



*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.

MORNING PRAYER

***Saturday, January 28, 2023  
The Season of Epiphany***

***Thomas Aquinas, Friar and Theologian, 1274***

## **Opening Sentence**

*The Officiant says the following*

I will give you as a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth. *Isaiah 49:6b*

## **Invitatory and Psalter**

*Officiant* O God, open our lips.

*People* And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

*Officiant* You laid the foundation of the earth

*People* and the heavens are the work of your hands.

*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* Alleluia, Christ is shown forth in glory:

*People* O come, let us adore him, alleluia.

*Said in unison* **Venite** *Psalms 95:1-7*

Come, let us sing to the Holy One; \*

let us shout for joy to the Rock of our salvation.

Let us come before God's presence with thanksgiving, \*  
and raise a loud shout with psalms.

For you, O God, are a great God; \*

you are great above all gods.

In your hand are the caverns of the earth, \*

and the heights of the hills are yours also.

The sea is yours, for you made it, \*

and your hands have molded the dry land.

Come, let us bow down and bend the knee, \*  
and kneel before God, our Maker,  
For you are our God, and we are the people of your pasture and  
the sheep of your hand. \*  
Oh, that today we would hearken to your voice!

*Officiant* Alleluia, Christ is shown forth in glory:  
*People* O come, let us adore him, alleluia.

### **Psalm Appointed**

*read in unison* **Psalm 55** *Exaudi, Deus*

1 Hear my prayer, O God; \*  
do not hide yourself from my petition.

2 Listen to me and answer me; \*  
I have no peace, because of my cares.

3 I am shaken by the noise of the enemy \*  
and by the pressure of the wicked;

4 For they have cast an evil spell upon me \*  
and are set against me in fury.

5 My heart quakes within me, \*  
and the terrors of death have fallen upon me.

6 Fear and trembling have come over me, \*  
and horror overwhelms me.

7 And I said, "Oh, that I had wings like a dove! \*  
I would fly away and be at rest.

8 I would flee to a far-off place \*  
and make my lodging in the wilderness.

9 I would hasten to escape \*  
from the stormy wind and tempest.”

10 Swallow them up, O God; confound their speech, \*  
for I have seen violence and strife in the city.

11 Day and night the sentries make their rounds upon its walls,  
\*  
but trouble and misery are in the midst of it.

12 There is corruption at its heart; \*  
its streets are never free of oppression and deceit.

13 For had it been an adversary who taunted me,  
then I could have borne it; \*  
or had it been enemies who vaunted themselves against me,  
then I could have hidden from them.

14 But it was you, someone after my own heart, \*  
my companion, my own familiar friend.

15 We took sweet counsel together, \*  
and walked with the throng in the house of God.

16 Let death come upon them suddenly;  
let them go down alive into the grave, \*  
for wickedness is in their dwellings, in their very midst.

17 But I will call upon God, \*

and God will deliver me.

18 In the evening, in the morning, and at noonday,  
I will complain and lament, \*  
and God will hear my voice.

19 God will bring me safely back from the battle waged against  
me, \*  
for there are many who fight me.

20 God, who is enthroned of old, will hear me and bring them  
down; \*  
they never change; they do not fear God.

21 My companions have stretched forth their hands against  
their comrade; \*  
they have broken their covenant.

22 Their speech is softer than butter, \*  
but war is in their hearts.

23 Their words are smoother than oil, \*  
but they are drawn swords.

24 Cast your burden upon God,  
who will sustain you; \*  
God will never let the righteous stumble.

25 For you will bring the bloodthirsty and deceitful \*  
down to the pit of destruction, O God.

26 They shall not live out half their days, \*

but I will put my trust in you.

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 Prophet Isaiah 51:1-8**

Listen to me, you that pursue righteousness,  
you that seek the Lord.

Look to the rock from which you were hewn,  
and to the quarry from which you were dug.

