

Sunday Readings

17th November 2024

Collect

Grant us, we pray, O Lord our God,
the constant gladness of being devoted to you,
for it is full and lasting happiness
to serve with constancy
the author of all that is good.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the
Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

FIRST READING

A reading from the prophet Daniel 12:1-3

'At that time Michael will stand up, the great prince who mounts guard over your people. There is going to be a time of great distress unparalleled since nations first came into existence. When that time comes, your own people will be spared, all those whose names are found written in the Book. Of those who lie sleeping in the dust of the earth many will awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting disgrace. The learned will shine as brightly as the vault of heaven, and those who have instructed many in virtue, as bright as the stars for all eternity.'

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 15:5.8-11. R/v.1

R/. Preserve me, God, I take refuge in you.

O Lord, it is you who are my portion and cup;
it is you yourself who are my prize.
I keep the Lord ever in my sight:
since he is at my right hand, I shall stand firm. **R/.**

And so my heart rejoices, my soul is glad;
even my body shall rest in safety.
For you will not leave my soul among the dead,
nor let your beloved know decay. **R/.**

You will show me the path of life,
the fullness of joy in your presence
at your right hand happiness for ever. **R/.**



SECOND READING

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews 10:11-14. 18

All the priests stand at their duties every day, offering over and over again the same sacrifices which are quite incapable of taking sins away. Christ, on the other hand, has offered one single sacrifice for sins, and then taken his place for ever, at the right hand of God, where he is now waiting until his enemies are made into a footstool for him. By virtue of that one single offering, he has achieved the eternal perfection of all who he is sanctifying. When all sins have been forgiven, there can be no more sin offerings.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Mt 24:42. 44

Alleluia, alleluia!
Stay awake and stand ready, because you do not know the hour when the Son of Man is coming.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Mark 13:24-32

The Lord be with you. *And with your Spirit.*
A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark.
Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus said, 'In those days, after the time of distress, the sun will be darkened, the moon will lose its brightness, the stars will come falling from heaven and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory; then too he will send the angels to gather his chosen from the four winds, from the ends of the world to the ends of heaven.'

'Take the fig tree as a parable: as soon as its twigs grow supple and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. So with you when you see these things happening: know that he is near, at the very gates. I tell you solemnly, before this generation has passed away all these things will have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.'

'But as for that day or hour, nobody knows it, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son; no one but the Father.'

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Prayer after Communion

We have partaken of the gifts of this sacred mystery, humbly imploring, O Lord, that what your Son commanded us to do in memory of him may bring us growth in charity. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Thirty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

Lectionary Year B

The Word of God

Saint of the Week

Sunday 17 November 2024

St Hilda (614 - 680)

Towards the ends of their Gospels, Matthew, Mark and Luke recount the 'eschatological discourse' in which Jesus tells of the culmination of history, with "the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory".

We know from his parables that Jesus often spoke cryptically, and that is even more the case in this discourse. To confuse things further, much of what he says concerns not so much the end of the world as the destruction of Jerusalem (which would take place under the Romans in the year 70 AD). The disciples would not have had a clear idea of the meaning of each part of the prediction, and how distant Christ's return actually was. Doubtless many of them surmised it would be in their own lifetimes.

Over the ages we have learnt to be sceptical when people have given definite dates for the Second Coming—of course, always getting it wrong. Jesus himself tells us in the Gospel: "As for that day or hour, nobody knows it, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son; no one but the Father." It was not Jesus' mission to reveal this, so trying to work out specific details is doomed to failure. Jesus instead leads us to entrust the future to divine providence. God is in control, and even the most fearful events are really signs that final redemption is close, that Christ "is near, at the very gates". Our call is to live the present moment faithfully, knowing we will one day account for how we used God's gifts.

If we are living in the love of God and with trust in his plan, the end of history is not primarily something to be feared but something that fills us with hope. Until then, we follow Jesus' words quoted in the Gospel Acclamation: "Be watchful, pray constantly, that you may be worthy to stand before the Son of Man."

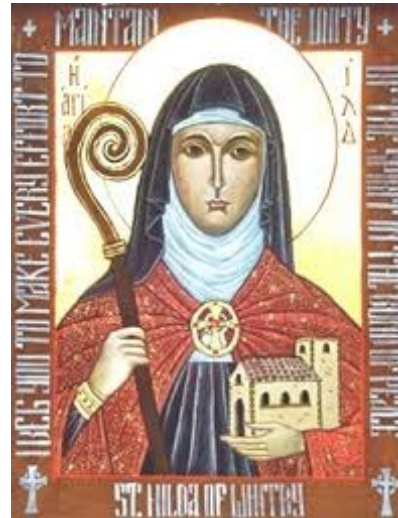
Prayer of the Week

A Morning Prayer

Bless this day
all that I might see,
all that I might hear,
all that I might smell,
all that I might say.

Bless this day
all that I might serve,
all that I might comfort,
all that I might help,
all that I might guide.

Bless this day



Saint Hilda (or Hild) was born in Northumbria in 614. She was the grandniece of King Edwin of Northumbria and was not baptised until the age of 13, when she was received into the Church by Paulinus at York, at the same time as King Edwin and many of his nobles.

The first part of Hilda's life was spent in the ordinary secular pursuits of the day. But these were years of constant warfare and in

655, her sister Hereswith, the wife of the King of the East Angles, suffered the loss of her husband in battle and decided to withdraw from the world to the monastery of Cale in Paris where she entered religious life. At the age of 33, Hilda decided to follow her and was only prevented from doing so by the intervention of St Aidan who directed her first to establish a small religious house on the north bank of the Wear where she stayed for a year, and then to take charge of the monastery of Hieu at Hartlepool. She proved to be an able and wise superior and, after several years at Hartlepool, she set about establishing the famous double monastery at Whitby which she governed for the rest of her life.

Hilda was an extraordinary woman for her time. Her influence was widespread and her advice was valued by high and low alike. In her monastery she gave 'a great example of peace and charity', as Bede says 'all who knew her called her mother, such were her wonderful godliness and grace.' She laid emphasis on the study of the Scriptures and insisted on careful preparation for the priesthood, after the manner of St Aidan on Lindisfarne. Among her community was the first English poet, Caedmon, who had been the community's herdsman until his poetic genius was discovered. After the death of St Aidan, when the divisions between those who held the Celtic tradition and those who supported Roman ways became critical, it was at her monastery that the important Synod of Whitby was held in 644 to decide upon a common Church order among the rival parties.

Although her last seven years were a time of constant illness, she continued to lead her community to the end. Towards daybreak on 17 November 680 she asked for, and received, viaticum and died peacefully with her community around her or as St Bede says, 'she joyfully saw death approaching... and passed from death to life.'