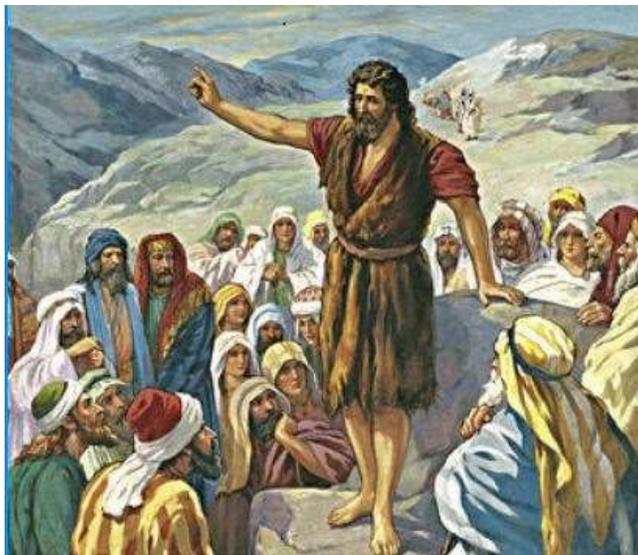


St. Paul's Episcopal Church

The Third Sunday in Advent
December 13, 2020



"he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,
to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,"



"He himself was not the light,
but he came to testify to the light."

The Holy Eucharist: Rite I

Prelude

Announcements and Lighting of the Advent Wreath

The Season of Advent

The 3rd Sunday

The real GIFT of Christmas is the Christchild, and as Christians we know that. While the world "prepares" by shopping, decorating, and planning, we do all that, but WE also prepare by REMEMBERING.....How the Heavenly Father saw humankind so lost and unhappy, so misguided and sinful, that they needed a SAVIOR. He prepared the way, and finally sent His SON to be that Savior! We join the world in preparing our homes and families, but we also prepare our HEARTS. We remind ourselves of God's great act and all the ways He prepared the world for what He was going to do. We mark the season of ADVENT with candles and stories that symbolize our hope so that ... *"when He comes, He may find in us a mansion, prepared for Himself."*

Our King and Savior now draws near.

Come, let us adore Him! Alleluia!

Glory to God in the highest,

And on earth peace, goodwill to all people!!

Let us pray:

O Heavenly Father, you have surrounded us with the light of Your presence; we remember with joy and awe that the world is Your creation and that life is Your gift. Lift up our thoughts from the littleness of our own works to the greatness and majesty, and the wonder of Yours, and teach us so to behold Your glory that we may walk in the steps of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. AMEN

The 3rd candle on the wreath testifies to the important part played by the VIRGIN MARY, the mother of Jesus. While there may be debate & perhaps some discomfort in the minds of some as to how we express our thanks & respect for Mary, there can be NO question of her importance, her acceptance, and her holiness as she carried & birthed the Holy Child. To question or debate the biology of it all is to totally miss the point of her amazing act: A young woman, facing terrible judgments accepted God's call and trusted it with all her heart! She BORE Him and CARED for Him; She FOLLOWED Him, SUFFERED with Him, BURIED Him, and she lived to see God's plan play out in His resurrection. She is, indeed, the most blessed among women. Remember MARY, who trusted God and served Him in the most ultimate of ways, thus bringing blessing to us all!

