

**OPENING PRAYERS AND HOLY COMMUNION ARE AVAILABLE AS A VIDEO HERE**

**PART 1 – OPENING PRAYERS**

WELCOME

The Lord be with you.  
And also with you.

SENTENCE

Here is my servant, whom I have chosen ... I will put my Spirit upon him, and he will proclaim justice to the Gentiles. Matthew 12:18

PRAYER OF PREPARATION

*Let us pray.*  
Almighty God,  
to whom all hearts are open,  
all desires known,  
and from whom no secrets are hidden:  
cleansing the thoughts of our hearts  
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,  
that we may perfectly love you,  
and worthily magnify your holy name,  
through Christ our Lord. Amen.

TWO GREAT COMMANDMENTS

Our Lord Jesus Christ said:  
You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbour as yourself. Matthew 22.37–40, Mark 12.30–31

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

In penitence and faith,  
let us confess our sins to Almighty God:

Merciful God,  
our maker and our judge,  
we have sinned against you  
in thought, word, and deed,  
and in what we have failed to do:  
we have not loved you with our whole heart;  
we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves;  
we repent, and are sorry for all our sins.  
Father, forgive us.  
Strengthen us to love and obey you  
in newness of life;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Almighty God,  
who has promised forgiveness to all who turn to him in faith:  
pardon you and set you free from all your sins,  
strengthen you in all goodness  
and keep you in eternal life,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

#### PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God,  
you have prepared for those who love you  
such good things as pass our understanding:  
pour into our hearts such love toward you,  
that, loving you above all things,  
we may obtain your promises  
which exceed all that we can desire;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

#### PLEASE PAUSE THE VIDEO

**PART 2** — AN ALL AGE VIDEO ON THE ONE ANOTHERS, PART 4: ENCOURAGE ONE ANOTHER, AND  
DOWNLOADABLE MATERIAL FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN [HERE](#)

**PART 3** — LOOK UP AND READ THROUGH THE READINGS, LISTEN TO THE [SERMON PODCAST](#) (READ  
ALONG IF YOU WISH) BY REV JENNIE SAVAGE, AND PRAY THE INTERCESSIONS, TODAY BY JOHN  
TATMAN

#### READINGS

Romans 8:1-8  
Psalm 145:8-14  
Matthew 12:15-21

**SERMON BY REV JENNIE SAVAGE**

**Available to listen online and/or download – access via Pentecost 2020 link and notice also a reasonable library of past sermons for you to listen to as you exercise or meditate...**

Matthew 12:15-21

*Let us pray:*

*Lord, we thank you for the gift of your Word;*

*open our hearts and our minds to your Spirit as we reflect and pray. Amen.*

Is gentleness a coveted virtue?

While Christians may strive more for characteristics of courage, fortitude, discipline and vigilance, gentleness we will find out, undergirds all of these.

Though St Paul urges us with images like putting on the armor of God or being like well-trained athletes who exercise discipline and self-control, *more often* he exhorts the churches to bear with one another with charity, with selflessness, gentleness, and patience.

'The Spirit prompts us,' he said, 'with kindness, goodness, gentleness and patience.'

Sam and Sav's excellent all age talks over the past month have explored these 'one another' passages.

In today's gospel reading, Jesus is portrayed as gentle.

Now we have had several readings where Jesus has been angry and frustrated.

He has ranted against the authorities who place heavy burdens on people, or exclude them altogether.

At the start of this chapter, *again*, Jesus has been scrutinised by the Pharisees.

After healing a man with a withered hand on the Sabbath, the Pharisees conspire against him and plan how to destroy him.

*And when Jesus became aware of this, he departed.*

This time, Jesus walks away from the Pharisees and their arguments.

Before, he has answered their questions, he has defended himself, he has challenged them.

Perhaps now, he recognises the futility of engaging in arguments and stops wasting his energy.

Many are still following him, and Jesus continues to heal them.

It is interesting that they are not fazed by the Pharisees disapproval.

But then, they are probably the 'little ones'

for whom the Pharisees had no regard.

In asking them to not publicise his ministry,

Jesus seeks not to draw attention to himself or what he is doing.

He was never about pointing the finger to himself.

He also remained free to go where he was needed

and where he felt called to go.

At this point, the gospel writer quotes one of Isaiah's servant songs, to show Jesus as fulfilling the prophecy.

