

KYABRAM

St Patrick's Tongala and St Sebastian's Merrigum

Anthony of Egypt After the death of his wealthy landowner parents Anthony, at the age of 34, felt called to follow the words of Jesus: 'Go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and come, follow Me.' From then on he spent his time living the life of a desert hermit. He is notable for being one of the first ascetics to attempt living in the desert proper, completely cut off from civilization – and has hence been called 'the founder of Christian monasticism'.



*Readings for
this week:*

Isaiah 49:3, 5-6
1 Corinthians 1:1-3
John 1:29-34



*Readings for
next Sunday:*

Isaiah 8:23-9:3
1 Corinthians 1:10-13,17
Matthew 4:12-23



Liturgical Jottings

After the consecration in the Eucharistic Prayer for Special Occasions there is a passage which relates closely to today's liturgy. It asks God to, 'Open our eyes to the needs of our brothers and sisters and inspire in us words and actions to comfort those who labour and are burdened. Make us serve them truly, after the example of Christ and at his command. And may your church stand as a living witness to truth and freedom, to peace and justice, so that all people will be raised up to a new hope.'

Quotable Quote

What is hope?

It is the confidence that we have a worldview worth sharing with all who see no future for themselves or humanity.

Timothy Radcliffe, OP

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Looking at the Readings

In the reading today from the prophet Isaiah we hear the promise of God, 'I will make you the light of the nations so that my salvation will reach to the ends of the earth.' Then the theme of the Psalm for the day answers that challenge with the words, 'Here I am, Lord, I come to do your will.' Next there is the prayer of Paul for the people of Corinth, 'May God Our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ send you grace and peace.' Finally in the gospel reading we have an account of the baptism of Jesus. It begins with John identifying Jesus as the one who will take away the sin of the world.

Collectively these readings tell us much about what it means to live as a follower of Christ in today's world. In 2013 our attention was called to a meaningful prayer written by Syrian Christians. It is addressed to the God of Compassion and asks that he will comfort those who suffer violence, console those who mourn the dead, convert the hearts of those who have taken up arms and protect those who are committed to peace. It prays that God will inflame the universal church with compassion for the people of Syria so that they can face the future in the hope that there will one day be justice for all.

The striking thing about their prayer is that it applies equally to so many other countries at this time and equally to God's promise that his salvation will reach to the ends of the earth. The challenge to us as individual Christians and as a faith community is to maintain faith in God's compassion for the world, to pray constantly for the well-being of all who bear the pain of violence and injustice and, as Pope Francis puts it, to always respond to the real needs of those who yearn for salvation.

From Today's Readings

Seeing Jesus coming towards him John said, "Look, there is the lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world. This is the one I spoke of when I said, 'A man is coming after me who ranks before me because he existed before me. I did not know him myself, and yet it was to reveal him to Israel that I came'."



Prayer for the Week

God of Hope, Inspire leaders to choose peace over violence and to seek reconciliation with enemies, Inspire the universal Church with compassion for the people of Syria, and give all who suffer from the effects of Injustice and oppression hope for a future of peace built on justice and peace. We ask this through Jesus Christ, Prince of Peace and Light of the World, Amen.