

NOVEMBER 1, 2020

FEAST OF ALL SAINTS & INVESTITURE TO THE ORDER OF THE DIOCESE OF NEW
WESTMINSTER, MS. MAUREEN SHIRLEY

GATHERING OF THE COMMUNITY

Greeting & Welcome

Processional or Opening Music

Territorial Acknowledgement

Introductory Responses

Great are you, O Lord, and greatly to be praised

There is no end of your greatness.

One generation shall praise your works to another.

and shall declare your power.

All your works praise you,

and your faithful servants bless you.

They make known the glory of your reign of justice

and peace and speak of your power.

Our mouths shall speak your praise;

let all flesh praise your holy name for ever and ever.

THANKSGIVING

Blessed are you, Sovereign God,

ruler and judge of all,

to you be praise and glory for ever.

In the darkness of this age that is passing away

may the light of your presence which the saints enjoy

surround our steps as we journey on.

May we reflect your glory this day

and so be made ready to see your face

in the heavenly city where night shall be no more.

Blessed be God:

source of all being,

eternal Word and Holy Spirit.

All **Blessed be God forever.**

THE PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

First Reading: Revelation 7:9-17

After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. They cried out in a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!" And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshipped God, singing, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honour and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen." Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from?" I said to him, "Sir, you are the one that knows." Then he said to me, "These are they who have come out of the great ordeal; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. For

this reason they are before the throne of God, and worship him day and night within his temple, and the one who is seated on the throne will shelter them. They will hunger no more, and thirst no more; the sun will not strike them, nor any scorching heat; for the Lamb at the centre of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of the water of life, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

PSALM 34:1-10, *The reader will read the light print, while the people will read the bold.*

1 I will bless our God at all times;*
your praise shall ever be in my mouth.

2 I will glory in our God;*
let the humble hear and rejoice.

3 Proclaim with me the greatness of the Most High;*
let us exalt God's Name together.

4 I sought you, O God, and you answered me*
you delivered me out of all my terror.

5 Look upon the Most High and be radiant,*
and let not your faces be ashamed.

6 I called in my affliction and God heard me*
and saved me from all my troubles.

7 Your angel, O God, encompasses those who fear you,*
and you will deliver them.

8 Taste and see that the Holy One is good;*
happy are they who trust in God!

9 Fear the Holy One, you that are God's saints,*
for those who fear God lack nothing.

10 The young lions lack and suffer hunger,*
but those who seek our God lack nothing that is good.

**Glory to God our Creator, to God's most Holy Word,
and to the Spirit, indwelling:***
as it was in the beginning, is now and will be for ever. Amen.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew

Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Matthew 5:1-12

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

The Gospel of Christ

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

SERMON

There will be a period of silence after the sermon.

SPECIAL SERMON FROM ARCHBISHOP MELISSA SKELTON FOR THE INVESTITURE

One of the most memorable and foundational moments of my seminary education occurred in my homiletics class during my middle year in school. The professor teaching the course had a bit of a reputation because he liked to challenge the theology in his student's sermons by asking them embarrassingly pointed questions in front of the entire class. These very pointed questions concerned what a person really believed, what a person had staked both their sermon and perhaps their life in making the decision to attend theological school.

One day a man in my class preached a sermon on one of the versions of the Beatitudes, that section in the Gospel of Matthew or in the Gospel of Luke that begins with "Blessed are..." in which Jesus describes the upside down realm of God, a realm in which the poor or the poor in spirit, not the rich, are blessed, in which those who mourn will know comfort, in which the meek, not the bold and adventurous, will inherit the earth, and on and on. In other words, the realm of God is a realm that God graciously creates, and through God's graciousness, we are invited to inhabit it.

The preacher, probably out of perplexity about what to do with the Beatitudes, had decided to focus on those behaviours that he believed should be characteristic of those inhabiting God's realm. Behaviors such as giving to the poor, comforting those who mourn, being merciful to others, making peace, fighting for justice, all of which the Beatitudes seem to reference. And so the sermon detailed all the things we each need to do as Christian people as we seek to inhabit the realm of God that Jesus came to proclaim.

After the sermon, we all offered our feedback to the preacher about his words and his delivery. To tell you the truth, I remember absolutely nothing about the feedback I or others gave.

At some point, however, our homiletics professor couldn't contain himself any longer. As he spoke, he addressed not just the preacher but all of us.

"Listen, people," he said, "This is not a pull-yourself-up-by-your-bootstraps religion, a religion that you have to earn your way into. The purpose of a sermon is not to exhort others to earn their way into a relationship with God through their good behavior. No, the love of God is like a net stretching across the universe, and in our baptism, we are gathered into that net. It isn't possible, no matter what we do, to earn our way into that net and, I believe, it isn't possible, no matter what we do, to fall our way out of that net." "Blessed are you," he said to all of us, "and blessed are they, your listeners. Do you get it? If you do, go and preach that! And let any comments about your or their behavior come out of being caught up first in that net!"

At the time I had thought—how rude, how mean. How dare he embarrass one of us or all of us in this way! At the same time, I was also thinking: "Eek! I thought Christian life was all about good actions on behalf of others!"

