

Wednesday 4 August 2021

Curé D'Ars



Jean-Baptist Vianney is now known throughout the world as the 'Curé d'Ars'. He was born in 1786 and received little education because of the French Revolution. Despite the odds, he became a priest. His lack of education meant he was sent to a tiny insignificant village, Ars, in 1818. It soon became a model parish and famous throughout the whole of the country.

Reports of the Curé's holiness and supernatural powers spread rapidly. He was dedicated to the sacrament of confession for his parishioners. Ars became a pilgrimage site such that 20,000 penitents visited Ars each year to make their confession.

He died on this day in 1845 and was canonised in 1925.

Sermon © Revd Dr Paul Monk.

Liturgy and prayers of intercession (adapted slightly) © 2000 The Archbishops' Council.

Bible readings © the publishers of the NRSV translation.

The liturgy assumes the service is Eucharistic. The prayers of consecration appear 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 I heard the voice of Jesus say (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.

The Spirit of the Lord fills the world
and knows our every word and deed.

Let us then open ourselves to the Lord
and confess our sins in penitence and faith.

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 Jean-Baptist Viannay, the Curé D'Ars

Father of mercy,

who made Jean-Baptist Vianney outstanding

in his zeal and concern for your people:

may we, following his example,

care for our brothers and sisters

and bring them to know the love of Christ;

through the same 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 Proverbs

The Lord said to Moses, 'Send men to spy out the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the Israelites; from each of their ancestral tribes you shall send a man, every one a leader among them.'

At the end of forty days they returned from spying out the land. And they came to Moses and Aaron and to all the congregation of the Israelites in the wilderness of Paran, at Kadesh; they brought back word to them and to all the congregation, and showed them the fruit of the land. And they told him, 'We came to the land to which you sent us; it flows with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. Yet the people who live in the land are strong, and the towns are fortified and very large; and besides, we saw the descendants of Anak there. The Amalekites live in the land of the Negeb; the Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites live in the hill country; and the Canaanites live by the sea, and along the Jordan.'

But Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and said, 'Let us go up at once and occupy it, for we are well able to overcome it.' Then the men who had gone up with him said, 'We are not able to go up against this people, for they are stronger than we are.' So they brought to the Israelites an unfavourable report of the land that they had spied out, saying, 'The land that we have gone through as spies is a land that devours its inhabitants; and all the people that we saw in it are of great size. There we saw the Nephilim (the Anakites come from the Nephilim); and to ourselves we seemed like grasshoppers, and so we seemed to them.' Then all the congregation raised a loud cry, and the people wept that night.

And the Lord spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying, 'How long shall this wicked congregation complain against me? I have heard the complaints of the Israelites, which they complain against me. Say to them, "As I live", says the Lord, "I will do to you the very things I heard you say: your dead bodies shall fall in this very wilderness; and of all your number, included in the census, from twenty years old and upwards, who have complained against me, not one of you shall come into the land in which I swore to settle you, except Caleb son of Jephunneh and Joshua son of Nun. But your little ones, who you said would become booty, I will bring in, and they shall know the land that you have despised. But as for you, your dead bodies shall fall in this wilderness. And your children shall be shepherds in the wilderness for forty years, and shall suffer for your faithlessness, until the last of your dead bodies lies in the wilderness. According to the number of the days in which you spied out the land, forty days, for every day a year, you shall bear your iniquity, forty years, and you shall know my displeasure." I the Lord have spoken; surely I will do thus to all this wicked congregation gathered together against me: in this wilderness they shall come to a full end, and there they shall die.'

Numbers 13:1-2, 25—14:1, 26-35

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

Second reading

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. Suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. Amazed and astonished, they asked, 'Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power.' All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, 'What does this mean?' But others sneered and said, 'They are filled with new wine.'

But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them: 'Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o'clock in the morning. No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

'In the last days it will be, God declares,
that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh,
and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
and your young men shall see visions,
and your old men shall dream dreams.
Even upon my slaves, both men and women,
in those days I will pour out my Spirit;
and they shall prophesy.
And I will show portents in the heaven above
and signs on the earth below,
blood, and fire, and smoky mist.
The sun shall be turned to darkness
and the moon to blood,
before the coming of the Lord's great and glorious day.
Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.' *Acts 2:1-21*

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

HYMN 2 Kyrie eleison

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

Gospel reading

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke

All Glory to you O Lord.

Jesus went to the district of Tyre and Sidon. A Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, 'Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon.' But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, 'Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us.' He answered, 'I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.' But she came and knelt before him, saying, 'Lord, help me.' He answered, 'It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs.' She said, 'Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table.' Then Jesus answered her, 'Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish.' And her daughter was healed instantly. *Matthew 15:21-28*

This is the Gospel of the Lord

All Praise to you O Christ.

Sermon

The lectionary chose these three passages for today, Wednesday 4 August, rather than specifically for Jean Viannay, the Curé D'Ars. But they seem to define his life and ministry. They will also help us to become more like him.

Jean-Baptist was famous for his work in the confessional. The work involved giving advice and comfort. He acquired a reputation for wisdom, and on many occasions displayed supernatural knowledge. He must therefore have listened to the Holy Spirit before speaking.