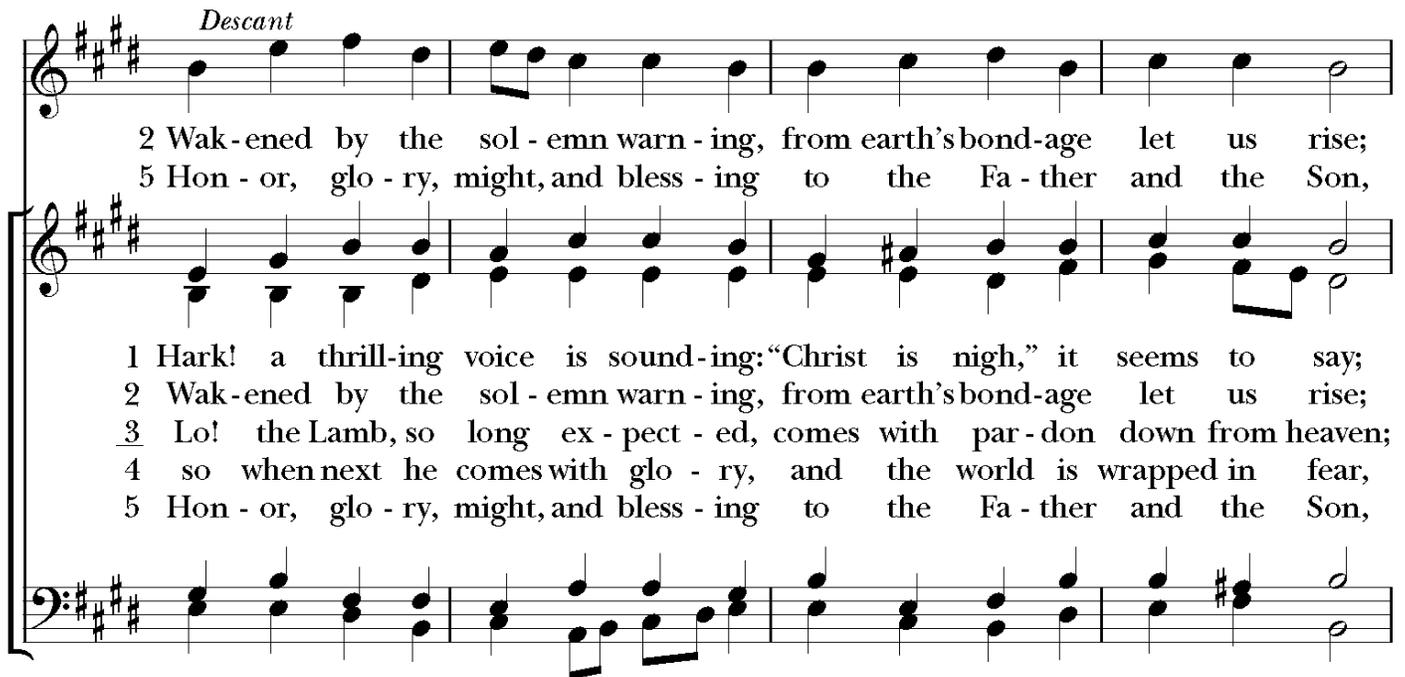
Prepare Ye the way of the Lord

Make straight in the desert a highway for our God!

The Holy Eucharist: Rite I

Hymn 59(V:1,3,4) "Hark! A thrilling voice is sounding"

Descant



2 Wak-ened by the sol - emn warn - ing, from earth's bond-age let us rise;
5 Hon - or, glo - ry, might, and bless - ing to the Fa - ther and the Son,

1 Hark! a thrill-ing voice is sound-ing: "Christ is nigh," it seems to say;
2 Wak-ened by the sol - emn warn - ing, from earth's bond-age let us rise;
3 Lo! the Lamb, so long ex - pect - ed, comes with par-don down from heaven;
4 so when next he comes with glo - ry, and the world is wrapped in fear,
5 Hon - or, glo - ry, might, and bless - ing to the Fa - ther and the Son,



2 Christ, our sun, all sloth dis - pel - ling, shines up - on the morn-ing skies.
5 with the ev - er - last-ing Spi - rit while un - end - ing a - ges run.

1 "Cast a - way the works of dark-ness, O ye child-ren of the day."
2 Christ, our sun, all sloth dis - pel - ling, shines up - on the morn-ing skies.
3 let us haste, with tears of sor - row, one and all to be for - given;
4 may he with his mer - cy shield us, and with words of love draw near.
5 with the ev - er - last-ing Spi - rit while un - end - ing a - ges run.

The Word of God

Celebrant: Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

***People:* And blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.**

Celebrant: Let us Pray.

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy Immortal One,
Have mercy upon us.

Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy Immortal One,
Have mercy upon us.

Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy Immortal One,
Have mercy upon us.

The Collect for the Day

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

***People:* And with thy spirit.**

Stir up thy power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let thy bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be honor and glory, world without end. **Amen.**

Almighty God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armor 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, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

The Readings from Scripture

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion—to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, to display his glory. They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations;

they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations. For I the Lord love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the Lord has blessed. I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

***People:* Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 126 ; *In convertendo*

**When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, *
then were we like those who dream.**

**Then was our mouth filled with laughter, *
and our tongue with shouts of joy.**

**Then they said among the nations, *
"The Lord has done great things for them."**

**The Lord has done great things for us, *
and we are glad indeed.**

**Restore our fortunes, O Lord, *
like the watercourses of the Negev.**

**Those who sowed with tears *
will reap with songs of joy.**

**Those who go out weeping, carrying the seed, *
will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves.**

Celebrant: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to John.

