



St Paul's Church, Knightsbridge
The Diocese of London



**The Solemn Eucharist
of Advent Sunday**

1st December 2013 at 11 a.m.

Welcome to St Paul's Knightsbridge, part of the Diocese of London and a church of the worldwide Anglican Communion. If you are visiting us from another church, please make yourself known to the sidesmen or to one of the clergy after the service. Members of all Christian churches are welcome to share with us in this Eucharist – and those who do not wish to receive the Sacrament are invited to approach the altar at the time of Communion, to receive a blessing.



There is a loop system in the lower parts of the church for the benefit of the hearing-impaired. Hearing aid users should switch their devices to 'T'.



During the service a collection will be taken for the work of the church in this parish, throughout the Diocese of London and further afield. Please use the special envelopes at the end of each pew to maximise your giving through the 'Giftaid' scheme.



Members of the congregation are asked to ensure that mobile phones are switched off (or to silent) and are reminded that the taking of photographs or the making of audio or video recordings during services is prohibited.

*Cover image
Christ the Judge
Pontormo (1494-1557)*

ORDER OF SERVICE

The Introductory Rite

The Choir, Servers and Sacred Ministers enter from the West doors and process to cense the High Altar. All stand:



The Choir sings:

Drop down ye heavens from above,
and let the skies pour down righteousness.

All repeat:

**Drop down ye heavens from above,
and let the skies pour down righteousness.**

Be not wroth very sore, O Lord, neither remember iniquity for ever: thy holy cities are a wilderness; Sion is a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation: our holy and our beautiful house, where our fathers praised thee.

**Drop down ye heavens from above,
and let the skies pour down righteousness.**

Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know me and believe me: I, even I, am the Lord, and beside me is no Saviour: and there is none that can deliver out of my hand.

**Drop down ye heavens from above,
and let the skies pour down righteousness.**

Comfort ye, comfort ye my people; my salvation shall not tarry: I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions: fear not, for I will save thee: for I am the Lord thy God, the holy one of Israel, thy redeemer.

**Drop down ye heavens from above,
and let the skies pour down righteousness.**

THE GREETING

When all are in their places the Celebrant says:

✠ In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you
and with thy spirit.

THE PRAYERS OF PENITENCE AND KYRIE ELEISON

The Deacon says:

When the Lord comes,
he will bring to light those things now hidden in darkness,
and will disclose the purposes of the heart.
Therefore in the light of Christ let us confess our sins.

All kneel and, in silence, call to mind sins and failings.

**Almighty God, our heavenly Father,
we have sinned against thee
and against our neighbour,
in thought and word and deed,
through negligence, through weakness,
through our own deliberate fault.
We are heartily sorry and repent of all our sins.
For the sake of thy Son Jesus Christ,
who died for us, forgive us all that is past,
and grant that we may serve thee in newness of life
to the glory of thy name. Amen.**

The Choir sings:

Kyrie eleison,
Christe eleison,
Kyrie eleison.

*Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.*

Music: Mass 'Awake my soul' - Judith Bingham (b.1952)

The Celebrant says:

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.
Amen.

All stand with the Celebrant.

THE COLLECT

The Celebrant introduces a period of silent prayer:

Let us pray.

Thereafter, he sings:

Almighty God,
give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness
and put upon us the armour of light,
now in the time of this mortal life,
in which thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility;
that in the last day when he shall come again in his glorious majesty
to judge both the quick and the dead,
we may rise to the life immortal;
through him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit,
now and for ever.
Amen.

All sit.

THE FIRST READING

The book of the prophet Isaiah 2: 1-5

A reading from the prophecy of Isaiah.

The word that Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. In days to come the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised above the hills; all the nations shall stream to it. Many peoples shall come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths." For out of Zion shall go forth instruction, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He shall judge between the nations, and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the Lord!

At the end:

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The choir sings:

THE PSALMODY

I was glad when they said unto me :
We will go into the house of the Lord.

Our feet shall stand in thy gates :
O Jerusalem.

Jerusalem is built as a city :
that is at unity in itself.

For thither the tribes go up, even the tribes of the Lord :
to testify unto Israel, to give thanks unto the Name of the Lord.

