

Parish of Central Exeter

Morning Worship and Spiritual Communion
10th Sunday after Trinity 16 August 2020

Jesus and the Canaanite Woman

We have been following the readings from Genesis in our morning worship, and the Gospel in the evening. Today we are reversing the sequence. Both reflections have been provided for us by Chris Bryan to whom our deepest thanks.

Welcome everyone.

Call to worship

From the comfort of our homes we gather to worship.
Whether through printed word, or through technology
we are a community.

Here we seek connection to the Divine.

Come, let us worship God,
shown to us through the risen Christ.

*(Ann Harbridge, Minister at Trinity Centennial United Church,
Rosemont, Ontario.)*

Hymn: Our opening hymn is 'And can it be?' one of Charles Wesley's most well-known hymns, recorded here at the Wesley Chapel, City Road, London. Words appear on the screen.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sQeIGbKqiW8>

Opening Prayer

In every place and every time,
in every relationship and every interaction,
You are God.

You are God to the poor and to the wealthy,
to the weak and to the powerful;
You are God to the believer and to the doubter,
to the religious and to the atheist;
You are God to the courageous and to the fearful,
to the fighter and to the peacemaker;
You are God to the leader and to the follower,
to the parent and to the child;



'Jesus and the Canaanite woman' by Ilyas Basim Khuri Bazzi Rahib, who was most likely a Coptic monk in the late 17th century in Egypt. 1684

Original in Walters Art Museum, Baltimore.

You are God to all,
and Your grace and love extends to all.
And while we may seek to keep You to ourselves,
while we may try to hoard Your blessings,
You have come to all, You are available to all,
and all who want You will find that You are there.

We praise You that our small self-interests are not enough
to keep You from being the great and all-embracing God
that You are. Amen.

(From sacredise.com)

Reading

Mathew 15:21-28

The Faith of a Canaanite Woman

²¹ Leaving that place, Jesus withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon. ²² A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him, crying out, “Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is demon-possessed and suffering terribly.”

²³ Jesus did not answer a word. So his disciples came to him and urged him, “Send her away, for she keeps crying out after us.”

²⁴ He answered, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel.”

²⁵ The woman came and knelt before him. “Lord, help me!” she said.

²⁶ He replied, “It is not right to take the children’s bread and toss it to the dogs.”

²⁷ “Yes it is, Lord,” she said. “Even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master’s table.”

²⁸ Then Jesus said to her, “Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted.” And her daughter was healed at that moment.

(New International Version)



*Jesus and the Canaanite woman
(1964) by Sadao Watanabe, a
Japanese printmaker (1913—1996)
who became a Christian aged 17. All
his prints are on Biblical themes.
See entry in Wikipedia.*

Reflection

You sometimes hear people who think that they are being ever so orthodox saying things like, "If Jesus was God, he must have known everything." Actually, when they say things like that they aren't being orthodox at all. They're espousing a form of the docetic heresy (the name comes from the Greek verb *dokeō*, meaning "to appear" or "to seem"). Docetists said that Jesus wasn't *really* human at all. He was actually God *appearing* or *seeming* or *pretending* to be human. In other words (and if you will forgive the analogy) he was like a chocolate Easter egg covered in coloured paper. It *looks* like a coloured egg, but really it's just chocolate underneath! The New Testament, however, says that "the Word *became* flesh" (John 1.14)—*really* became it!—which is to say, Jesus was *truly* a human being, with all the limitations that go along with that. And among those limitations, of course, is the plain fact that we *don't* know everything, and what we do know we have to learn. And, of course, that's exactly how St Luke describes Our Lord. As he grew to manhood, Luke says, he "advanced in wisdom and stature" (2.52). In other words, he *learned* things!

Now one of the reasons why I find today's gospel interesting is that I believe it gives us a glimpse of Our Lord doing just that: learning something, advancing in wisdom. Some of my old students may remember I used to say to them, "There's only one time in the gospels when Jesus loses an argument, and it's to a woman and a foreigner." This is the story I was talking about.