***People:* Glory be to thee, O Lord.**

John 1:6-8,19-28

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. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

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 confessed, "I am not the Messiah." And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,'" as the prophet Isaiah said. Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?"

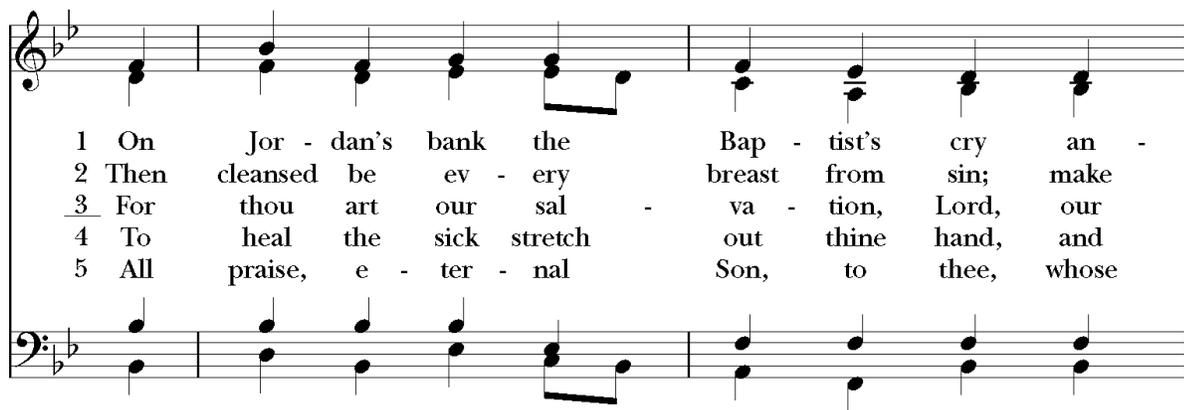
John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

Celebrant: The Gospel of the Lord.

***People:* Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

Hymn 76(V:1,2,3)

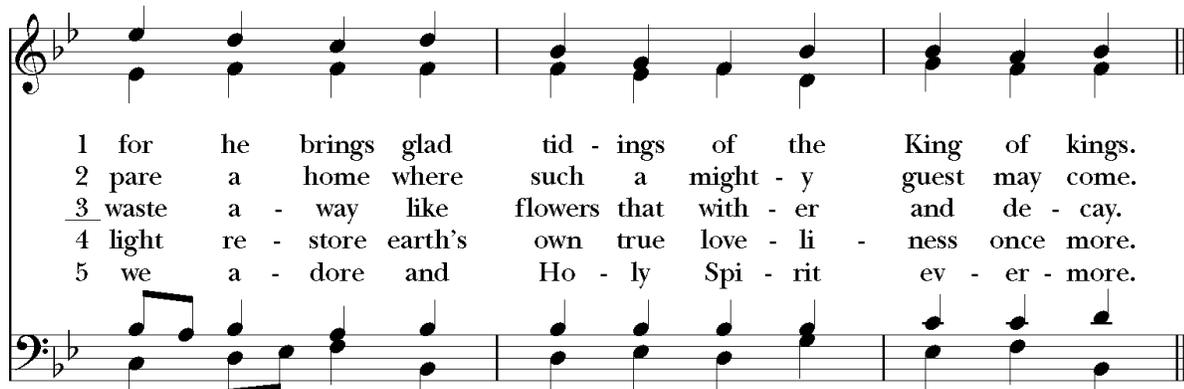
"On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry"



1 On Jor - dan's bank the Bap - tist's cry an -
 2 Then cleansed be ev - ery breast from sin; make
 3 For thou art our sal - va - tion, Lord, our
 4 To heal the sick stretch out thine hand, and
 5 All praise, e - ter - nal Son, to thee, whose



1 noun - ces that the Lord is nigh; a - wake and hear - en,
 2 straight the way for God with - in, and let each heart pre -
 3 re - fuge, and our great re - ward; with - out thy grace we
 4 bid the fall - en sin - ner stand; shine forth, and let thy
 5 ad - vent doth thy peo - ple free; whom with the Fa - ther



1 for he brings glad tid - ings of the King of kings.
 2 pare a home where such a might - y guest may come.
 3 waste a - way like flowers that with - er and de - cay.
 4 light re - store earth's own true love - li - ness once more.
 5 we a - dore and Ho - ly Spi - rit ev - er - more.

