



*A ministry and community of prayer of  
The Episcopal Diocese of Vermont*

A few notes about today's service.

Please ***leave your microphone on mute*** during the responsory portions of the service. You are welcome to unmute yourself when you are invited to offer your prayers, then remember to mute it again when you have completed your prayer.

We will always read the Gospel appointed for the day so that we can read and meditate on Jesus' words and teaching.

MORNING PRAYER

*October 29, 2021*

*Friday of Ordinary Time, Proper 25*

*Maryam of Qidun, Monastic, 4<sup>th</sup> century*

## Opening Sentence

*The Officiant says the following*

May the words of my mouth and the thoughts of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O God, my rock and my redeemer. *Psalm 19:14*

## Invitatory and Psalter

*Officiant* O God, open our lips.

*People* And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

*All* Praise to the holy and undivided Trinity, one God: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen. Alleluia.

*Officiant* Our God has redeemed the world:

*People* Come, let us worship.

*Said in unison* **Jubilate** *Psalm 100*

May all lands be joyful before you, O God, \*  
serve with gladness  
and come before your presence with a song.

For we know that you are God; \*  
you yourself have made us, and we are yours;  
we are your people and the sheep of your pasture.

We shall enter your gates with thanksgiving,  
go into your courts with praise, \*  
give thanks to you and call upon your Name.

For you are good; your mercy is everlasting; \*  
and your faithfulness endures from age to age.

*Officiant* Our God has redeemed the world:  
*People* Come, let us worship.

## **Psalms Appointed**

### ***Psalms 40 and 54***

#### ***Psalm 40*** *Expectans, expectavi*

1 I waited patiently for you, O God; \*  
you stooped to me and heard my cry.

2 You lifted me out of the desolate pit, out of the mire and clay; \*  
you set my feet upon a high cliff and made my footing sure.

3 You put a new song in my mouth,  
a song of praise to our God; \*  
many shall see, and stand in awe,  
and put their trust in you.

4 Happy are they who trust in you; \*  
they do not resort to evil spirits or turn to false gods.

5 Great things are they that you have done, O God,  
how great your wonders and your plans for us; \*  
there is none who can be compared with you.

6 Oh, that I could make them known and tell them, \*  
but they are more than I can count.

7 In sacrifice and offering you take no pleasure \*  
(you have given me ears to hear you);

8 Burnt-offering and sin-offering you have not required, \*  
and so I said, “Behold, I come.

9 In the roll of the book it is written concerning me: \*  
‘I love to do your will, O my God;  
your law is deep in my heart.’ ”

10 I proclaimed righteousness in the great congregation; \*  
behold, I did not restrain my lips,  
and that, O God, you know.

11 Your righteousness have I not hidden in my heart;  
I have spoken of your faithfulness and your deliverance; \*  
I have not concealed your love and faithfulness from the great  
congregation.

12 You are the Holy One;  
do not withhold your compassion from me; \*  
let your love and your faithfulness keep me safe for ever.

13 For innumerable troubles have crowded upon me;  
my sins have overtaken me, and I cannot see; \*  
they are more in number than the hairs of my head,  
and my heart fails me.

14 Be pleased, O God, to deliver me; \*  
O God, make haste to help me.

15 Let them be ashamed and altogether dismayed  
who seek after my life to destroy it; \*  
let them draw back and be disgraced  
who take pleasure in my misfortune.

16 Let those who say to me “Aha!” and gloat over me be  
confounded, \*  
because they are ashamed.

17 Let all who seek you rejoice in you and be glad; \*  
let those who love your salvation continually say,  
“Great is the Holy One!”

18 Though I am poor and afflicted, \*  
you will have regard for me.

19 You are my helper and my deliverer; \*  
do not tarry, O my God.

Psalm 54 *Deus, in nomine*

1 Save me, O God, by your Name; \*  
in your might, defend my cause.

2 Hear my prayer, O God; \*  
give ear to the words of my mouth.

3 For the arrogant have risen up against me,  
and the ruthless have sought my life, \*  
those who have no regard for God.

4 Behold, God is my helper; \*  
it is God who sustains my life.

5 Render evil to those who spy on me; \*  
in your faithfulness, destroy them.

6 I will offer you a freewill sacrifice \*  
and praise your Name, O God, for it is good.

7 For you have rescued me from every trouble, \*  
and my eye has seen the ruin of my foes.

Praise to the holy and undivided Trinity, one God:  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be  
for ever. Amen.

