

Order of Service for Home Worship

THE FIFTEENTH SUNDAY

After TRINITY



Hymn 1 Father of Heaven

1. Father of heaven, whose love profound
a ransom for our souls hath found,
before thy throne we sinners bend,
to us thy pardoning love extend.
2. Almighty son, incarnate Word,
our Prophet, Priest, Redeemer, Lord,
before thy throne we sinners bend,
to us thy saving grace extend.
3. Eternal Spirit, by whose breath
the soul is raised from sin and death,
before thy throne we sinners bend,
to us thy quickening power extend.
4. Thrice Holy! Father, Spirit, Son;
mysterious Godhead. Three in One,
before thy throne we sinners bend,
grace, pardon, life to us extend.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**
Grace and peace be with you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Father of glory, holy and eternal, look upon us now in power and mercy. May your strength overcome our weakness, your radiance transform our blindness, and your Spirit draw us to that love shown and offered to us by your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

As we come into the presence of our heavenly Father let us seek his forgiveness of our sins that we may know his peace is our hearts.

Lord Jesus, you have shown us the way to the Father. **Lord, have mercy.**
Lord Jesus, you have given us knowledge of your truth. **Christ, have mercy.**
Lord Jesus, you are the Good Shepherd leading us to life. **Lord, have mercy.**

May almighty God have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

**Alleluia, alleluia, glory be to God on high;
Alleluia, to the Saviour who has gained the victory;
Alleluia to the Spirit, fount of love and sanctity;
Alleluia, Alleluia, to the Triune Majesty.**

Collect:

God, who in generous mercy sent the Holy Spirit upon your Church in the burning fire of your love: grant that your people may be fervent in the fellowship of the gospel that, always abiding in you, they may be found steadfast in faith and active in service; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

A reading from the book of Genesis

50. 15-21

Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, 'What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?' So they approached Joseph, saying, 'Your father gave this instruction before he died, "Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did

in harming you.” Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father.’ Joseph wept when they spoke to him. Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, ‘We are here as your slaves.’ But Joseph said to them, ‘Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones.’ In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 103. 8-13

Response: The Lord has compassion for those who fear him.

The Lord is merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.
He will not always accuse,
nor will he keep his anger for ever. (R)

He does not deal with us according to our sins,
nor repay us according to our iniquities.
For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; (R)

as far as the east is from the west,
so far he removes from us our transgressions.
As a father has compassion for his children,
so the Lord has compassion for those who fear him. (R)

A reading from Paul’s letter to the Romans

14. 1-12

Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarrelling over opinions. Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgement on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. Who are you to pass judgement on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand. Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. Those who observe the day, observe it in honour of the

Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honour of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honour of the Lord and give thanks to God.

We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord’s. For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. Why do you pass judgement on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgement seat of God. For it is written, ‘As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God.’ So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

“Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.”

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Listen to the Gospel of Christ according to St. Matthew Glory to you, O Lord.

18. 21-35

Then Peter came and said to him, ‘Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?’ Jesus said to him, ‘Not seven times, but I tell you, seventy-seven times. ‘For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, “Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.” And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow-slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, “Pay what you owe.” Then his fellow-slave fell down and pleaded with him, “Have patience with me, and I will pay you.” But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he should pay the debt. When his fellow-slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, “You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your

fellow-slave, as I had mercy on you?" And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he should pay his entire debt. So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Meditation:

In each of today's readings, we hear of mercy and forgiveness which are the basic attitudes that all Christians must put into practice - even though it is not easy on occasions. In Genesis we heard how Joseph's brothers thought that Joseph would want to avenge himself on those who caused him harm and upset without reason, including themselves. They pleaded for forgiveness, not only as brothers but as servants of their father Jacob's God. Seeing this behaviour, which was complete fulfilment of his dreams, affected Joseph and he directs them not to fear him but to fear God, to humble themselves before God and to seek forgiveness but he also comforted them by assuring them of his kindness. The psalm follows on the theme by reminding us of God's love – he forgives us our sins and has the kindness for us that a father has for his children. Paul in his letter to the Romans, speaks of the differing attitudes between the Jews and the Gentiles but irrespective of differences, we are taught not to judge people as God will be the judge. In the gospel, Peter asks Jesus how many times must he forgive his brother. In everyday life, forgiveness, it is said, is more often talked about than put into practice. Probably because it is difficult, demanding and takes a great deal out of us. When small incidents are blown out of proportion and a mountain is made out of a molehill, these incidents became major events and can, on occasions cause rifts to develop. How many times have we heard disputes over issues such as neighbours, parking, animals straying and rights of way - problems that can cause bad feeling and upsets. When we remind ourselves of all Jesus did for us, we see that both the purpose and giving of his life was to win forgiveness for all people. In the words Jesus proclaimed from the cross, he lived out in his life though his actions and deeds. Thinking of today's gospel as we could ponder:- "Why was Jesus so insistent about the practice of forgiveness in the lives of his disciples?" When we hear Peter asking, "How often must I forgive my brother?" there is a good chance that he was embarrassed by the answer he received from Jesus as the reply was that he needed to be far more forgiving than he suggested. Through Jesus saying seventy times seven, he was saying that forgiveness has no limit and is one of the central characteristics of the Christian way of life.