This servant song is more about the servant's character:

*He will not wrangle or cry aloud, nor will anyone hear his voice in the streets.*

*He will not break a bruised reed or quench a smouldering wick until he brings justice to victory.*

While Jesus did have 'words' at times with the authorities, on the whole he was non-assertive.

For the weak and vulnerable, the little ones,  
he gave the utmost compassion and mercy.  
To them he was indeed *gentle and humble in heart*.  
To those who were marginalised and rejected, he brought hope.

These few verses sit in the middle of acrimony.  
More accusations against Jesus are coming, even calling him the devil (which we will look at next week).  
But Jesus' true nature is gentle and patient,  
virtues which are often misunderstood.

Francis De Sales, a 17<sup>th</sup> century Roman Catholic Bishop of Geneva, described gentleness as a *common, but not easy* virtue.

He said: '*Nothing is so strong as gentleness, nothing is so gentle as real strength.*'

*'One of the first things we should be gentle with,'* said Francis, *'is oneself. We must accept our limitations, be willing to fall down and rise up again without undo self-recrimination, and to proceed at a steady, not hurried pace. Let us be what we are and be that well.'*

And of course, we are called to practice gentleness with others as well.

In a letter to Philotea, Francis tells the story of the venerable St Bernard, the founder of the Cistercian order, as someone from whose *lack* of gentleness we might well learn.

To Philotea he wrote,

*In the beginning, St Bernard was full of severity and harshness toward those who placed themselves under his guidance.*

*He told them that first of all they should leave the body behind and come to him only with the spirit.*

*When he heard their confessions, he expressed horror for any of their failures, even the smallest, with unusual severity and urged these poor beginners in perfection so much that by pushing them too far he was in fact drawing them back.*

*For they lost courage and eagerness at seeing themselves driven, forcibly and at once, up a straight and steep climb.*

*You see, Philothea, it was the ardent zeal for perfect purity which compelled this great saint to adopt this kind of method.*

*This zeal was a great virtue but a virtue which did not cease to be blameworthy.*

*God himself corrected him in a holy vision infusing into him a gentle, kind, amiable and tender spirit.*

*Through it he was completely changed.*

*He accused himself very much of having been too exacting and severe.*

*He became so considerate and kind that he made himself all to all to gain all. (1 Cor 9:22)<sup>1</sup>*

Francis was convinced that heart speaks to heart,  
that we are drawn closer into union with God  
by others whose hearts are aflame with divine love.

We are drawn most effectively *not* by fear or intimidation, by frenzied exhortation or reasoned argument alone.

Rather we are persuaded by a heart that loves as God loves as seen through the gentle, humble heart of Jesus.

*Let us pray:  
O God,*

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<sup>1</sup> Wendy M. Wright, *Be Gentle*. Weavings XIX:4, <sup>1</sup>, p.13-14

***Open to us today the sea of your mercy and water us with full streams from the riches of your grace and springs of your kindness.***

***Make us children of quietness, gentleness and heirs of peace: kindle in our hearts the fire of your love; sow in us your fear; strengthen our weakness by your power and bind us close to you and to each other.***

***In Christ's name. Amen.<sup>2</sup>***

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<sup>2</sup> Iona Abbey Worship Book. Wild Goose Publications, 2001. p 187

## INTERCESSIONS BY JOHN TATMAN

Lord God; We pray for your blessing on our worship; for your Spirit to be upon us; for we come as the hungry to feed on your word; we come as the thirsty, to drink of your love; we come as the faithful, to bring you our prayers, for the world and your Church.

Lord, in your mercy, *hear our prayer.*

Lord we pray for those countries who are struggling to control the corona virus, and the thousands of people who have been affected in many different ways. We pray also for all marginalised groups, who have been oppressed or ill treated. We remember all first nation people, Afro Americans, all People of different ethnic origins, or different faiths, and our own indigenous people. Lord we pray for the healing of the world, a cleansing of the virus; and a healing of our prejudices, for a world where we can live together in love, and proclaim your glory.

Lord, in your mercy, *hear our prayer.*

We give pray for the Church , all church leaders, for Jenny, Sam and Libby, and all who work to make your gospel known. We give thanks for you, Lord Jesus Christ; you are truly Gods chosen servant, you prepare a table of delights for us, a feast of all good things, you flood our lives with joy and gladness. Indeed our cups runneth over, and we can feel from the depths of our hearts, "surely your goodness and mercy shall follow us all the days of our lives."