## **The Lessons**

### **First Reading**

*Reader* A reading from **The Book of Revelation 6:12-7:4**

When he opened the sixth seal, I looked, and there came a great earthquake; the sun became black as sackcloth, the full moon became like blood, and the stars of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree drops its winter fruit when shaken by a gale. The sky vanished like a scroll rolling itself up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place. Then the kings of the earth and the magnates and the generals and the rich and the powerful, and everyone, slave and free, hid in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains, calling to the mountains and rocks, 'Fall on us and

hide us from the face of the one seated on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand?’

After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth so that no wind could blow on earth or sea or against any tree. I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, having the seal of the living God, and he called with a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to damage earth and sea, saying, ‘Do not damage the earth or the sea or the trees, until we have marked the servants\* of our God with a seal on their foreheads.’

And I heard the number of those who were sealed, one hundred and forty-four thousand, sealed out of every tribe of the people of Israel:

Here ends the reading.

*read in unison* **Canticle L**

***A Song of Christ's Humility*** *Philippians 2:6-11*

Though in the form of God, \*

Christ Jesus did not cling to equality with God,  
But emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, \*  
and was born in human likeness.

Being found in human form, he humbled himself \*  
and became obedient to death, even death on a cross.

Therefore, God has highly exalted him \*  
and given him the name above every name,

That at the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow, \*  
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,  
And every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, \*  
to the glory of God the Father.

## **The Gospel**

*Reader* A reading from the Gospel of **Matthew 13:24-30**

He put before them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field; but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, "Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?" He answered, "An enemy has done this." The slaves said to him, "Then do you want us to go and gather them?" But he replied, "No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn."

Here ends the reading.

*A moment of silence is observed so that we may reflect on the teachings and ministry of Jesus.*

## **The Apostles' Creed**

*All say together*

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**

*Officiant* God be with you.

*People* And also with you.

*Officiant* Let us pray.

*Officiant and People*

## **An alternative Lord's Prayer**

Our loving God in heaven,  
holy is your Name,  
may your reign 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 all creation, the power,  
and the glory are yours,  
now and for ever. Amen.

## **Suffrages**

V. Help us, O God our Savior;  
R. Deliver us and forgive us our sins.  
V. Look upon your congregation;  
R. Give to your people the blessing of peace.  
V. Declare your glory among the nations;  
R. And your wonders among all peoples.  
V. Do not let the oppressed be shamed and turned away;  
R. Never forget the lives of your poor.  
V. Continue your loving-kindness to those who know you;  
R. And your favor to those who are true of heart.  
V. Satisfy us by your loving-kindness in the morning;  
R. So shall we rejoice and be glad all the days of our life.

## **The Collects**

## **The Collect of the Day**

*Proper 25*

Almighty and everlasting God, increase in us the gifts of faith, hope, and charity; and, that we may obtain what you promise, make us love what you command; through Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

O God, whose glory it is always to have mercy: Be gracious to all who have gone astray from your ways, and restore them again like your servant Maryam of Qidun with penitent hearts and steadfast faith to embrace and hold fast the unchangeable truth of your Word, Jesus Christ; who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

*Together*

### **A Collect for Guidance**

O God, our Creator and Sustainer, in you we live and move and have our being: We humbly pray you so to guide and govern us by your Holy Spirit, that in all the cares and occupations of our life we may not forget you, but may remember that we are ever walking in your sight; through Jesus Christ our Savior. *Amen.*

*Together*

### **For People Facing Uncertainty**

God of the present moment, God who in Jesus stills the storm and soothes the frantic heart; bring hope and courage to us all as we move forward in uncertainty. Bring hope that you will make us the equal of whatever lies ahead. Bring us courage to endure what

cannot be avoided, for your will is health and wholeness; you are God, and we need you. Amen.

*Together*

***For discernment for the future of the Diocese of Vermont***

Gracious and loving God, of transformation and discovery. We give thanks that you call us to be your people in this time, and in this place. As you call us into deeper and uncertain waters, “to step out of the boat and go closer to Jesus,” we give thanks for the experience, gifts and skills of our diocesan household, represented by the Task Force for Hope, Revitalization, Innovation, Vision, and Efficiency (THRIVE). Bless their efforts as they rally and shepherd us in our common work. We pray for open hearts and minds and for clear vision, and never-ending reliance on your abundant and creative goodness. We pray for inspiration and guidance from your Holy Spirit, knowing that your power working in us can accomplish far more than we can ask or imagine. All this, we pray, in Jesus’ name. Amen.

*Together*

***For dismantling racism***

Creator of the Universe, source of all goodness and love, we ask wisdom, help, and guidance as we work to counter the many instances of injustice and racism in our world. Help us to value differences in culture, religious beliefs, and physical appearance, and celebrate the God-made wonder of every human being. Help us to be vigilant, working against racial and social injustice in our own hearts and in the world around us, that we may live into our baptismal covenant to “strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being.” Amen.