But later, over the years during the many times I felt alone, or afraid or unworthy or irredeemable or cut off from God and from others, I have clung to those words. The love of God is like a net, strung across the universe. It is isn't possible to earn our way into that net. It isn't possible to fall out of that net. And so we are blessed, even when we were poor or poor in spirit, even when we were in mourning. We are blessed even when we were meek and speechless in the face of those who love the sounds of their own voices. We are blessed.

Today we're celebrating a group of people in the Diocese of New Westminster who have given themselves to the life of the Church in their parishes and at the diocesan and the national levels. As a part of this celebration, we will get to hear citations read that detail the many, many actions each person has taken during their time in the Church, actions that have, without a doubt, contributed to the life and witness of the Church in this place and beyond this place. Let there be no mistake about it—I and those gathered here today are deeply grateful for those actions. This is because those actions are actions of holy sacrifice: offerings of time and energy and imagination, precious gifts offered to God and God's people.

But even more important than this, the people we are honouring today are people who over many, many years have lived richly and fully within the net that is the love of God, a net that, yes, does spur those who live within it to actions of love, of mercy, of comfort and of compassion and justice-making. But it is a net that also holds us fast during the times when we are incapable of putting one foot in front of another, during the times when we are inhibited from doing much on account of a pandemic, during the times when we are perplexed into pausing on account of the complex issues of racial justice that keep emerging in the world around us, during the times when all we believe we can do is close our eyes and do our best to breathe.

This is what our Church and the people we honour today are all about—they are a community of people who have been and continue to be an important part of that net of God's love stretching across the universe gathering others into itself, a net that we don't earn our way into. A net that, God be praised, no matter what we do, we cannot fall our way out of.

During these times many of the good things we are accustomed to doing in the church have been paused, and we have been left for a time with simply considering who we really are, who we really are in the face of pandemic and the ongoing issues in the world related to race and justice. It would be easy to think that we have lost our way when in a sense our hands have been tied. But today I want to tell you that this time has also presented us with the opportunity to remind ourselves about what is at the base of this religion, this Christian faith, of ours.

We are not a pull-yourself-up-by-your bootstraps religion. For all the good work that many in this room have done, we are not a people who stand before God thinking that these good works will somehow secure for us a place in the realm of God. No, we know that God creates God's realm through a relentless and unstoppable love for us and for the world. And that all we have done and that all we will do are the result of an answering love, the result of our grateful and answering love. Thank you, ODNW recipients, for all the many things that have flowed from your answering love.

INVESTITURE Ms. Maureen Shirley

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

The Apostle's Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried.

He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

THE PRAYERS OF THE COMMUNITY

Intercessions & Thanksgivings

Leader: Let us pray to the God of all the faithful. With the noble fellowship of the prophets may we discern the signs of your reign in our midst:

All: **God of all the faithful, remember your promise of mercy.**

Leader: With the glorious company of the apostles may we proclaim your gospel throughout the world:

All: **God of all the faithful, remember your promise of mercy.**

Leader: With the white-robed army of martyrs may we be ready to suffer for the truth's sake:

All: **God of all the faithful, remember your promise of mercy.**

Leader: With all who are anointed by your Spirit may we bring good news to the poor and freedom to the oppressed:

All: **God of all the faithful, remember your promise of mercy.**

Leader: With the saints in light may we bind up the broken-hearted and comfort all who mourn:

All: **God of all the faithful, remember your promise of mercy.**

Leader: With the whole company of Christ's pilgrim people may we come to the inheritance of the saints in glory:

All: **God of all the faithful, remember your promise of mercy.**

Additional intercessions, petitions and thanksgivings may be offered in silence or aloud.

Silence for reflection

THE PEACE

The peace Christ be always with you. **And also with you.**

OFFERTORY HYMN

PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS

Let us pray.

Holy and mighty God,

**we give you thanks for the triumph of Christ
in the lives of all his saints.**

**Receive all we offer you this day,
and help us, like them, to run our course with faith,
so that we may come to your eternal kingdom.**

We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

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

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord Our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Blessed are you, gracious God . . .

...to proclaim the glory of your name:

SANCTUS

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might

Heaven and earth are full, full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest

We give thanks to you...

..therefore, Loving God, according to his command:

We remember his death, we proclaim his resurrection, we await his coming in glory.

And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving . . .

...now and forever. Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

As our Saviour taught us, let us pray,

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.

BREAKING OF THE BREAD

Creator of all,

you gave us golden fields of wheat,

whose many grains we have gathered

and made into this one bread.

So may your Church be gathered
from the ends of the earth
into your reign of justice and peace.

These are the gifts of God and we are the people of God.
Thanks be to God.

THE COMMUNION

THE PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray:

Lord of hosts,
we praise your glory reflected in your saints.
May we who share at this table
be filled with the joy of your eternal kingdom,
where Jesus is Lord, now and for ever. Amen.

Glory to God,
whose power, working in us,
can do infinitely more
than we can ask or imagine.
Glory to God from generation to generation,
in the Church and in Christ Jesus,
for ever and ever. Amen.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

THREE MINUTES FOR STEWARDSHIP

PRIEST'S BLESSING

SENDING HYMN

SENDING OUT

Go forth in peace and love, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit! **Thanks be to God.**

TODAY'S WORSHIP TEAM

Presider: Emilie Smith
Music: Sathia Aruliah, Patti Powell
Prayers: Roland Gwan
Readers: Donna Bridgman, Martha Cameron