We could ask? "Why was Jesus so adamant that his listeners would understand how his message of forgiveness was central to his preaching and teaching?"

Maybe it was because he knew that forgiveness was among the most difficult challenges for human beings. The reason that Jesus could be uncompromising about the centrality of forgiveness was because he understood human nature. He knew that if people were neither unable to forgive one another nor could not accept forgiveness in a gracious manner from other people when offered, then they were unable to experience God's forgiveness. What Jesus could appreciate was that the human spirit yearns for acceptance, sympathy, respect, companionship, and a sense of belonging which without forgiveness, is impossible. What we learn from these readings and their meanings is our ability to forgive, enabling us to realise the yearnings of acceptance, sympathy, respect, companionship, and a sense of belonging. The forgiveness that we offer to others is the indispensable condition which makes it possible for us to receive God's forgiveness and to meaningfully pray the prayer of confession, the words of the Lord's Prayer: "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." and also the words from The Prayer of St. Francis: "It is in pardoning that we are pardoned." If we fail to offer pardon, it may mean that we have either forgotten God's goodness or have not fully appreciated his unconditional forgiveness. In our lives, pain and hurt can be felt in many ways - perhaps heart breaking or emotionally crippling and others may be the slight hurt and petty envies which have the ability to tempt us to be vindictive and hit back but these are actions which are not pleasing to God. What is required of us is limitless forgiving, an ability to gloss over our faults and to keep on loving even in the face of insults - not easy actions but to follow the way of Christ they are necessary actions.

Forgiveness does not come on its own - it brings with it healing - healing wounds that without forgiveness would continue hurting. As people who both seek forgiveness and are repentant, we are able to confess our sins, to make reparation for our wrongdoings and resolve not to commit these wrongs again, we are assured that our sins are forgiven and will have God's help enabling us in avoiding making the same errors. At the beginning of the service we said the prayer of confession, asking for forgiveness and repented of our sins and soon we will say the words of the Lord's Prayer, once again asking for forgiveness. Through these confessions God is able to forgive us. We too are listeners of Christ and so we need to not only understand his message of forgiveness but follow the example of Jesus by living the message of forgiveness in our lives.

Amen

Intercessions:

In the power of the Holy Spirit and in union with Christ let us bring our prayers for the Church and for the world to our heavenly Father.

We pray for the Church throughout the world, for the leaders of the Church among them Andrew our Archbishop and Mary our Bishop. We pray for the clergy and people of our diocese and for our own ministry area; that the Church may faithfully work with Christ to proclaim the saving love of God to the world.

Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

We pray for the people of the world, for the victims of violence and oppression among them the people of the Ukraine and the Yemen, for all suffering the effects of natural disaster and for those suffering from famine or drought; May the leaders of the nation's follow the Lord in the ways of justice and peace.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for our own community, for our families, friends and neighbours. We give thanks for all who serve the needs of the vulnerable; may we persevere in the ways of Christ bringing hope and peace to those in need around us.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for all who are in need, for those who are sick, for those who are bereaved, for the lonely and isolated and for all in any kind of need. We hold in our hearts before God those known to us who are in need at this time and all whose names are recorded in our intercession books; relieve them according to their need, strengthen them with your Holy Spirit and console them with the love of Christ.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for all who have died. We remember before God our own departed loved ones and we pray for the recently departed and those whose anniversary of death falls at this time; welcome them and all the departed into the eternal joy and peace of your heavenly kingdom.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We bring all our prayers to our heavenly Father as we pray together:

**Our Father,
who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy Kingdom come, thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the Kingdom,
The power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.**

The Peace:

Jesus said, "Peace, I bequeath to you; my own peace I give you; a peace the world cannot give, this is my gift to you. The peace of the Lord be with you and with all those whom you love. **And also with you.**

Let us pray:

Lord Jesus Christ, you have taught us that what we do for the least of our brothers and sisters we do also for you: give us the will to be the servant of others as you were the servant of all, and gave up your life and died for us, but are alive and reign, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The Blessing:

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

The peace of God which is beyond all understanding guard your hearts in the knowledge and love of God and of his Son Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Let us go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

In the name of Christ. **Amen**

Hymn 2. At the name of Jesus

- 1 **At the name of Jesus
ev'ry knee shall bow,
ev'ry tongue confess him
King of glory now;
'tis the Father's pleasure
we should call him Lord,
who from the beginning
was the mighty Word.**
- 2 **At his voice creation
sprang at once to sight,
all the angel faces,
all the hosts of light,
thrones and dominations,
stars upon their way,
all the heav'nly orders
in their great array.**
- 3 **Humbled for a season
to receive a name
from the lips of sinners
unto whom he came,
faithfully he bore it
spotless to the last,
brought it back victorious
when from death he passed;**
- 4 **Bore it up triumphant
with its human light,
thro' all ranks of creatures
to the central height,
to the throne of Godhead,
to the Father's breast,
filled it with the glory
of that perfect rest.**
- 5 **In your hearts enthrone him;
there let him subdue
all that is not holy,
all that is not true;
crown him as your captain
in temptation's hour;
let his will enfold you
in its light and pow'r.**

- 6 **Truly, this Lord Jesus
shall return again
with his Father's glory,
with his angel train;
for all wreaths of empire
meet upon his brow,
and our hearts confess him
King of glory now.**

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