

15th November 2020 – The Second Sunday before Advent

Collect - Heavenly Lord,
you long for the world's salvation:
stir us from apathy,
restrain us from excess
and revive in us new hope
that all creation will one day be healed
in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

OLD TESTAMENT – Zephaniah 1.7, 12 –end

Be silent before the Lord GOD!
For the day of the LORD is at hand;
the LORD has prepared a sacrifice,
he has consecrated his guests.
At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps,
and I will punish the people
who rest complacently on their dregs,
those who say in their hearts,
'The LORD will not do good,
nor will he do harm.'
Their wealth shall be plundered,
and their houses laid waste.
Though they build houses,
they shall not inhabit them;
though they plant vineyards,
they shall not drink wine from them.
The great day of the LORD is near,
near and hastening fast;
the sound of the day of the LORD is bitter,
the warrior cries aloud there.
That day will be a day of wrath,
a day of distress and anguish,
a day of ruin and devastation,
a day of darkness and gloom,
a day of clouds and thick darkness,
a day of trumpet blast and battle cry
against the fortified cities
and against the lofty battlements.
I will bring such distress upon people
that they shall walk like the blind;
because they have sinned against the LORD,
their blood shall be poured out like dust,
and their flesh like dung.
Neither their silver nor their gold
will be able to save them
on the day of the LORD's wrath;
in the fire of his passion

the whole earth shall be consumed;
for a full, a terrible end
he will make of all the inhabitants of the earth.

NEW TESTAMENT - 1 Thessalonians 5.1-11

Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters,
you do not need to have anything written to you. For you
yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like
a thief in the night. When they say, 'There is peace and security',
then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labour pains
come upon a pregnant woman, and there will be no escape! But
you, beloved, are not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like
a thief; for you are all children of light and children of the day; we
are not of the night or of darkness. So then, let us not fall asleep
as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober; for those who
sleep sleep at night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night.
But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the
breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of
salvation. For God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining
salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that
whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him.
Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as
indeed you are doing.

HYMN FOR REFLECTION

**Come to us, creative spirit,
In our Father's House
Every human talent hallow
Hidden skills arouse
That, within your earthly temple
Wise and simple
May rejoice.**

**Poet, painter and music-maker
All your treasures bring
Craftsman, cator, graceful dancer
Make your offering
Join your hands in celebration
Let Creation
Shout and sing!**

**Word from God eternal springing
Fill our minds, we pray
And in all artistic vision
Give integrity**

**May the flame within us burning
Kindle yearning**

**In all places and forever
Glory be expressed
To the Son, with God the Father
And the Spirit blessed
In our worship and our living
Keep us striving
For the best.**

GOSPEL – Matthew 25.14-30

Jesus said 'For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, "Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents." His master said to him, "Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master." And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, "Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents." His master said to him, "Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master." Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, "Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours." But his master replied, "You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."