For there is the seat of judgement :
even the seat of the house of David.

O pray for the peace of Jerusalem :
they shall prosper that love thee.

Peace be within thy walls :
and plenteousness within thy palaces.

For my brethren and companions' sakes :
I will wish thee prosperity.

Yea, because of the house of the Lord our God :
I will seek to do thee good.

Psalm 122

THE SECOND READING

The Letter of Paul to the Romans 13: 11-end

A reading from Paul's letter to the Romans.

You know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armour of light; let us live honourably as in the day, not in revelling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

At the end:

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

All stand.

THE GRADUAL HYMN (15)

The Lord will come and not be slow,
His footsteps cannot err;
Before him righteousness shall go,
His royal harbinger.

Truth from the earth, like to a flower,
Shall bud and blossom then;
And justice, from her heavenly bower,
Look down on mortal men.

Rise, God, judge thou the earth in might,
This wicked earth redress;
For thou art he who shalt by right
The nations all possess.

The nations all whom thou hast made
Shall come, and all shall frame
To bow them low before thee, Lord,
And glorify thy Name.

For great thou art, and wonders great
By thy strong hand are done:
Thou in thy everlasting seat
Remainest God alone.

Words: John Milton (1608-74)

Music: 'St. Stephen', William Jones (1726-1800)

All remain standing.

THE GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

The Cantor sings:



Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight:
and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

THE GOSPEL READING

Matthew 24: 36-44

The Deacon says:

The Lord be with you

And with thy spirit.

Hear the Gospel of our Lord, Jesus Christ, according to Matthew.

Glory be to thee, O Lord.

About that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so too will be the coming of the Son of Man. Then two will be in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. Two women will be grinding meal together; one will be taken and one will be left. Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to thee, O Christ.

THE SERMON

Fr Alan Gyle

Vicar

Silence is kept.

THE CREED

All stand with the Celebrant, who says: Let us make affirmation of our faith.

**I believe in one God, the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
and of all things visible and invisible:
And in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of his Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of light,
very God of very God, begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made;
who for us men and for our salvation
came down from heaven,
and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost
of the Virgin Mary, and was made man,
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried,
and the third day he rose again
according to the Scriptures,
and ascended into heaven,
and sitteth on the right hand of the Father.
And he shall come again with glory
to judge both the quick and the dead:
whose kingdom shall have no end.
And I believe in the Holy Ghost,
the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceedeth from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son together
is worshipped and glorified,
who spake by the prophets.
And I believe One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church.
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins.
And I look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

All remain standing.

THE PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

In the power of the Spirit and in union with Christ, let us pray to the Father.

All kneel. Either of the following responses may be used:

Lord in thy mercy or Lord, hear us
hear our prayer Lord, graciously hear us.

For the departed, these words may be used:

Rest eternal grant unto them, O Lord
and let light perpetual shine upon them.
May they rest in peace
and rise in glory.

At the end, a brief period of silence is kept for personal prayer. All say:

Merciful Father,
**accept these prayers for the sake of thy Son,
our Saviour, Jesus Christ.**
Amen.

THE NOTICES

All stand.

THE PEACE

The Celebrant says:

In the tender mercy of our God,
the dayspring from on high shall break upon us,
to give light to those who dwell in darkness
and in the shadow of death
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.
and with thy spirit.

The Deacon says:

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

All exchange a sign of peace with those standing close by.

THE OFFERTORY

The gifts of the people are carried to the altar and presented. A collection is taken to support our work, ministry and charitable giving. Please use the Gift Aid envelopes provided, remembering to fill in all the details. The altar is prepared and the gifts of bread and wine, the altar, and the sanctuary party are censed.

THE COLLECTION HYMN (315)

**Word of the Father, source of all things living,
Word once made flesh, our true and only Saviour,
Grow in our hearts, O seed of heaven's harvest,
Jesus, Redeemer.**

**Gospel from heaven, living Word incarnate,
Open our minds, Lord, teach us your true wisdom;
Lamp to our footsteps, scatter all our darkness,
Day-star of glory.**

**Lord of the faithful, guide us on our journey;
Pilgrims, we hunger for the life of heaven;
Jesus, our manna, feed us with your goodness,
Here and hereafter.**

Words: G. B. Timms (1910-1990?)

