



Flowing with Joy, Walking with God.



**Catherine of Siena
April 29, 2021
Service of Healing • 6:15 pm
The Reverend Sarah van Gulden
Priest-in-Charge**

Opening Sentences

Presider The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.

People **And also with you.**

Presider Let us pray.

Loving God, the comfort of all who sorrow, the strength of all who suffer: accept our prayers and grant the power of your grace, that the weak may be strengthened, sickness turned to health, the dying made whole, and sorrow turned into joy; through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

The Collect of the Day

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God, who kindled the flame of your love in the heart of your servant Catherine of Siena: Grant unto us the same strength of conviction and power of love that, as we rejoice in her triumph, we may profit by her example; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The First Reading

1 John 1:5-2:2

A Reading from the First Letter of John.

This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him while we are walking in darkness, we lie and do not do what is true; but if we walk in the

light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

Thanks be to God.

The Response

Psalm 36

There is a voice of rebellion deep in the heart of the wicked; *
there is no fear of God before his eyes.

**He flatters himself in his own eyes *
that his hateful sin will not be found out.**

The words of his mouth are wicked and deceitful, *
he has left off acting wisely and doing good.

**He thinks up wickedness upon his bed
and has set himself in no good way; *
he does not abhor that which is evil.**

Your love, O LORD, reaches to the heavens, *
and your faithfulness to the clouds.

**Your righteousness is like the strong mountains,
your justice like the great deep; *
you save both man and beast, O LORD.**

How priceless is your love, O God! *

your people take refuge under the shadow of your wings.

They feast upon the abundance of your house; *

you give them drink from the river of your delights.

For with you is the well of life, *

and in your light we see light.

Continue your loving-kindness to those who know you, *

and your favor to those who are true of heart.

Let not the foot of the proud come near me, *

nor the hand of the wicked push me aside.

See how they are fallen, those who work wickedness! *

they are cast down and shall not be able to rise.

The Gospel

Luke 12:22-31

Presider The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to
Luke.

People Glory to you Lord Christ.

Jesus said to his disciples, “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat, or about your body, what you will wear. For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds! And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? If then you are not able to do so small a thing as that, why do you worry about the rest? Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you—you of little faith! And do not keep striving for what you are to eat and what you are to drink, and do not keep worrying. For it is the nations of the world that strive

after all these things, and your Father knows that you need them. Instead, strive for his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you Lord Christ.

Reflection

Litany for Healing

Loving God, we hold in your healing presence those who suffer pain and ill-health, with their families, and all who care for them.

May they know the deep peace of Christ.

Loving God, we hold in your healing presence those who suffer in mind and spirit, and all who care for them.

May they know the deep peace of Christ.

Loving God, we hold in your healing presence the suffering people of our world, and all the places where people are experiencing despair and loss.

May they know the deep peace of Christ.

Loving God, we hold in your healing presence those facing bereavement, and we pray for all who have died.

May they know the deep peace of Christ.

Loving God, we give you thanks for health restored and prayers answered. We hold in your healing presence those whose needs are known to you alone.

May they know the deep peace of Christ.

May your wisdom, God, guide nurses, doctors, first responders and those who work in every part of Health Services across the world.

May your presence strengthen all who work for the benefit and well-being of all.

May they be strengthened for the tasks set before them.

God of compassion and love, we offer you all our uncertainty and suffering, Give us strength to bear our weakness, healing even when there is no cure, Peace in the midst of turmoil, And love to uphold and strengthen us. Glory to God who brings healing and light into all places. May the peace of Christ bear us into new life this day and evermore.

Amen.

Prayers adapted from the Iona Abbey Worship Book

The Lord's Prayer

**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, and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

Closing Prayer

**Generous God, we give you thanks for your beloved
Jesus Christ, in whom you have shared the beauty and
pain of human life. Look with compassion upon all for
whom we pray, and strengthen us to be your
instruments of healing in the world, by the power of
the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

The Blessing

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Creator, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Catherine Benincasa was the youngest of twenty-five children of a wealthy dyer of Siena. At six years of age, she had a remarkable vision that probably decided her life's vocation. Walking home from a visit, she stopped on the road and gazed upward, oblivious to everything around her. "I beheld our Lord seated in glory with St. Peter, St. Paul, and St. John." She went on to say, later, that the Savior smiled on her and blessed her.

From then on, Catherine spent most of her time in prayer and meditation, despite her mother's attempts to force her to be like other girls. To settle matters, Catherine cut off her hair, her chief beauty. The family harassed her continually; but in the end, convinced that she was deaf to all opposition, her father let her do as she would: close herself away in a darkened room, fast, and sleep on boards. Eventually, she was accepted as a Dominican postulant.

Catherine had numerous visions, and was also tried most severely by loathsome temptations and degrading images. Frequently, she felt totally abandoned by the Lord. At last, in 1366, the Savior appeared with Mary and the Heavenly Host, and espoused her to himself, so ending her years of lonely prayer and struggle. She became a nurse, as Dominicans regularly did, caring for patients with leprosy and cancer whom other nurses disliked to treat.

Opinion in Siena was sharply divided about whether she was a saint or a fanatic, but when the Bishop of Capua was appointed her confessor, he helped her to win full support from the Dominican Mother House. Catherine was a courageous worker in time of severe plague; she visited prisoners condemned to death; she constantly was called upon to arbitrate feuds and to prepare troubled sinners for confession.

During the great schism of the papacy, with rival popes in Rome and Avignon, Catherine wrote tirelessly to princes, kings, and popes, urging them to restore the unity of the Church. She even went to Rome to press further for the cause.

Besides her many letters to all manner of people, Catherine wrote a *Dialogue*, a mystical work dictated in ecstasy. Exhausted and paralyzed, she died at the age of thirty-three.

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