



St Paul's Church, Knightsbridge
The Diocese of London



The Solemn Eucharist
The Second Sunday of Lent

16th March 2014 at 11 a.m.

Welcome to St Paul's Knightsbridge. 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'.

giftaid it

scheme.

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'



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:
Jesus & Nicodemus
(Stained Glass Window)*

ORDER OF SERVICE

The Introductory Rite

At 11 o'clock, a bell is rung. All stand.

The Servers and Sacred Ministers enter from the west doors.

The Choir sings:

Kyrie eleison. Christe eleison. Kyrie eleison.
Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Missa Salve regina – Tomás Luis de Victoria (1548 – 1611)

THE GREETING & THE ACT OF PENITENCE

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 all
and with thy spirit.

Brothers and sisters in Christ: during this holy season of Lent, the Church invites us, by prayer, penitence and self-possession, to grow in holiness and to be reminded of the infinite love and mercy of God. We, who are created in his image, have marred the divinity that is within us, and yet in Christ we are assured of eternal life and are made one with him.

Let us now keep silence, calling to mind our sins and giving thanks for the infinite mercy of God.

All kneel.

Silence is kept.

Water is presented to the Celebrant, who blesses it, saying:

Almighty God,
your gift of water brings life and freshness to the earth,
and your water in baptism gives to us the gift of salvation.
Bless this water and grant that it may be for us
a sign of the living spring of life
which you alone renew within us
to wash away our sin and fill us with your Spirit. **Amen.**

The Celebrant sprinkles the congregation with water.

The Choir sings:

Thou shalt purge me, O Lord, with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
thou shalt wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.

Have mercy upon me, O God, after thy great goodness.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost,
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.

*'Asperges me'; Psalm 51. 1 & 8
Music: plainsong; Mode vii*

The Celebrant then pronounces the absolution, saying:

May the Father of all mercies
cleans us from our sins,
and restore us in his image
to the praise and glory of his name,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord.
Amen.

All stand.

THE COLLECT

The Celebrant introduces a period of silent prayer:

Let us pray.

Thereafter, he sings:

Almighty God,
who showest to them that be in error the light of thy truth,
to the intent that they may return into the way of righteousness:
grant unto all them that are admitted
into the fellowship of Christ's religion,
that they may eschew those things
that are contrary to their profession,
and follow all such things as are agreeable to the same;
through our Lord Jesus Christ,
who liveth and reigneth with thee,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

All sit.

THE FIRST READING

The book of Genesis 12: 1-4a

Now the Lord said to Abram, 'Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.' So Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran.

At the end:

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

THE PSALMODY

- 1 I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills :
from whence cometh my help.
- 2 My help cometh even from the Lord :
who hath made heaven and earth.
- 3 He will not suffer thy foot to be moved :
and he that keepeth thee will not sleep.
- 4 Behold, he that keepeth Israel :
shall neither slumber nor sleep.
- 5 The Lord himself is thy keeper :
the Lord is thy defence upon thy right hand;
- 6 So that the sun shall not burn thee by day :
neither the moon by night.
- 7 The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil :
yea, it is even he that shall keep thy soul.
- 8 The Lord shall preserve thy going out, and thy coming in :
from this time forth for evermore.

Psalm 121

THE SECOND READING

The letter of Paul to the Romans 4: 1-5, 13-17

What then are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what does the scripture say? 'Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.' Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. But to one who without works trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness.

For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, as it is written, 'I have made you the father of many nations')—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

At the end:

This is the word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

All stand.

THE GRADUAL HYMN

**Take up thy cross, the Saviour said,
if thou wouldst my disciple be;
deny thyself, the world forsake,
and humbly follow after me.**

**Take up thy cross, let not its weight
fill thy weak spirit with alarm;
his strength shall bear thy spirit up,
and brace thy heart and nerve thine arm.**

**Take up thy cross then in his strength,
and calmly sin's wild deluge brave,
'twill guide thee to a better home,
it points to glory o'er the grave.**

**Take up thy cross and follow Christ,
nor think til death to lay it down;
for only those who bear the cross
may hope to wear the glorious crown.**

*Words: Charles William Everest (1814-1877)
Music: from As Hymnodus Sacer, Leipzig 1625
arranged by Felix Mendelssohn (1809-47)*

All remain standing.

THE GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

The Cantor sings:

Praise to thee, O Christ, king of eternal glory.



Praise to thee, O Christ, king of eternal glory.

Man does not live on bread alone,

but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.

Praise to thee, O Christ, king of eternal glory.

All turn to face the Deacon.