Today's first reading describes the end of the Exodus when Joshua and his army conquered the promised land. They believed that God was calling them to cleanse the land before the chosen people took it for themselves. It's a complex story but clearly involved genocide. Neither a modern mind nor a Christian mindset will enjoy the story. Many readers will probably conclude that Joshua thought he'd heard God but was mistaken. Whatever he heard was not truly from the Spirit.

The second reading describes Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit came to earth with physical manifestation of wind and fire. The Spirit created the Church and gave gifts of the Spirit to all the disciples. One of those gifts is supernatural wisdom.

And the third reading describes a strange story in which Jesus appears to change his mind. He initially refused to help a Canaanite woman but (we assume) the Holy Spirit interceded to correct the error. Interestingly, this last story also involves an

ethnic dimension: Jesus refused to help the woman because she was not Jewish: helping her would have been taboo. Jesus changed his mind after listening to God.

The first story describes the horrors that occur when we don't correctly discern the will of God and the third describes someone changing their mind after listening to God. And the middle reading describes the mediator of spiritual truths and the giver of wisdom, God the Holy Spirit. All three stories, then, involve not just listening but discernment: mulling over that which has been 'heard' and agonising over its implications and asking repeatedly, 'is this from God or not'? After all, malign spirits can also speak to us.

These stories tell us many things. Firstly, they say that God wants the best for us and for others. Why else would God change Jesus' mind if the result was morally the same, before and after the U-turn? Rather, we seek God's wisdom because we want to please God. The result that pleases Him will both give Him honour and will yield the result that's best for us and for others.

Listening to God and then acting on it does not mean we're getting it right. The once-popular phrase, 'The road to hell is paved with good intentions' suggests as much. A person of faith must not merely ask God for guidance and then listen. Rather, we must ponder the responses to ensure they are genuinely from God.

Finally, these readings say it's alright to change our minds. If Jesus did a U-turn then so should we if we discern that until now we've misheard God. Perhaps it helps to remember that one aspect of the word 'repent' is 'change.' It's better to admit a fault and then be right than to look steadfast and remain in the wrong.

Today in the Church calendar we remember the Curé D'Ars, who was justly famous for his ability to hear and communicate God's will to everyone who came to him for advice. He was exercising a gift that's open to all of us, if we ask for it. God wants all of us to follow Him, know Him ... and that requires holy listening.

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 God to fill us with his Spirit.

Generous God,
we thank you for the *power* of your Holy Spirit.
We ask that we may be strengthened to serve you better.
Lord, come to bless us.

All and fill us with your Spirit.

We thank you for the *wisdom* of your Holy Spirit.
We ask you to make us wise to understand your will.
Lord, come to bless us.

All and fill us with your Spirit.

We thank you for the *peace* of your Holy Spirit.
We ask you to keep us confident of your love,
wherever you call us.
Lord, come to bless us.

All and fill us with your Spirit.

We thank you for the *healing* of your Holy Spirit.
We ask you to bring reconciliation and wholeness
where there is division, sickness and sorrow.
Lord, come to bless us.

All and fill us with your Spirit.

We thank you for the *gifts* of your Holy Spirit.
We ask you to equip us for the work which you
have given us.
Lord, come to bless us.

All and fill us with your Spirit.

We thank you for the *fruit* of your Holy Spirit.
We ask you to reveal in our lives the love of Jesus.
Lord, come to bless us.

All and fill us with your Spirit.

We thank you for the *breath* of your Holy Spirit,
given by the risen Lord.
We ask you to keep the whole Church,
living and departed,
in the joy of eternal life.
Lord, come to bless us.

All and fill us with your Spirit.

Generous God,
you sent your Holy Spirit upon your Messiah at the River Jordan,
and upon the disciples in the upper room.
In your mercy fill us with your Spirit.

**All hear our prayer,
and make us one in heart and mind
to serve you with joy for ever.
Amen.**

Merciful Father,

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

The peace

God has made us one in Christ.
He has set his seal upon us and, as a pledge of what is to come,
has given the Spirit to dwell in our hearts.

The peace of the Lord be always with you,

All And also with you.

HYMN 3 O God of earth and altar (please click on this link to hear the hymn)

The liturgy of the Communion Service appears below

The Dismissal

The Spirit of truth lead you into all truth,
give you grace to confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,
and strengthen you to proclaim the word and works of God;
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 I, the Lord of sea and sky (please 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.

For he is our great high priest
who has entered once for all
into the heavenly sanctuary,
evermore to pour upon your Church
the grace and comfort of your Holy Spirit.

He is the one who has gone before us,
who calls us to be united in prayer
as were his disciples in the upper room
while they awaited his promised gift,
the life-giving Spirit of Pentecost.

Therefore all creation yearns with eager longing
as angels and archangels sing the endless hymn of praise:

**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 Jean-Baptist 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 power,
whose Holy Spirit renews your people
in the bread and wine we bless and share:
may the boldness of the Spirit transform us,
the gentleness of the Spirit lead us,
and the gifts of the Spirit equip us to serve and worship you;
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.