

OPENING RESPONSES:

O Lord, open thou our lips.

And our mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

O God, make speed to save us.

O Lord, make haste to help us.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Praise ye the Lord.

The Lord's name be praised.

PSALM: 69

Save me, O God *

for the waters are come in, even unto my soul.

I stick fast in the deep mire, where no ground is *

I am come into deep waters, so that the floods run over me.

I am weary of crying; my throat is dry *

my sight faileth me for waiting so long upon my God.

They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head *

they that are mine enemies, and would destroy me guiltless, are mighty.

I paid them the things that I never took *

God, thou knowest my simpleness, and my faults are not hid from thee.

Let not them that trust in thee, O Lord God of hosts, be ashamed for my cause *

let not those that seek thee be confounded through me, O Lord God of Israel.

And why? for thy sake have I suffered reproof *

shame hath covered my face.

I am become a stranger unto my brethren *

even an alien unto my mother's children.

For the zeal of thine house hath even eaten me *

and the rebukes of them that rebuked thee are fallen upon me.

I wept, and chastened myself with fasting *

and that was turned to my reproof.

I put on sackcloth also *

and they jested upon me.

They that sit in the gate speak against me *

and the drunkards make songs upon me.

But, Lord, I make my prayer unto thee *

in an acceptable time.

Hear me, O God, in the multitude of thy mercy *

even in the truth of thy salvation.

Take me out of the mire, that I sink not *

O let me be delivered from them that hate me, and out of the deep waters.

Let not the water-flood drown me, neither let the deep swallow me up *

and let not the pit shut her mouth upon me.

Hear me, O Lord, for thy loving-kindness is comfortable *

turn thee unto me according to the multitude of thy mercies.

And hide not thy face from thy servant, for I am in trouble *

O haste thee, and hear me.

Draw nigh unto my soul, and save it *

O deliver me, because of mine enemies.

Thou hast known my reproof, my shame, and my dishonour *

mine adversaries are all in thy sight.

Thy rebuke hath broken my heart; I am full of heaviness *

I looked for some to have pity on me, but there was no man, neither found I any to comfort me.

They gave me gall to eat *

and when I was thirsty they gave me vinegar to drink.

Let their table be made a snare to take themselves withal *

and let the things that should have been for their wealth be unto them an occasion of falling.

Let their eyes be blinded, that they see not *

and ever bow thou down their backs.

Pour out thine indignation upon them *

and let thy wrathful displeasure take hold of them.

Let their habitation be void *

and no man to dwell in their tents.

For they persecute him whom thou hast smitten *

and they talk how they may vex them whom thou hast wounded.

Let them fall from one wickedness to another *

and not come into thy righteousness.

Let them be wiped out of the book of the living *

and not be written among the righteous.

As for me, when I am poor and in heaviness *

thy help, O God, shall lift me up.

I will praise the Name of God with a song *

and magnify it with thanksgiving.

This also shall please the Lord *

better than a bullock that hath horns and hoofs.

The humble shall consider this, and be glad *

seek ye after God, and your soul shall live.

For the Lord heareth the poor *

and despiseth not his prisoners.

Let heaven and earth praise him *

the sea, and all that moveth therein.

For God will save Sion, and build the cities of Judah *

that men may dwell there, and have it in possession.

The posterity also of his servants shall inherit it *

and they that love his Name shall dwell therein.

Glory be to the Father:

and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be:

world without end. Amen.

FIRST LESSON: Malachi 3: 1-4, 4

See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?

For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the LORD in righteousness. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

MAGNIFICAT:

**My soul doth magnify the Lord:
and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.**

**For he hath regarded:
the lowliness of his handmaiden.**

**For behold, from henceforth:
all generations shall call me blessed.**

**For he that is mighty hath magnified me:
and holy is his Name.**

**And his mercy is on them that fear him:
throughout all generations.**

**He hath shewed strength with his arm:
he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.**

**He hath put down the mighty from their seat:
and hath exalted the humble and meek.**

**He hath filled the hungry with good things:
and the rich he hath sent empty away.**

**He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant Israel:
as he promised to our forefathers, Abraham and his seed for ever.**

**Glory be to the Father:
and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.**

**As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be:
world without end. Amen.**

SECOND LESSON: Philippians 4: 4-7

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

NUNC DIMITTIS:

**Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace:
according to thy word.**

**For mine eyes have seen:
thy salvation.**

**Which thou hast prepared:
before the face of all people.**

**To be a light to lighten the Gentiles:
and to be the glory of thy people Israel.**

**Glory be to the Father:
and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.**

**As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be:
world without end. Amen.**

THE APOSTLES' CREED:

I believe in God the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father almighty. From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Lord be with you.