The Nicene Creed

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.**

**Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven:**

**by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven**

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and
the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,

who proceeds from the Father and the Son.

With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.

He has spoken through the Prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

**We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

The Prayers of the People

Let us pray for the whole state of Christ's Church and the world.

Almighty and everliving God, who in thy holy Word hast taught us to make prayers, and supplications, and to give thanks for all people: Receive these our prayers which we offer unto thy divine Majesty, beseeching thee to inspire continually the Universal Church with the spirit of truth, unity, and concord; and grant that all those who do confess thy holy Name may agree in the truth of thy holy Word, and live in unity and godly love.

Give grace, O heavenly Father, to all bishops and other ministers that they may, both by their life and doctrine, set forth thy true and lively Word, and rightly and duly administer thy holy Sacraments.

And to all thy people give thy heavenly grace, and especially to this congregation here present; that, with meek heart and due reverence, they may hear and receive thy holy Word, truly serving thee in holiness and righteousness all the days of their life.

We beseech thee also so to rule the hearts of those who bear the authority of government in this and every land, especially Donald, our President and Gavin, our Governor, that they may be led to wise decisions and right actions for the welfare and peace of the world.

Open, O Lord, the eyes of all people to behold thy gracious hand in all thy works, that, rejoicing in thy whole creation, they may honor thee with their substance, and be faithful stewards of thy bounty.

And we most humbly beseech thee, of thy goodness, O Lord, to comfort and succor all those who in this transitory life, are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity.

(Additional petitions and thanksgivings may be included here.)

And we also bless thy holy Name for all thy servants departed this life in thy faith and fear, beseeching thee to grant them continual growth in thy love and service; and to grant us grace so to follow the good examples of all thy saints, that with them we may be partakers of thy heavenly kingdom.

Let us pray for our own needs and those of others.

Ever-present God, be with us in our isolation, be close to us in our distancing, be healing in our sickness, be

joy in our sadness, be light in our darkness, be wisdom in our confusion, be all that is familiar when so much is unfamiliar. You are the Great Healer and we fervently ask that you bring to all people a sense of caring and compassion in the sacrifices we make for the sake of all around us; that you will bring healing and recovery to those who are ill, knowledge to our scientists, and ultimately an end to this pandemic. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

(A period of Silence is kept. Please add your petition and thanksgivings, silently or aloud.)

Grant these our prayers, O Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, our only Mediator and Advocate. **Amen.**

Celebrant: Let us humbly confess our sins unto Almighty God.

**Most merciful God,
we confess that we have sinned against thee
in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done,
and by what we have left undone.
We have not loved thee with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
For the sake of thy Son Jesus Christ,
have mercy on us and forgive us;
that we may delight in thy will,
and walk in thy ways,
to the glory of thy Name. Amen.**

Celebrant: Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who of his great mercy hath promised forgiveness of sins to all those who with hearty repentance and true faith turn unto him, have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and bring you to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

The Peace

Celebrant: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

***People:* And with thy spirit.**

Celebrant: Please acknowledge one another with a word of peace.

The Offertory

Celebrant: Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, the power, the glory, the victory, and the majesty. For everything in heaven and on earth is yours. Yours, O Lord, is the kingdom, and you are exalted as head over all.

The Holy Communion

The Great Thanksgiving

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

***People:* And with thy spirit.**

Celebrant: Lift up your hearts.

***People:* We lift them up unto the Lord.**

Celebrant: Let us give thanks unto our Lord God.

***People:* It is meet and right so to do.**

It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto thee, O Lord, holy Father, almighty, everlasting God. Because thou didst send thy beloved Son to redeem us from sin and death, and to make us heirs in him of everlasting life; judge the world, we may without shame or fear rejoice to behold his appearing.

Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious Name; evermore praising thee, and saying,

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts:

Heaven and earth are full of thy Glory.

Glory be to thee, O Lord Most High.

Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

Let us pray. All glory be to thee, Almighty God, our heavenly Father, for that thou, of thy tender mercy, didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption; who made there, by his one oblation of himself once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world; and did institute, and in his holy Gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of that his precious death and sacrifice, until his coming again.

For in the night in which he was betrayed, he took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take, eat, this is my Body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Likewise, after supper, he took the cup; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink ye all of this; for this is my Blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins. Do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me."

Wherefore, O Lord and heavenly Father, according to the institution of thy dearly beloved Son our Savior Jesus Christ, we, thy humble servants, do celebrate and make here before thy divine Majesty, with these thy holy gifts, which we now offer unto thee, the memorial thy Son hath commanded us to make; having in remembrance his blessed passion and precious death, his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension; rendering unto thee most hearty thanks for the innumerable benefits procured unto us by the same.

And we most humbly beseech thee, O merciful Father, to hear us; and, of thy almighty goodness, vouchsafe to bless and sanctify, with thy Word and Holy Spirit, these thy gifts and creatures of bread and wine; that we, receiving them according to thy Son our Savior Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of his death and passion, may be partakers of his most blessed Body and Blood.

And we earnestly desire thy fatherly goodness mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; most humbly beseeching thee to grant that, by the merits and death of thy Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in his blood, we, and all thy whole Church, may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of his passion.

And here we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, our selves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice unto thee; humbly beseeching thee that we, and all others who shall be partakers of this Holy Communion, may worthily receive the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son Jesus Christ, be filled with thy grace and heavenly benediction, and made one body with him, that he may dwell in us, and we in him.

And although we are unworthy, through our manifold sins, to offer unto thee any sacrifice, yet we beseech thee to accept this our bounden duty and service, not weighing our merits, but pardoning our offenses, through Jesus Christ our Lord;

By whom, and with whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honor and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world without end. **Amen.**

And now, as our Savior Christ hath taught us, we are bold to say,

Our Father, who art in heaven,

hallowed be thy Name,

thy kingdom come,

thy will be done,

on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses,

as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation,

**but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the
glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

The Breaking of the Bread

Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;
Therefore let us keep the feast.

These are the Gifts of God for the People of God.

The Prayer for Spiritual Communion (for those who are watching at home)

**In union, O Lord, with your faithful people at every
altar of your Church, where the Holy Eucharist is now
being celebrated, I desire to offer to you praise and
thanksgiving. I remember your death, Lord Christ; I
proclaim your resurrection; I await your coming in
glory. Since I cannot receive you today in the
Sacrament of your Body and Blood, I beseech you to
come spiritually into my heart. Cleanse and
strengthen me with your grace, Lord Jesus, and let me
never be separated from you. May I live in you, and
you in me, in this life and in the life to come. Amen.
(From The United States Military Prayerbook)**

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Let us pray.

**Almighty and everliving God, we most heartily thank
thee for that thou dost feed us, in these holy**

mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and dost assure us thereby of thy favor and goodness towards us; and that we are very members incorporate in the mystical body of thy Son, the blessed company of all faithful people; and are also heirs, through hope, of thy everlasting kingdom. And we humbly beseech thee, O heavenly Father, so to assist us with thy grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all such good works as thou hast prepared for us to walk in; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honor and glory, world without end. Amen.

Celebrant: And now, May 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 Almighty God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit be upon you this day and always. Amen.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Hymn 444(V:1,2,3) "Blessed be the God of Israel"



1 Blessed be the God of Is - rael, who comes to set us free;
2 He from the house of Da - vid a child of grace has given;
3 On pri - son - ers of dark-ness the sun be - gins to rise,



he vis - its and re - deems us, he grants us lib - er - ty.
a Sa - vior comes a - mong us to raise us up to heaven.
the dawn - ing of for - give - ness up - on the sin - ner's eyes.



The pro - phets spoke of mer - cy, of free - dom and re - lease;
Be - fore him goes his her - ald, fore - run - ner in the way,
He guides the feet of pil - grims a - long the paths of peace.



God shall ful - fill his prom - ise and bring his peo - ple peace.____
the pro - phet of sal - va - tion, the har - bin - ger of Day.____
O bless our God and Sa - vior, with songs that nev - er cease.____

(Dismissal will begin during the last verse of the hymn.)

Postlude