

St Mark the Evangelist

Saturday 25 April 2020

John Mark was Jewish. St Paul's Letter to the Colossians tells us his cousin was St Barnabas. Mark accompanied St Paul and St Barnabas to Cyprus then to Rome with Peter.



Mark wrote the first of our gospels. Scholars think he wrote it while in Rome. St Peter may have helped write it.

Mark is a master writer. His gospel has immediacy and depth. He does not spare the apostles and shows their many weaknesses and lack of understanding.

Legend says the Holy Spirit prompted St Mark to go to Egypt after Pentecost where he founded the Coptic Church and introduced Christianity into Africa and was its first Pope. That's why many Church historians say the Coptic Church is the oldest Church denomination in the world.

About the life of St Mark

About Mark's Gospel and brief commentary on its text

About St Mark and his role in forming the Coptic Church

- 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 hymn is a Youtube link. Please hover the mouse over the link, press Ctrl and then return.

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Bible readings © The publishers of the NRSV translation.

Sermon © Revd Dr Paul Monk.

Prayers of intercession © www.thisischurch.com (adapted).

HYMN [When the saints go marching in](#) (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 version of the 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 Mark

Almighty God,
who enlightened your holy Church
through the inspired witness of your evangelist Saint Mark:
grant that we, being firmly grounded in the truth of the gospel,
may be faithful to its teaching both in word and deed;
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 Acts of the Apostles

Paul and Barnabas remained in Antioch, and there, with many others, they taught and proclaimed the word of the Lord. After some days Paul said to Barnabas, 'Come, let us return and visit the believers in every city where we proclaimed the word of the Lord and see how they are doing.' Barnabas wanted to take with them John called Mark.

But Paul decided not to take with them one who had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not accompanied them in the work. The disagreement became so sharp that they parted company; Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus. But Paul chose Silas and set out, the believers commending him to the grace of the Lord. He went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches. *Acts 15:35-41*

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

Second reading

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians

Each of us was given grace according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore it is said, 'When he ascended on high he made captivity itself a captive; he gave gifts to his people.' When it says, 'He ascended,' what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is the same one who ascended far above all the heavens, so that he might fill all things.

The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ. We must no longer be children, tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine, by people's trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming. But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love. *Ephesians 4:7-16*

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

Gospel reading

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark

All Glory to you O Lord.

Jesus said to Peter, James, John and Andrew: 'Beware that no one leads you astray. Many will come in my name and say, "I am he!" and they will lead many astray. When

you hear of wars and rumours of wars, do not be alarmed; this must take place, but the end is still to come. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various places; there will be famines. This is but the beginning of the birth pangs.

'As for yourselves, beware; for they will hand you over to councils; and you will be beaten in synagogues; and you will stand before governors and kings because of me, as a testimony to them. And the good news must first be proclaimed to all nations. When they bring you to trial and hand you over, do not worry beforehand about what you are to say; but say whatever is given you at that time, for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit. Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death; and you will be hated by all because of my name. But the one who endures to the end will be saved.' *Mark 13:5-13*

This is the Gospel of the Lord

All Praise to you O Christ.

Sermon

Mark was the first person to write a Gospel and was therefore something of a trend-setter. Mark effectively invented the concept of a biography because nothing similar had ever been written before. Previous kinds of writing somehow didn't work for him.

Mark was writing because he had learned about Jesus and wanted to share what he knew. We have no direct evidence that he'd ever met Jesus himself. But a great many traditions suggest he appears often in the Gospels but is always anonymous:

- St Mark was one of the servants at the Marriage at Cana who poured out the water that Jesus turned to wine (**John 2:1-11**).
- Mark was one of the seventy Apostles sent out to preach by Jesus (**Luke 10:1**).
- Mark carried water to the house where the Last Supper took place (**Mark 14:13**).
- Mark was the young man who ran away naked, leaving behind his robe when Jesus was arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane (**Mark 14:51-52**).
- Mark was the person who hosted the disciples in his house after the death of Jesus and into whose house the resurrected Jesus appeared (**John 20**).

