

Lenten Evening Prayer

in the style of *Taizé*
Ecumenical
Community



*Grace Lutheran Church
3330 Gomer Street
Yorktown Heights, NY 10598*

5 Spiritual Fruits

Reading

Patience

Nancy Kangas

Reference desk, phone call, 8:19 p.m. She wanted to know
which laundry detergent to use in the front-loading machine
that she has been using for over a decade.

When I said, *May I put you on hold?*
I meant it. She said, *You take all the time you need.*
I did. I perfected a sentence in the email

I'd been writing to Josh and drafted a few more
about how we might develop our project proposal.
I may have even swiped all

over my slick sweet phone and opened every single app
that would tell me anything: the weather, the breaking,
the love others have.

I let my face ache. I took her time. When I came back
with a *Consumer Reports* article on the best laundry detergent
for front-loading machines she listened to every word

and said she was writing many of them down.

When I told her that the top-rated soap
had benefits of removing all sorts of stains

—blood, grass, chocolate, tea—
she told me she was a very old person
who lives alone and that nothing ever

gets truly dirty.

She asked about fabric softeners
so I read to her the *Consumer Reports* caveat

that if used on children's pajamas,
fabric softeners can undo the feature of retarding the flames,
and she gasped and wrote that down, too (I think).

She wanted to know where to go for this best soap
so I read to her some of the names of the stores
that might sell it—Walmart, Kroger, CVS—

and after each, she let out a sigh
like a porpoise surfacing.
Then she thanked me

for what I'd done,
for my patience,
and asked if she could tell my supervisor how

kind and good I was
and when I gave her Jennifer's name she asked if Jennifer
were there right now. I said Jennifer was not.

So I wished her a good evening
and she said, You have a wonderful
evening, with a warm engine in her voice.

I set the crap receiver back in the crap cradle
and thought, I am in the dark entryway
just inside the back door of her house and she is in her immaculate kitchen
resetting her own phone. She is glowing. She is the light. She sits on a chair
near a stack of folded linens and wears pressed pajamas.
There is the smell of hot cotton.

It is a childhood home.
It is a mother.

—from Rattle #59, Spring 2018

Invocation

P: In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen

Veni Sancte Spiritus

The congregation will sing the refrain continually while the cantor sings the verses.

The musical score is written for a congregation and a cantor. It features two staves: a treble clef staff for the cantor and a bass clef staff for the congregation. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 8/8. The cantor's part begins with a whole note chord (F#, A, C#) and then moves to a series of eighth notes. The congregation's part consists of a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The lyrics 'Ve - ni San - cte Spi - ri - tus.' are written below the cantor's staff. Above the cantor's staff, the letters 'A' and 'B7' are written, indicating the chords for the cantor's part.

Cantor Verses

- 1. Come from the four winds, O Spirit, come breath of God; disperse the shadows over us renew and strengthen your people.*
- 2. Father of the poor, come to our poverty. Shower upon us the seven gifts of your grace. Be the light of our lives.*
- 3. You are our only comforter, Peace of the soul. In the heat you shade us; in our labor you refresh us, and in trouble you are our strength.*
- 4. Kindle in our hearts the flame of your love that in the darkness of the world it may glow and reach to all forever.*

Prayer of the Day

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Let us pray.

C: God of all time, seconds and minutes, hours and days, weeks and months, years and aeons, pass in your presence as your plan for all time is carried out according to your rhythm and pace. Yet, we have our own plans and urgencies and find it difficult to discern the need to wait, to have patience, for almost anything. We need the answers.

We need everything to make sense. We need wholeness and peace. Now. Sometimes, we do not want to do the work and undertake the disciplines necessary to achieve what we are desiring – what you are offering. So, send your Spirit to tempter our impatience, to calm our accelerated anxieties, to restrain our resistance to the plodding feeling of true discipleship. Draw us into the timeless hope of your promises, that with the whole company of Saints of all ages we will join our lives and voices to the ceaseless adoration of your glory. We pray this in the name of the one who was, who is and who will be among us again, Jesus the Christ. Amen.

Scripture Reading – The Fruits of the Spirit

Galatians 5

It is for Freedom that Christ has set us free. Therefore, stand firm! Do not be subjected again to a yoke of slavery. . .

You were called to Freedom, brothers and sisters, only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for doing what is opposed to your new life in Christ. In other words, do not see your freedom as an opportunity to return to a life in the “Flesh” when Christ has given you the freedom of a life in the “Spirit” – a “Spiritual Life.” Instead, through the Wholistic Love you have experiences in Christ, serve one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word - "You will love your neighbor as yourself." If, however, you bite and devour one another, take care that you are not consumed by one another.

Instead, I say, walk about in the “Spirit” and do not give freedom to the passions of the old life in of the “Flesh.” For what life in the “Flesh” is passionate for is in opposition to life in the “Spirit,” and the life in the “Spirit” is in opposition to the life in the “Flesh;” for you cannot life in “Spirit” and in the “Flesh” simultaneously. If you try that, you are not able to do what you want. . .

