



Wednesday 20 January 2021

Richard Rolle was born in about 1300. He was an English hermit, mystic, and religious writer. He is also known as Richard Rolle of Hampole or de Hampole, because, at the end of his life, he lived near a Cistercian nunnery in Hampole in South Yorkshire.

By the fifteenth century he was one of the most widely read of all English spiritual writers. His works survive in nearly four hundred English manuscripts and in at least seventy Continental manuscripts. Almost all written between 1390 and 1500. He died on 30 September 1349). The Church remembers him on this day.

- All the Bible readings come from the *New Revised Standard Version*.
- The liturgy assumes the service is Eucharistic. The prayers of consecration have been included at the end rather than in situ because many following the service will be in isolation and unable to celebrate the sacrament.
- The hymns are YouTube links. To hear the hymns please hover the mouse over each link, press Ctrl and then return.
- To see service transcripts from previous weeks, please visit the page, <http://www.medlockhead.co.uk/resources/index.htm>

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Sermon © Revd Dr Paul Monk.

Introduction and welcome

HYMN 1 [Colours of day](#)

(please click on this link to hear the hymn)

The Welcome

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit

All Amen.

The Lord be with you

All And also with you.

The Preparation

**All Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
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.**

Our Lord Jesus Christ said:

The first commandment is this:

‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is the only Lord.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,
with all your soul, with all your mind,
and with all your strength.’

And the second is this: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’

There is no other commandment greater than these.

On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

All Amen. Lord, have mercy.

Christ calls us to share the heavenly banquet of his love with all the saints in earth and heaven. Therefore, knowing our unworthiness and sin, let us confess our sins in penitence and faith, firmly resolved to keep God’s commandments and to live in love and peace with all.

All Almighty God, our heavenly Father,
we have sinned against you
and against our neighbour
in thought and word and deed,
through negligence, through weakness,
through our own deliberate fault.
We are truly sorry
and repent of all our sins.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
who died for us,
forgive us all that is past
and grant that we may serve you in newness of life
to the glory of your name.
Amen.

Almighty God,
who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy upon you,
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,
and keep you in life eternal;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

The Gloria

This Gloria is sung to the tune of 'Cwm Rhondda'. Click [here](#) for the tune.

All Glory be to God in Heaven,
Songs of joy and peace we bring,
Thankful hearts and voices raising,
To creation's Lord we sing.
Lord we thank you, Lord we praise you,
Glory be to God our King:
Glory be to God our King.

Lamb of God, who on our shoulders,
Bore the load of this world's sin;
Only Son of God the Father,
You have brought us peace within.

**Lord, have mercy, Christ have mercy,
Now your glorious reign begin:
Now your glorious reign begin.**

**You O Son of God are Holy,
You we praise with one accord.
None in heav'n or earth is like you,
Only you are Christ the Lord.
With the Father and the Spirit,
Ever worshipped and adored:
Ever worshipped and adored.**

The Collect for Richard Rolle

Gracious God,
we give you thanks for the lives and work of Richard Rolle
and all hermits and mystics
who, passing through the cloud of unknowing,
beheld your glory.
Help us, after their examples,
to see you more clearly and love you more dearly,
in the Name of Jesus Christ our Saviour;
who with you and the Holy Spirit
lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever.

All Amen.

First reading

A reading from the book of Job

Job said,

'How you have helped one who has no power!
How you have assisted the arm that has no strength!
How you have counselled one who has no wisdom,
and given much good advice!
With whose help have you uttered words,
and whose spirit has come forth from you?
The shades below tremble,
the waters and their inhabitants.

