

Contemplative Noonday Prayer & Scriptural Reflection August 20, 2025

St. Columba's Episcopal Church, Inverness, CA

St. Ethelbert, King and Confessor



Died 616

Please respond to any parts labeled “& All” on mute.

Mother Teri: O God, make speed to save us.

Assistant & ALL: O Lord, make haste to help us.

+ Glory to You O Eternal Source, Divine Savior, and Holy Spirit:

As it was in the beginning is now and will be forever.

Amen

The Collect

Assistant & All: O God who created Wisdom in the beginning to stand with us; at this current crossroad we ask understanding, patience and courage for all peoples of our world, especially those who lead us, so that our planet may be healed through your grace which flows through each of us; in your Name we pray, Amen. (Jan 27, 2021, St. Columba's Noonday Prayer Group)



Psalm 77: 1-4, 11-15 (NRSV)

Mother Teri will read the lines in plain font; *please join by repeating the lines in **bold italics** at home on mute.*

Psalm 77: 1-4, 11-15 (NRSV)

I cry aloud to God,

aloud to God, that he may hear me.

In the day of my trouble I seek the Lord;

***in the night my hand is stretched out without
wearying;***

my soul refuses to be comforted.

I think of God, and I moan;

I meditate, and my spirit faints.

Selah

You keep my eyelids from closing;

I am so troubled that I cannot speak.

I will call to mind the deeds of the LORD;

I will remember your wonders of old.

I will meditate on all your work,
and muse on your mighty deeds.

Your way, O God, is holy.

What god is so great as our God?

You are the God who works wonders;

you have displayed your might among the peoples.

With your strong arm you redeemed your people,

the descendants of Jacob and Joseph.

Selah

Assistant: *Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and
to the Holy Spirit:*

Mother Teri: *As it was in the beginning, is now, and
will be forever. Amen.*

Mother Teri:

*A reading from the Holy Gospel according to St
Matthew 4:1-11*

New Revised Standard Version

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted for forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished. The tempter came and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.' But he answered, 'It is written,

“One does not live by bread alone,
but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.” ’

Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, ‘If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written,
“He will command his angels concerning you”,
and “On their hands they will bear you up,
so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.” ’

Jesus said to him, ‘Again it is written, “Do not put the Lord your God to the test.” ’ Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour; and he said to him, ‘All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Away with you, Satan! for it is written,
“Worship the Lord your God,
and serve only him.” ’

Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

Mother Teri: Hear what the Spirit is saying.

Assistant & All: Thanks be to God.

Celtic Contemplation: 15 minutes

Please sit comfortably and close your eyes for 15 minutes of silent meditation. Chimes will sound to begin and end the time. For today's reflection:

“You are the peace of all things calm.”

(Celtic oral tradition - 1st millennium)

Please follow along and chant the Kyrie with us while on mute. We will chant it once.

Mother Teri / Assistant

Kyrie Eleison (***Kyrie Eleison***)

Christe Eleison (***Christe Eleison***)

Kyrie (***Kyrie***), Christe (***Christe***) Eleison (***Eleison***)



Mother Teri: Lord, hear our prayer;

Assistant: And let our cry come to you.

God of compassion,

teach us how to embody your love

God of faithfulness

help us to be constant in service

God of creation

give us compassion for all your children

God of blessing

hear our prayers¹

Please offer your intercessions here, aloud or silently. Prayers given aloud are followed with:

Mother Teri: We pray to the Lord

Assistant Lord, hear our prayer

Continue after personal intercessions with...

Mother Teri: God of love

Assistant: draw our hearts to you²

Be their light in darkness.

Be their hope in distress. Be their calm in anxiety.

Be strength in their weakness.

Be their comfort in pain. Be their song in the night.

¹Daily Prayer for All Seasons, p. 13

²Daily Prayer for All Seasons, p. 13

³excerpted from the Ita Compline, Northumbria Community.

Mother Teri: Please join now on mute in praying as Jesus taught...

Our Father in heaven,

Mother Teri & All: 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.

Assistant: Let us bless the Lord.

Mother Teri & All: Thanks be to God.

Please remain for discussion on today's topic and scriptural reading

St. Ethelbert, King and Confessor Died 616

The first of the Anglo-Saxons to receive the Christian faith was the premier king, or Bretwalda, of the Saxon confederation, respected not only as a grandson of Hengist but also as a great warrior. He married Bertha, a Christian

Princess from Gaul, and agreed that she should continue to practise her religion and bring with her Luidhard, the Bishop of Senlis, as her chaplain. Ethelbert gave his Queen the ancient church of St. Martin in Canterbury, built in Roman times, which he restored. It stood outside the city walls and there is a small postern gate still there, known as the Quenin Gate, through which she passed daily to hear mass.

His marriage made Ethelbert well-disposed towards Augustine when he arrived with his monks in the Isle of Thanet, but he was cautious. He would not meet these strangers except in the open air in case they should work upon him some magical charm, and so it was that he received Augustine seated under an oak tree with Bertha by his side. He listened to the words of the Gospel translated to him by an interpreter, and when they were ended he said that he could not immediately abandon all that he held sacred, but the Christian missionaries were free to preach in his kingdom. He gave to them a piece of land between the walls and St. Martin's, where the monks established their monastery, which became the great Abbey of SS Peter and Paul. The fourteenth century gate-house, known as the Fyndon Gate, has a figure carved on one of the battlements of St. Ethelbert looking over his city.

The king watched carefully the behaviour of these Christians and became convinced of the truth of what they preached, so on Whitsunday 597, with many of his nobles

and subjects, he received baptism in the river Stour. Augustine went to France to be consecrated bishop, and on his return, Ethelbert presented him with his palace inside the walls, which was consecrated as the Cathedral Church of Christ. In fact this building was probably the basilica, or town hall, of the Roman town of Durovernum. The King retired to his palace at Reculver, another of the old Roman buildings, but continued to assist Augustine and his company by giving them land at Rochester, where another Cathedral was built, this time dedicated to St. Andrew. He also influenced his nephew Sabert, King of the East Saxons, to embrace the faith and to give the land on which to build St. Paul's Cathedral for London, which was probably an ancient Christian site on which the British had previously erected a church, then in ruins.

In his letter to Ethelbert, St. Gregory bids him follow the example of Constantine, the first Christian Emperor, in establishing the faith of Christ in his dominions. He ends with a blessing, May grace from on high keep your excellency safe, my Lord Son. St. Ethelbert was to reign another twenty years after his conversion, and it is recorded that during that time he was always fair, never using pressure on any to become a Christian and only having greater affection for those who did, not showing them added favours. He died in 616 and was buried in SS. Peter and Paul with his Queen, Bertha, and the good Bishop Luidhard. The great tower, which stood at the west end of the Abbey Church, was called Ethelbert's Tower, and

remained standing after the impious dissolution, amidst the ruins of the monastery, until 1822 when most of it succumbed to a violent storm.

(<https://celticsaints.org/2021/0224a.html>)