

Compline – Wednesday, November 25, 2020

Celtic Daily Prayer – The Northumbria Community

**modifications made for inclusive language*

St. George's Anglican Church, Cadboro Bay / www.stgeorgecadborobay.ca

Opening

O Christ, of the living God,
May Your holy angels guard our sleep,
May they watch over us as we rest
and hover around our beds.
Let them reveal to us in our dreams
visions of Your glorious truth.

May no nightmares darken our dreams
May no fears or worries delay our willing, prompt repose
May our sleep be deep and soft
so our work be fresh and spirited.

Scripture – Acts 26:1,9-16 (CEV)

Agrippa told Paul, "You may now speak for yourself." Paul stretched out his hand and said:

I once thought that I should do everything I could to oppose Jesus from Nazareth. I did this first in Jerusalem, and with the authority of the chief priests I put many of God's people in jail. I even voted for them to be killed. I often had them punished in our meeting places, and I tried to make them give up their faith. In fact, I was so angry with them, that I went looking for them in foreign cities. King Agrippa, one day I was on my way to Damascus with the authority and permission of the chief priests. About noon I saw a light brighter than the sun. It flashed from heaven on me and on everyone traveling with me. We all fell to the ground. Then I heard a voice say to me in Aramaic, "Saul, Saul, why are you so cruel to me? It's foolish to fight against me!"

"Who are you?" I asked.

Then the Lord answered, "I am Jesus! I am the one you are so cruel to. Now stand up. I have appeared to you, because I have chosen you to be my servant. You are to tell others what you have learned about me and what I will show you later."

Poem – "Said" by David Rivard

I fed my father what
as it turned out the future
would call his last meal
(tho at the time neither
he nor I was required to

think it that exactly)—
ground chourico & chopped
green pepper open-faced
on a burger bun, french fries,
a cupcake with icing almost
chocolate in flavor—alarming,
a departure from his diet
of low-sodium, zeroed-out
trans fats & sugar-free
vegetables with high fiber-
scores, suffering as he had
been for years from barbarian
cholesterol & geriatric
diabetes (the nurse shrugged
simply & said "why not?"—
meaning of course that
we should get it, all of us,
he *was* going to die,
and soon). A few loose
chitters of ground sausage
fell onto his johnnie
from the fork I lifted
to his mouth—they left
tiny, paprika-red dots
of oil on the sheer cotton,
prussic red, corpuscle red
like the small scabs my sister
and I had left on his face
while helping him shave
the day before. A week earlier
I had visited him at home;
the day an unusually warm
day in a March unusually
cold. He was telling me how
he'd gone out into the yard
to get some sun only to return
minutes later to the house,
the wind far too strong—
he said he worried that
if the wind took his hat
from his head, he might
die while chasing it.
I made a joke—forced to,
I thought—chasing a hat,

I said, that might be
a better death than most,
I said maybe the death
certificate would read "killed
by the wind." He laughed
all right. You know, he said,
you've really got a lousy
sense of humor. Better than
nothing, I guess—(did *he*
say *that*, or did I think
it?). Later he said . . . he'd said
earlier . . . then I said . . . he
said . . . I said . . . I said . . .
I said . . . Say now that
this might be all that's left
for consolation, this
might be love at the end,
the confidences exchanged—
all these pratfalls, & this
skin chapped by a blade,
and your willing servant's
shaky hands, then a short
trip to be washed a last,
finally blameless time
(so the scriptures say)
in the blood of the lamb:
a smell like the smell of
sweetgrass burning crosswise
the length of a dry plain
and sent by a wind whose
swiftness has in it the bright
voices of kindergarteners, children
born of a hardship town.

a moment of silence for reflection

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.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and for ever. Amen.

Prayers of Intercession and Thanksgiving

O God, at this time, we lift up to you our concerns, hopes and thanksgivings for ourselves and others, naming them out loud or holding them in our hearts....

Closing Prayers

I will lie down and sleep in peace
For You alone, Lord, make me dwell in safety.
My dear ones, O God, bless Thou and keep,
In every place where they are.

How precious to me are Your thoughts, O God!
How vast is the sum of them!
Were I to count them,
they would outnumber the grains of sand.
When I awake, I am still with You.

Sources:

Prayers are from: Celtic Daily Prayer: Book Two, Farther Up and Farther In Northumbria Community, London: William Collins Books, 2015.

Poem: David Rivard, "Said" from *Standoff* (Graywolf Press, 2016).