

Ashburton and Moorland Team

The Blessed Virgin Mary

15th August 2021



The Gathering

In the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Hymn - All my hope on God is founded

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W2oYTtyBSxk>

All my hope on God is founded
he does still my trust renew;
me through change and chance he guideth,
only good and only true.
God unknown, he alone,
calls my heart to be his own.

Pride of man and earthly glory,
sword and crown, betray his trust;
what with care and toil he buildeth,
tower and temple, fall to dust,
but God's power, hour by hour,
is my temple and my tower.

Still from man to God eternal
sacrifice of praise be done,
high above all praises praising
for the gift of Christ, his Son.
Christ doth call one and all:
ye who follow shall not fall.

Prayer of Preparation

**Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

Prayers of Penitence

The Summary of the Law

Our Lord Jesus Christ said:

The first commandment is this:

‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is the only Lord.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,
with all your soul, with all your mind,
and with all your strength.’

The second is this: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’

There is no other commandment greater than these.

On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

Amen. Lord, have mercy.

Confession

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son Jesus Christ
to save us from our sins, to be our advocate in heaven,
and to bring us to eternal life.

Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith,
firmly resolved to keep God’s commandments
and to live in love and peace with all.

**Almighty God, our heavenly Father,
we have sinned against you
and against our neighbour
in thought and word and deed,
through negligence, through weakness,
through our own deliberate fault.
We are truly sorry and repent of all our sins.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, who died for us,
forgive us all that is past
and grant that we may serve you in newness of life
to the glory of your name. Amen.**

Almighty God,
who forgives all who truly repent,
have mercy upon us,
pardon and deliver us from all our sins,
confirm and strengthen us in all goodness,
and keep us in life eternal;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Gloria in Excelsis

**Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.**

**Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.**

**For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

The Collect

Almighty God,
who looked upon the lowliness of the Blessed Virgin Mary
and chose her to be the mother of your only Son:
grant that we who are redeemed by his blood
may share with her in the glory of your eternal kingdom;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

.¶ The Liturgy of the Word

Readings

Isaiah 61:10,11

I will greatly rejoice in the Lord,
my whole being shall exult in my God;
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,
so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise
to spring up before all the nations.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Galatians 4:4-7

When the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!' So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Hymn – For Mary, mother of our Lord

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IWS-Jtaly7w>

For Mary, Mother of our Lord
God's holy name be praised,
who first the Son of God adored
as on her child she gazed.

The angel Gabriel brought the word
she should Christ's mother be;
our Lady, handmaid of the Lord,
made answer willingly.

The heavenly call she thus obeyed,
and so God's will was done;
the second Eve love's answer made
which our redemption won.

Dear Mary, from your lowliness
and home in Galilee,
there comes a joy and holiness
to every family.

Hail, Mary, you are full of grace,
above all women blest;
and blest your Son, whom your embrace
in birth and death confessed.

Gospel Reading

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke
Glory to you, O Lord.

Luke 1:46-55

When Mary met Elizabeth, she said,
'My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,
for he has looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant.
Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;
for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name.
His mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.
He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.
He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,
and lifted up the lowly;
he has filled the hungry with good things,
and sent the rich away empty.
He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants for ever.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

The Sermon

Today's Gospel is "The Magnificat" – words spoken by Mary when she had travelled some fifty miles to see her pregnant cousin Elizabeth. They were both expecting, and were both incredibly excited about having their first child.

Their pregnancies were going well – perhaps they were around the sixth month mark – and so they felt confident that their children would be ok.

And they were clearly chatting about their expectations of their children. Elizabeth was to give birth to John the Baptist, and Mary to Jesus.

It was a very happy occasion – when Mary arrived at her house, Elizabeth felt her baby “leap in the womb”. So it was very natural that they started talking about their hopes for their first born – but from very different viewpoints.

Elizabeth was old, had long given up any hope of having a child, thinking she was barren; but then an angel told her husband Zechariah that she would bear a son – he was astonished and she was delighted, and incredibly happy.

Mary had also had a visit from an angel, saying that she would bear a son, but she felt she was too young rather than too old, and at the time was scared stiff.

However all was going well with them both, and so they got to speculating about what role their children would have. Elizabeth, the older mum, was enthusing about the future of Mary’s child rather than her own. I expect she felt that Mary was needing lots of support and encouragement because Mary’s baby was going to be so important.

Elizabeth knew the prophecy that Mary had been given by the angel “You will bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David.” And she knew that Mary would value her support, and delighted that she had made the journey to visit her.

So she said to her “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me?”

Mary must have been delighted and encouraged to hear this, but it didn’t turn her head. Instead she spoke words from her heart, expressing how wonderful God was, and how small she felt.

“Magnificat” is Latin, and translates as “I magnify”. God was big, and Mary was small.

“I magnify the Lord” she said, “for he has looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant.” She would have felt lowly for several reasons:

- she was a young teenager, feeling perhaps she didn’t know enough of the world, and lacking confidence.
- she had no status in society, was just an ordinary young girl tasked with something incredibly amazing.
- she was puzzled as to why God had chosen her. It just seemed so unlikely!