Tune: 'Ad tuum nomen' from the Chartres Antiphoner 1784

*When the Thurifer approaches, all stand to be censed.
After being censed, all remain standing for the Eucharistic Prayer.*

THE OFFERTORY ANTHEM

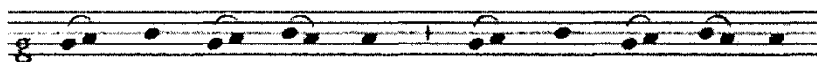
Remember not, Lord, our offences
Henry Purcell (1659–1695)

Remember not, Lord, our offences,
nor the offences of our forefathers;
neither take thou vengeance of our sins:
spare us, good Lord, spare thy people,
whom thou hast redeemed with thy most precious blood,
and be not angry with us for ever.
Spare us, good Lord.

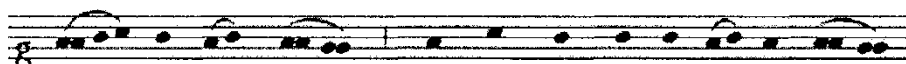
THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

The Celebrant sings:

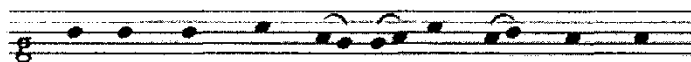
All respond:



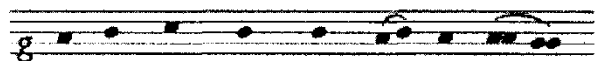
The Lord be with you *R* and with thy spi-rit.



Lift up your hearts. *R* **We lift them up un-to the Lord.**



Let us give thanks un - to the Lord our God.



R **It is meet and right so to do.**

It is very meet, right and our bounden duty,
that we should at all times and in all places give thanks unto thee,
O Lord, holy Father, almighty, everlasting God,
through Jesus Christ, thine only Son, our Lord.

For he is thy living Word;
through him thou hast created all things from the beginning,
and fashioned us in thine own image.
Through him thou didst redeem us from the slavery of sin,
giving him to be born of a woman, to die upon the cross, and to rise
again for us. Through him thou hast made us a people for thine own
possession, exalting him to thy right hand on high,
and sending forth through him thy holy and life-giving Spirit.

And now we give thee thanks
because thou didst send him to redeem us from sin and death
and to make us inheritors of everlasting life;
that when he shall come again in power
and great triumph to judge the world,
we may with joy behold his appearing,
and in confidence may stand before him.

Therefore with angels and archangels,
and with all the company of heaven,
we laud and magnify thy glorious name,
evermore praising thee and saying:

The choir sings:

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus, Dominus Deus Sabaoth,
Pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria tua, Hosanna in excelsis.
Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini. Hosanna in excelsis.

*Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts, heaven and earth are full of thy glory.
Glory be to thee, O Lord most high. Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the
Lord. Hosanna in the highest.*

Music: Mass 'Awake my soul' - Judith Bingham (b.1952)

The prayer continues:

Accept our praises, heavenly Father, through thy Son, our Saviour, Jesus
Christ, and as we follow his example and obey his command,
grant that by the power of thy Holy Spirit
these gifts of bread and wine may be unto us his body and his blood;
who, in the same night that he was betrayed, took bread;
and when he had given thanks to thee,
he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

Likewise after supper he took the cup;
and when he had given thanks to thee, he gave it to them, saying:

Drink ye all of this; for this is my blood of the new covenant,
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me.

Wherefore, O Lord and heavenly Father,
we remember his offering of himself made once for all upon the cross;
we proclaim his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension;
we look for the coming of his kingdom and with this bread and this cup
we make the memorial of Christ, thy Son, our Lord.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died:

Christ is risen:

Christ will come again.

Accept through him, our great high priest, this our sacrifice of thanks and praise, and as we eat and drink these holy gifts in the presence of thy divine majesty, renew us by thy Holy Spirit, inspire us with thy love, and unite us in the body of thy Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, by whom, and with whom, and in whom, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honour and glory be unto thee, O Father almighty, world without end.