Jesus, the evangelist tells us, was approached by a woman of Sidon, a Canaanite, in other words, a pagan—the very kind of person whom, according to Moses, the good Israelite should "utterly destroy" (Deut. 20.17). She addresses Jesus with profound respect and asks for healing for her daughter. "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David," she says, "my daughter is tormented by a demon!" At first Jesus simply says nothing—he gives her, as we say, "the silent treatment." Then, when his disciples fuss at him to send her away, he points out that his primary mission must be to his own people. "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Her response is to kneel before him and say, "Lord, help me!" His response—"It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs"—embarrasses us, and it should. It is an insult, although no doubt it is precisely what Jesus had been told by at least some among his teachers. Israel is God's child, and Israel's election must be taken seriously. Non-Israelites are abominable because they do not honour the God of Israel. In their uncleanness they are like dogs, and it would be a poor father who gave the children's dinner to the dogs!

Insulted and rejected though she has been, the Canaanite woman neither sulks nor turns away. Rather, she stands her ground, turning Jesus' family metaphor on its head: "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table"—a response that shows wit and magnanimity, but above all *faith*. She maintains her courteous address, continuing to call Jesus "Lord". She denies neither that Jesus' primary mission is to Israel nor that the Israelites are God's "children", the elect, first in God's love. She insists, however, on a truth prior even to that of God's election of Israel—a truth she seems to know instinctively, even though she has surely never read the Scriptures, a truth that was apparently (as St Paul would have put it) "written in her heart" (cf. Rom. 2.15): namely, that "the LORD is good to *all*, and his compassion is over *all* that he has made" (Ps. 145.9). So then, even mere dogs under the table are surely permitted to pick up the crumbs the

children don't need! In insisting on this, she manifests the essential faith of Israel, the faith of Abraham. Like Abraham, she is willing to *argue* with God, a willingness that can be based on nothing less than her faith that God is just, good, and merciful. In doing so she shows herself to be at heart a daughter of Abraham.

Her effect on Our Lord is evident. "Lady, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish." And her daughter was healed instantly.

So in this scene we see an occasion when, to use St Luke's phrase, "Jesus advanced in wisdom."

Thanks be to God! God grant us all the faith, wit, grace and tenacity of the Canaanite woman.

Prayer of confession

When we choose to believe that Your Kingdom
is no bigger than our bigotry;
When we reduce Your Presence to the ambience
in our favourite meeting place;
When we see Your people as no one other
than our people;
When we believe that we have the authority
to distribute Your grace as we see fit;
When use Your word to justify the way
we withhold Your blessing from others;
When we enlist You as an enforcer
of our particular ideology;



When in any way, O God, we make You in our image,
when we create our own Kingdoms and call them Yours,
We have failed You, and we have kept others away from You.

Forgive us, change us, and humble us, we pray;
Keep us always aware of how Your grace has rescued us,
and keep us always aware of those who seek Your grace
in us.

In Jesus' Name. Amen.

(from sacredise.com)

Song

'There's a wideness in God's mercy' sung here by the congregation of St Mark's Maida Vale.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vJwfT3SY_PU

Creed

We believe in God
Source of all life
Source of all love
Creation within our past and our future
Mother and Father of all that's to be.

We believe in God
Christ of our history
Link with eternity
One with our humanness
Revealing our hopefulness
Traveller before us, the sign of the way.

We believe in God,
Spirit of newness,
Spirit of power
Wisdom and wonder
Mystery and miracle
God moves in freedom,
Transforming the earth.



We believe in the Church
Born of our struggles
Open to changes
Centred in loving
And moving and growing
Heart of the community turned to the world
AMEN

('Mauri inclusive creed', published by the Thomas More Center: a catholic organisation committed to spiritual renewal of parishes, working in the USA, Australia and New Zealand.)

Intercessions

Because Your love, O God, is so indiscriminate –
crossing boundaries and inviting all –
we pray for the lost and lonely ones;
those who find themselves without companions in the world,
those who are separated from loved ones by distance or death,
and those who have forgotten love
because of their struggle to survive.

Because Your grace, O Christ, is so generous –
not crumbs falling from the table, but a sumptuous feast –
we pray for the accused and guilty ones;
those in prisons they deserve,

those unjustly detained,
and those imprisoned by their own guilt and regret.

Because Your Kingdom, O Lord, is so different –
challenging the ways of human beings –
we pray for the powerful and influential ones;
those who lead countries or communities,
those who decide and enforce law,
those who hold responsibility for great resources.

