

St Magnus Cathedral, Kirkwall

www.stmagnus.org

Scottish Charity SCO 05322/CCL No 119086



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Welcome to St Magnus Cathedral this morning. It was founded in 1137 by St Rognvald, in honour of Magnus, his uncle. The Cathedral belongs to the people of Orkney and its doors are open to all. If you are a visitor, we hope this order of service will help you feel part of our worship together.

SUNDAY 7th February

You can find our Sunday worship here.

<https://www.facebook.com/StMagnusCathedralCongregation/>

or on YouTube here.

<https://youtu.be/cPcHe1ArGtE>

Join our Wednesday ZOOM meditation by signing up here.

stmagnuszoom@gmail.com

Welcome

Opening meditation

In the lengthening of days,
Snowdrops emerging
from winter's frozen ground
we see the creator's hand.

Perfect, as though carved in green veined marble,
life pulsing through tissue delicate as the eyelids of a sleeping child,
curved like small fingers, holding on.

In the sight of a tiny lamb,
joyfully bounding
across hillside farm
we see the creator's hand.

Reading Mark 1 29-39 Kate Richmond

As soon as Jesus left the meeting place with James and John, they went home with Simon and Andrew. When they got there, Jesus was told that Simon's mother-in-law was sick in bed with fever. Jesus went to her. He took hold of her hand and helped her up. The fever left her, and she served them a meal.

That evening after sunset, all who were sick or had demons in them were brought to Jesus. In fact, the whole town gathered around the door of the house. Jesus healed all kinds of terrible diseases and forced out a lot of demons. But the demons knew who he was, and he did not let them speak. Very early the next morning, Jesus got up and went to a place where he could be alone and pray. Simon and the others started looking for him. And when they found him, they said, "Everyone is looking for you!"

Jesus replied, "We must go to the nearby towns, so that I can tell the good news to those people. This is why I have come." Then Jesus went to Jewish meeting places everywhere in Galilee, where he preached and forced out demons.

**For the word of God in scripture, For the word of God among us. For the
word of God within us.
We give thanks**

Reflection

Once a man was riding a galloping horse. As the horse and rider thundered past, an old farmer standing by a gate called out, "where are you going?"
"Don't ask me, ask the horse," the man yelled as he flashed by.

The man on horseback stands for the person whose life consists of non stop activity. Such a person is not free. They are slaves to their work. But the problem goes deeper. They are not in control of their life. It's as if some power has got into them that is driving them along. Is that a good way to live?

People can get so caught up in work that they haven't a minute for themselves. Activity can become a disease. This is a dangerous situation. People go on to suffer burnout or breakdown. Perhaps counter-intuitively, generous people are more at risk than selfish people. We need to take care of ourselves. It can't be all outputs and no input. Only by paying careful attention to our own physical, emotional, mental and spiritual needs can we remain joyful givers.

Even Jesus needed to take time out for himself, as we see from today's gospel passage. He was surrounded by the physically and mentally sick. Everybody was clamouring for him. He was in danger of being consumed. Yet in the middle of this hectic scene, we read, early in the morning, he got up and left the house, and went off to a lonely place to pray. Jesus prayed not only out of a sense of duty but also out of a sense of need.

What did the lonely place do for him? It enabled him to recover lost energy. It helped him to keep focused. But above all, it was during these hours of solitude that he maintained and fostered the most important thing in his life, his relationship with God. Here lies the secret of his successful ministry.

The most beneficial prayer of all is just to be in the presence of God, without saying or doing anything. Just to sit in the divine presence, as one might sit by a fire. This may sound easy, but in practise for many people it is very difficult. Because as soon as we stop, we feel empty, perhaps even useless. Most people get their sense of self worth from doing. Their value as people depends on their usefulness. They don't know how to cope with idleness and stillness. The result is that their lives can be shallow and superficial. On the other hand, when we immerse ourselves in the quiet and stillness of the divine presence, our projects lose their power over us, but we experience our true worth, which consists not in doing but in being.

The most important guide travelling on the way of God is simply to be aware of the divine presence. A lot of people try to equate love of God with social action. Of course prayer can become a selfish thing. It can become a cop out and an escape. But so too can work. Work can be a cop out from prayer and stillness from seeking an awareness of God. And without prayer, meditation, contemplation it can easily become totally self directed, self propelled, rather than being inspired by the presence of God.

We can lose ourselves in work. But we can also find ourselves in work. This is why we need a lonely place in our lives. We need to learn from the example of Jesus how to combine action and contemplation. Going away is not escaping, but leads to re-engagement. There is a time to give and a time to receive. For a healthy life we need to take care of both.

The gospels tell us that Jesus often went off to a lonely place to pray. Yet the same Jesus who prayed in lonely places said, when you pray, go into your room, and pray to your father in secret. This means that the lonely place is not necessarily a place far away, or that by 'room' he means four walls that separate us physically from others. The room is the room of our innermost heart. This room is with us at all times. We should make it a place to which we can go to find rest and spiritual recovery when the world is too much with us.

Then we will discover that the inner room is not empty after all, but is occupied by the love of God who dwells in us all.

COMMUNION

Come to the table of God.
God is revealed here
in fabric woven and spread,
in wax shaped and lighted,
in bread baked and broken;
in grapes grown and pressed;
in cup and plate moulded and passed.

Come to the table of God.
God is revealed here
in eyes filled with peace,
in hands gently open to receive,
in ears tuned to words of welcome,
in mouths filled with these gifts.

Come to the table of God.
You are welcome in this place
broken out of time
poured out of space

where we become one.

Together in Christ, let us celebrate the unity we share.
As many grains are gathered to make bread, and much fruit is mixed to make wine, So we who are many, and, at present, inhabit many places, are one in the Divine Life.

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Rejoicing in the indwelling Spirit of God in all creation, we bring to mind in this celebration:

The world around us, and all that is close to us in our lives,

This is my body.

The vastness of the Cosmos, the fragile earth,

This is my body.

The air we breathe, the sounds we hear,

This is my body.

The beauty of nature,
the uniqueness of living forms,

This is my body.

Those whom we love, our families and friends,

We are all one.

Those whom we meet in daily life,
and those whom we know to be in need,

We are all one.

The broken body of the world,
and all who we hold in our prayers,

We are all one.

Those who have passed from this world, and all who rejoice in the life of the Spirit,

We are all one.

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Jesus broke the bread
And gave it to his friends, saying: "Take this, all of you, and eat it; This is my Body,
Which is given for you."

We take this bread, praying that, By the power of the Holy Spirit, It may be for us

The Body of Christ
Given for us all, [The bread is broken]

The Divine Presence [The bread is elevated]
That makes all things sacred, all things holy, as one in the Eternal.

Agnus Dei by choir

Jesus gave the cup to his friends, saying: "Take this, all of you, and drink from
it:

This is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for many. Do this
in memory of me."

[cup is elevated]

Let us now join with the Church of all the
ages and all parts of the world as in our space we drink the cup to share in the
body of Christ.

Kyrie Eleison by choir

We all come from the One
and to the One we shall return, the One, the Centre of all.

Come. Take bread, and drink from the cup,
To celebrate that we are One with God
And God is One with us.

The Bread of Eternal Life to bless you and keep you
The Cup of Life for the life of us all.

Blessing

Deep peace of the running wave to you.
Deep peace of the flowing air to you.
Deep peace of the quiet earth to you.
Deep peace of the shining stars to you.
Deep peace of the Son of Peace to you. Amen.

May you stay safe in the Way of Christ, and may you be blessed by his Spirit
this day and always.