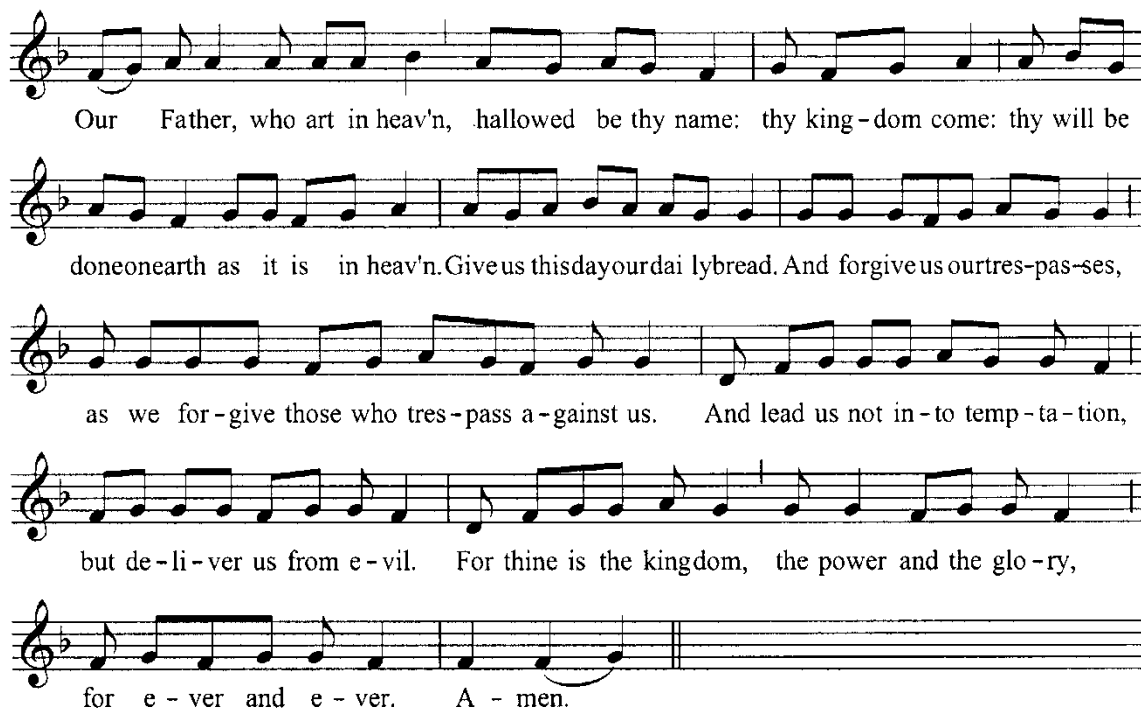
Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

All kneel. The Celebrant sings:

Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us.

All sing:



Our Father, who art in heav'n, hallowed be thy name: thy king-dom come: thy will be done on earth as it is in heav'n. Give us this day our dai ly bread. And forgive us our tres-pas-ses, as we for-give those who tres-pass a-gainst us. And lead us not in-to temp-ta-tion, but de-li-ver us from e-vil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glo-ry, for e-ver and e-ver. A-men.

THE FRACTION

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated bread, saying:

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

**Though we are many, we are one body,
because we all share in one bread.**

THE GIVING OF HOLY COMMUNION

By way of invitation to receive the Sacrament the Celebrant says:

Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

Blessed are those who are called to his supper.

**Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof,
but speak the word only and my soul shall be healed.**

The Sacred Ministers and Servers receive the Holy Communion, followed by the people, beginning with those seated at the front of the Nave.

All who normally do so in their own Church are invited to receive the Sacrament. Those who do not wish to receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion are invited to approach the altar to receive a blessing, carrying this booklet in their hands as an indication to the Priest.

The choir sings:

AGNUS DEI

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, Donna nobis pacem.

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, grant us thy peace.

