, all should suffer alongside; and if one member is honoured, all should be glad. Paul says: ‘Accept one another as Christ accepted you, for the glory of God.’ Now accepting one another means being willing to share one another’s thoughts and feelings, bearing one another’s burdens, and preserving the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. This is how God accepted us in Christ, for John’s testimony is true and he said that God the Father ‘loved the world so much that he gave his own Son for us’. God’s Son was given as a ransom for the lives of us all. He has delivered us from death, redeemed us from death and from sin. Paul throws light on the purpose of God’s plan when he says that Christ became the servant of the circumcised to show God’s fidelity. God had promised the Jewish patriarchs that he would bless their offspring and make it as numerous as the stars of heaven. This is why the divine Word himself, who as God holds all creation in being and is the source of its well-being, appeared in the flesh and became human. He came into this world in human flesh not to be served, but, as he himself said, to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many. Christ declared that his coming in visible form was to fulfil the promise made to Israel. ‘I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel,’ he said. Paul was perfectly correct, then, in saying that Christ became a servant of the circumcised in order to fulfil the promise made to the patriarchs and that God the Father had charged him with this task, as also with the task of bringing salvation to the Gentiles, so that they

too might praise their Saviour and Redeemer as the Creator of the universe. In this way God's mercy has been extended to all, including the Gentiles, and it can be seen that the mystery of the divine wisdom contained in Christ has not failed in its benevolent purpose. In the place of those who fell away the whole world has been saved.

Reader Here ends the lesson.

The Collects

Antony the Great (*from Lesser Feasts and Fasts*)

O God, as you by your Holy Spirit enabled your servant Antony to withstand the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil; so give us grace to follow you with pure hearts and minds, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

A Prayer for Those Affected by the Wildfires

O God, our refuge and strength, our help in times of trouble. Have mercy on the lands damaged by fires. Guard and protect first responders and those who care for others in danger. Protect those who evacuate houses, and give them shelter and encouragement to face the days to come. Strengthen those who rebuild hope, so that entire communities may face the future without fear, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*



1 By all your saints still striv - ing, for all your saints at rest,
2 (*Insert the stanza appropriate to the day*)
3 Then let us praise the Fa - ther and wor - ship God the Son



your ho - ly Name, O Je - sus, for ev - er - more be blessed.
and sing to God the Spi - rit, e - ter - nal Three in One,



You rose, our King vic - to - rious, that they might wear the crown
till all the ran - somed num - ber who stand be - fore the throne



and ev - er shine in splen - dor re - flect - ed from your throne.
a - scribe all power and glo - ry and praise to God a - lone.

Confession of Saint Peter *January 18*

We praise you, Lord, for Peter,
so eager and so bold:
thrice falling, yet repentant,
thrice charged to feed your fold.
Lord, make your pastors faithful
to guard your flock from harm
and hold them when they waver
with your almighty arm.



Saturday, Jan 18 | THE CONFESSION OF SAINT PETER THE APOSTLE

Saturday of the First Week after Epiphany

Introduction

When Jesus' disciple Simon confessed, "You are the Christ," Jesus responded, "You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church." This fisherman and his brother Andrew were the first disciples called by Jesus. Peter figures prominently in the Gospels, often stumbling, impetuous, intense, and uncouth. It was Peter who attempted to walk on the sea, and began to sink; it was Peter who impulsively wished to build three tabernacles on the mountain of the Transfiguration; it was Peter who, just before the crucifixion, three times denied knowing his Lord. But it was also Peter who, after Pentecost, risked his life to do the Lord's work, speaking boldly of his belief in Jesus. It was also Peter, the Rock, whose strength and courage helped the young church in its questioning about the mission beyond the Jewish community. Opposed at first to the baptism of Gentiles, he had the humility to admit a change of heart, and to baptize the Roman centurion Cornelius and his household. Even after this, Peter had a continuing struggle with his conservatism, for Paul, writing to the Galatians, rebukes him for giving way to the demands of Jewish Christians to dissociate himself from table-fellowship with Gentiles. Though the New Testament makes no mention of it, the tradition connecting Peter with Rome is early and credible. According to a legend based on that tradition, Peter fled from Rome during the persecution under Nero. On the Appian Way, he met Christ, and asked him, "Domine, quo vadis?" ("Lord, where are you going?") Jesus answered, "I am coming to be crucified again." Peter thereupon retraced his steps, and was shortly thereafter crucified, head downwards. "I am not worthy to be crucified as my Lord was," he is supposed to have said. As we watch Peter struggle with himself, often stumble, love his Lord and deny him, speak rashly and act impetuously, his life reminds us that our Lord did not come to save the godly and strong but to save the weak and the sinful. Simon, an ordinary human being, was transformed by the Holy Spirit into the "Rock," and became the leader of the Church. Since 1908, the eight days between the feast of the Confession of Saint

