

Celtic Evening Prayer 31 March 2021

Opening Prayer

Out of the depths I have cried to You. O Lord, hear my voice.
With my whole heart I want to praise you. O Lord, hear my voice.
If You, Lord should mark iniquities. Who could stand? Who could stand?
I will wait for the Lord. My soul waits, and in his word do I hope.

Lament

We approach the throne of the Servant King, who kneels and washes his disciples' feet, saying... Lord Jesus wash us clean; make us alive in you.
When we feel tempted to turn away from suffering and choose the easy path, Lord Jesus wash us clean; make us alive in you.
When we feel tempted to seek personal recognition and status above others, Lord Jesus wash us clean; make us alive in you.
When we feel tempted to pursue our own interests but disregard the needs of the under privileged and exploited, Lord Jesus wash us clean; make us alive in you.
When we feel tempted to strive for power and forget our calling to serve others in your name, Lord Jesus wash us clean; make us alive in you.
As you have washed our feet, setting us an example to follow, may we do for others what you have done for us.

Readings

May he be like rain that falls on the mown grass, like showers that water the earth. In his days may righteousness flourish and peace abound, until the moon is no more. (Ps 72: 6-7)

Those of steadfast mind you keep in peace - in peace because they trust in you. Trust in the LORD for ever, for in the LORD GOD you have an everlasting rock. (Isaiah 26: 3-4)

Meditation of Peter

It was ready for us, just as he'd said it would be, everything arranged, everything in its place, down to the very last detail, as if our arrival there had been planned long before; yet – can you believe it? – still the penny didn't drop. It was only later – after we'd shared supper together, after his enemies had come for him in the garden, after they'd beaten him, broken him, nailed him to the cross – it was only then that the awesome truth suddenly hit us: he had planned it! – every move, every step, meticulously prepared, weeks, months, even years beforehand – and our minds reeled at the enormity of it all.

When we'd walked by his side, blissfully unaware of anything untoward, he'd known that death was waiting for him, lurking greedily around the corner. When we watched as he healed the sick and comforted the distressed, his thoughts all for others rather than himself, he was aware, nonetheless, of the awful fate in store for him, the horror, the hurt, the humiliation. When we'd accompanied him proudly as he entered Jerusalem, basking in his reflected glory, revelling in the adulation, he'd had one eye already fixed on the days ahead – on this last meal we would share together, on the darkness to come in Gethsemane, on the torture of crucifixion. Suddenly it all made sense – how that stranger had been waiting to meet us inside the city, how we'd only to say “the teacher asks...” and it was done, how we were shown upstairs to a little room without any need for explanation. He'd realised, all along, probably from the very beginning, that this moment would come, that the path he has chosen would lead to suffering and death, yet still he carried on, undeterred, undaunted. And as that truth dawned on me, a lump came to my throat, for he'd done it, willingly, for people like me. He'd known I would deny him, that we'd all fail him in our own way, yet it didn't matter, still he cared enough to die for us. He saw us at our worst, recognising our deepest weaknesses, yet still he walked the way of the cross, faithful to the last. I can't believe it, even now – that anyone could love us that much – but it's true, I saw the proof for myself. We deserved nothing, as he well knew, yet he went to the cross and gave everything.

Canticle

Teach us, dear Lord, to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. Oh, satisfy us early with Thy mercy that we may rejoice and be glad all of our days. And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish Thou the work of our hands. And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish Thou the work of our hands.

Blessing

May the Christ who walks with wounded feet walk with you on the road.
May the Christ who serves with wounded hands Stretch out your hands to serve.
May the Christ who loves with wounded heart open your hearts to love.