

A Simple service of Daily Prayer for the week of Prayer for Christian Unity!

Day 2 Maturing Internally

“Abide in me as I abide in you” (Jn 15:4a)

Gathering to worship God

Welcome and introduction

Greeting

Let us worship God: Creator, Word and Holy Spirit

All **Amen**

God is with you

All **And also with you.**

This is the day that God has made

All **We will rejoice and be glad in it.**

Opening Prayer

In peace let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, you are the vinedresser who cares for us with love.

You call on us to see the beauty of each branch united

to the vine,

the beauty of each person.

And yet, too often the differences in others make us afraid.

We withdraw into ourselves.

Our trust in you is forsaken.

Enmity develops between us.

Come and direct our hearts toward you once again.

Grant us to live from your grace

so that we may be together and praise your name.

All **Amen**

Blessed is the Creator
All **for God has heard the voice of our prayer;**

Psalm for the day

Psalm 85

- 1 Lord, you were gracious to your land; *
you restored the fortunes of Jacob.
- 2 You forgave the offence of your people *
and covered all their sins.
- 3 You laid aside all your fury *
and turned from your wrathful indignation.
- 4 Restore us again, O God our Saviour, *
and let your anger cease from us.
- 5 Will you be displeased with us for ever? *
Will you stretch out your wrath from one generation to another?
- 6 Will you not give us life again, *
that your people may rejoice in you?
- 7 Show us your mercy, O Lord, *
and grant us your salvation.
- 8 I will listen to what the Lord God will say, *
for he shall speak peace to his people and to the faithful,
that they turn not again to folly.
- 9 Truly, his salvation is near to those who fear him, *
that his glory may dwell in our land.
- 10 Mercy and truth are met together, *
righteousness and peace have kissed each other;
- 11 Truth shall spring up from the earth *
and righteousness look down from heaven.
- 12 The Lord will indeed give all that is good, *
and our land will yield its increase.
- 13 Righteousness shall go before him *
and direct his steps in the way.

All **Glory to God, Creator, Word, Spirit
As it was in the beginning, is now,
And shall be forever. Amen**

Readings

Ephesians 3:14-21

¹⁴ For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, ¹⁵from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name. ¹⁶I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, ¹⁷and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. ¹⁸I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, ¹⁹and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

²⁰ Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, ²¹to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, for ever and ever. Amen.

Luke 2:41-52

⁴¹ Now every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. ⁴²And when he was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival. ⁴³When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. ⁴⁴Assuming that he was in the group of travellers, they went a day's journey. Then they started to look for him among their relatives and friends. ⁴⁵When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him. ⁴⁶After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. ⁴⁷And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. ⁴⁸When his parents saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, 'Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in great anxiety.' ⁴⁹He said to them, 'Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?' ⁵⁰But they did not understand what he said to them. ⁵¹Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart.

⁵² And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favour.

Meditation

The encounter with Jesus gives rise to the desire to stay with him and to abide in him: a time in which fruit matures.

Being fully human, like us Jesus grew and matured. He lived a simple life, rooted in the practices of his Jewish faith. In this hidden life in Nazareth, where apparently nothing extraordinary happened, the presence of the Father nourished him.

Mary contemplated the actions of God in her life and in that of her son. She treasured all these things in her heart. Thus, little by little, she embraced the mystery of Jesus.

We too need a long period of maturation, an entire lifetime, in order to plumb the depths of Christ's love, to let him abide in us and for us to abide in him. Without our knowing how, the Spirit makes Christ dwell in our hearts. And it is through prayer, by listening to the word, in sharing with others, by putting into practice what we have understood, that the inner being is strengthened.

*"Letting Christ descend into the depths of our being ... He will penetrate the regions of the mind and the heart, he will reach our flesh unto our innermost being, so that we too will one day experience the depths of mercy."
The Sources of Taizé*

Affirmation of faith

With the whole church

**All We affirm that we are made in God's image,
Befriended by Christ,
Empowered by the Spirit**

With people everywhere

**All We affirm God's goodness at the heart of humanity
Planted more deeply than all that is wrong**

With all creation

**All We celebrate the miracle and wonder of life;
The unfolding purposes of God, forever at work
In ourselves and the world**

Iona Abbey Worship Book

Prayers of Intercession

Holy Spirit, you create and re-create the Church in all places.
Come and whisper in our hearts the prayer which Jesus
addressed to his Father on the eve of his passion: "that they
may all be one... so that the world may believe".

All Kyrie eleison (Lord have mercy)

Lord Jesus, Prince of Peace, light the fire of your love in us so
that suspicions, contempt and misunderstanding cease in the
Church. May the walls that separate us fall.

All Kyrie eleison

Holy Spirit, Consoler of all, open our hearts to forgiveness and

reconciliation and bring us back from our wanderings.

All Kyrie eleison

Lord Jesus, gentle and humble of heart, give us poverty of spirit so that we may welcome the unexpectedness of your grace.

All Kyrie eleison

Holy Spirit, you never abandon those who are persecuted for their fidelity to the gospel. Give them strength and courage, and support those who help them.

All Kyrie eleison

Gracious God,

All accept these prayers

In the name of our brother Jesus Christ. Amen.

Collect (Prayer for the day)

Holy Spirit,
May we receive in our hearts the presence of Christ,
and cherish it as a secret of love.
Nourish our prayer,
enlighten our reading of Scripture,
act through us,
so that the fruits of your gifts can patiently grow in us..

All Amen.

The Disciple's Prayer

**All 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.
And forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Keep us from the time of trial
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power
and the glory, are yours
now and ever. Amen.**

Going out to serve God

Let us go from our prayer to proclaim the good news in all we say and do

Let us go in peace to love and serve our loving God.

All Thanks be to God. Amen.

Questions for Discussion and Reflection (For the website)

1. Jesus is a youth when he is presented to the Temple, still new to life and not yet beginning his ministry. He had to grow spiritually, amongst other ways, to serve. What are the ways that we grow spiritually here and now? Are there exercises or practices in your tradition that help you grow?
2. Do we ever feel fully mature in our faith? What does that look like (knowing your Scriptures, a “full” prayer practice, being involved in the church, etc.)? This may be a question to ask people of different ages and backgrounds.
3. One of the prayer practices that this year’s Week of Prayer for Christian Unity includes is Taizé contemplation. As a Bible Study, or on your own, this would be an excellent opportunity to try Taizé Prayer for 15 minutes and reflect on your experience.