

# LIVERPOOL PARISH CHURCH

OUR LADY & ST NICHOLAS

## **Worship at home for the Second Sunday before Advent**

**15<sup>th</sup> November 2020**

*Find yourself a quiet, comfortable space that will allow your heart, mind and soul to focus on prayer and contemplation. You can pray these words out loud, quietly, in your head, or using a mixture of these approaches – whatever suits you best.*

*If you have a candle light it, and/or you can use a cross, crucifix, icon, or something else that gives you a visual focus to aid your time of prayer to, and worship of, Jesus Christ, the light of the world, the way, and the truth and the life.*

*Spend some time thinking about the past week, and bring before God anything that is troubling you, that you feel has challenged you, and that you feel you want God's help and guidance with. Then pray:*

**Lord, have mercy.  
Christ, have mercy.  
Lord, have mercy.**

**Grant, we beseech you, merciful Lord, to your faithful people pardon and peace, that they may be cleansed from all their sins and serve you with a quiet mind; 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.**

Pray today's 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.**

*Now read through these passages from The Bible:*

### **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.

### **I 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.

### **Matthew 25.14-30**

'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."

*Spend some time thinking about the Bible readings. Here are some ideas you might want to reflect on in your prayers:*

- The coming of the Lord is seen by some as a time of judgement, and others as a time of peace. The Bible shows us both models, and in this Old Testament passage it suggests that it will be a "day of wrath". It is an uncomfortable reading. The pandemic is not a judgement from God, but it has made a lot of people anxious. Think about times when you have felt anxious or distressed in the last week and offer those moments to God. Pray for yourself, that your world may be one of peace.
- Like the first reading, the New Testament reading is also one to inspire terror. But the reading says that it doesn't have to be like that. Try and remember times when you have felt that God was coming into your life. Was that a time of peace and acceptance? As we begin to think about the coming of Christ at Christmas, what preparations can you make in your life now? Are you finding your salvation is in God already?
- This week's Gospel sometimes feels a bit unfair on the slave who only had one talent to invest, but the message is that if you do not put the gifts you are given to good use, then you will get no reward from them. Make a list in your mind of your strengths and qualities – the gifts you have been given – and then think about how you have used them to serve God and neighbour. In prayer, give thanks to God for those gifts and for the ways you have been able to use them.

*Now spend some time in your own prayers. You may want to pray and give thanks for:*

- The Church across the world, and the communities that it serves
- All those who are physically, emotionally or spiritually isolated
- All those who are facing the fear of death, their own, or that of a loved one

- All medical, nursing, caring and support staff, and emergency responders around the world
- All businesses, business owners, industries and employees who are facing loss and change at this time of uncertainty
- Marginalised communities, the homeless, asylum seekers, and all those who are especially vulnerable at this time
- Essential service providers, frontline workers, volunteers, and charitable supporters
- Those named on the Parish prayer list from the Sunday service booklet which you can download from the “This Week” page of our website ([https://www.livpc.co.uk/whats\\_on/this\\_week.html](https://www.livpc.co.uk/whats_on/this_week.html))

*Then finish with your own prayers and intercessions with 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.**

*If you have a candle, put it out when you end this time of worship, but perhaps keep your sacred space set up, so that you can use it whenever you need to, and keep the Bible readings and prayer for the week, praying, reading, reflecting and thinking about them over the next seven days.*

*The clergy and community of Liverpool Parish Church are praying for you, your family, our city, our country, and our world.*