Because Your Presence, O Spirit, is so constant –
never abandoning or neglecting us –
we pray for those things that are closest to our hearts...
(a time for your personal prayers).

We pray because we believe that no one is beyond Your grace,
no one is outside of Your love,
and because we believe that the prayers we offer
enable us to receive, and to share,
the blessings You desire to give us.

And we pray in the name of Jesus, who taught us to pray.
Amen.

The Peace

If alone, smile and hug yourself (God does). If otherwise, share the Peace
as appropriate.

A short Spiritual Communion

The Book of Common Prayer reminds us that if we offer ourselves in
penitence and faith, giving thanks for the redemption won by Christ
crucified, we may truly 'eat and drink the Body and Blood of our Saviour
Christ', even when we cannot receive the sacrament physically in ourselves.

Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

O God,
help me to trust you,
help me to know that you are with me,
help me to believe that nothing
can separate me from your love
revealed in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



Prayer of Humble Access

(It seems totally appropriate to include this prayer today with its echoes of Jesus and the Canaanite woman.)

We do not presume to come to this your table, O merciful Lord,
trusting in our own righteousness,
but in your abundant and great mercies.
We are not worthy so much as to gather up
the crumbs under your table;
but you are the same Lord
whose character is always to have mercy.
Grant us, therefore, gracious Lord,
so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ,
and to drink his blood,
that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body,
and our souls washed through his most precious blood,
and that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.

As we prepare for communion you might like to access 'The Table of the Lord' – words by Richard, music by Nigel, sung by the Langford Singers

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KCZmrj81t8o&feature=youtu.be>



Because there is no Breaking and Sharing we can have only Spiritual Communion with Christ. I'm sure you can find a way to use a few minutes of silence or conversation to enjoy this, and make it a sacramental moment.

Giving thanks for Christ's death and resurrection you may wish to say

Thanks be to you, Lord Jesus Christ,
for all the benefits you have given me,
for all the pains and insults you have borne for me.
Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally,
I ask you to come spiritually into my heart.
O most merciful redeemer, friend and brother,
may I know you more clearly,
love you more dearly,
and follow you more nearly, day by day. Amen.
(after the Prayer of St Richard of Chichester)

Post Communion Prayer

Lord of heaven and earth,
as Jesus taught his disciples to be persistent in prayer,
give us patience and courage never to lose hope,
but always to bring our prayers before you;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Sending out

Generous God
You have given us friends and families,
colleagues & companions,
and we thank You;
May we be friends of the friendless
and companions to the lonely.

You have given us this community
to strengthen our faith
and help us to serve You well;
May we be faithful followers and co-workers,
building Your Kingdom in this world.

Blessing

May the Lord bless us and keep us;
the Lord make his face shine on us,
and be gracious to us;
the Lord turn his face towards us
and give us peace;
Amen

Our closing hymn is a new one to us, as far as the words go. The tune will be very familiar.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EupYa9VxiQ>

*When Christ was lifted from the earth, his arms stretched out above
through every culture, every birth, to draw an answering love.*

*Still east and west his love extends and always, near or far,
he calls and claims us as his friends, and loves us as we are.*

*Where generation, class, or race divide us to our shame,
he sees not labels but a face, a person, and a name.*

*Thus freely loved, though fully known, may I in Christ be free
to welcome and accept his own, as Christ as accepted me.*

Scroll Down for Coffee Break

Coffee Break



Jesus and the Canaanite Woman by Pieter Lastman, a Dutch artist in 1617. In the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

The Bible narrative says that Jesus had withdrawn to the area around Tyre and Sidon, so the painting is set against the ruins of the old Crusader castle at Sidon dating from the twelfth century.

Matthew the evangelist is on the right holding his Gospel book and looking out at us, inviting us to join in this Gospel message.