Music: Mass 'Awake my soul' - Judith Bingham (b.1952)

COMMUNION ANTHEM

Drop down, ye heavens
Judith Weir (b.1954)

Drop down, ye heavens, from above,
And let the skies pour down righteousness.
Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people;
My salvation shall not tarry.
I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy
transgressions.
Fear not, for I will save thee;
For I am the Lord thy God,
The holy one of Israel, thy redeemer.
Drop down ye heavens from above,
And let the skies pour down righteousness.

Words: *Words: from Isaiah 45*

PRAYERS AFTER COMMUNION

The Celebrant introduces a period of silent prayer.

Let us pray.
All kneel.

O Lord our God,
as we wait for the coming of thy Son our Lord,
preserve us in watchfulness and faith,
that when he shall appear
he may not find us asleep in sin
but active to serve him
and joyful to praise him;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Almighty God,
we thank thee for feeding us
with the body and blood of thy Son, Jesus Christ.
Through him we offer thee our souls and bodies
to be a living sacrifice.
Send us out in the power of thy Spirit
to live and work to thy praise and glory. Amen.

All stand.

THE CONCLUDING HYMN

Hark, what a sound, and too divine for hearing,
Stirs on the earth and trembles in the air!
Is it the thunder of the Lord's appearing?
Is it the music of his people's prayer?

Surely he cometh, and a thousand voices
Shout to the saints and to the deaf and dumb;
Surely he cometh, and the earth rejoices,
Glad in his coming who hath sworn, I come.

So even I, and with a pang more thrilling,
So even I, and with a hope more sweet,
Yearn for the sign, O Christ, of thy fulfilling,
Faint for the flaming of thine advent feet.

Yea, through life, death, through sorrow and through sinning,
He shall suffice me, for he hath sufficed:
Christ is the end, for Christ was the beginning,
Christ the beginning, for the end is Christ.

Words: Frederick William Henry Myers (1843-1901)
Music: 'Highwood', R. R. Terry (1865-1938)

All remain standing.

THE BLESSING & THE DISMISSAL

The Celebrant says:

The Lord be with you
and with thy spirit.

Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, shine upon you,
scatter the darkness before your path,
and make you ready to meet him when he comes in glory;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
come upon you and remain with you always.
Amen.

The Deacon says:

Go in the peace of Christ.
Thanks be to God.

All remain standing as the Servers and Sacred Ministers depart.

ORGAN VOLUNTARY

played by Jeremy Cole

'Le Monde dans l'attente du Sauveur'
from Symphonie-Passion op. 23
Marcel Dupré (1886 – 1971)

NOTES ON THE READINGS

Isaiah 2: 1-5

This book can be divided into two (and possibly three) parts. Chapters 1 to 39 were written before the exile, from about 740 BC to about 700 BC. These were difficult times for the southern kingdom, Judah: a disastrous war was fought with Syria; the Assyrians conquered Israel, the northern kingdom, in 723 BC, and threatened Judah. Isaiah saw the cause of these events as social injustice, which he condemned, and against which he fought valiantly. Chapters 40 to 66 were written during and after the Exile in Babylon. They are filled with a message of trust and confident hope that God will soon end the Exile. Some scholars consider that Chapters 56 to 66 form a third part of the book, written after the return to the Promised Land. These chapters speak of hope and despair; they berate the people for their sin, for worshipping other gods. Like Second Isaiah, this part speaks of the hope that God will soon restore Jerusalem to its former glory and make a new home for all peoples.

Isaiah wrote these verses about 740 BC, a time when spirits were low in Judah: Assyrian armies were bent on conquest, and many people doubted God's power to preserve the dynasty of David in accordance with his promise; others believed themselves to be invincible in the face of enemies. Because Chapter 1 begins with similar words, it appears that this and the next few chapters originally formed a separate document. The ideas in vv. 2-4 are also found in Micah 4. In the future ("in days to come", v. 2) God will launch a new era in which he will dwell on earth ("house"), at Jerusalem. His presence above all others on earth symbolizes his sovereignty. (Jerusalem began on the eastern hill or "mountain". By Isaiah's time it had expanded on to part of the western hill. "Zion", v. 3, was originally the name of the southern slope of the eastern hill, the site of the first settlement. The name was later used for the whole city.) The prophet foretells a time when all peoples will make pilgrimage to Jerusalem ("let us go up", v. 3) to worship God – to learn the way of living revealed by God. The city will be the source of "instruction" in ethical living. In Chapter 30, Isaiah tells us that in his time Judah rejected God's message, but in this future time all peoples will accept it. (The Hebrew word for "instruction" is *torah* which is also a name for the first five books of the Bible, the Law.) In this future time, God will settle disputes among nations ("judge", v. 4) and between people ("arbitrate"). It will be an age of peace and plenty: warfare being a thing of the past, agriculture ("plowshares", "pruning hooks") will prosper. (Conquering armies lived off the land and farmers were needed for military service.) In v. 5, Isaiah exhorts the people to adopt God's ways now.

