

# Compline : Night Prayer for the Solemnity of 'Corpus Christi' *The Body of Christ*

*"Corpus Christi is a day that involves the cosmic dimension, the heavens and the earth... heaven and earth, God and Man, became one"*

*Because of this we say*

*"Yes, Love exists, and because it exists things can change for the better and we can hope"*

*(Pope Benedict XVI, given in S. Peter's Square 14 June 2009)*

## **The Gathering ...**

Welcome and introduction

*From our cycle of prayer for this dispersed worshipping community: Tonight's Office Prayer is offered alongside and for*

- *the priest, people and community of S. Giles, Sheldon, in the Birmingham Diocese*
- *and for the Llandaff Diocese.*

## **Introductory prayer**

Let my prayer be counted as incense before you, and the lifting up of my hands as an evening sacrifice.

*Psalm 141:1-2*

## **Sonnet for Corpus Christi: 'Love's Choice'**

This bread is light, dissolving, almost air,  
A little visitation on my tongue,  
A wafer-thin sensation, hardly there.  
This taste of wine is brief in flavour, flung  
A moment to the palate's roof and fled,  
Even its aftertaste a memory.  
Yet this is how He comes. Through wine and bread  
Love chooses to be emptied into me.  
He does not come in unimagined light  
Too bright to be denied, too absolute  
For consciousness, too strong for sight,  
Leaving the seer blind, the poet mute,  
Chooses instead to seep into each sense,  
To dye himself into experience.

*Fr. Malcolm Guite*

The angels of God guard us through the night,  
and quieten the powers of darkness.

The Spirit of God be our guide  
to lead us to peace and to glory.

Our help is in the name of the eternal God  
who is making the heavens  
and the earth.

## **Hymn**

Guide me, O thou great Redeemer,  
pilgrim though this barren land;  
I am weak, but thou art mighty;  
hold me with thy powerful hand;  
Bread of heaven,  
feed me now and evermore.

Open now the crystal fountain,  
whence the healing stream doth flow;  
let the fiery cloudy pillar  
lead me all my journey through;  
strong Deliverer,  
be thou still my Strength and Shield.

When I tread the verge of Jordan,  
bid my anxious fears subside;  
bear me through the swelling current,  
land me safe on Canaan's side;  
songs of praises,  
I will ever give to thee.

*Text: William Williams*

*Music 'cwm rhondda' John Hughes  
(HON Liturgical 307)*

Dear God, thank you for all that is good,  
for our creation and our humanity,  
for the stewardship you have given us  
of this planet earth,  
for the gifts of life and of one another,  
for your love,  
which is unbounded and eternal.

O Thou, Most Holy and Beloved,  
My Companion, my Unicorn,  
my Guide upon the Way.

## **Words of love and penitence...**

Loving God, close your eyes to our sins,  
**We who have wounded your love.**

Refine us with the flame of your Spirit:  
**Cleanse us with springs of living water.**

Save us with words of forgiveness and peace:  
**make us whole, steadfast in spirit.**

Broken are our bones, yet you can heal us,  
**and we shall leap for joy  
and dance again.**

O God of Love, we adore you ...  
You transfigure our disfigured faces,  
you strive with our resistant clay,  
you bring out of our chaos, harmony.  
O God of Love, we adore you ...

Eternal Spirit, flow through our being  
and open our lips,  
**that our mouths  
may proclaim your praise.**

Let us worship the God of Love:  
**Alleluia! Alleluia!**

## **Psalmody**

**Say to those who are invited:  
Behold, the supper is ready, come to  
the marriage feast. Alleluia!**

The Lord is my shepherd;  
there is nothing I shall want.  
Fresh and green are the pastures  
where he gives me repose.  
Near restful waters he leads me,  
to revive my drooping spirit.

He guides me along the right path;  
he is true to his name.  
If I should walk in the valley of darkness  
no evil would I fear.  
You are there with your crook and your staff;  
with these you give me comfort.

You have prepared a banquet for me  
in the sight of my foes.

My head you have anointed with oil;  
my cup is overflowing.

Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me  
all the days of my life  
In the Lord's own house shall I dwell  
for ever and ever.

Glory be to Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit,  
as it was in the beginning, is now,  
and shall be for ever.

**Glory be to God,  
sustaining, redeeming, sanctifying,  
as in the beginning, so now and forever.  
Amen.**

**Say to those who are invited:  
Behold, the supper is ready, come to  
the marriage feast. Alleluia!**

## **Scripture reading**

*John 6: 51-57*

**"I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."**

The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" So Jesus said to them,

**"Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day; for my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me."**

## **Responsory**

Into your hands, O God,  
I commend my spirit,  
**For you have redeemed me,  
O God of truth and love.**

Keep me, O God, as the apple of an eye:  
**Hide me under the shadow of your  
wings.**

## ***Nunc Dimittis (Gospel Cantic)***

**Preserve us O God, while waking  
and guard us while sleeping,  
that awake we may watch with Christ,  
and asleep we may rest in your peace.**

**Praise be to God,  
I have lived to see this day.  
God's promise is fulfilled  
and my duty done.**

**At last you have given me peace,  
for I have seen with my own eyes  
the salvation you have prepared  
for all nations –  
a light to the world in its darkness,  
and the glory of your people, Israel.**

**Glory be to God,  
sustaining, redeeming, sanctifying,  
as in the beginning, so now and forever.  
Amen.**

**Preserve us O God, while waking  
and guard us while sleeping,  
that awake we may watch with Christ,  
and asleep we may rest in your peace.**

## ***Intercession...***

*..... intercession.... Bringing to mind those whom we  
pray for and holding them in God's love..., bringing  
the needs of the world, the church, and those who  
have no-one to pray for them...*

## **The Lord's Prayer**

**Our Father,  
which 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 them  
that trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
the power and the glory,  
for ever and ever. Amen.**

## ***Blessing and departure***

**I will lie down in peace and take my rest,  
for it is in God alone  
that I dwell unafraid.**

**Let us bless the Life-Giver,  
the Pain-Bearer, the Love-Maker  
let us praise and exalt God  
above all for ever.**

**May God's name be praised  
beyond the furthest star;  
glorified and exalted above all for ever.  
Amen.**

**Be present, Living Christ, within us,  
your dwelling place and home,  
that all places may be ones where  
all darkness is penetrated by your light,  
all troubles calmed by your peace,  
all evil redeemed by your love,  
all pain transformed in your suffering.  
and all dying glorified in your risen life.  
Amen.**

**The blessing of God,  
Life-giver, Pain-bearer, Love-maker,  
be with us now and always.**

**Amen**

**May the Lord bless us, protect us from  
all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.**

**Amen**

## ***Goodnight ....***

*Material in this act of worship is taken from:  
Jim Cotter : 'Prayer at Night', Sheffield, Cairns  
Publications, 1991  
Scripture from the NRSV  
Sonnet for Corpus Christi :Fr. Malcolm Guite  
[https://malcolmquite.wordpress.com/2011/06/23/loves-choice-  
a-sonnet-for-the-feast-of-corpus-christi/](https://malcolmquite.wordpress.com/2011/06/23/loves-choice-a-sonnet-for-the-feast-of-corpus-christi/)  
Psalm antiphon and final blessing prayer : 'The Divine  
Office, the Liturgy of the Hours', Collins, 2016  
Psalm 23: 'Twenty Four Psalms and a Cantic to the  
psalmody of Joseph Geineau', Grail ,  
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