

Thursday 18 November 2021

St Elizabeth of Hungary



Elizabeth was born in 1207, the daughter of the king of Hungary. She was given in marriage to Louis IV of Thuringia with whom she had three children. Her marriage was happy but he died of plague four years later.

Elizabeth was driven from the court and settled in Marburg. Her confessor there, Conrad of Marburg, was domineering and sadistic. Under his direction she suffered mental and physical abuse (in the name of religious austerity) but bore it all humbly. Her body was so weakened by his severe regime that she died on this day, aged just twenty-four years old, in 1231.

Sermon © Jo Monk.

Liturgy and prayers of intercession © 2000 The Archbishops' Council.

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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 Will you come and follow me [\(click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)

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 saints were faithful unto death

and now dwell in the heavenly kingdom for ever.

As we celebrate their joy,

let us bring to the Lord our sins and weaknesses,
and ask for his mercy.

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 Elizabeth of Hungary

Lord God,
who taught Elizabeth of Hungary
to recognise and reverence Christ in the poor of this world:
by her example
strengthen us to love and serve the afflicted and the needy
and so to honour your Son, the servant King,
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 Tobit

Bless God and acknowledge him in the presence of all the living for the good things he has done for you. Bless and sing praise to his name. With fitting honour declare to all people the deeds of God. Do not be slow to acknowledge him. It is good to conceal the secret of a king, but to acknowledge and reveal the works of God, and with fitting honour to acknowledge him. Do good and evil will not overtake you. Prayer with fasting is good, but better than both is almsgiving with righteousness. A little with righteousness is better than wealth with wrongdoing. It is better to give alms than to lay up gold. For almsgiving saves from death and purges away every sin. Those who give alms will enjoy a full life. *Tobit 12:6b-9*

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

Second reading

A reading from the Letter of St James

What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill,' and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead. *James 2:14-17*

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

HYMN 2 Beauty for brokenness

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

Gospel reading

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew

All Glory to you O Lord.

Jesus said, 'When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand, "Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me."

"Then the righteous will answer him, "Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?" And the king will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me."

"Then he will say to those at his left hand, "You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me." Then they also will answer, "Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?" Then he will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did

not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.” And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.’ *Matthew 25:31–46*

This is the Gospel of the Lord

All Praise to you O Christ.

Sermon

Elizabeth of Hungary was a medieval princess, but devoted her life to caring for the poor. She would have understood today’s readings from James and Matthew very well. A real faith will reveal itself by the way we live our lives, and especially in the way we treat others.

The Gospel reading is quite chilling: on the day of judgement, it says, we will be divided into those who did the right things and those who didn’t. The righteous, or ‘sheep’, will be welcomed into God’s kingdom in heaven, and the unrighteous, or ‘goats’ will go to eternal punishment.

So are we sheep or goats?

If we’re honest, there’s probably a bit of sheep and a bit of goat in all of us. Most of us will remember times when we helped those less fortunate than ourselves and times when we neglected to do so, or even chose not to. It’s easy to comfort ourselves with ‘well, we did our best, Nobody’s perfect. I can’t help everyone all the time’. But this parable suggests that God wants more of us than that.

So how to can we improve our record? The answer, as so often, is to get to know God better.

God is both tougher and gentler than we can imagine. He is the great Judge, but also the Merciful One who forgives and comforts us. If we learn to love God more, acts of mercy and kindness will come more naturally to us. St Augustine famously said, ‘Love God and do as you will’. In other words, if we truly love God, we will want to do the things that please Him.

The life of Jesus is our model. When faced with difficult or painful situations, we need to get into the habit of asking, ‘What would Jesus do?’ When we are tempted to judge others, the story of the woman caught in adultery comes to mind (John 8:3–11); when we’re tempted to ignore the suffering of others, the parable of the Good Samaritan should stop us in our tracks (Luke 10:25–37); when we are stressed and afraid, we remember how Jesus prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26:36–46). There are lots of examples, so reading the Bible and getting to know it well is a good start.

Praying is also important if we want to know God better. Jesus spent a great deal of time in prayer, often going into the hills by himself all night to be alone with God

(Matthew 14:23; Luke 6:12). The more we pray, the more we open up our lives to the work of the Holy Spirit.

There's a beautiful collect (also by St Augustine) that sums all this up nicely:

*Eternal God, the light of the minds that know you,
the joy of the hearts that love you
and the strength of the wills that serve you;
grant us so to know you that we may truly love you,
and so to love you that we may fully serve you,
whom to serve is perfect freedom,
in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

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

In every age you have raised up holy men and women
to reflect the light of Christ and to teach us the way of holiness.

We thank you for those who have been teachers in the school of Christ:
give understanding to those who study the faith the Church has handed on,
and clarity to those who communicate the gospel in a changing world ...

Lord, hear us.

All Lord, graciously hear us.

We thank you for those who have been shepherds of your people:
give a pastoral heart to deacons, priests and bishops,
and the needful gifts to all your people in their ministry ...

Lord, hear us.

All Lord, graciously hear us.

We thank you for those who have been Christian rulers in the world,
and for those who carried the good news to lands where it had not been before:
give wisdom to all who have power and influence among the nations,
and establish God's sovereignty among people of every race ...

Lord, hear us.

All Lord, graciously hear us.

We thank you for those whom you have called to live in community:
establish mutual love among those drawn into fellowship in your service,
and bless with Christ's presence all the communities to which we relate ...

Lord, hear us.

All Lord, graciously hear us.

We thank you for those who have lived out their vocation in family life:
give your grace to all who nurture children
and all who care for the aged,
and enfold in your love all your sons and daughters ...

Lord, hear us.

All Lord, graciously hear us.

We thank you for those who have brought wholeness
through the medicine of the gospel:
give skill to all who minister healing and reconciliation in your name,
and comfort all who cry out to you from any sort of distress ...

Lord, hear us.

All Lord, graciously hear us.

We thank you for the noble army of martyrs
by the shedding of whose blood the Church has been enriched:
keep under your protection those who are persecuted for the cause of Christ,
and acknowledge, we pray,
those who have passed through death trusting your promises ...

Lord, hear us.

All Lord, graciously hear us.

We thank you today for Elizabeth of Hungary
As we celebrate her memory and rejoice in her friendship,

we ask you to bless ...

Keep in one communion and fellowship all those for whom Christ died.

Lord, hear us.

All Lord, graciously hear us.

Hasten, Lord, the day when people will come from east and west,
from north and south,
and sit at table in your kingdom,
and we shall see your Son in his glory.

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.

HYMN 3 Colours of day

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

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 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.
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 Elizabeth 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

Faithful God,
who called your servant Elizabeth to serve you
and gave her joy in walking the path of holiness:
by this Eucharist
in which you renew within us the vision of your glory,
strengthen us all to follow the way of perfection
until we come to see you face to face;
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.