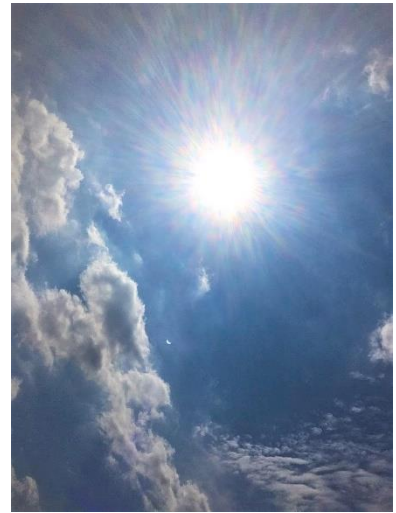
The artist captures the scene as Jesus says 'It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to the dogs.' On cue there are in the left corner two youngsters munching on some bread, and on the centre right two young dogs, puppies really, both vying for Jesus's attention, eager for whatever he might give them. The woman is begging Jesus to save her daughter, and the disciples begging Jesus to send her away.

The use of the puppies and young children provides a charming feature that gives a far softer feeling to the whole event.

The World I Live In by Mary Oliver

I have refused to live
locked in the orderly house of
reasons and proofs.
The world I live in and believe in
is wider than that. And anyway,
what's wrong with *Maybe*?

You wouldn't believe what once or
twice I have seen. I'll just
tell you this:
only if there are angels in your head will
you ever, possibly, see one.
(*Felicity* 2015)



Angels by Mary Oliver

You might see an angel anytime
and anywhere. Of course you have
to open your eyes to a kind of
second level, but it's not really
hard. The whole business of
what's reality and what isn't has
never been solved and probably
never will be. So I don't care to
be too definite about anything.
I have a lot of edges called Perhaps
and almost nothing you can call
Certainty. For myself, but not
for other people. That's a place
you just can't get into, not
entirely anyway, other people's
heads.



I'll just leave you with this.
I don't care how many angels can
dance on the head of a pin. It's
enough to know that for some people
they exist, and that they dance.

Scroll down for Night Prayer

Night Prayer

If you are able to do so, you might wish to light a candle near a window.



Jospeh and his brothers - again!

Opening prayer

I praise and thank you for this day, Lord:
for all its ups and downs,
with all its joys and sorrows,
and every gracious moment when my heart
was at peace with you
and I at peace with my neighbour...

I praise and thank you, Lord,
for my worries and fears,
my troubles and anxieties,
my confusion and misgivings,
my errors and my mistakes
- *because* -
each of these offers me a choice
to trust in your abiding presence,
to lean on your strong shoulder,
to learn from your counsel and wisdom,
to receive your mercy and pardon
and grow closer and closer to my God
who makes a home within my humble heart...

(Concord Pastor)

You may like to access 'Father, Hear the prayer we offer'. Words appear on screen.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hEno1PGQ61w>

Reading Genesis 45: 1-15

Joseph Makes Himself Known

45 Then Joseph could no longer control himself before all his attendants, and he cried out, “Have everyone leave my presence!” So there was no one with Joseph when he made himself known to his brothers. ² And he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard him, and Pharaoh’s household heard about it.

³ Joseph said to his brothers, “I am Joseph! Is my father still living?” But his brothers were not able to answer him, because they were terrified at his presence.

⁴ Then Joseph said to his brothers, “Come close to me.” When they had done so, he said, “I am your brother Joseph, the one you sold into Egypt! ⁵ And now, do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you. ⁶ For two years now there has been famine in the land, and for the next five years there will be no ploughing and reaping. ⁷ But God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance. ⁸

⁸ “So then, it was not you who sent me here, but God. He made me father to Pharaoh, lord of his entire household and ruler of all Egypt. ⁹ Now hurry back to my father and say to him, ‘This is what your son Joseph says: God has made me lord of all Egypt. Come down to me; don’t delay. ¹⁰ You shall live in the region of Goshen and be near me—you, your children and grandchildren, your flocks and herds, and all you have. ¹¹ I will provide for you there, because five years of famine are still to come. Otherwise you and your household and all who belong to you will become destitute.’

¹² “You can see for yourselves, and so can my brother Benjamin, that it is really I who am speaking to you. ¹³ Tell my father about all the honour accorded me in Egypt and about everything you have seen. And bring my father down here quickly.”

¹⁴ Then he threw his arms around his brother Benjamin and wept, and Benjamin embraced him, weeping. ¹⁵ And he kissed all his brothers and wept over them. Afterward his brothers talked with him.

New International Version



‘The Recognition of Joseph by his Brothers’, 1816 by Peter Cornelius, a German painter.