Sheol is naked before God,
and Abaddon has no covering.
He stretches out Zaphon over the void,
and hangs the earth upon nothing.
He binds up the waters in his thick clouds,
and the cloud is not torn open by them.
He covers the face of the full moon,
and spreads over it his cloud.
He has described a circle on the face of the waters,
at the boundary between light and darkness.
The pillars of heaven tremble,
and are astounded at his rebuke.
By his power he stilled the Sea;
by his understanding he struck down Rahab.
By his wind the heavens were made fair;
his hand pierced the fleeing serpent.
These are indeed but the outskirts of his ways;
and how small a whisper do we hear of him!
But the thunder of his power who can understand?' *Job 26:1-14*

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

Second reading

A reading from St Paul's Letter to the Romans

O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!

'For who has known the mind of the Lord?
Or who has been his counsellor?
Or who has given a gift to him,
to receive a gift in return?'

For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory for ever. Amen.

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual

worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect. *Romans 11:33–12:2*

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

HYMN 2 Father we adore you

[\(click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)

Gospel reading

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew

All Glory to you O Lord.

Jesus said, ‘You have heard that it was said, “You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy”. But I say to you, “Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you”, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet only your brothers and sisters, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.’ *Matthew 5:43–48*

This is the Gospel of the Lord

All Praise to you O Christ.

Sermon

I wonder how many famous people we’ve met? Some of us may have met a famous pop star, celebrity, soap actor, politician, member of the royal family, and so on. We feel famous for a day. We might value the encounter and tell everyone during subsequent years. We met someone and it changed everything. We may even feel different about ourselves because, by association, something of their fame has rubbed off on us; maybe our children will tell their friends of it in a sort of empathetic pride!

Unfortunately we might know *about* these famous people and have met them once or twice—but we don’t actually *know* them. We can’t even start to guess their likes and dislikes, or their quirks of personality. All our knowledge is secondhand.

St Paul in our second reading suggests that we can enter the mind of God Himself *and actually know Him*. This astonishing statement should shock us. How is it possible to fit the infinity of God into a small, finite human mind? Perhaps we can understand small truths from God but do we take them out of context or misread

completely because we are human and therefore fallible?

Richard Rolle became a hermit in a remote, secluded part of Yorkshire. He gave up everything in order to know God and discern God's will for his life. He therefore wanted to know God. He became known as a man of great spiritual wisdom. His life showed spiritual fruit. In today's second reading, St Paul wants the same for us.

But how? Paul gives his key to knowing God in the last paragraph of his reading. He says, 'Present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God'. It's a simple progression. We start by acting on what we already know. His advice is to adopt the same mindset as 'method acting': we use our bodies to do this work. We perform acts of love. We go out of our way to share charity and mercy. We do good. We try to inhabit the role although it can often feel like will-power is propelling us.

After a while, this mode of living becomes habit. It's ingrained and virtuous. We can then explore and extend it, deliberately moving out of our comfort zone. For most of us, that means extending love to those we don't yet know in situations that can feel threatening. It's a sacrifice because it's costly. It may hurt and feel risky.

Offering a costly act of sacrificial love needs to have God at its core. We offer love as a means of pleasing God rather than to feel good in ourselves. We must therefore pray before each act, asking something like, 'What do I do; who should I approach; who should I be?' This combination of seeking God and offering love has the effect of stripping away anything acting like spiritual blinkers. We start to see things as God sees them. In a genuine sense, we start to acquire the mind of Christ.

This approach is also a response to the great commandment, to love God and to love our neighbour. Scripture tells us that God *is* love (1 John 4) so all giving that is genuinely sacrificial acts as a way of accessing God, because it has love at its core.

To summarise, if we are to 'discern what is the will of God' we must 'Present our bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God'. This process allows God to enter all that we do and, maybe gradually, we start to discern the mind of God.

The Creed

Do you believe and trust in God the Father,
the source of all being and life,
the one for whom we exist?

All We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Son,
who took our human nature,
died for us and rose again?

All We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit,
who gives life to the people of God
and makes Christ known in the world?

All We believe and trust in him.

This is the faith of the Church.

All This is our faith.