And with thy spirit.

Let us pray.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Our Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. Amen.

○ Lord, shew thy mercy upon us.

And grant us thy salvation.

○ Lord, save the Queen.

And mercifully hear us when we call upon thee.

Endue thy ministers with righteousness.

And make thy chosen people joyful.

○ Lord, save thy people.

And bless thine inheritance.

Give peace in our time, ○ Lord.

Because there is none other that fighteth for us, but only thou, ○ God.

○ God, make clean our hearts within us.

And take not thy Holy Spirit from us.

THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

○ Lord Jesu Christ, who at thy first coming didst send thy messenger to prepare thy way before thee; Grant that the ministers and stewards of thy mysteries may likewise so prepare and make ready thy way, by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, that at thy second coming to judge the world we may be found an acceptable people in thy sight, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end. **Amen.**

THE ADVENT COLLECT

Almighty God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious Majesty, to judge both the quick and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, now and ever. **Amen.**

COLLECT FOR PEACE

O God, from whom all holy desires, all good counsels and all just works do proceed; Give unto thy servants that peace which the world cannot give; that both, our hearts may be set to obey thy commandments, and also that by thee we being defended from the fear of our enemies may pass our time in rest and quietness; through the merits of Jesus Christ our Saviour. **Amen.**

COLLECT FOR AID AGAINST ALL PERILS

Lighten our darkness, we beseech thee, O Lord: and by thy great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night; for the love of thy only Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

PRAYERS

Behold the name of the Lord cometh from far, and his glory filleth the whole world.

Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness.
Let the earth open, and bring forth salvation.

Stir up, we beseech thee, O Lord, thy power, and come among us: that whereas we are beset with sins to our peril, we may be freed from them through thy protection, and saved through thy deliverance: who livest and reignest with God the Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end.

O Lord Jesu Christ, who for our sake didst vouchsafe to descend from thy throne of glory and from the bosom of the Father to this vale of tears and woe; who wast conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, and wast made Man; make, we beseech thee, our hearts a fit habitation for thyself. Beautify and fill them with all spiritual graces, and possess them wholly by thy power. Give us grace to prepare for thy coming with deep humility, to receive thee with burning love, and to hold thee fast for ever; through thy merits, O blessed Lord Jesu, who livest and reignest with God the Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

Pause for **SILENT REFLECTION**

A PRAYER OF ST JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

Almighty God, who hast given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplications unto thee; and dost promise that when two or three are gathered together in thy Name thou wilt grant their requests: Fulfil now, O Lord, the desires and petitions of thy servants as may be most expedient for them; granting us in this world knowledge of thy truth, and in the world to come life everlasting. **Amen.**

THE GRACE

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore. **Amen.**

Hymns suitable for use at home:

ICH 634

Love divine, all loves excelling,
joy of heaven, to earth come down,
fix in us thy humble dwelling,
all thy faithful mercies crown;
Jesu, thou art all compassion,
pure unbounded love thou art,
visit us with thy salvation,
enter every trembling heart.

Come, almighty to deliver,
let us all thy life receive;
suddenly return, and never,
never more thy temples leave.
Thee we would be always blessing,
serve thee as thy hosts above,
pray, and praise thee without ceasing,
glory in thy perfect love.

Finish then thy new creation,
pure and spotless let us be;
let us see thy great salvation,
perfectly restored in thee;
changed from glory into glory,
till in heaven we take our place,
till we cast our crowns before thee,
lost in wonder, love and praise.

Words: Charles Wesley (1707-88) based on Matthew 3:1-2; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 5:17

Tune: BLAENWERN William P. Rowlands (1860-1937)

ICH 566

Fight the good fight with all thy might!
Christ is thy strength, and Christ thy right;
lay hold on life, and it shall be _
thy joy and crown eternally.

Cast care aside, lean on thy guide;
his boundless mercy will provide;
trust, and thy trusting soul shall prove
Christ is its life, and Christ its love.

Run the straight race through God's good grace,
lift up thine eyes, and seek his face;
life with its path before us lies;
Christ is the way, and Christ the prize.

Faint not nor fear, his arms are near;
he changeth not, and thou art dear;
only believe, and thou shalt see
that Christ is all in all to thee.

Words: John S.B. Monsell (1811-75) based on 1 Timothy 6:11-12

Tune: DUKE STREET Melody from H. Boyd's Psalm and Hymn Tunes (Glasgow, 1793) later attrib. John L. Hatton (d. 1793)

Bible passages in this service are from the New Revised Standard Version.

Material in this service is reproduced from the Book of Common Prayer copyright © RCB 2004. Belfast Cathedral text, music and live streaming licence numbers CCL 8124, MRL 1049409

belfastcathedral.org