Originally part of a fresco cycle in the Casa Bartholdy, Rome. Now in the Nationalgalerie, Berlin.

Reflection

First, from the Scriptures of Israel, we have what is in effect the conclusion of the long saga of the family life of Israel's patriarchs and matriarchs. It's been a tortuous tale, replete with some truly awful behaviour by just about everyone involved. The patriarchs and matriarchs give a whole new dimension to the phrase "dysfunctional family". It's a remarkable tribute to Israel's honesty that she told these stories about her founders, and even incorporated them into her Scriptures. No "Father, I cannot-tell-a-lie" nonsense here!

But story *does* have a happy ending—sort of!—and this morning we heard it. Last week we heard how Joseph was sold into slavery by his brothers. Joseph had certainly been an irritating little prig, but still that didn't justify what they did, which was wicked and cruel. Some of them, to be sure, were less willing than others—and they stopped short of actual murder. But all of them were complicit in what they did do. And then they compounded the evil by telling their ageing father, Jacob—the only one in the family who actually *loved* Joseph—that his son was dead. Jacob was heartbroken. But the brothers evidently decided they could live with that, too.

This week we hear how all that changes. Joseph is *no longer* a slave and he has *not* died. Instead, he has risen to a position of great power in the land of Egypt, second only to Pharaoh. Because there is a famine in the world, and only the Egyptians have grain, his brothers have come to Egypt to buy some, and it is Joseph with whom they must deal. They do not recognise him in his greatness but he recognises them. And now he holds their lives in his hand. He can revenge himself. And I suppose in one sense of "revenge"—"to repay someone for the evil they have done to you"—he *does* revenge himself. He "repays" them, but not at all in the manner they might expect. He "repays" them by forgiving them!

Let's note three things about the story.

First, it begins with Joseph's revelation of himself. "I am Joseph." His brothers' nice, safe universe—safe for them, that is—in which their brother Joseph was history so they needn't worry about him, and father Jacob was just going to have to suck it up and grieve—all that is utterly shattered. Joseph is back and Joseph is in power, and the brothers are going to have to deal with that. No wonder they are, as our version of the story says, "dismayed"! I dare say that is putting it mildly. They are *terrified*! The brother they dealt with so cruelly now has them utterly in his power.

I think it very likely some of Our Lord's disciples—and most obviously Peter—had something of the same dismay when they were told that Jesus had risen from the dead. After all, they had all deserted him and fled. Peter had denied even *knowing* Jesus—three times! And now Jesus is back! Wouldn't that be scary if you were Peter?

Second, however, Joseph doesn't react at all as they might expect. He *weeps* before them. "I am your *brother* Joseph!" he says. "Come closer!" he says, and "do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves because you sold me here"! He does not speak with sovereign authority—though he has such authority, and could so speak. He speaks with passion and love, thereby making himself vulnerable, so that there is as much at stake here

for him as for them. The brothers fear he will do something terrible to them for the way they have treated him in the past. He, however, invites them to something quite new. He invites them to *put that dreadful past behind them!* That invitation is certainly not anything they have deserved. It is his gift to them.

So too with Our Lord, risen from the tomb! When he commissions Mary of Magdala to go to the disciples with news of his resurrection, he says “Go and tell my *brethren!*” The Risen One affirms the continuance of his family unity with them, a unity that has survived even their failure to act as disciples.

Which brings us to our third note, and the most important point about the story. It is Joseph himself who makes this point and he makes it three times. “For *God* sent me before you to preserve life...” he says. And again, “*God* sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. So it was not you who sent me here, but *God*.” These are stunning assertions. They redefine the state of affairs for everyone involved. The elderly father’s sorrow is (or will soon be) turned to joy. The brothers’ guilt-ridden terror is replaced with hope. And even the earlier priggishness of Joseph, which might feasibly now express itself in triumph over his brothers, is done away. None of this old stuff is important any more—for it turns out that through and in this whole chaotic mess, God has been working his purpose out—and it is a purpose for the good of *everyone* involved. The Old Testament scholar Walter Brueggemann makes the point:

God is free. He is at work for his purpose in spite of, through, and against every human effort. Such a reading collides with any easy *humanism*. It also collides with a kind of *supernaturalism* which wants to distinguish between God’s work and human work. Against such humanism which separates God’s work and ours, this arena asserts that the arena of human choice is precisely where God’s saving work is done.¹

The supreme example of all this is surely Calvary. Through and in and under that terrible scene of cruelty and death God was at work for our salvation. This unending work of God through all that we do is what Saint Paul was talking about when he summed up human history by saying, “God has imprisoned all in disobedience so that he may be merciful to all” (Rom. 11.32). What can we say to this but what Paul himself says?—

O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgements and how inscrutable his ways!