Peter and the feast of the Conversion of Saint Paul have been observed ecumenically as the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

Opening & Invitatory

In Morning Prayer, Use the Saint's Day Opening Sentence (bottom of pg. 77) & the Venite (pg. 82) with the Saint's Day Antiphon (pg. 82)

In Evening Prayer, sing or read the hymn on the previous page in place of the Phos Hilaron (the hymn is #231 in the 1982 Hymnal)

The Psalter

In Morning Prayer, Psalm 66, 67 (BCP pg. 673)

In Evening Prayer, Psalm 118 (BCP pg. 760)

The First Reading for Morning Prayer (*Ezekiel 3:4-11*)

Reader A reading from the book of the Prophet Ezekiel

He said to me, "Mortal, go to the house of Israel and speak my very words to them. For you are not sent to a people of obscure speech and difficult language but to the house of Israel, not to many peoples of obscure speech and difficult language whose words you cannot understand. Surely, if I sent you to them, they would listen to you. But the house of Israel will not be willing to listen to you, for they are not willing to listen to me, because all the house of Israel have a hard forehead and a stubborn heart. See, I have made your face hard against their faces and your forehead hard against their foreheads. Like the hardest stone, harder than flint, I have made your forehead; do not fear them or be dismayed at their looks, for they are a rebellious house." He said to me, "Mortal, all my words that I shall speak to you receive in your heart and hear with your ears; then go to the exiles, to your people, and speak to them. Say to them, 'Thus says the Lord God,' whether they hear or refuse to hear."

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

[Use Canticle 16 (BCP pg. 92) as the canticle]

The Second Reading for Morning Prayer (*Acts 10:34-44*)

Reader A reading from the book of Acts

Then Peter began to speak to them: “I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every people anyone who fears him and practices righteousness is acceptable to him. You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree, but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.” While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who heard the word.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

[Use Cantic 21 (BCP pg. 95) as the second cantic]

The Third Reading for Morning Prayer

A Reading from a sermon by Leo the Great

The Lord once asked the apostles what people thought of him. As long as they related the uncertainties of the foolish about him, they all said the same. But when Jesus asked the disciples what they themselves actually thought, it was the man who held first place among the apostles who was first to confess the Lord. Peter declared, ‘You are the Christ, the son of the living God.’ To this Jesus replied, ‘Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is heaven.’ In other words, you are blessed because my Father has taught you this. You have not been deceived by

the opinions of the world, but informed by heavenly inspiration; it was not flesh and blood, but the One whose Son I am who has revealed this to you. Jesus continued, 'And I tell you', meaning, that as my Father has revealed to you my divinity, so I will now make known to you your high position: 'that you are Peter.' What Jesus means is that I am the secure rock, the cornerstone which unites, that foundation which no one else can ever lay. But you Peter also are a rock because by my strength you are made firm, with the result that you and I share together those things which are my special prerogative by right. 'And on this rock I shall build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.' On this strong foundation, Jesus says, I will build an everlasting temple and my church will rise high to heaven upon the strength of this faith. The gates of hell will not imprison this confession, nor the chains of death bind it. Your voice is the voice of life: as it lifts up to heaven those who confess it, so it plunges into hell those who deny it. That is why Jesus said to blessed Peter, 'I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.' The right to this power was handed on to the other apostles and the provisions of this decree have been passed on to all the leaders of the church. But it was not an idle gesture to put into one person's keeping what was to be communicated to all. This commission was given to Peter in particular because the example of Peter is placed before all the leaders of the church.