The works of the “Flesh” are clearly evident. They are whatever is: an illicit relationship, corrupt, over-indulgent, idolatry, sorcery, unresolved division, strife, jealousy, wrath, competitiveness, antagonism, sectarianism, envy, alcoholism, a raucous hedonistic celebration of over-indulgent values, and things like these. I am warning you, as I warned you before, anyone doing such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

But, the fruit of the “Spirit” is wholistic love, great joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faith, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law

against such things. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the “Flesh” with its sufferings and drives. If we live by the “Spirit,” let us be in the ranks of the Spirit. Let us not become boastful, competing against one another, envying one another.

Silence

Confession & Kyrie

P: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

C: I confess to God Almighty, before the whole company of heaven, and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have sinned in thought, word, and deed by my fault, by my own fault, by my own most grievous fault; wherefore I pray God Almighty to have mercy on me, forgive me all my sins, and bring me to everlasting life. Amen.

Refrain Sung 3x by Congregation

The musical notation for the Kyrie refrain is presented on a two-staff system. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The bottom staff is in bass clef with the same key signature and time signature. Above the treble staff, the following chords are indicated: G, C, am, D, bm, em, am, D, G. The lyrics "Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son, Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son." are written below the notes. The melody consists of quarter and eighth notes, with some measures containing beamed eighth notes. The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Cantor Verses

1. Lord Jesus Christ, you were sent to heal the contrite, have mercy on us.
2. Lord Jesus Christ, you came to call all sinners, have mercy on us.
3. Lord Jesus Christ, you intercede for us, have mercy on us.

Reading

Exodus 32

When the God's people became impatient at the base of the mountain, wondering why Moses had been up on the summit for so long, and thinking that he was not coming back – probably because God had killed him up there – they gathered as a mob and came before Aaron, who Moses had left in charge before he went up the Mountain to talk with God.

The people said to Aaron, "Get up! Make a god for us who can go before us now! For, this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, has not come back and we do not know what has become of him."

Aaron said to them, "Remove the gold rings that are on the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me."

So, all the people took off the gold rings from their ears and brought them to Aaron. He took the gold from them, poured it into a mold, and cast an image of a calf.

Then the people said, "This is your god, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!"

When Aaron saw this, he built an altar in front of the calf and Aaron made the proclamation, "Tomorrow is a festival to Yahweh!"

Everyone got up early the next day and offered burnt offerings and brought sacrifices to the calf. Then the people sat down to eat and drink and stood up to dance and be merry.

Up on the Mountain Yahweh said to Moses, "Go down at once! **Your** people, whom you brought up out of the land of Egypt, have wrought ruin; they have been quick to turn aside from the way that I commanded them; they have cast for themselves an image of a calf, and have worshiped it and sacrificed to it, and said, 'These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!' I see this people - and here, how stiff-necked they are. Now leave me alone, so that my wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them; then I will make a great nation out of you, instead."

But Moses soothed the face of Yahweh his God, and said, "For what reason, O Yahweh, should your anger flare against your people whom **you** brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? For what reason should the Egyptians say, yes, say; 'It was with evil intent that he brought them out to kill them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth'? Turn from your flaming anger; be sorry for the evil you are feeling against your people! Recall Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants, how you swore to them by yourself, saying to them, 'I will multiply your descendants like the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have promised I will give to your descendants, and they shall inherit it forever.'"

And Yahweh let himself be sorry concerning the evil that he had spoken of doing to his people.

Then Moses faced about to come down from the mountain, the two tablets of the covenant in his hands, tablets written on both sides, written on the front and on the back,

and the tablets were God's making, and the writing was the writing of God, engraved upon the tablets.

When Joshua, who had gone up the mountain with Moses, heard the noise of the people as they shouted and sang, he said to Moses, "There is a noise of war in the camp."

But Moses said,

"Not the sound of the song of prevailing,
not the sound of the song of failing,
the sound of the song of joy is what I hear."

As soon as he came near the camp and saw the calf and the dancing, Moses' anger burned hot, and he threw the tablets from his hands and broke them under the mountain. He took the calf that they had made, burned it with fire, ground it to powder, scattered it on the water, and made the Israelites drink it.

Silence

Our Eyes are Turned

The musical score is written for a four-part setting (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) in G major and 3/4 time. The melody is primarily in the Soprano and Alto parts. The lyrics are in Latin and English. The score is divided into two systems. The first system covers the first line of the lyrics, and the second system covers the second line. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The time signature is 3/4. The lyrics are: "O - cu - li nos - tri ad Do - mi - num Je - sum, Our eyes are turned to the Lord Je - sus Christ. —". The second system covers the second line of the lyrics: "o - cu - li nos - tri ad Do - mi - num nos - trum. Our eyes are turned to the Lord God, our Sav - ior." The score includes chord symbols above the notes: Em, D, G, D, Em, C, Am, B in the first system, and Em, D, G, D, Em, C, Am⁶, B, Em in the second system. The lyrics are written below the notes, with some words in English and some in Latin. The score is written in a standard musical notation with a treble and bass clef for each part.

