

Morning Prayer – Saturday, March 28, 2020
New Zealand Book of Common Prayer

Opening Words
(as candle is lit)

We light a candle
to remember that we are not alone.

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. (Psalm 46:1)

O come, let us sing to the Lord,
let us rejoice in the rock of our salvation.
We sing to you, O God, and bless your name;
and tell of your salvation from day to day.
We proclaim your glory to the nations,
your praise to the ends of the earth.

Glory to the holy and undivided Trinity, One God
as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be for ever more. Amen.

(Be still and aware of the presence of the Divine within and all around)

Scripture – 1 Corinthians 13:1-13 (Contemporary English Version - CEV)

What if I could speak
all languages
of humans
and of angels?
If I did not love others,
I would be nothing more
than a noisy gong
or a clanging cymbal.
What if I could prophesy
and understand all secrets
and all knowledge?
And what if I had faith
that moved mountains?
I would be nothing,
unless I loved others.
What if I gave away all
that I owned
and let myself
be burned alive?
I would gain nothing,

unless I loved others.
Love is kind and patient,
never jealous, boastful,
proud, or rude.
Love isn't selfish
or quick tempered.
It doesn't keep a record
of wrongs that others do.
Love rejoices in the truth,
but not in evil.
Love is always supportive,
loyal, hopeful,
and trusting.
Love never fails!
Everyone who prophesies
will stop,
and unknown languages
will no longer
be spoken.
All that we know
will be forgotten.
We don't know everything,
and our prophecies
are not complete.
But what is perfect
will someday appear,
and what isn't perfect
will then disappear.
When we were children,
we thought and reasoned
as children do.
But when we grew up,
we quit our childish ways.
Now all we can see of God
is like a cloudy picture
in a mirror.
Later we will see him
face to face.
We don't know everything,
but then we will,
just as God completely
understands us.
For now there are faith,
hope, and love.
But of these three,
the greatest is love.

(a time for reflection on the reading)

Poem – “So?” by Leonard Nathan

So you aren't Tolstoy or Saint Francis
or even a well-known singer
of popular songs and will never read Greek
or speak French fluently,
will never see something no one else
has seen before through a lens or with the naked eye.

You've been given just the one life
in this world that matters
and upon which every other life
somehow depends as long as you live,
and also given the costly gifts of hunger,
choice, and pain with which to raise
a modest shrine to meaning.

Prayers

Make your ways known upon earth, O God,
your saving power among all peoples.

Renew your Church in holiness,
and help us to serve you with joy.

Guide the leaders of this and every nation,
that justice may prevail throughout the world.

Let not the needy, O God, be forgotten,
nor the hope of the poor be taken away.

Make us instruments of your peace,
and let your glory be over all the earth.

Holy and everliving God,
by your power we are created
and by your love we are redeemed;
guide and strengthen us by your Spirit,
that we may give ourselves to your service,
and live each day in love to one another and to you,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(Time of silence for personal thanksgivings and intercessions)

Closing words

(after which candle is extinguished)

In darkness and in light,
in trouble and in joy,
help us, heavenly Creator,
to trust your love,
to serve your purpose,
and to praise your name,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Spiritual Exercises:

- 1) In our reading from Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians we read about the love as our primary spiritual calling. Collage, draw or paint what love in action looks like to you.
- 2) Make a list of all the people who've loved you in your life (or better yet draw/write their names surrounding your name). Pray and give thanks for all these folks who've loved you.

Sources:

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Poem: "So?" by Leonard Nathan from *Carrying On: New and Selected Poems* (University Pittsburgh Press, 1985).

Scripture: *Contemporary English Version*, American Bible Society, 1995.