

Wednesday 21 April 2021

St Anselm



Anselm was born in Aosta, northern Italy, in 1033.

As a young man, Anselm left home and travelled north, visiting many monasteries and other centres of learning. One such visit was to the abbey of Bec, where he met Lanfranc who advised him to embrace monastic life. Anselm had a powerful and original mind. During his 34 years at Bec (as monk, then prior and finally as abbot), he taught and wrote theological, philosophical and devotional works.

Anselm was made Archbishop of Canterbury following Lanfranc's death. The promotion caused him to subordinate his scholarly work to the needs of the diocese and nation. He twice endured exile for championing the rights of the Church against the authority of the king; but despite his stubbornness, intellectual rigour, and personal austerity he was admired by the Norman nobility as well as loved by his monks.

Anselm died in 1109.

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Bible readings © the publishers of the NRSV translation.

Prayers of intercession © from Anselm, as reproduced in [Collection of Prayers](#).

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.

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>

Introduction and welcome

HYMN 1 Take my life and let it be (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.

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

All He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

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 St Anselm

Eternal God,
who gave great gifts to your servant Anselm
as a pastor and teacher:
grant that we, like him, may desire you with our whole heart
and, so desiring, may seek you
and, seeking, may find you;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever..

All Amen.

First reading

A reading from the book of Wisdom

For who can learn the counsel of God? Or who can discern what the Lord wills? For the reasoning of mortals is worthless, and our designs are likely to fail; for a perishable body weighs down the soul, and this earthy tent burdens the thoughtful mind. We can hardly guess at what is on earth, and what is at hand we find with labour; but who has traced out what is in the heavens? Who has learned your counsel, unless you have given wisdom and sent your Holy Spirit from on high? And thus the paths of those on earth were set right, and people were taught what pleases you, and were saved by wisdom. *Wisdom 9:13-18*

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

Second reading

A reading from the Letter of St Paul to the Romans

God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us. Much more surely then, now that we have been justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more surely, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life. But more than that, we even boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

Romans 5:8-11

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

HYMN 2 Brother, sister let me serve you ([click on this link to hear the hymn](#))

Gospel reading

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke

All Glory to you O Lord.

Jesus said to the disciples, 'When you hear of wars and insurrections, do not be terrified; for these things must take place first, but the end will not follow immediately. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be great earthquakes, and in various places famines and plagues; and there will be dreadful portents and great signs from heaven.

'But before all this occurs, they will arrest you and persecute you; they will hand you over to synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors because of my name. This will give you an opportunity to testify. So make up your minds not to prepare your defence in advance; for I will give you words and a wisdom that none of your opponents will be able to withstand or contradict.'

Luke 21:9-15

This is the Gospel of the Lord

All Praise to you O Christ.

Sermon

All the contemporary biographies of Anselm suggest he was 'a brain walking on legs'. He was always utterly brilliant and used his amazing mind to further the Church. Even today, we still use many of his ideas and prayers. All commentators agree that Anselm went far in the Church in part because of his mind but his

personal piety was also exceptional. By calling Anselm *Saint Anselm*, the Church is inviting us to emulate him. Clearly, it would be nice to do so ... but how can we?

We need to appreciate an important distinction. We're not being told to be clever. The world is full of brilliant men and women who use their cleverness for themselves. Some use their cleverness for evil purposes, for furthering themselves and getting richer. Some do not believe in God and others consciously work against Him. That's why the first reading says, 'For the reasoning of mortals is worthless'. So the task involves a different way of looking. Where do we look for guidance?

Jesus himself usually started with The Law, which he summarised by telling us to love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength. 'Mind' is different from cleverness. Similarly, the first readings tells us, 'the people are saved by wisdom.'

Elsewhere in Scripture, Jesus commends a widow who gives just a tiny donation to the Temple. It's a story we often call the 'widow's mite' (Mark 12:41-44, Luke 21:1-4). This old, poor woman may have given little but it was a large proportion of what she had. In the same way, we please God when we give Him a high proportion of our mental ability, whatever its extent. We use our mind to think about God, plan to do His work. The prayer of St Teresa of Àvila is useful in this respect:

Christ has no body now but yours.

No hands, no feet on earth but yours.

Yours are the eyes through which he looks compassion on this world.

Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good.

Yours are the hands through which he blesses all the world.

Yours are the hands, yours are the feet, yours are the eyes, you are his body.

Christ has no body now on earth but yours.

It suggests our task of loving God with our mind is bound up in assessing *how* to be His hands, *how* to be His feet, body, etc. This way of loving God requires a mind that's willing to think through His tasks and obligations to the best of its ability. Our thinking is customised both in terms of context but also our ability. In our thinking, God wants us to do what we can but doesn't ask us to do what we can't.

A second caution concerns the way Scripture talks of 'wisdom', which is not the same as cleverness (innate or learned) but is always a result of Godliness. This wisdom comes from asking God for help. That's what today's Gospel reading seeks to convey. And this wisdom often appears different to cleverness because it's His way of doing things rather than ours. As God says through the Prophet Isaiah, ' "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways," says the Lord. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts" ' (Is 55:8,9).

Today in the Church calendar we remember St Anselm. The best homage we can pay him is to love God with our mind, and love Him to the uttermost.

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

O Father, most merciful,
in the beginning you created us,
and by the passion of your only Son
you created us anew.
Work in us now,
both to will and to do what pleases you.
Since we are weak and can do no good thing by ourselves,
grant us your grace and heavenly blessing,
that in whatever work we engage
we may do all to your honour and glory.
Keep us from sin
and empower us daily to do good works,
that as long as we live in the body
we may always perform service to you.

After our departure give us pardon of all our sins,
and receive us to eternal life;
through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
for ever and ever. *St Anselm*

All Amen.

O blessed Lord,
you have commanded us to love one another.
Just as we have received your undeserved blessings,
may we love everyone in you and for you.

We ask your kindness for all,
but especially for the friends
whom your love has given to us.
Love them, O fountain of love,
and move them to love you
with all their heart,
that they may will, and speak, and do only those things
which are pleasing to you.

Our prayer is cold,
because our love is so feeble,
but you are rich in mercy.
Do not measure your goodness to them by the dullness of our devotion,
but as your kindness surpasses all human affection,
so let your hearing transcend our prayer.
Do what is best for them, according to your will,
that being ruled and protected by you always and everywhere,
they may receive eternal life in the end;
to you, with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
be all honour and praise for ever and ever. *St Anselm*

All Amen.

O Lord Jesus Christ,
our redemption and our salvation,
we praise you and give you thanks.
Though we are unworthy of your benefits,
and cannot offer to you the devotion you deserve,
let your loving-kindness complete whatever our weakness tries to do.
Before you, O Lord, we lay all our desires,
and whatever our heart rightly wishes, it is because of your gift.

Help us love you as you command.
Do not let your gift be unfruitful in us.
Complete what you have begun,
give what you have made us desire,
convert our lukewarmness into fervent love of you;
for the glory of your holy name. *St Anselm*

All Amen.

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 [Turn your eyes upon Jesus](#) (please click on this link to hear the hymn)

The liturgy of the Communion Service appears below

The Dismissal

May Christ who makes saints of sinners,
who has transformed those we remember today,
raise and strengthen you that you may transform the world;
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 [What a friend we have in Jesus](#) (click on this link to hear the hymn)

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All In the name of Christ. Amen.

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

All He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

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 Anselm 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.

The 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 with St Anselm 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 Anselm
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.