

Thursday 29 April 2021

St Catherine of Siena



Catherine Benincasa was born in 1347, the second youngest of twenty-five children. She was pious from her earliest years but had to overcome family opposition to follow her vocation. She became a Dominican tertiary at the age of eighteen. She was nourished by a life of contemplative prayer and mystical experience and devoted herself to active care for the poor and sick.

Catherine was increasingly sought out as an adviser on political as well as religious matters so, in 1376, she journeyed to Avignon as an ambassador to the pope where she influenced his decision to return to Rome. She wrote a *Dialogue* on the spiritual life as well as numerous letters of counsel and direction, which stressed her devotion to the Precious Blood of Jesus.

Catherine had a stroke on 21 April and died eight days later, on this day in 1380. She was 33.

Sermon © Revd Dr Paul Monk.

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Bible readings © the publishers of the NRSV translation.

Prayers of intercession © Lay Anglicana (adapted).

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 [At the name of Jesus](#)

(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 St Catherine

God of compassion,
who gave your servant Catherine of Siena
a wondrous love of the passion of Christ:
grant that your people
may be united to him in his majesty
and rejoice for ever in the revelation of his glory;
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 Proverbs

Does not wisdom call, and does not understanding raise her voice? Hear, for I will speak noble things, and from my lips will come what is right; for my mouth will utter truth; wickedness is an abomination to my lips. All the words of my mouth are righteous; there is nothing twisted or crooked in them. They are all straight to one who understands and right to those who find knowledge. Take my instruction instead of silver, and knowledge rather than choice gold; for wisdom is better than jewels, and all that you may desire cannot compare with her. *Proverbs 8. 1, 6-11*

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

Second reading

A reading from the Third Letter of St John

Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, just as it is well with your soul. I was overjoyed when some of the friends arrived and testified to your faithfulness to the truth, namely how you walk in the truth. I

have no greater joy than this, to hear that my children are walking in the truth. Beloved, you do faithfully whatever you do for the friends, even though they are strangers to you; they have testified to your love before the Church. You will do well to send them on in a manner worthy of God; for they began their journey for the sake of Christ, accepting no support from non-believers. We therefore ought to support such people, so that we may become co-workers with the truth. *3 John 2-8*

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

HYMN 2 Jesus, name above all names ([click on this link to hear the hymn](#))

Gospel reading

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John

All Glory to you O Lord.

Jesus, looking up to heaven, said to the Father, 'While I was with those whom you gave me from the world, I protected them in your name that you have given me. I guarded them, and not one of them was lost except the one destined to be lost, so that the Scripture might be fulfilled. But now I am coming to you, and I speak these things in the world so that they may have my joy made complete in themselves. I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one. They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth.

'I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. Father, I desire that those also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory, which you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.

'Righteous Father, the world does not know you, but I know you; and these know that you have sent me. I made your name known to them, and I will make it

known, so that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.' *John 17:12-26*

This is the Gospel of the Lord

All Praise to you O Christ.

Sermon

Most of us are taught to end a prayer with words like, 'We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.' With practise, these words become ingrained habit. A prayer that ends differently feels odd. It may feel wrong. Some folk may repeat their prayer if they realise they forgot to say this 'magic line'. After all, it's Jesus' name that makes the prayer, right?

Praying differs from a legally-binding clause or even a spell. The act of praying does not require a pre-set form of words. In fact, a great many people pray without even using words. Therefore, praying *in Jesus' name* must mean something else.

When we end a prayer with the words, 'in Jesus' name' we're saying that we want something in our prayers to somehow identify with Jesus. Maybe we're using a similar way of thinking to the policeman who says, 'Stop *in the name* of the law.' Or maybe it's similar to a couple with a new-born child who say, 'He looks like a "John" but he doesn't look like a "Steve"!' A name contains more than sounds and letters.

Christians who pray in Jesus' name seek to pray in the same way as Jesus. Today's Gospel passage comes from John's Gospel and forms a part of a long section we call the 'High-Priestly prayer.' It shows Jesus praying. We can therefore learn much from reading it to see how he prays and what he says and doesn't say.

Jesus first looks up to heaven. We should not imply from physical action that heaven is above us. Rather, it alerts us that praying involves a direction: our soul looks from self to God. We change our attention to Him in every possible way. God wants our lives to look toward Him. We sometimes call this aspect 'recollection.'

Jesus then speaks. He starts by saying, 'your name that you have given me'. His prayer starts from within a relationship with God: he knows God and is known by God. That relationship informs everything he says or does, and so do his prayers.

Later in this same prayer, Jesus says, 'They [the disciples] do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world.' Stated another way, they start their praying without an anchor holding them back. They are not going about their discipleship in a spiritual vehicle that has its hand-break on. They're not placing limits on God, which is wise because God responds to a great many of our prayers, 'Good! Do it yourself and I'll be with you.'

When we conclude a prayer with the words, 'In Jesus name ...' we're saying that we're looking toward God from a committed relationship. It's that relationship that validates our prayers and not the postscript. So let's get praying.

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

Holy Spirit, come into my heart;
draw it to Thee by Thy power, O my God,
and grant me charity with filial fear.

Preserve me, O beautiful love, from every evil thought; warm me, inflame me
with Thy dear love, and every pain will seem light to me.

My Father, my sweet Lord, help me in all my actions.

Jesus, love, Jesus, love.

All Amen.

Eternal God, eternal Trinity,
You have made the Blood of Christ so precious
through His sharing in Your Divine nature.
You are a mystery as deep as the sea;
the more I search, the more I find,
and the more I find the more I search for You.
But I can never be satisfied;
what I receive will ever leave me desiring more.

When You fill my soul I have an ever-greater hunger,
and I grow more famished for Your light.

I desire above all to see You,
the true light, as you really are.

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 Glorify your name

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

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 Lord I lift your name on high

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

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 Catherine 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 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 Catherine
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.