“For who has known the mind of the Lord?

Or who has been his counsellor?”

“Or who has given a gift to him,
to receive a gift in return?”

For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory for ever. Amen.

¹ Walter Brueggemann, *Genesis* (Atlanta, Georgia: John Knox, 1982) 346.

Creed

We are not alone,
we live in God's world.

We believe in God:
who has created and is creating,
who has come in Jesus,
the Word made flesh,
to reconcile and make new,
who works in us and others
by the Spirit.

We trust in God.

We are called to be the Church:
to celebrate God's presence,
to live with respect in Creation,
to love and serve others,
to seek justice and resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,
our judge and our hope.

In life, in death, in life beyond death,
God is with us.

We are not alone.
Thanks be to God.

(United Church of Canada)

Intercessions

Lord God,
You sent Joseph to Egypt through unexpected ways.
It was not a place he would have chosen himself,
but you were able to use his skills and abilities to make a difference.

Hear our prayers that we may be able to make a difference where we are, in our situation,
whether of our liking or not.

You enabled Joseph to interpret dreams, to read and understand events,
and to fearlessly propose courses of action.

Hear our prayers for those who collect data and process information to plan for the future.



Seek justice: resist evil

You enabled Joseph to rise to a position of great power,
which he used wisely and for the good of the people.

Hear our prayers for those who hold authority or wield power over others.

You enabled Joseph to help the Egyptian people prepare for a time of famine,
and you continue to call people to use their skills and abilities
to help alleviate hunger and suffering in the world today.

Hear our prayers for those who work in relief and development organizations
around the world.

You enabled Joseph to be reunited with his family,
because he was able to forgive past hurts.

Hear our prayers for those who seek to restore families that are broken.

Lord God grant to all who seek to support others the love and compassion they need to do
their work well— to be your hands and feet in our hurting world.

Amen.

*We now have the Taizé song 'Nothing can ever come between us and the love of God, the
love of God revealed to us in Christ Jesus.' (Romans 8:38-39)*

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CQInYSKIR_c

Today's Meditation



*The number one job of settlers is to
seek the places that unsettle you
and just stay there, prepared to
linger there a long time so that in
your openness and vulnerability and
confusion you might finally enter
into relationship with the land and
people you have unsettled.*

*[www.chriscorrigan.com/parkinglot/
reconciliation/](http://www.chriscorrigan.com/parkinglot/reconciliation/)*

Chris Corrigan lives in Canada

Blessing

The peace of God
be over me to shelter me,
under me to uphold me,
about me to protect me,
behind me to direct me,
ever with me to save me.

The peace of all peace
be mine this night
in the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Our closing hymn is 'Forth in thy Name O Lord I go,' sung by the congregation of Portsmouth Cathedral. Words: Charles Wesley, 1749.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-X-4HRj8III>

Forth in thy Name, O Lord, I go,
my daily labour to pursue;
thee, only thee, resolved to know
in all I think or speak or do.

The task thy wisdom hath assigned,
O let me cheerfully fulfil;
in all my works thy presence find,
and prove thy good and perfect will.

Thee may I set at my right hand,
whose eyes mine inmost substance see,
and labour on at thy command,
and offer all my works to thee.

Give me to bear thy easy yoke,
and every moment watch and pray,
and still to things eternal look,
and hasten to thy glorious day.

For thee delightfully employ
whate'er thy bounteous grace hath given;
and run my course with even joy,
and closely walk with thee to heav'n.

Thanks

Thanks to everyone who has contributed to these services, especially Chris for his reflections. Other material taken or developed from various websites and blogs is normally identified in the text.



Whanganui River New Zealand.

Reflecting the significance of water to the indigenous people, this river is now officially recognised by the New Zealand Government as 'a living entity'.