THE GOSPEL READING

The Deacon says:

The Lord be with you
and with thy spirit.

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

Glory be to thee, O Lord.

Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God." Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above." Nicodemus said to him, "How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?" Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I

said to you, 'You must be born from above.' The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit." Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?" Jesus answered him, "Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things? "Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. "Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

John 3: 1-17

This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise be to thee, O Christ.

THE SERMON

*The Reverend Andrew Sloane
Associate 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 and keep silence.

To the words, *Lord, in thy mercy*, we respond, **hear our prayer.**

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

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

All sit.

THE NOTICES

THE PEACE

The Celebrant introduces the Peace.

Since we are justified by faith,
we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,
who has given us access to his grace.

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

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

All exchange the Peace by shaking hands 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, the sanctuary party and the Choir are censed.

THE COLLECTION HYMN

**Father, hear the prayer we offer:
not for ease that prayer shall be,
but for strength, that we may ever
live our lives courageously.**

**Not for ever in green pastures
do we ask our way to be ;
but the steep and rugged pathway
may we tread rejoicingly.**

**Not forever by still waters
would we idly rest and stay;
but would smite the living fountains
from the rocks along our way.**

**Be our strength in hours of weakness,
in our wanderings be our Guide;
through endeavour, failure, danger,
Father, be thou at our side.**

*Words: Maria Willis (1824-1908)
Music: 'Sussex', English traditional*

All sit. When the Thurifer approaches through the gates, all stand to be censed.

THE OFFERTORY ANTHEM

Super flumina

Tomás Luis de Victoria (1548 – 1611)

Psalmus David, Jeremiae. Super flumina Babylonis illic sedimus et flevimus, cum recordaremur Sion.

In salicibus in medio ejus suspendimus organa nostra: quia illic interrogaverunt nos, qui captivos duxerunt nos, verba cantionum; et qui abduxerunt nos: Hymnum cantate nobis de canticis Sion.

Quomodo cantabimus canticum Domini in terra aliena?

By the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept: when we remembered thee, O Sion.

As for our harps, we hanged them up: upon the trees that are therein.

For they that led us away captive required of us then a song, and melody in our heaviness: Sing us one of the songs of Sion.

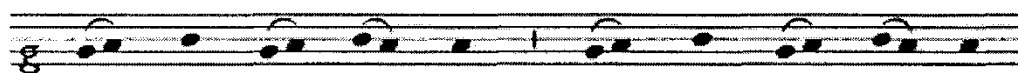
How shall we sing the Lord's song: in a strange land?

After being censed, remain standing for the Eucharistic Prayer.

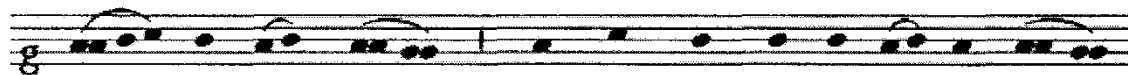
THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

The Celebrant sings:

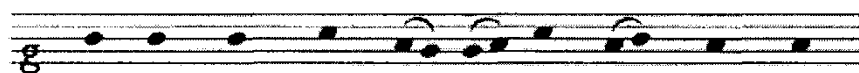
All respond:



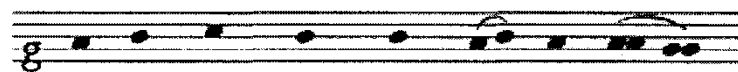
The Lord be with you **R.** and with thy spi-rit.



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 dost give us the spirit of discipline, that we may triumph over evil and grow in grace, as we prepare to celebrate the paschal mystery with mind and heart renewed.

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

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.

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.