Look to Abraham your father  
and to Sarah who bore you;

for he was but one when I called him,  
but I blessed him and made him many.

For the Lord will comfort Zion;

he will comfort all her waste places,  
and will make her wilderness like Eden,  
her desert like the garden of the Lord;  
joy and gladness will be found in her,  
thanksgiving and the voice of song.

Listen to me, my people,

and give heed to me, my nation;  
for a teaching will go out from me,  
and my justice for a light to the peoples.

I will bring near my deliverance swiftly,  
my salvation has gone out  
and my arms will rule the peoples;  
the coastlands wait for me,

and for my arm they hope.  
Lift up your eyes to the heavens,  
and look at the earth beneath;  
for the heavens will vanish like smoke,  
the earth will wear out like a garment,  
and those who live on it will die like gnats;  
but my salvation will be for ever,  
and my deliverance will never be ended.

Listen to me, you who know righteousness,  
you people who have my teaching in your hearts;  
do not fear the reproach of others,  
and do not be dismayed when they revile you.  
For the moth will eat them up like a garment,  
and the worm will eat them like wool;  
but my deliverance will be for ever,  
and my salvation to all generations.

Here ends the reading.

*read in unison* **Canticle 26**

**A Song of God's Chosen One** *Isaiah 11.1,2,3b-4a,6,9*

*Refrain:*

*All* The earth shall be full of the knowledge of our God.

Then a shoot will sprout from the stump of Jesse;  
from Jesse's roots, a branch will blossom:  
The Spirit of God will rest on you--  
a spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
a spirit of counsel and strength,  
a spirit of knowledge and reverence for God.  
You will delight in obeying God,

and you won't judge by appearances,  
or make decisions by hearsay.  
You will treat poor people with fairness  
and will uphold the rights of the land's  
downtrodden.  
With a single word you will strike down tyrants;  
with your decrees you will execute evil people.  
Justice will be the belt around this your waist-  
faithfulness will gird you up.  
Then the wolf will dwell with the lamb,  
and the leopard will lie down with the young goat;  
the calf and the lion cub will graze together,  
and a little child will lead them.  
The cow will feed with the bear;  
their young will lie down together.  
The lion will eat hay like the ox.  
The baby will play next to the den of the cobra,  
and the toddler will dance over the viper's nest.  
There will be no harm, no destruction  
anywhere in my holy mountain;  
for as water fills the sea,  
so the land will be filled with knowledge of God.

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

*Refrain:*

*All* The earth shall be full of the knowledge of our God.

## **The Gospel**

*Reader:* A reading from the Gospel of **Mark 7:1-23**



Now when the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around him, they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with defiled hands, that is, without washing them. (For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they thoroughly wash their hands, thus observing the tradition of the elders; and they do not eat anything from the market unless they wash it; and there are also many other traditions that they observe, the washing of cups, pots, and bronze kettles.) So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, 'Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?' He said to them, 'Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written, "This people honors me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching human precepts as doctrines."

You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition.'

Then he said to them, 'You have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to keep your tradition! For Moses said, "Honor your father and your mother"; and, "Whoever speaks evil of father or mother must surely die." But you say that if anyone tells father or mother, "Whatever support you might have had from me is Corban" (that is, an offering to God)— then you no longer permit doing anything for a father or mother, thus making void the word of God through your tradition that you have handed on. And you do many things like this.'

Then he called the crowd again and said to them, 'Listen to me, all of you, and understand: there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile.'

When he had left the crowd and entered the house, his disciples asked him about the parable. He said to them, 'Then do you also fail to understand? Do you not see that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile, since it enters, not the heart but the stomach, and goes out into the sewer?' (Thus he declared all foods clean.) And he said, 'It is what comes out of a person that defiles. For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.'

Here ends the reading.