*The Officiant says*

I invite your prayers of thanksgiving and intercession at this time.

*(During the silence people may add their own prayers. **Please unmute yourself to share your prayer aloud. When you have completed your prayer, return the microphone to mute.**)*

*The Officiant concludes with the Collect for Mission.*

### **A Collect for Mission**

Almighty and everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of your faithful people is governed and sanctified: Receive our supplications and prayers which we offer before you for all members of your holy Church, that in their vocation and ministry they may truly and devoutly serve you; through our Savior Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

### **The General Thanksgiving**

*The Officiant and People say together*

Almighty God, of boundless mercy,  
we your unworthy servants give you humble thanks  
for all your goodness and loving-kindness  
to us and to all whom you have made.  
We bless you for our creation, preservation,  
and all the blessings of this life;  
but above all for your immeasurable love  
in the redemption of the world  
by our Savior Jesus Christ;  
for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory.  
And, we pray, give us such an awareness of your mercies,

that with truly thankful hearts  
we may show forth your praise,  
not only with our lips,  
but in our lives,  
by giving up our selves to your service,  
and by walking before you  
in holiness and righteousness all our days;  
through Jesus Christ our best vision,  
to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,  
be honor and glory throughout all ages. Amen.

### *Together* **A Collect of Dedication**

Beloved God: As we offer ourselves to you this day, guide and stir us with your Holy Spirit, that we may become one body, one spirit in Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

### **Dismissal**

*Deacon or Officiant*     Let us bless God.  
*People*                     To God be thanks forever.

### **Concluding Sentences**

The grace of our Savior Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore. *Amen.*

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

Glory to God, whose power working in us can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine. Glory to God from generation to

generation in the church, and in Christ Jesus for ever and ever.  
*Amen.*

### **Commemoration**

Maryam of Qidun is one of the most popular Syriac Christian saints. The drama of her life story easily lends itself to fictionalized interpretations, and multiple accounts of her life exist were produced. There nevertheless seems to be a historical person in the background of all of these accounts, who became the inspiration for all of these stories. Maryam grew up in a Christian family and was orphaned at the age of 7. Her only living relative was an uncle named Abraham who lived as a hermit in the desert near Qidun, a village outside of Edessa. Despite the seeming oddity of an anchorite being the guardian of a young girl, therefore, she was given to him to raise. For twenty years, she lived the ascetic life in her own room in his dwelling, growing deeply in holiness and prayer, teaching those who came to seek her wisdom through a window, and being praised and admired by all who met her. However, there was a monk who desired her, and who used to come to the hermitage every day on the pretext of speaking with Abraham in order to see her. One day when her uncle was out, the monk seduced her. Afterwards, she fell into despair about the possibility of her salvation, for she had always been admired for her purity and holiness, and had felt secure in those things. Deeply shaken, she thought: “How can I ever again raise my eyes up to heaven when I cannot even bring myself to look at my uncle?” Rather than face him and confess her sin to him, she ran away to the city and began to work as a prostitute in a tavern. After two years of frantic searching, her uncle discovered where she was living, and he borrowed a soldier’s uniform and a horse. He covered his face with the helm, and set off for the tavern. When he saw her dressed as a

prostitute and flirting with the customers he wanted to weep, but he concealed his emotions lest she recognize him and run away. Although he had not touched wine or cooked food in nearly fifty years, he feasted and drank and joked as though he were truly a soldier. But when the girl led him back to her bedroom he took off his hermit and said, “My daughter Maryam, don’t you know me? Whatever has happened to you? Why did you not just tell me when you had sinned? I would not have been angry with you, for who is without sin, except for God alone? I would have done penance for you myself, yet instead you have left me all alone in unspeakable sadness and grief.” As he spoke these words, she was like a motionless stone in his hands, too ashamed and afraid even to speak or to raise her eyes to his. But he spoke words of comfort and compassion to her all night, and in the morning she allowed him to lead her home, where she pleased God more by her sincere repentance than she ever had by her virginity, and where she was able to direct others more wisely because she was able to identify with sinners in their weakness rather than looking down on them from a place of purity.

—Lesser Feasts and Fasts 2018 Church Publishing

*Liturgy created with the following resources:*

*Book of Common Prayer, Enriching Our Worship, Saint Helena Breviary, A New Zealand Prayer Book and The Inclusive Bible, For Times of Transition - Joseph P. Shadle, For dismantling racism - Peggy Bonesteel and the prayer team of St. James Episcopal Church, Essex Jct., VT*