

Evening Prayer

April 3, 2025

Thursday after the Fourth Sunday in Lent

RICHARD OF CHICHESTER, Bishop, 1253

Yours is the day, O God, yours also the night; you established the moon and the sun. You fixed all the boundaries of the earth; you made both summer and winter.

Psalm 74:15,16

Confession of Sin

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Silence may be kept.

Officiant and People together, all kneeling

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

Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life. **Amen.**

Invitatory and Psalter

All stand

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Officiant **O God, make speed to save us.**
People **O Lord, make haste to help us.**

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

O Gracious Light

O gracious light,
pure brightness of the everliving Father in heaven,
O Jesus Christ, holy and blessed!

Now as we come to the setting of the sun,
and our eyes behold the vesper light,
we sing your praises, O God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

You are worthy at all times to be praised by happy voices,
O Son of God, O Giver of Life,
and to be glorified through all the worlds.

Psalm 73

BCP p. 687

¹ Truly, God is good to Israel, *
to those who are pure in heart.

² But as for me, my feet had nearly slipped; *
I had almost tripped and fallen;

³ Because I envied the proud *
and saw the prosperity of the wicked:
⁴ For they suffer no pain, *
and their bodies are sleek and sound;
⁵ In the misfortunes of others they have no share; *
they are not afflicted as others are;
⁶ Therefore they wear their pride like a necklace *
and wrap their violence about them like a cloak.
⁷ Their iniquity comes from gross minds, *
and their hearts overflow with wicked thoughts.
⁸ They scoff and speak maliciously; *
out of their haughtiness they plan oppression.
⁹ They set their mouths against the heavens, *
and their evil speech runs through the world.
¹⁰ And so the people turn to them *
and find in them no fault.
¹¹ They say, "How should God know? *
is there knowledge in the Most High?"
¹² So then, these are the wicked; *
always at ease, they increase their wealth.
¹³ In vain have I kept my heart clean, *
and washed my hands in innocence.
¹⁴ I have been afflicted all day long, *
and punished every morning.
¹⁵ Had I gone on speaking this way, *
I should have betrayed the generation of your children.
¹⁶ When I tried to understand these things, *
it was too hard for me;
¹⁷ Until I entered the sanctuary of God *
and discerned the end of the wicked.
¹⁸ Surely, you set them in slippery places; *
you cast them down in ruin.
¹⁹ Oh, how suddenly do they come to destruction, *
come to an end, and perish from terror!
²⁰ Like a dream when one awakens, O Lord, *
when you arise you will make their image vanish.

21 When my mind became embittered, *
I was sorely wounded in my heart.
22 I was stupid and had no understanding; *
I was like a brute beast in your presence.
23 Yet I am always with you; *
you hold me by my right hand.
24 You will guide me by your counsel, *
and afterwards receive me with glory.
25 Whom have I in heaven but you? *
and having you I desire nothing upon earth.
26 Though my flesh and my heart should waste away, *
God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever.
27 Truly, those who forsake you will perish; *
you destroy all who are unfaithful.
28 But it is good for me to be near God; *
I have made the Lord GOD my refuge.
29 I will speak of all your works *
in the gates of the city of Zion.
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: *
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

The Lessons

The First Lesson

Exod. 1:6-22

A Reading from the Book of Exodus.

Then Joseph died, and all his brothers, and that whole generation. But the Israelites were fruitful and prolific; they multiplied and grew exceedingly strong, so that the land was filled with them.

Now a new king arose over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. He said to his people, "Look, the Israelite people are more numerous and more powerful than we. Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, or they will increase and, in the event of war, join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land." Therefore they set taskmasters over them to oppress them with forced labor. They built supply cities, Pithom and Rameses, for Pharaoh. But the more they were oppressed, the more they

multiplied and spread, so that the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites. The Egyptians became ruthless in imposing tasks on the Israelites, and made their lives bitter with hard service in mortar and brick and in every kind of field labor. They were ruthless in all the tasks that they imposed on them.

The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other Puah, "When you act as midwives to the Hebrew women, and see them on the birthstool, if it is a boy, kill him; but if it is a girl, she shall live." But the midwives feared God; they did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but they let the boys live. So the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and said to them, "Why have you done this, and allowed the boys to live?" The midwives said to Pharaoh, "Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women; for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife comes to them." So God dealt well with the midwives; and the people multiplied and became very strong. And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families. Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, "Every boy that is born to the Hebrews you shall throw into the Nile, but you shall let every girl live."

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

J. A Song of Judith

Judith 16:13-16

I will sing a new song to my God, *
for you are great and glorious, wonderful in strength, invincible.
Let the whole creation serve you, *
for you spoke and all things came into being.
You sent your breath and it formed them, *
no one is able to resist your voice.
Mountains and seas are stirred to their depths, *
rocks melt like wax at your presence.

But to those who fear you, *
you continue to show mercy.
No sacrifice, however fragrant, can please you, *
but whoever fears the Lord shall stand in your sight for ever.

The Second Lesson

Rom. 8:12-27

A Reading from the Letter to the Romans.