Romans 13: 11-end

Romans is the first epistle in the New Testament, although not the first to be written. Paul wrote it to the church at Rome, which included both Jews and Gentiles. His primary theme is the basics of the good news of Christ, salvation for all people. The book was probably written in 57 AD, when Paul was near the end of his third missionary journey around the Eastern Mediterranean. It is unusual in that it was written to a church that Paul had not visited.

In vv. 1-8, Paul has written about the obligations we Christians have to civil authorities; he has continued his instructions on ethics for Christians. The only

thing we Christians “owe” others – Christians and non-Christians – is love: this sums up the obligations of the Christian in life, of Christian ethics. But as Christians, love is part of the deal rather than an obligation, and can never be completely discharged. Love among Christians is something special: it is mutual. Then vv. 9-10: if we love our neighbours, we will treat them as the Ten Commandments (“the law”) requires: this flows naturally out of our love for them, e.g. we will not offend them by adulterous behaviour, etc. This is why “one who loves another ... [fully satisfies] the law” (v. 8). Now Paul tells us another reason why ethical behaviour is important for Christians. We know that we are living both in the present and in the age which is after the first coming of the Messiah and before the second: “salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers” (v. 11). Paul expresses it in terms of night and day: we should awake, pass from darkness to light, from evil to good. The image of armour is also found in contemporary Jewish writings about the end of the age; in 1 Thessalonians 5:8, Paul tells us that the “armour of light” (v. 12) is faith, hope, love for each other, fidelity, uprightness, etc. “Let us live” (v. 13), he says, as if the Day of the Lord is already here, “honourably”, not in ways that harm ourselves and our neighbours. Rather, let Christ be our armour, and let us not give in to the temptations of the flesh. (In baptism, we have already “put on”, v. 12, Christ, but life in Christ is something that grows with experience. As we grow in the faith, we are more and more able to resist sinful opportunities.)

Matthew 24: 36-44

This gospel is the first in the New Testament, but it was probably the second to be written. Scholars recognize that it borrows material from Mark, and from a sayings source containing sayings of Jesus and known as Q (for Quelle, German for source). The author shows an understanding of Jewish culture and religion not found in the other gospels. It was probably written about 60 to 70 AD, possibly for a largely Jewish audience.

Speaking to his followers, Jesus has foretold the destruction of the Temple; he has told them the signs of the coming of the end times (in terms used in contemporary literature.) In the suffering and trials which will precede the End, society will break down, “many will fall away” (v. 10, from the faith) but “one who endures to the end will be saved” (v. 13). After these events, the “Son of Man” (vv. 27, 30) will come “with power and great glory”. This will mark the beginning of a new era, a new way of being. Followers should discern signs of the second coming of Christ (vv. 32-35). But (v. 36), we do not know precisely when that coming will be, and neither does Jesus. The situation will be like that before the Flood: people were preoccupied with earthly matters (v. 38). When the Flood came, a small number “entered the ark” and were saved, but many drowned. The dawn of the new era will also be like this; Jesus gives two examples: of men (v. 40) and of women (v. 41). Some will be “taken” to be with Christ (because they are prepared) but others will be “left”. V. 43 is an other example. “Keep awake” (v. 42) to the will of God: be ready for Christ’s second coming!