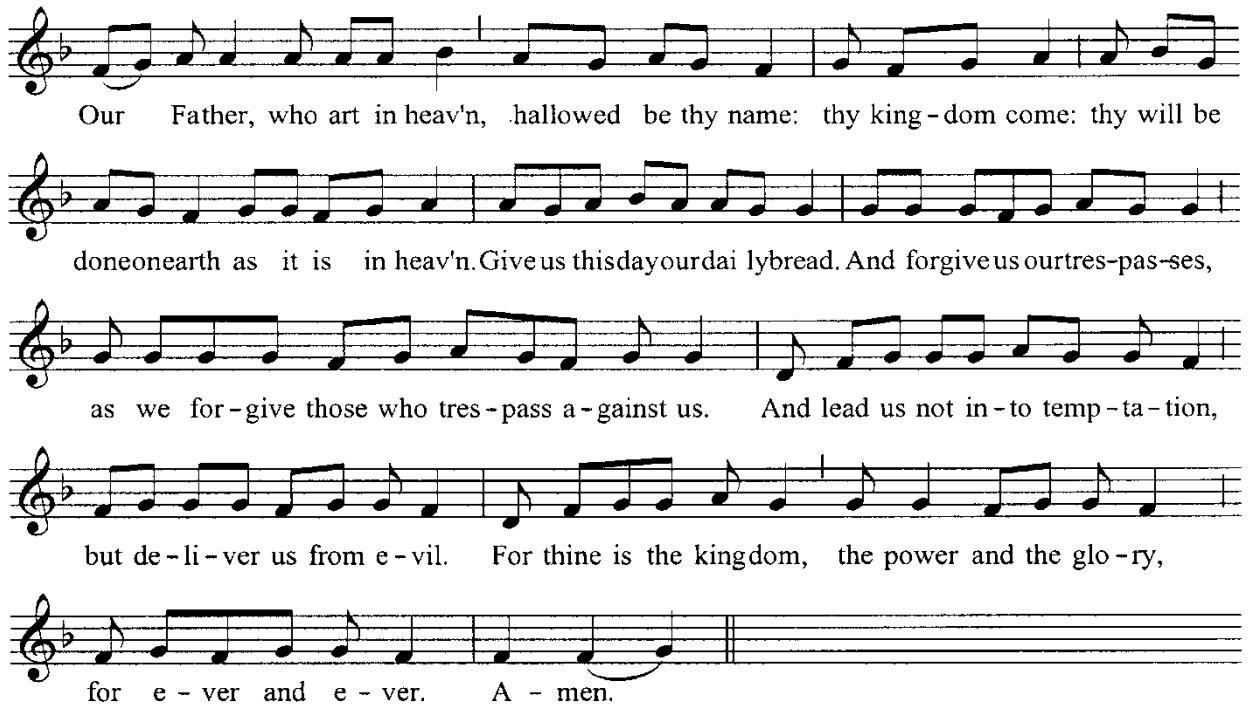
All sing, boldly: **Amen.**

All kneel. A short period of silence is kept.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

The Celebrant sings:

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



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 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 Communion, followed by the people, beginning with those seated at the front of the Nave. Please leave space in the Chancel for the Choir to be able to see the Director of Music.

All who normally do so in their own Church are invited to receive the Sacraments. 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.

AGNUS DEI

The Choir sings:

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona 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 peace.

Missa Salve regina – Tomás Luis de Victoria (1548 – 1611)

THE COMMUNION ANTHEM

Miserere Mei

William Byrd (1543 – 1623)

Miserere mei, Deus, secundum magnam misericordiam tuam; et
secundum multitudinem miserationum tuarum, dele iniquitatem meam.

*Have mercy upon me, O God, after thy great goodness: according to the multitude
of thy mercies do away mine offences.*

PRAYERS AFTER COMMUNION

The Celebrant introduces a period of silent prayer:

Let us pray.

Almighty God,
who seest that we have no power of ourselves
to help ourselves:
keep us both outwardly in our bodies,
and inwardly in our souls;
that we may be defended from all adversities
which may happen to the body,
and from all evil thoughts
which may assault and hurt the soul;
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.**

THE CONCLUDING HYMN

There's a wideness in God's mercy
like the wideness of the sea;
there's a kindness in his justice,
which is more than liberty.
There is welcome for the sinner,
and more graces for the good;
there is mercy with the Saviour;
there is healing in his blood.

There is no place where earth's sorrows
are more felt than up in heaven;
there is no place where earth's failings
have such kindly judgement given.
There is plentiful redemption
in the blood that has been shed;
there is joy for all the members
in the sorrows of the Head.

For the love of God is broader
than the measure of man's mind;
and the heart of the Eternal
is most wonderfully kind.
If our love were but more faithful,
we should take him at his word;
and our life would be thanksgiving
for the goodness of the Lord.

Words: Fr F.W. Faber (1814-63)

Music: 'Corvedale', Maurice Bevan (b. 1921)

All remain standing.

THE BLESSING & THE DISMISSAL

The Lord be with you
and with thy spirit.

Christ give you grace to grow in holiness
to deny yourselves, take up your cross and follow him;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.
Amen.

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

All remain standing as the Servers and Sacred Ministers depart.