Lord, in your mercy, *hear our prayer.*

We give thanks for our local community, and people known to us. We remember especially all hospital staff, health workers and those who are working to protect or keep us safe from this pandemic. Lord; in these difficult times, we are often led astray by the news of the world, and tempted to concentrate on our loss of freedom and privileges. Forgive us Lord, and help us to stay focused, on your good news, and the needs of our neighbours.

Lord, in your mercy, *hear our prayer.*

Lord God we pray for the sick, those known to us and those who have asked our prayers. Comfort and heal merciful Lord. All who are in sorrow, need, sickness or any other trouble. May they know they are loved by our actions and care, and in their loneliness know your presence, healing and peace.

Lord, in your mercy, *hear our prayer.*

Lord, we give thanks for the saints of every age, and those from this Parish, whose anniversary of passing is on or near this date. We think of those whose faith, even when tested by pain, loss or sorrow, still shines as a witness to you, and speaks so clearly of your love for us. Lord; we thank you, that you gather up your faithful to dwell with you, in your house forever.

Lord, in your mercy, *hear our prayer.*

Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord who taught us to pray:

Our Father in heaven,

hallowed be your name,

your kingdom come,

your will be done,

on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins

as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial,

and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours

now and for ever. Amen.

**PLEASE RESUME THE VIDEO FOR HOLY COMMUNION**

**GREETING OF PEACE**

We are the body of Christ.  
His Spirit is with us.  
The peace of the Lord be always with you.  
And also with you.

**OFFERTORY PRAYER**

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation.  
Through your goodness we have these gifts to share.  
Accept and use our offerings for your glory  
and for the service of your kingdom.  
Blessed be God for ever.

**HOLY COMMUNION**

The Lord be with you,  
And also with you.  
Lift up your hearts;  
We lift them to the Lord.  
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God  
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

You are worthy, our Lord and God,  
to receive glory and honour and power,  
for you created all things,  
making us in your own image.

We praise you for your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ,  
who by his death on the cross and rising to new life  
offered the one true sacrifice for sin  
and obtained an eternal deliverance for his people.  
Therefore, we lift our voices to praise you, saying,

Holy, holy, holy Lord,  
God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.

And now we thank you for these gifts of bread and wine; may we who receive them, as Jesus said,  
share his body and his blood.

On the night he was betrayed, he took bread and gave you thanks. He broke the bread and gave it  
to his friends, and said, 'Take and eat. This is my body given for you. Do this in remembrance of  
me.'

After supper he took the cup and gave you thanks.  
He shared the cup with them and said,  
'This is my blood poured out so that sins may be forgiven.  
Do this in remembrance of me.'

**Christ has died,  
Christ is risen,  
Christ will come again.**

**You have gathered us together to feed on Christ and to remember all he has done for us:  
Fill us with your Spirit that we may follow Jesus in all we do and say, working for justice and  
bringing your peace to this world that you have made.  
Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

**Blessing and honour and glory and power,  
are yours forever and ever. Amen**

#### **THE BREAKING AND SHARING OF THE BREAD AND WINE**

**We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.  
We who are many are one body,  
for we all share in the one bread.**

#### **DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION**

#### **POST COMMUNION PRAYER**

**Gracious God,  
we thank you that in this sacrament  
you assure us of your goodness and love.  
Accept our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving  
and help us to grow in love and obedience  
that we may serve you in the world  
and finally be brought to that table  
where all your saints feast with you for ever.**

**Father,  
we offer ourselves to you as a living sacrifice  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Send us out in the power of your Spirit  
to live and work to your praise and glory.**

#### **AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

**We believe in one God,  
who made and loves all that is.  
We believe in Jesus Christ,  
God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was born, lived, died and rose again,  
and is coming to call all to account.  
We believe in the Holy Spirit,  
who calls, equips and sends out God's people,  
and brings all things to their true end.**

**This is our faith, the faith of the Church:  
We believe in one God,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.**

**BLESSING**

**The peace of God which passes all understanding keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord;  
and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. Amen.**

**DISMISSAL**

**Go in peace to love and serve the Lord:  
In the name of Christ. Amen.<sup>3</sup>**

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<sup>3</sup> Liturgy from From A Prayer Book for Australia Copyright © Broughton Publishing 1995