**We believe and trust in one God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.**

Prayers of intercession

We pray for the coming of God's kingdom.

You sent your Son to bring good news to the poor,
sight to the blind,
freedom to captives
and salvation to your people:
anoint us with your Spirit;
rouse us to work in his name.

Father, by your Spirit

All bring in your kingdom.

Send us to bring help to the poor
and freedom to the oppressed.

Father, by your Spirit

All bring in your kingdom.

Send us to tell the world
the good news of your healing love.

Father, by your Spirit

All bring in your kingdom.

Send us to those who mourn,
to bring joy and gladness instead of grief.

Father, by your Spirit

All bring in your kingdom.

Send us to proclaim that the time is here
for you to save your people.

Father, by your Spirit

All bring in your kingdom.

Merciful Father,

All accept these prayers
for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.

The peace

Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and his name shall be called the Prince of Peace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you,

All And also with you.

HYMN 3 [Have thine own way, Lord](#) (please click on this link to hear the hymn)

The liturgy of the Communion Service appears below

The Dismissal

May God,
who kindled the fire of his love in the hearts of the saints,
pour upon you the riches of his grace;
and the blessing of God the Almighty:
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
be with you now and remain with you always.

All Amen.

HYMN 4 [For I'm building a people of power](#) (click on this link to hear the hymn)

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All In the name of Christ. Amen.

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

Eucharistic Prayer (prayer E)

The Lord be with you

All and also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

All We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
always and everywhere to give you thanks,
holy Father, almighty and eternal God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

And now we give thanks, most gracious God,
surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses
and glorified in the assembly of your saints.

The glorious company of apostles praise you.

The noble fellowship of prophets praise you.

The white-robed army of martyrs praise you.

We, your holy Church, acclaim you.

In communion with angels and archangels,
and with all who served you on earth and worship you now in heaven,
we raise our voice to proclaim your glory,
for ever praising you and saying:

**All 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.**

We praise and bless you, loving Father,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord;
and as we obey his command,
send your Holy Spirit,
that broken bread and wine outpoured
may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son.

On the night before he died he had supper with his friends
and, taking bread, he praised you.

He broke the bread, gave it to them and said:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

When supper was ended he took the cup of wine.
Again he praised you, 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.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did,
in him we plead with confidence his sacrifice made once for all upon the cross.

Bringing before you the bread of life and cup of salvation,
we proclaim his death and resurrection
until he comes in glory.

Great is the mystery of faith:

All Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

Lord of all life,
help us to work together for that day
when your kingdom comes
and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth.

Look with favour on your people,
gather us in your loving arms
and bring us with Richard Rolle and all the saints
to feast at your table in heaven.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father,
for ever and ever.

All Amen.

Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**All 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.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever. Amen.**

Breaking of the Bread

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

**All Though we are many, we are one body,
because we all share in one bread.**

**All Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
grant us peace.**

Draw near with faith.

Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ
which he gave for you,
and his blood which he shed for you.

Eat and drink in remembrance that he died for you,
and feed on him in your hearts
by faith with thanksgiving.

All We do not presume
to come to this your table, merciful Lord,
trusting in our own righteousness,
but in your manifold and great mercies.
We are not worthy
so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table.
But you are the same Lord
whose nature is always to have mercy.
Grant us therefore, gracious Lord,
so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ
and to drink his blood,
that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body
and our souls washed through his most precious blood,
and that we may evermore dwell in him,
and he in us. Amen.

Communion is distributed.

Prayer after Communion

God of truth,
whose Wisdom set her table
and invited us to eat the bread and drink the wine
of the kingdom:
help us to lay aside all foolishness
and to live and walk in the way of insight,
that we may come with your servant Bernard
to the eternal feast of heaven;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen

All Almighty God,
we thank you for feeding us
with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.
Through him we offer you our souls and bodies
to be a living sacrifice.
Send us out in the power of your Spirit
to live and work
to your praise and glory. Amen.