THE ORGAN VOLUNTARY

Fugue in A minor, BWV 543
Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 – 1750)

NOTES ON THE READINGS

Genesis 12:1-4a

In a time of migration of peoples about 4,000 years ago, Terah has travelled west with his son Abram, Abram's wife Sarai and his grandson Lot from Ur, near the delta of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. Terah and his family settle for a time in "Haran" (11:31), where Terah dies. Abram now comes to centre-stage. God makes a pact with Abram: if Abram will leave behind his land and kin (and his pagan past), and live in "the land that I will show you" (12:1, cease to be semi-nomadic), God will honour him in seven ways: make of him "a great nation" (v. 2), (2) confer favour on him ("bless you"), make his name renowned ("great") make him a vehicle of good fortune ("be a blessing"), show favour to those who show him favour ("bless", v. 3), (6) exclude those who show him disrespect ("the one ..."), and as other peoples come to trust in God, they will find themselves similarly blessed. In doing "as the Lord had told him" (v. 4), Abram shows his trust (faith) in God. This covenant marks the start of communal relations with God. Being blessed seven ways is being blessed totally: he, his family and his people. In v. 5, "the land" is identified as Canaan. At Shechem, when Abram erects an altar at a pagan shrine ("the oak of Moreh"), God promises the land to his descendants. At "Bethel" (v. 8), Abram builds another altar. God is god of the whole land. Abram and his family continue southward in stages and, due to famine, go on to Egypt – to return later.

Psalm 121

Perhaps a pilgrim asks the rhetorical question in v. 1, as he journeys through hill country, where pagan gods were once thought to dwell. He begins to answer his own question (v. 2): his help is from God, the creator. Then another voice, perhaps a priest, continues, telling of God's protection of Israel: God is always vigilantly protecting the way of the pilgrim (v. 3). God is "your shade" (v. 5): he protects him from sunstroke and from moon rays (then thought to be harmful). He protects the faithful "from all evil" (v. 7), throughout their lives.

Romans 4:1-5,13-17

Paul has written that one can attain a right relationship with God through faith, without living by Mosaic law. Now he takes Abraham as an example; he asks: what can we conclude about faith vs. Law by looking at Abraham's life? Judaism claimed that Abraham kept the Law before it was given, that he was godly ("justified", v. 2) because his "works" were in accord with the Law. Paul rejects this claim; rather, it was, as Genesis shows, Abraham's faith which counted for him ("reckoned", v. 3) as

godliness. God “justifies the ungodly” (v. 5). For the worker, “wages” (v. 4) are expected, but for one who trusts (with no certainty of reward), such trust counts with God. In vv. 6-9 Paul quotes from Psalm 32 and Genesis, interpreting the verses jointly as showing that those who trust in God obtain his favour, whether they be keepers of the Law or trusters in God. Paul then argues that, because Abraham trusted in God’s pact before he was circumcised, Abraham’s faith (and not his keeping of the Law) was what counted for him with God (v. 10). Indeed, he says, circumcision was a confirmation of the right relationship he had attained through faith. It made Abraham “ancestor” (v. 11) of all who trust in God, both Jews (v. 12) and non-Jews (v. 11).

So the “promise” (v. 13) that Abraham would be father of many nations (“inherit the world”) came as a result of his faith and not his law-keeping. If the only way of achieving union with God is through keeping the Law, faith is irrelevant and the promise to Abraham is nonsense (v. 14). Because it is impossible to keep every law, sin is inevitable; God’s response to sin is punishment, breakdown of human relations with God: “the law brings wrath” (v. 15). But for those living by faith, transgression (“violation”) of the Law is irrelevant. So a right relationship with God “depends on faith” (v. 16), resting on God’s “promise” of “grace”, his gift of love – made not only to Jews but also to all those who trust in God, “of many nations” (v. 17). God spoke these words to Abraham; God gives spiritual “life” to the unbeliever; he restored Isaac’s life when he was as good as dead; he brought a son “into existence” to Abraham and Sarah, in their old age. They were “fully convinced” (v. 21) that God could do it. If we trust in God and have faith in the power of Christ’s resurrection, our trust will count with God too.