NOTES ON THE MUSIC

Mass 'Awake, My Soul' – Judith Bingham (b. 1952)

Judith Bingham is a Nottingham-born composer and mezzo soprano, who studied at the Royal Academy of Music. In 1977 she won the BBC Young Composer Award, and on joining the BBC Choral Society (now the BBC Symphony Chorus) she started to write a series of choral works. Bingham's compositional style is very individual – her singer's feel for musical lines is supplemented by strong senses of rhythm and harmony. A lot of her inspiration comes from the natural World and from the World of arts, allowing her to shape and colour her compositions in a unique style. She wrote a significant amount of diverse anthems and church works for Winchester, Wells and Westminster Cathedrals, as well as Westminster Abbey, St. John's Cambridge and others. This four-part choir and organ Mass 'Awake, My Soul' was composed in 2007 and was commissioned by Bromley Parish Church to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the consecration of the new church (the original building having been destroyed by bombing in April 1941). This mass is based on the hymn 'Awake my soul, and with the sun, thy daily stage of duty run'.

Remember not, Lord, our offences – Henry Purcell (1659 – 1695)

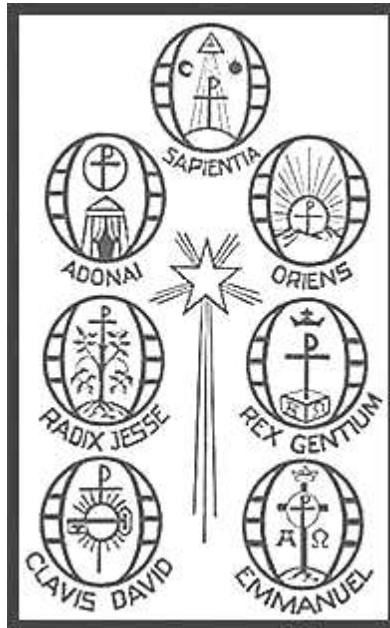
Written in 1680, this five-part anthem Remember not, Lord, our offences shows Purcell's mastery for word-setting and drama, and his magnificent use of harmony and discord demonstrated in this short piece. Both the beginning and the end of the work make use of a homophonic (chordal) texture, with the atmosphere created at the very first word. With touches of counterpoint, the first half of the music climaxes on the line 'But spare us, Good Lord', where a rising chromatic line builds tension and discord. Swiftly, the mood returns to appeal: Purcell's harmony relaxes delectably onto 'redeem'd' and the tenors' line clashes divinely with another line on the word 'precious'. It is the tenors again who have the wonderfully subtle inner line at 'for ever' and here the anthem ends, as it began, with a calm prayer for salvation.

Drop down ye heavens from above – Judith Weir (b. 1954)

Born in Cambridge, Weir trained with John Tavener while still at school before gaining a place to study music at King's College, Cambridge. Her music often draws on sources from medieval history, as well as the traditional stories and music of her native Scotland. Her music language is fairly conservative in its mechanic, with a 'knack of making simple musical ideas appear freshly mysterious'. She is best known for her operas and theatrical works, and her operatic works are known to have been compared to Britten's. This very short setting of a text associated with the Matins service at Advent, Drop down ye heavens from above, was written in 1983 and first performed by the Choir of Trinity College Cambridge, as part of the Advent Carol Service held every year in the Chapel. The music has a plainsong-like shape, although not based on any real plainsong, and swells from unison to eight-part harmony and back again within a short amount of time.

Le Monde dans l'attente du Sauveur, from Symphonie-Passion op. 23 – Marcel Dupré (1886 – 1971)

Marcel Dupré was the foremost French organ virtuoso of his time; famed for his ability to improvise, he also composed substantial works and was a widely travelled recitalist and an influential teacher. Dupré studied at the Paris Conservatoire with Vierne and Widor and went on to succeed Widor at Saint-Sulpice in Paris until his death at the age of eighty five. The *Symphonie-Passion* is laid out in four movements: 'Le monde dans l'attente du Sauveur' (The World Awaiting Its Saviour), 'Nativité', 'Crucifixion', and 'Résurrection'. In the opening movement, which we hear here, presents Jesus redemptor omnium as a quiet second subject in contrast to the agitated, pulsing of the opening main theme, over which the plainsong ultimately triumphs.



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For further information about the life of St Paul's, please contact:

The Parish Office, 32A Wilton Place, London SW1X 8SH

020 7201 9999

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