

Morning Prayer – Friday, April 3, 2020
Celtic Prayers from Iona – J. Philip Newell

Opening Words (*as candle is lit*)

Where can I go
From your spirit O God? (Psalm 139:7)

(Be still and aware of the presence of the Divine within and all around)

Opening Prayer and Thanksgiving

I awake this morning
in the presence
 of the holy angels of God.
May heaven open wide before me
Above me and around me
That I may see
 The Christ of my love
And his sunlit company
In all the things of earth this day.

FREE PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING

The Lord's Prayer

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.

Scripture – John 10:22-42 (Contemporary English Version)

That winter, Jesus was in Jerusalem for the Temple Festival. One day he was walking in that part of the temple known as Solomon's Porch, and the people gathered all around him. They said, "How long are you going to keep us guessing? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly!"

Jesus answered:

I have told you, and you refused to believe me. The things I do by my Father's authority show who I am. But since you are not my sheep, you don't believe me. My sheep know my voice, and I know them. They follow me, and I give them eternal life, so that they will never be lost. No one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father gave them to me, and he is greater than all others. No one can snatch them from his hands, and I am one with the Father.

Once again, the religious leaders picked up stones in order to kill Jesus. But he said, "I have shown you many good things that my Father sent me to do. Which one are you going to stone me for?"

They answered, "We are not stoning you because of any good thing you did. We are stoning you because you did a terrible thing. You are just a man, and here you are claiming to be God!"

Jesus replied:

In the Scriptures doesn't God say, "You are gods"? You can't argue with the Scriptures, and God spoke to those people and called them gods. So why do you accuse me of a terrible sin for saying that I am the Son of God? After all, it is the Father who prepared me for this work. He is also the one who sent me into the world. If I don't do as my Father does, you should not believe me. But if I do what my Father does, you should believe because of that, even if you don't have faith in me. Then you will know for certain that the Father is one with me, and I am one with the Father.

Again they wanted to arrest Jesus. But he escaped and crossed the Jordan to the place where John had earlier been baptizing. While Jesus was there, many people came to him. They were saying, "John didn't work any miracles, but everything he said about Jesus is true." A lot of those people also put their faith in Jesus.

SILENCE

(Reflect on the gospel and the One who calls us to follow him as the Way, the Truth and the Life)

Poem – "When I come home they rush me, the flies" by Aracelis Girmay

When I come home they rush to me, the flies, & would take me, they would take me in their small arms if I were smaller, so fly this way, that way in joy, they welcome me. They kiss my face one two, they say, *Come in, come in. Sit at this table. Sit.* They hold one hand inside the other & say, *Eat.* They share the food, sit close to me, sit. As I chew they touch my hair, they touch their hands to my crumbs, joining me. The rim of my cup on which they perch. The milky lake above which. They ask for a story: *How does it begin? Before, I was a child,* & so on. My story goes on too long. I only want to look into their faces. The old one sits still, I sit with it, but the others busy themselves now with work & after the hour which maybe to them is a week, a month, I sleep in the room between the open window & the kitchen, dreaming though I were the Sierra, though I were their long lost sister, they understand that when I wake I will have to go. One helps me with my coat, another rides my shoulder to the train. *Come with me, come,* I say. *No, no,* it says, & waits with me there the rest

whistling, touching my hair, though maybe these are its last seconds on earth in the light in the air is this love, though it is little, my errand, & for so little I left my house again.

Intercessions

O God of life, of all life, of each life,
I offer you my prayers
In the love of Christ
In the affection of Christ
In the company of Christ.
As your own household
Desires in heaven
So may I desire on earth this day.

(Pray for the coming day and the Church throughout the world)

Closing Prayer

(after which candle is extinguished)

The love and affection
of the angels be with me
The love and affection
of the saints be with me
The love and affection
of heaven be with me
To lead me and to cherish me
this day.

Spiritual Exercises:

- 1) In her poem, Arcelis Girmay writes about being in relationship with the flies. Imagine being in relationship with some part of Creation you haven't previously thought about yourself as being in relationship with – write or make art about it.
- 2) What does it mean to you to be under the care of our Shepherd, Jesus. How have you experienced him as tending to you?
- 3) Listen for the voices of those who are asking for support and love at this time – perhaps it's a friend on Facebook, a family member via email, or just your intuition that someone could use a check-in. Find a way to connect with that individual and share your caring with them and open yourself to listening deeply to their experience.

Sources:

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Scripture: *Contemporary English Version*, American Bible Society, 1995.