If true, Mark was hot-wiring anonymity into his new way of telling us about Jesus' life. Perhaps earlier drafts included too much detail about Mark himself so felt they took the spotlight away from Jesus.

Mark's Gospel is full of anecdote, story, and action. It conveys a sense of rush and the imperative to do something. It's no surprise how often the word 'immediately' appears. Indeed, underpinning the whole account is the implied demand, 'you've now heard about this Jesus. Now respond!'

Mark invited his first hearers to respond. His Gospel also invites us. If we respond as St Mark did, we will tell everyone about Jesus but we will also ensure that our response is *entirely* about Jesus. Mature discipleship is not about us but about Him.

Prayers of intercession

As we pray for the Church and the World, let us first thank God for the power of His love, which continually surrounds us wherever we are.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for your love which

- freely forgives and welcomes us into the family of your church
- abounds in the joys of creation, so evident at the moment
- brings peace into our lives, working through and beyond pain and conflict
- challenges and purifies our hearts
- is stronger than death and from which nothing can separate us now or ever.

Lord, in your mercy:

All Hear our prayer.

Father, we pray for your Church throughout the world, that it may share in the work of your son, revealing you to men and women, and reconciling them to you and to one another. We thank you for the growing unity within the Church and pray that together Christians can respond more effectively to the plight of all those in special need. So we pray now for the poor, the hungry, the homeless, and the sick

Christ, let me see You in others

Christ, let others see You in me

Christ, let me see.

You are the caller,

You are the poor,

You are the stranger

At the door.

You are the wanderer,

The unfed,

You are the homeless
With no bed.

You are the man
Driven insane.

You are the child
Crying in pain.

You are the other
Who comes to me.
Open my eyes that
I may see.

Lord, in your mercy:

All Hear our prayer.

We pray now for all the nations and peoples of the world—for all who serve the common good. We pray for the leaders of the nations in whose hands the future of all our countries lie, that they may seek justice, freedom and peace for all people. For those seeking to bring healing from Covid-19 .

Lord, in your mercy:

All Hear our prayer.

We pray for our own Church, for our ministers and all those who lead and assist our worship. For all those in positions of responsibility within our Church. We ask your blessing on all who share with us in our Church's life and worship.

Lord, in your mercy:

All Hear our prayer.

We pray for those in need in our local community and in our own families.

Jesus, our healer, we place into your gentle hands those who are sick. Ease their pain and heal any harm done to them in body, mind and spirit. Be present to them through the support of friends, and the care of doctors and nurses, and fill them with the warmth of your love now and always. In a moment of quiet, we bring before you those known to us ...

We pray for those who mourn through recent bereavement, and for those who miss the companionship and care of loved ones. In particular we think of ...

Lord, in your mercy:

All Hear our prayer.

Merciful Father,

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

The peace

May the God of peace sanctify you: may he so strengthen your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless before him at the coming of our Lord Jesus with his saints.

The peace of the Lord be always with you:

All And also with you.

The liturgy of the Communion Service appears below

The Dismissal

Jesus said, 'I have made your name known to those you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours.' *John 17:6-9*

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

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
that we should always sing of your glory,
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.
For you are the hope of the nations,
the builder of the city that is to come.
Your love made visible in Jesus Christ
brings home the lost,
restores the sinner
and gives dignity to the despised.
In his face your light shines out,
flooding lives with goodness and truth,
gathering into one in your kingdom
a divided and broken humanity.
Therefore with all who can give voice in your creation
we glorify your name,
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 St Mark, St Barnabas 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

Almighty God,
who on the day of Pentecost
sent your Holy Spirit to the disciples
with the wind from heaven and in tongues of flame,
filling them with joy and boldness to preach the gospel:
by the power of the same Spirit
strengthen us to witness to your truth
and to draw everyone to the fire of your love;
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.**