

The Church of St. Paul, Cambria

Morning Prayer and Holy Eucharist

• The Fourth Sunday in Advent, Year B • December 24, 2023 • 10:00 A.M.

Blessed be God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
**And blessed be his kingdom, now and forever.
Amen.**

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Penitential Rite

‘The axe is laid at the root of the trees; every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down.’ But confident in God’s mercy we confess our sins.

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 you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. Amen.

Lord, open our lips
And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

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.

Our King and Savior now draws near: Come let us adore him.

Jubilate: Psalm 100

- 1 Be joyful in the LORD, all you lands; serve the LORD with gladness and come before his presence with a song.
- 2 Know this: The LORD himself is God; he himself has made us, and we are his; we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.
- 3 Enter his gates with thanksgiving: go into his courts with praise; give thanks to him and call upon his Name.

4 For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his faithfulness endures from age to age.

Psalm 132:8-15

- 8 Arise, O Lord, into your resting-place, * you and the ark of your strength.
- 9 Let your priests be clothed with righteousness; * let your faithful people sing with joy.
- 10 For your servant David’s sake, * do not turn away the face of your Anointed.
- 11 The Lord has sworn an oath to David; * in truth, he will not break it:
- 12 “A son, the fruit of your body * will I set upon your throne.
- 13 If your children keep my covenant and my testimonies that I shall teach them, * their children will sit upon your throne for evermore.”
- 14 For the Lord has chose Zion; * he has desired her for his habitation:
- 15 “This shall be my resting-place for ever; * here will I dwell, for I delight in her.”

The Celebrant says to the people

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

Purify our conscience, Almighty God, by your daily visitation, that your Son Jesus Christ, at his coming, may find in us a mansion prepared for himself; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

First Lesson Second Book of Samuel (7:1-11,16))

Now when the king was settled in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, the king said to the prophet Nathan, “See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent.” Nathan said to the king, “Go, do all that you have in mind; for the LORD is with you.” But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan: Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the LORD: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, “Why have you not built me a house of cedar?” Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the LORD of hosts: I took

you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house. Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Canticle 13: A Song of Praise

Glory to you, Lord God of our fathers: * you are worthy of praise; glory to you.
Glory to you for the radiance of your holy Name; * we will praise you and highly exalt you for ever.
Glory to you in the splendor of your temple; * on the throne of your majesty, glory to you.
Glory to you, seated between the Cherubim; * we will praise you and highly exalt you for ever.
Glory to you, beholding the depths; * in the high vault of heaven, glory to you.
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 **second lesson** is from the Letter to the Romans (16:25-27)

Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith — to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Canticle 15: The Song of Mary

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 ever will be. Amen.

The Holy **Gospel** of our Lord according to Saint Luke (1:26-38)

Glory to you, Lord Christ.

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Christ.

The Sermon

*Here follows **the Nicene Creed**, all standing*

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became

incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

The Prayers of the People

Rejoicing with Mary that the word comes among us, let us offer to God our prayers, saying: Lord, hear our prayer.

(As the Spirit moves you, please read one or more of the following petitions.)

May we find in Mary, the servant of the Lord, the model of our heart's willing surrender to God's call. For this let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

May we discover in true spiritual virginity the richness of what God alone can do to make Christ come alive in Mary, in us, and in all the world. For this let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

May the God of mystery who dwells in unapproachable light draw us more and more deeply into the path of divine wisdom beyond all human expectation. For this let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

May our assembly of disciples be a womb and a place for the shaping of Christ by God's power, so that we may give birth to Christ from the womb of our community for the world. For this let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

May our deepest hearts find strength in the gift of blessed hope that what God has begun to do in our world and in all our persons by Christ's saving work will be brought to its fullness by our Savior. For this let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

May we remember before God all who are in any need and who cry for the presence of God. For this let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Almighty God, we commend to your gracious care and keeping all the men and women of our armed forces, and all those who are first responders in times of crisis. Defend them day by day with your heavenly grace; strengthen them in their trials and temptations; give them courage to face the perils

which beset them and grant them a sense of your abiding presence wherever they may be. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

We pray for Jennifer and for all who have requested our prayers. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

(Here other intercessions may be offered.)

Call us to yourself, O God, as you called Mary, that we may be formed into a dwelling of holiness, giving life to all the peoples of the world through Mary's son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God. *Ephesians 5:2*

Prayer over the gifts: Gracious God, by the power of the Spirit who sanctified the mother of your Son, make holy all we offer you this day. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord. **Amen.**

The Great Thanksgiving A

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give him thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth because you sent your beloved Son to redeem us from sin and death, and to make us heirs in him of everlasting life; that when he shall come again in power and great triumph to judge the world, we may without shame or fear rejoice to behold his appearing. Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

The people stand or kneel, as they are able.

Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself; and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ. By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. **AMEN.**

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say

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 forever. Amen.

The Breaking of the Bread

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

We, being many, are one body, for we all share in the one bread.

Behold the Lord whose advent we await, who will come with glory on the day of judgment. Blessed are those who are called to the banquet of the Lamb.

Communion of the People

After Communion, the Celebrant says

Faithful God, help us always to hear the inner voice which calls us out of our comfort zone and into service for the greater good of your kingdom. Let us pray.

Almighty and ever-living God, we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and for assuring us in these holy mysteries that we are living members of the Body of your Son, and heirs of your eternal kingdom. And now, Father, send us out to do the work you have given us to do, to love and serve you as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord. To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

Knowing that all of our community cannot share the Eucharist in person, we affirm that the true mystical communion of Christ and His Church is a bond of spirit and heart, grounded in faith. Therefore, we commit ourselves to this deep bond of the Spirit in union with Christ our Lord. Amen.

May God the Father, who loved the world so much that he sent his only Son, give you grace to prepare for life eternal; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

The Peace

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

Announcements

Anniversary/Thanksgiving Prayer

We give you thanks, O God, for your many blessings: for our days of celebration, for the love that surrounds us, for your healing presence in our lives. Keep us in your care, we pray, and help us to live as truly thankful people. Amen.

The Lord's coming is close at hand. Go forth in peace to prepare the way of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.