So then, brothers and sisters, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh— for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, “Abba! Father!” it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him. I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

15. The Song of Mary *Luke 1:46-55*

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior; *
for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.
From this day all generations will call me blessed: *
the Almighty has done great things for me,
and holy is his Name.
He has mercy on those who fear him *
in every generation.
He has shown the strength of his arm, *
he has scattered the proud in their conceit.
He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, *
and has lifted up the lowly.
He has filled the hungry with good things, *
and the rich he has sent away empty.
He has come to the help of his servant Israel, *
for he has remembered his promise of mercy,
The promise he made to our fathers, *
to Abraham and his children for ever.
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: *
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

The Apostles' Creed

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**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,**

was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living 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 Prayers

<i>Officiant</i>	The Lord be with you.
<i>People</i>	And also with you.
<i>Officiant</i>	Let us pray.

The Lord's Prayer

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.

Suffrages B

That this evening may be holy, good, and peaceful.
We entreat you, O Lord.

That your holy angels may lead us in paths of peace and goodwill,
We entreat you, O Lord.

That we may be pardoned and forgiven for our sins and offenses,
We entreat you, O Lord.

That there may be peace to your Church and to the whole world,
We entreat you, O Lord.

That we may depart this life in your faith and fear, and not be
condemned before the great judgment seat of Christ,
We entreat you, O Lord.

That we may be bound together by your Holy Spirit in the
communion of [_____ and] all your saints, entrusting one another
and all our life to Christ,
We entreat you, O Lord.

The Collect of the Day

Gracious Father, whose blessed Son Jesus Christ came down from
heaven to be the true bread which gives life to the world: Evermore give
us this bread, that he may live in us, and we in him; who lives and
reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Richard of Chichester, Bishop, 1253

Almighty and most merciful God, who calls your people to yourself, we pray that, following the example of your bishop Richard of Chichester, we may see your Son Jesus Christ more clearly, love him more dearly, and follow him more nearly; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Seasonal Collect

Almighty and everlasting God, you hate nothing you have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent: Create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of you, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

A Collect for the Presence of Christ

Lord Jesus, stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past; be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts, and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. **Amen.**

A Prayer for Mission

O God, you manifest in your servants the signs of your presence: Send forth upon us the spirit of love, that in companionship with one another your abounding grace may increase among us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Here may be sung a hymn or anthem.

Authorized intercessions and thanksgivings may follow.

18. For our Country

Almighty God, who has blessed this land with beauty and diversity: We humbly beseech thee that we may always prove ourselves a people mindful of thy favor and glad to do thy will. Bless this land with honorable industry, sound learning, and pure manners. Save us from

violence, discord, and confusion, from pride and arrogance, and from every evil way. Defend our liberties, and fashion into one united people the multitudes brought together out of many kindreds and tongues.

Endue with the spirit of wisdom those to whom, in thy Name, we entrust the authority of government, that there may be justice and peace at home, and that, through obedience to thy law, we may show forth thy praise among the nations of the earth. In the time of prosperity, fill our hearts with thankfulness, and in the day of trouble, suffer not our trust in thee to fail; all which we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Before the close of the Office one or both of the following may be used

A Prayer of St. Chrysostom **BCP p. 102**

Almighty God, you have given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplication to you; and you have promised through your well-beloved Son that when two or three are gathered together in his Name you will be in the midst of them: Fulfill now, O Lord, our desires and petitions as may be best for us; granting us in this world knowledge of your truth, and in the age to come life everlasting. **Amen.**

Then may be said

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Officiant may then conclude with one of the following

May the God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing through the power of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Romans 15:13

Richard of Chichester

Born in Burford, Worcestershire, around 1197, Richard and his older brother Robert were quite young when their parents died, leaving a rich estate with a guardian to manage it. The guardian allowed the estate to dwindle, and Richard worked long hours to restore it.

Pressure was put on Richard to marry, but he, who from earliest years had preferred books to almost anything else, turned the estate over to his brother and went to Oxford. Often hungry, cold, and not always sure of his next day's keep, Richard managed to succeed in his studies under such teachers as Robert Grosseteste.

He continued to study law at Paris and Bologna, earned a doctorate, and returned to Oxford to become the university chancellor. Shortly afterward, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Edmund Rich, appointed him to be his own chancellor. The friendship between the primate and his young assistant was close: Richard also became his biographer.

Conflict with King Henry III eventually forced the archbishop into exile in France, where Richard nursed him in his final illness. After the archbishop's death, Richard moved to the Dominican house at Orleans for further study and teaching. He was ordained as a priest in 1243.

He then returned to England, and was elected Bishop of Chichester in 1244. King Henry opposed the election, confiscated all of the revenues of the diocese, and even locked Richard out of the episcopal dwelling. Richard was given lodging by a priest, Simon of Tarring.

During these years he functioned as a missionary bishop, traveling about the diocese on foot, visiting fishermen and farmers, holding synods with great difficulty, and endeavoring to establish order. Threatened by the Pope, Henry finally acknowledged Richard as bishop in 1246.

For eight years, he served his diocese as preacher, confessor, teacher, and counselor. He died in 1253. Nine years after his death, he was canonized. His best remembered words are:

Dear Lord, of thee three things I pray:

To see thee more clearly,

Love thee more dearly,

Follow thee more nearly.