Em D G D Em C Am B

O - cu - li nos - tri ad Do - mi - num Je - sum,
Our eyes are turned to the Lord Je - sus Christ. —

Em D G D Em C Am⁶ B Em

o - cu - li nos - tri ad Do - mi - num nos - trum.
Our eyes are turned to the Lord God, our Sav - ior.

Meditation on Patience

“Patience is a virtue. We're all familiar with that cliché, and many of us know that patience is listed by Paul in Galatians 5:22-23 as among the fruit of the Spirit. So there's no disputing that the Christian ought to be patient. But as with most of the virtues, the biblical writers assume that we know what patience is and don't give an explicit definition. But do we? Could you define patience if you were asked? And, to make things more tricky, could you do so without simply citing examples of patience? Starting with the basic definition of patience as "waiting without complaint," . . . patience might seem to be a morally insignificant trait. What's so virtuous about not complaining? In itself, not complaining carries no particular virtue. Suppose a person awaits the arrival of a friend from out of town, and she spends the time happily reading or watching television. We wouldn't say that, simply because she's not complaining, she exhibits patience in this case. Something else must be required to make one's lack of complaint virtuous. That something is discomfort. It's because a circumstance is uncomfortable for someone that we find her refusal to complain remarkable and thus regard her as patient. So to improve the initial definition above, to be patient is to endure discomfort without complaint. . . .”

This was how an article about *The Virtue of Patience* began in *Christianity Today*. The author went on to talk about different kinds of discomfort we might need different kinds of patience to endure; nuisances, boredom, suffering. Sure, we might call enduring these kinds of things as having “patience,” but what is really “virtuous” about just enduring for the sake of enduring. Nothing. “Patience” is not a goal in itself, for what value is there in simply being patient? None. Real patience is filled with hope and expectation for something to change, for the endurance to come to some kind of an end. Patience without hope and expectation is just resignation and, worse, despair. Patience has a goal. Which is why patience is a virtuous discipline that is required of the faithful. We wait in hope and expectation. We do not resign ourselves to despair in the face of the inevitable “discomforts.” Which also, seems a bit limited, for, there are times when the faithful are also called to be patient in our joy – think about a dark Christmas morning for a middle-class suburban 6 year old whose Christmas Tree and stocking are bursting with unopened

presents that her parents will not allow her to touch until the big hand is on the 12 and the little hand is on the 8! Real patience is keeping God's goal for us in mind and in practice in the midst of all life, not devolving into unfaithfulness and despair because things are not happening according to our agenda, but also not becoming ineffective through overzealous celebration of God's goodness that overlooks the discipline and discomfort of loving our neighbors who need our compassion as much as our exuberant hope and expectation. Patience, is a virtue, indeed, for it is part of walking in the Way of the Cross.

em

By the

am D

riv - - - ers of Ba-by-lon there we sat

em

and we wept. There we hung up our

am D em

har ps re - mem - - ber-ing home.

G am

It was there that they ask-ed us our

em am B7rit.

cap - tors for son - gs for joy. Oh,

em am em

how could we si - ng of the Lord on

am em Fine

a - li - en soil.

Cantor: If I forget you Jerusalem, let my righthand wither, my tongue cleave to my mouth, if I prize not Jerusalem above all my joys. Antiphon

Prayers from the Taizé Community . . .

P : Jesus our hope, in you we find the consolation with which God comes to flood our lives, and we understand that, in prayer, we can bring everything to you, entrust everything to you.

P : Jesus our peace, by your Gospel you call us to be very simple, very humble. You cause to grow within us an infinite gratitude for your constant presence in our lives.

P : God of consolation, even when we feel nothing of your presence, still, you are there. Your presence is invisible, but your Holy Spirit is always within us.

P : Holy Spirit, you have a call for everyone one of us. So come, prepare our hearts to discover what it is that you expect of each of us.

P : God of compassion, disconcerted by the incomprehensible suffering of the innocent, we pray for those who are experiencing times of trial. Inspire the hearts of those who seek the peace that is so indispensable for the whole human family.

P : God of consolation, you burden yourself with our burdens, so that we can move forward at every moment, from anxiety toward trust, from shadows toward light.

C: Gracious Lord, we give you thanks for the day, especially for the good we were permitted to give and to receive; the day is now past and we commit it to you. We entrust to you the night; we rest in surety, for you are our help, and you neither slumber nor sleep.

C: O Lord, support us all the day long of this troubled life, until the shadows lengthen and the evening comes and the busy world is hushed, the fever of life is over, and our work is done. Then, Lord, in your mercy, grant us a safe lodging, and a holy rest, and peace at the last; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Our Father who art in heaven hallowed by 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. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
 For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory now and forever.
 Amen.

Stay with Us

g m Eb7 c m a dim7 D g m d m7 Eb7

p Stay with us O Lord Je - sus Christ: night will soon

4 d m d m g m E m c m g m7 F Bb

fall. *mf* Then stay with us O Lord Je - sus Christ: *f*

7 c m Bb F g m D

light in our dark - ness. *p*

*Worshippers may remain in meditation as desired. Please
 leave in silence when you choose to do so.*