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

### **The Apostle's Creed**

*The Officiant and People 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* Believing the promises of God, as our Savior taught us, we 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. Save your people, O God, and bless your inheritance;  
R. govern and uphold us now and always.  
V. Day by day we bless you  
R. we praise your name forever.  
V. O God, keep us without sin today;  
R. have mercy on us, O God, have mercy.  
V. Show us your love and mercy;

R. for we put our trust in you.  
V. In you, O God, is our hope;  
R. and we shall never hope in vain.

## **The Collects**

### **The Collect of the Day**

Give us grace, O God, to answer readily the call of our Savior Jesus Christ and proclaim to all people the Good News of his salvation, that we and the whole world may perceive the glory of his marvelous works; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Almighty God, who has enriched your church with the singular learning and holiness of your servant Thomas Aquinas: Enlighten us more and more, we pray, by the disciplined thinking and teaching of Christian scholars, and deepen our devotion by the example of saintly lives; through Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, 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 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 Dismantling Racism**

Gracious God, Create in us a new mind and heart that will enable us to see our siblings in the faces of those divided by racial

categories. Give us the grace and strength to rid ourselves of racial stereotypes that oppress some of us, while providing entitlements to others. Help us to create a Church and nation that embraces the hopes and fears of oppressed People of Color where we live, as well as those around the world. Heal your family and make us one with you, in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ. 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 rejoice in the gift of this new day, once again  
we offer ourselves to you. May the light of your presence, O God,  
set our hearts on fire with love for you; now and for ever. Amen.

**Dismissal**

*Deacon* Let us bless God.

*People* To God be thanks forever.

*The Officiant ends with a 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**

Thomas Aquinas is one of the most influential theologians in the history of Western Christianity. Born into a noble Italian family, probably in 1225, he entered the new Dominican Order of Preachers as a young man, and soon became an outstanding teacher in an age of intellectual ferment. Perceiving the challenges that the recent rediscovery of Aristotle's works might entail for traditional Christian doctrine, especially in their emphasis upon empirical knowledge derived from reason and sense perception independent of faith and revelation, Thomas asserted that reason and revelation are in basic harmony. "Grace", he said, "is not the denial of nature, but the perfection of it." This synthesis Thomas accomplished in his greatest works, the *Summa Theologiae* and the *Summa Contra Gentiles*, which even today continue to exercise profound influence on Christian thought and philosophy. Although his theology is now considered to be conventional by many Christians, especially among Roman Catholics, in his own day Thomas was considered a bold thinker, even a "radical," and certain aspects of his thought were condemned by the ecclesiastical authorities. His canonization on July 18th, 1323 vindicated him. Thomas understood God's disclosure of his Name, in Exodus 3:14, "I Am Who I Am," to mean that God is Being, the Ultimate Reality from which everything else derives its being. The difference between

God and the world is that God's essence is to exist, whereas all other beings derive their being from him by the act of creation. Although God and the world are distinct, there is, nevertheless, an analogy of being between God and the world, since the Creator is reflected in his creation. It is therefore possible to have a limited knowledge of God by analogy from the created world. On this basis, human reason can demonstrate that God exists; that he created the world; and that he contains in himself, as their cause, all the perfections that exist in his creation. The distinctive truths of Christian faith, however, such as the Trinity and the Incarnation, are known only by revelation. 99 In December 1273, after decades of churning out theological writings at an astonishing pace, Thomas suddenly stopped, leaving his great Summa unfinished. When pressed as to why, he could only say that he had experienced a mystical encounter so profound that all of his former words seemed empty to him now. "All that I have written seems to me like so much straw compared to what I have seen and what has been revealed to me!" Thomas died in 1274, just under fifty years of age. In 1369, on January 28th, his remains were transferred to Toulouse. In addition to his many theological writings, he composed several eucharistic hymns. They include "O saving Victim" (The Hymnal 1982, #310; #311) and "Now, my tongue, the mystery telling" (The Hymnal 1982, #329; #330; #331).

—Lesser Feasts and Fasts 2018 Church Publishing

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