And yet she was growing in her confidence in God. I get the feeling that as her pregnancy settled down she had thought more and more about the role that God had given her, and was getting increasingly excited about the potential impact that her son could have.

She was feeling really good about the commission that God had given her. Not overawed, but thinking through all the things that were wrong with society, that she could see needed changing, and that her son could do something about.

The proud – the thoughts of their hearts would be disrupted and scattered, as they realised that their arrogance was unjustified and they weren’t important after all. Yes!

The powerful on their thrones – they needed bringing down a peg or two – bring them face to face with the consequences of their actions, and make them rule more justly, being fair to all. Yes!

The lowly – they needed recognition and fairer pay since they were the people that grew the crops, harvested the grapes, built the houses, sawed the wood, and produced all the good things that the wealthy enjoyed. Yes!

The hungry – no-one should feast while some were starving. The hungry need filling with good things. Yes!

The rich – let them try living on an empty stomach. Send them away empty. Make them realise that everyone needs enough food to live on. Yes!

I can see Mary dreaming of this revolutionary agenda, and her son wasn't even born yet!

But I'm sure she was thinking of the opportunities she would have as his mother. She would bring him up to think and talk about the issues that concerned her so deeply.

Years later, having brought up the young Jesus to understand her view of the problems in society, I can picture Mary's delight when she saw Jesus passionately talking about these issues throughout his ministry; telling people about God, pricking the bubble of their complacency and arrogance, bringing them to confess their faults, and encouraging them to follow him.

Mary was inspired by God. She rejoiced in her understanding of God. She caught His vision. She passed it on to her son, and he to us.

Of course it's our vision too – the job is not done. Today, tomorrow, and for as long as we live, we need to continue to fulfil Mary and Jesus' vision of how the world should be – how the Kingdom of God can be made real for everyone.

Amen.

The Nicene Creed

***I / We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.***

***I / We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God, begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,
was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and was made man.***

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**// We believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

**// We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
// We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
// We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come.
Amen.**

The Peace

We are the body of Christ.
In the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body.
Let us then pursue all that makes for peace
and builds up our common life.

The peace of the Lord be always with us.

Hymn – The Servant King

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PEjnhT-GfKs>

From heaven you came, helpless babe,
entered our world, your glory veiled;
not to be served but to serve,
and give your life that we might live
*This is our God, the Servant King,
he calls us now to follow Him,
to bring our lives as a daily offering
of worship to The Servant King.*

There in the garden of tears,
my heavy load he chose to bear;
his heart with sorrow was torn,
'Yet not my will but yours,' he said
This is our God, The Servant King...

Come see his hands and his feet,
the scars that speak of sacrifice,
hands that flung stars into space
to cruel nails surrendered.
This is our God, The Servant King ...

So let us learn how to serve,
and in our lives enthrone him;
each other's needs to prefer,
for it is Christ we're serving.
This is our God, The Servant King...

Prayers of Intercession

In the power of the Spirit and in union with Christ,
let us pray to the Father.

In joy and hope we pray.
Lord, in your mercy
hear our prayer.

We thank you for the example and wisdom of Mary;
we pray for all who are expecting children,
especially for those with health issues in their pregnancy,
that they may find the support and companionship they need.
Lord, in your mercy
hear our prayer.

We pray that children may be brought up to respect justice and fairness,

and that those children who are in danger may find protection.

Lord, in your mercy

hear our prayer.

We pray that people in all countries and places of oppression may find fresh strength and support in their struggles,

Lord, in your mercy

hear our prayer.

We give thanks for Mary's humility.

May we learn to be subject to one another in Christian love, learning ways of generosity and peace.

Lord, in your mercy

hear our prayer.

We pray for a more equal sharing of the world's resources, that their may be fair provision for those who lack food, work, or shelter.

Lord, in your mercy

hear our prayer.

We pray for all those suffering from anxiety, loneliness or isolation at this uncertain time.

Lord, in your mercy

hear our prayer.

We pray for the sick,

the weak, the dying and those who mourn.

In a moment of silence, let us bring before God

those whom we know to be in particular need at this time

Lord, in your mercy

hear our prayer.

**Merciful Father, accept these prayers
for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

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

Hymn – Tell out my soul

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=McOJnCtIBHg>

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord!
Unnumbered blessings give my spirit voice;
tender to me the promise of his word;
in God my Saviour shall my heart rejoice.

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his Name!
Make known his might, the deeds his arm has done;
his mercy sure, from age to age to same;
his holy Name, the Lord, the Mighty One.

Tel out my soul, the greatness of his might
powers and dominions lay their glory by.
Proud hearts and stubborn wills are put to flight,
the hungry fed, the humble lifted high.

Tell out, my soul, the glories of his word!
Firm is his promise, and his mercy sure.
Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord
to children's children and for evermore!

¶ *Ending*

God most high,
whose handmaid bore the Word made flesh:
we thank you that you visit us with your Holy Spirit
and overshadow us by your power;
strengthen us to walk with Mary the joyful path of obedience
and so to bring forth the fruits of holiness;
through Jesus Christ our Lord
Amen

The Blessing

The peace of God,
which passes all understanding,
keep our 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 Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among us and remain with us always.
Amen.