

A Service of Morning Prayer for Wednesday, July 1, 2020

Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons, Teacher of the Faith, c. 202 - Memorial



WELCOME

GATHERING

Leader: +In the name of God, the Creator, the Christ, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Leader: O Lord, open our lips

All: and our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

OPENING PRAYER

Leader: God our Creator,

All: and our life is fulfilled in the vision of your glory. Grant that, following your holy servant Irenaeus and withstanding every blast of vain doctrine, we may never presume to set anything that you have made beyond the embrace of your salvation; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Leader: The night has passed, and the day lies open before us; let us pray with one heart and mind.

Keep a time of silence

Leader: As we rejoice in the gift of this new day, so may the light of your presence, O God, set our hearts on fire with love for you; now and for ever.

All: Amen.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Leader: Wonderous God, you have brought us to this thin place where heaven and earth embrace. Here we bask in your peace and grace

All: and open our hearts to your holy Word.

1 John 2:20-25

A reading from the first letter of John:

But you have been anointed by the Holy One, and all of you have knowledge. I write to you, not because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and you know that no lie comes from the truth. Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son. No one who denies the Son has the Father; everyone who confesses the Son has the Father also. Let what you heard from the beginning abide in you. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, then you will abide in the Son and in the Father. And this is what he has promised us, eternal life.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

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PSALM 145:8-13

8 The Lord is gracious and full of compassion, * **slow to anger and of great kindness.**

9 The Lord is loving to everyone * **and his compassion is over all his works.**

10 All your works praise you, O Lord, * **and your faithful servants bless you.**

11 They make known the glory of your kingdom * **and speak of your power;**

12 That the peoples may know of your power * **and the glorious splendour of your kingdom.**

13 Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom; * **your dominion endures throughout all ages.**

God our creator and redeemer, inspire your people, in prosperity or adversity, to turn always to you, eternal source of life, health, and goodness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

THE GOSPEL: Luke 11:33-36

One: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

One: The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Luke.

All: Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ

'No one after lighting a lamp puts it in a cellar, but on the lampstand so that those who enter may see the light. Your eye is the lamp of your body. If your eye is healthy, your whole body is full of light; but if it is not healthy, your body is full of darkness. Therefore consider whether the light in you is not darkness. If then your whole body is full of light, with no part of it in darkness, it will be as full of light as when a lamp gives you light with its rays.'

One: The Gospel of Christ

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Passage about Irenaeus taken from *For All the Saints* by The Rev. Dr. Stephen J. Reynolds

Irenaeus was a second-century bishop and teacher of the faith, who defended Christianity as a gospel for all of human life, in all its dimensions.

Irenaeus grew up in Asia Minor and learned the Christian faith from Polycarp, the holy bishop of Smyrna. After further studies in Rome, he settled at Lyons, a city in south-central France, where he became a presbyter. In the year 177 the Christians of this city were caught in a horrible persecution, during which their bishop and many others were martyred. At the time Irenaeus happened to be at Rome on official business, and when he returned to Lyons the surviving Christians elected him as their bishop. Over the next two decades he rebuilt his shattered community; and in the wider life of the Church he lived up to his own name, which is the Greek word for *peace*, by helping to re-establish harmony between the church of Rome and the churches in Asia Minor. He died at Lyons around the year 202.

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Irenaeus was one of the first great theologians of the Christian Church. His most famous work is *Against the Heresies*. It is a long defense of Catholic doctrine against the people known as Gnostics, whose infiltration of Christianity was the great crisis of the second-century Church. This movement was divided into many different groups, but all shared a common belief that physical life was unredeemably evil. They taught that an immaterial spark of the divine was imprisoned in the flesh, and that “true” Christians should learn how to free it, so that it could fly upwards and be reabsorbed into God.

In his great work, Irenaeus showed how Gnostic teachings conflicted with the incarnation and resurrection of Christ. He taught that the Word became flesh in order to sanctify the whole of human life, its physical as well as its spiritual side, so that nothing was left outside the creative love of God and the transforming power of Christ. Though Irenaeus addressed his message to people and movements in the second century, his basic message has remained a touchstone of the Church’s thinking ever since.

INTERCESSIONS

Adapted from a ‘Day of Prayer for Indigenous Justice’, based on a Cree interpretation of the medicine wheel.

One: We turn to God in prayer, lifting before the Holy One,
the needs of the world in its brokenness: we seek healing; (silence is kept)
the needs of the sick: we seek wholeness; (silence is kept)
the needs of the oppressed: we seek liberation; (silence is kept)
the needs of victims of inequality, abuse and prejudice: we seek justice. (silence is kept)
the needs of the grieving: we seek comfort. (silence is kept)
needs of generations, robbed of culture, language, identity: we seek truth and reconciliation. (silence is kept)

One: Come Great Spirit, as we gather in your name. We turn to the East: to your symbol colour Red, the hue of revelation; to your animal symbol the Eagle, strong and nurturing; to your lessons calling us to the balance of your Spirit in Harmony with brothers and sisters; to invoke your wisdom and grace, the goodness of the ages, and so we pray:

All: COME HOLY SPIRIT, COME.

One: We turn to face South: to your symbol colour Gold for the morning star; to your symbol Brother Sun that enlightens our intellect and brings light on our path to live responsibly; to your lessons calling us to balance of Mind in the Spirit of humility; to invoke your spirit of illumination and far sighted vision; help us to love you and one another with our whole heart, our whole mind, and our whole soul,

All: COME HOLY SPIRIT, COME.

One: We turn to face West: to your symbol colour Black, still and quiet. to your animal symbol the Thunderbird; to your symbol the Thunder mighty and purposeful; to your lessons calling us to balance our emotions in the spirit of Gentleness and Honesty; to invoke your spirit of introspection, seeing within; give us your strength and the courage to endure,

All: COME HOLY SPIRIT, COME.

One: We turn to face North: to your symbol colour white of clarity and brightness. to your animal symbol the swan which brings us in touch with Mother Earth and growing things; to your lessons calling us to balance of our Body in the spirit of a good sense of humor; to invoke your spirit of innocence, trust and love; help us to open our eyes to the sacredness of every living thing,

All: COME HOLY SPIRIT, COME.

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One: We turn to complete the circle and to look: to God, our Creator who cleanses our Mother Earth with snow, wind and rain; to Jesus Christ, the Peacemaker who fills us with the wideness of mercy and lovingly embraces all, and the Holy Spirit who inspires us to action.

All: Amen.

Leader: Trusting in the compassion of God, let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us

**All: Eternal Spirit, Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,
Source of all that is and that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all,
Loving God, in whom is heaven:
The hallowing of your name echo through the universe!
The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world!
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and come on earth.
With the bread we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.
From trials too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.
For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and for ever.
Amen.**

HYMN

THE BLESSING