Reader Here ends the lesson.

[Use Suffrage B for the Prayers]

The First Reading for Evening Prayer (*Ezekiel 34:11-16*)

Reader A reading from the book of the Prophet Ezekiel

For thus says the Lord God: I myself will search for my sheep and will sort them out. As shepherds sort out their flocks when they are among scattered sheep, so I will sort out my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places to which they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries and bring them into their own land, and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the watercourses, and in all the inhabited parts of the land. I will feed them with good pasture,

and the mountain heights of Israel shall be their pasture; there they shall lie down in good grazing land, and they shall feed on rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I will make them lie down, says the Lord God. I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strays, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them with justice.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

[Use the Magnificat (pg. 119) as the canticle]

The Second Reading for Evening Prayer *(John 21:15–22)*

Reader A reading from the Gospel according to St. John

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my lambs.” A second time he said to him, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Tend my sheep.” He said to him the third time, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, “Do you love me?” And he said to him, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep. Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go.” (He said this to indicate the kind of death by which he would glorify God.) After this he said to him, “Follow me.” Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them; he was the one who had reclined next to Jesus at the supper and had said, “Lord, who is it that is going to betray you?” When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, “Lord, what about him?” Jesus said to him, “If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? Follow me!”

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

The Third Reading for Evening Prayer

A Reading from a commentary on the Psalms by Augustine

God could give no greater gift to us than to make his Word, through whom he created all things, our head and to join us to him as his members, so that the Word might be both Son of God and Son of Man, one God with the Father, and one human being with all humankind. The result is that when we speak with God in prayer we do not separate the Son from him, and when the body of the Son prays it does not separate its head from itself: it is the one Saviour of his body, our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who prays for us and in us and is himself the object of our prayers. He prays for us as our priest, he prays in us as our head, he is the object of our prayers as our God. Let us then recognise both our voice in his, and his voice in ours. When something is said, especially in prophecy, about the Lord Jesus Christ that seems to belong to a condition of lowliness unworthy of God, we must not hesitate to ascribe this condition to one who did not hesitate to unite himself with us. Every creature is his servant, for it was through him that every creature came to be. We contemplate his glory and divinity when we listen to these words: 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him nothing was made.' Here we gaze on the divinity of the Son of God, something supremely great and surpassing all the greatness of his creatures. Yet in other parts of Scripture we hear him as one sighing, praying, giving praise and thanks. We hesitate to attribute these words to him because our minds are slow to come down to his humble level when we have just been contemplating him in his divinity. It is as though we were doing him an injustice in acknowledging in a human being the words of one with whom we spoke when we prayed to God; we are usually at a loss and try to change the meaning. Yet our minds find nothing in Scripture that does not go back to him, nothing that will allow us to stray from him. Our thoughts must then be awakened to keep their vigil of faith. We must realise that the one whom we were contemplating a short time before in his nature as God took to himself the nature of a servant; he was

made in the likeness of our flesh and found to be a man like others; he humbled himself by being obedient even to accepting death; as he hung on the cross he made the psalmist's words his own: 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' We pray to him as God, he prays for us as a servant. In the first case he is the Creator, in the second a creature. Himself unchanged, he took to himself our created nature in order to change it, and made us one with himself, head and body. We pray then to him, through him, in him, and we speak along with him and he along with us.

Reader Here ends the lesson.

[Use Suffrage B for the Prayers]

The Collects

The Confession of Saint Peter the Apostle (*from the Book of Common Prayer, pg. 238*)

Almighty Father, who inspired Simon Peter, first among the apostles, to confess Jesus as Messiah and Son of the living God: Keep your Church steadfast upon the rock of this faith, so that in unity and peace we may proclaim the one truth and follow the one Lord, our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

A Prayer for Those Affected by the Wildfires

O God, our refuge and strength, our help in times of trouble. Have mercy on the lands damaged by fires. Guard and protect first responders and those who care for others in danger. Protect those who evacuate houses, and give them shelter and encouragement to face the days to come. Strengthen those who rebuild hope, so that entire communities may face the future without fear, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*



ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH