

The Eucharist for St Matthew the Apostle & Evangelist

with

Spiritual Communion

(Order One – Eucharistic Prayer B)

In Time of Pandemic

HYMNS

1. Saints of God! Lo, Jesus' people
2. He sat to watch o'er customs paid
3. I will sing the wondrous story
4. Let us break bread together
5. Now let the heavens with joy resound

READINGS

1. Proverbs 3.13-18
2. 2 Corinthians 4.1-6
3. Matthew 9.9-13

INTROIT HYMN

1. Saints of God! Lo, Jesu's people
Age to age your glory tell;
In His name for us ye laboured,
Now in bless eternal dwell.
2. Twelve poor men, by Christ anointed,
Braved the rich, the wise, the great,
All the world counts dear rejecting,
Rapt in their apostolate.
3. Thus the earth their death-wounds purchased,
Hallowed by the blood therefrom,
On her bosom bore the nations,
Laved, illumined—Christendom.
4. On this feast, almighty Father,
May we praise Thee with the Son,
Evermore His love confessing,
Who from Both with Both is One.

Saints of God! Lo, Jesus' people
Athelstan Riley (1906)
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THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING

A Reading from the Book of Proverbs

- ¹³Happy are those who find wisdom,
and those who get understanding,
¹⁴for her income is better than silver,
and her revenue better than gold.
¹⁵She is more precious than jewels,
and nothing you desire can compare with her.
¹⁶Long life is in her right hand;
in her left hand are riches and honour.
¹⁷Her ways are ways of pleasantness,
and all her paths are peace.
¹⁸She is a tree of life to those who lay hold of her;
those who hold her fast are called happy.

Proverbs 3.13-18

At the end the reader may say

This is the word of the Lord.

All **Thanks be to God.**

SECOND READING

A Reading from St Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians

- ¹Since it is by God's mercy
that we are engaged in this ministry,
we do not lose heart.
- ²We have renounced the shameful things that one hides;
we refuse to practise cunning or to falsify God's word;
but by the open statement of the truth we commend ourselves
to the conscience of everyone in the sight of God.
- ³And even if our gospel is veiled,
it is veiled to those who are perishing.
- ⁴In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers,
to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ,
who is the image of God.
- ⁵For we do not proclaim ourselves; we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your
slaves for Jesus' sake.
- ⁶For it is the God who said,
'Let light shine out of darkness,'
who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face
of Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 4.1-6

At the end the reader may say

This is the word of the Lord.

All **Thanks be to God.**

GRADUAL HYMN

1. He sat to watch o'er customs paid,
A man of scorned and hardening trade,
Alike the symbol and the tool
Of foreign masters' hated rule.
- 2 But grace within his breast had stirred;
There needed but the timely word:
It came, true Lord of souls, from thee,
That royal summons, 'Follow me.'
- 3 Enough, when thou wast passing by,
To hear thy voice, to meet thine eye:
He rose, responsive to the call,
And left his task, his gains, his all.
- 4 O wise exchange! with these to part,
And lay up treasure in the heart--
Who now with crown of light doth shine
Among the apostolic line.
- 5 Come, Saviour, as in days of old;
Pass where the world has strongest hold,
And faithless care and selfish greed
Are thorns that choke the holy seed.
- 6 Who keep thy gifts, O bid them claim
The steward's, not the owner's name;
Who yield up all for thy dear sake,
Let them of Matthew's wealth partake.

He sat to watch o'er customs paid
Author: William Bright
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GOSPEL READING

Alleluia, alleluia.

I have called you friends, says the Lord,
for all that I have heard from my Father
I have made known to you.

Alleluia.

The Lord be with you

All and also with you.

When the Gospel is announced the reader says

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to *Matthew*. (✠)

All (✠) Glory to you, O Lord.

⁹As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man called Matthew
sitting at the tax booth;
and he said to him,
 'Follow me.'

And he got up and followed him.

¹⁰And as he sat at dinner in the house, many tax-collectors and sinners
came and were sitting with him and his disciples.

¹¹When the Pharisees saw this,
they said to his disciples,
‘Why does your teacher eat with tax-collectors and sinners?’

¹²But when he heard this, he said,
‘Those who are well have no need of a physician,
but those who are sick.

¹³Go and learn what this means,
“I desire mercy, not sacrifice.”

For I have come to call not the righteous but sinners.’

Matthew 9:9-13

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All **Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

It takes all sorts to make a church!

'Follow me', says Jesus, and at once Matthew walks out of his office, without even stopping to switch off his computer. At the same word of command, and with no more idea of what he was letting himself in for, Peter had earlier left his nets to join Jesus (Matthew 4:18 - 22).

Matthew was a 'publican'. Publicans were cogs in the wheels of Empire. They were locally employed functionaries, contracted by the Roman authorities to oversee public works and to fill many of the countless pen-pushing posts needed to keep the vast imperial machine ticking over. Tax-collecting was farmed out to Publicans. They bid, literally at an auction, for the right to collect taxes due from a given area. They paid upfront what was owed. Then, they recouped their outlay by raking back the cash from the local people. Any profit was theirs to keep. Clearly, the system was open to abuse. The gospel-writers liken tax-collectors with 'sinners' in general. For the people of the first-century Roman Empire, any tax-collector you met is bound to be on the make! He was also a collaborator, even a traitor.

Think on this, Matthew had a desk job. The gospel specifically tells us he was 'sitting' when Jesus called him. Peter, the fishermen, did not sit very often and probably had a healthy contempt for those who did. Those who are up and about in their work usually dislike those who earn their living sitting down, especially the tax collectors, living is at their expense. It must have rankled with Peter that he should have to toil all night to maintain the likes of Matthew in the comfortable lifestyle to which had become accustomed.

Medics might have the same view about those who issue instructions in hospitals without knowing the difference between a bedpan and a defibrillator.

It cannot have been easy for Peter and the other fishermen to have accepted Matthew, nor for Matthew to relate to the fishermen. But they had to accept each other. The hardened fisherman, who had no time to sit down, must embrace a puffed-up taxman as their brother. The fastidious civil servant must fall in step with one who still whiffs of fish! It takes all sorts to make a church!

Then the Jewish 'clergy' started to protest; they speak out as they are supposed to. They are objecting to Jesus consorting with the likes of Matthew and other disreputable characters. But Jesus's reply is wonderful -- 'Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick.' They didn't get it!

The gospel according to Matthew, provides us with perspective on Jesus that resonates strongly with the Hebrew Bible. It brims over with Old Testament texts. And one in particular is used twice.

The Evangelist quotes Jesus telling his carping critics:

'Go and learn what this means:

" I desire mercy, not sacrifice"
which comes from the prophet Hosea (Hosea 6:6).

He wants us to get the message that it takes all sorts to make a church and that we should welcome everybody. Indeed, showing mercy to one another is a greater call on us than much else. Amen.

THE LITURGY OF THE SACRAMENT

OFFERTORY HYMN I will sing the wondrous story

- 1 I will sing the wondrous story
Of the Christ who died for me.
How He left His home in glory
For the cross of Calvary.
I was lost, but Jesus found me,
Found the sheep that went astray,
Threw His loving arms around me,
Drew me back into His way.
- 2 I was bruised, but Jesus healed me;
Faint was I from many a fall;
Sight was gone, and fears possessed me,
But He freed me from them all.
Days of darkness still come o'er me,
Sorrow's paths I often tread,
But the Saviour still is with me;
By His hand I'm safely led.
- 3 He will keep me till the river
Rolls its waters at my feet;
Then He'll bear me safely over,
Where the loved ones I shall meet.
Yes, I'll sing the wondrous story
Of the Christ who died for me,
Sing it with the saints in glory,
Gathered by the crystal sea.

I will sing the wondrous story
Francis H. Rowley
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POST-COMMUNION HYMN Let us break bread together

- 1 Let us break bread together on our knees, (on our knees) (twice)
Refrain
When I fall on my knees with my face to the rising sun,
O Lord, have mercy on me. (on me)
- 2 Let us drink wine together on our knees, (on our knees) (twice)
Refrain
- 3 Let us praise God together on our knees, (on our knees) (twice)
Refrain

Let us break bread together
Anon
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HYMN Now let the heavens with joy resound

- 1 Now let the heavens with joy resound,
And earth the chant re-echo round;
Nor heaven nor earth too high can raise
The great Apostles' glorious praise.
- 2 Theirs was the steadfast faith of saints,
The unconquered hope that never faints,
The perfect love of Christ to know,
That lays the praise of this world low.
- 3 In them the Father's glory shone,
In them the Spirit's will was done;
The Son's glad praise to them is given,
With joy resound the courts of heaven.
- 4 To thee, Redeemer, now we cry,
That with this glorious band on high,
Through endless ages, by thy grace,
Thy servants also may have place.

Now let the heavens with joy resound
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