John 3: 1-17

Nicodemus, a prominent Pharisee and teacher, comes to Jesus to ask him questions. He comes secretly (“by night”, v. 2) because a man of his stature could not be seen consulting Jesus. He has understood from Jesus’ miracles (“signs”) that Jesus is “from God”. But Jesus (in v. 3) tells him that he has not yet understood the main point: to “see the kingdom of God”, spiritual rebirth is required. Nicodemus misunderstands: he thinks that Jesus is speaking of biological rebirth (v. 4). Being “born from above” (v. 3) requires being baptised (v. 5). “Flesh” (v. 6) and “spirit” were seen as constituents of life, of which spirit (breath, wind, pneuma) was the life-giving force. Many things can be seen only in their effect; such is birth in the Spirit (v. 8). Still Nicodemus doesn’t understand: in order for him to do so, he needs to have faith (“receive our testimony”, v. 11). Then, in v. 12, Jesus says: you, Nicodemus, don’t comprehend what can be told in analogies (“earthly things”, i.e. “wind”, v. 8), so how can you possibly believe mysteries? Vv. 13-17 are a monologue. Only Christ has descended and ascended. The “serpent” (v. 14) is mentioned in Numbers 21:9-11: the people were bitten by poisonous snakes; some died; others became gravely ill. Instructed by God, Moses mounted (“lifted up”) a bronze snake on a pole. Those who looked at this emblem (trusting in God) were healed, lifted up, given life. God in his love provides eternal life to all who believe (v. 16). If you wilfully do not believe, you will perish. There is no third alternative! God’s intention is that you believe, rather than be condemned (v. 17).

Missa Salve regina – Tomás Luis de Victoria (1548 – 1611)

Victoria, sometimes referred to as the 'Spanish Palestrina', is Spain's most well-known composer of the 16th Century. He was an accomplished organist and singer, as well as composer, and held a number of chapel master positions before being appointed 'Maestro di Capella' at the Basilica St. Apollinare Italy, in 1575. In the preceding year, he became an ordained Priest. It was during this time in Italy that it is thought that Victoria studied with Palestrina. He was a master at crossing over and dividing choirs with multiple parts – a fine example being his Missa Salve regina, written for eight voices. Within the Gloria's first few bars, Victoria changes time signature – a surprise for the listener. This was a rare characteristic of the time, but sets Victoria apart from other composers. Many people hear in his music a direct emotional appeal and a spiritual intensity, which contrasts the more rhythmically and harmonically docile music of Palestrina.

Super flumina – Tomás Luis de Victoria (1548 – 1611)

Victoria was the most significant Spanish composer of the Counter-Reformation (the Catholic Revival) and is one of the best-regarded composers of sacred music in the late-Renaissance era. Victoria's music reflected his complex character – expressing religion and Spanish mysticism through melodic motifs and joyful inventions. Here we hear his motet, written in 1576, Super flumina Babylonis, which uses text from Psalm 136.

Miserere Mei – William Byrd (1543 – 1623)

Byrd maintained a precarious position as a Catholic in Protestant England, yet still dutifully provided Protestant church music of a very high calibre. The resultant favour of the Queen and the potency of his noble patrons also allowed Byrd to compose and print music for the Catholic liturgy under his own name, even during times of crackdown when possession of the same books could be grounds for suspicion and arrest. In 1591, the year of his retirement, Byrd released the second volume of his 'Cantiones sacrae' containing this Miserere Mei and twenty other Latin motets. Though Byrd set the plaintive text from Psalm 51 to a full five-voiced texture, only the two tenor parts are particularly broad in range, and the composer's frequent recourse to homophony (chords) makes this motet quite accessible. At the same time, he took a lot of care in crafting this little motet. Despite the superficial simplicity of the music, Byrd shaped in it a powerfully affective cry for God's mercy; opening with two homophonic invocations to God, unified in texture and poignancy of cadence.

Fugue in A minor, BWV 543 – Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 – 1750)

This Prelude and Fugue in A minor is probably a product of his years as court organist to the Duke of Saxe-Weimar, from 1709 until 1717. Not as famous as some other Bach organ works, it is the equal to the best of them. The prelude is a massive, dramatic creation, with a weighty, chromatically descending subject. But today, we hear the tricky, intricate fugue that follows. At the end of the fugue itself,

there is an electrifying passage of 'freewheeling', extremely unfugal organ virtuosity. Some observers contend that the chromatic, toccata-like prelude bears the marks of Bach's early, north German-influenced style, while the fugue could be a later product of his maturity. It was not uncommon for Bach to adapt or join together previously composed music to form new pieces.

THE CHOIR OF ST PAUL'S KNIGHTSBRIDGE

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

Stephen Farr

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

Jeremy Cole

The Music & Musicians of St Paul's Knightsbridge

St Paul's Knightsbridge maintains a regular professional choir of eight and the services of both a Director (Stephen Farr) and Assistant Director of Music (Jeremy Cole). The organ is by Henry Willis & Sons and dates from 1888. The musical repertoire, Sunday by Sunday, is diverse and often boldly ambitious: at the Solemn Mass at 11 am there is always a choral mass setting and two seasonal anthems, one at the Offertory and the other during Communion. Full details of the music for each week – along with a programme note – is published in the service paper. The musicians also sing and play for weddings, baptisms, funerals and memorial services at the church.

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