**Morning Worship for 7th February 2021**

***As we begin this act of worship let us remember all those not able to be with us who are joining us in their own homes, we remember that there are many friends who are doing the same and are joining with us in worship. Although we will not be having hymns in church for those of you at home If you have you-tube then please find an appropriate version of the suggested hymns and join in the singing on-line. As you go through this time of worship try to remember this reality; you are in the presence of God who holds us all in His care and keeping.***

**The Greeting:**

**Gilbert of Sempringham: Feast day 4th February.**

**Born in 1083 in Sempringham, the son of the squire, Gilbert became the parish priest in 1131. He encouraged the vocation of seven women of the town and formed them into a company of lay sisters. A group of lay brothers also came into being and they all kept the Benedictine Rule. Gilbert was unsuccessful in his bid to obtain pastoral guidance from Citeaux for the incipient communities and they came under the ambit of Augustinian canons Gilbert himself becoming the Master. At Gilbert’s death in 1189, aged 106, there were nine double monasteries in England and four of male canons only. It was the only purely English monastic foundation before the Dissolution of the Monasteries in the sixteenth century.**

**Collect for the Religious:**

Almighty God,

By whose grace Gilbert kindled with the fire of your love,

Became a burning and a shining light in the Church:

Inflame us with the same spirit of discipline and love,

That we may ever walk before you as children of light;

Through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,

Who is alive and reigns with you,

In the unity of the Holy Spirit,

One God, now and for ever.

**Amen.**

**Collect of the day:**

Almighty God,

You have created the heavens and the earth

And made us in your own image:

Teach us to discern your hand in all your works

And your likeness in all your children;

Through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,

Who with you and the Holy Spirit

Reigns supreme over all things,

Now and for ever.

**Amen.**

**Our Declaration of faith**

**All the earth, shout and sing for joy,**

**For great in your midst is the Holy One.**

**Behold, God is my salvation,**

**I will trust and will not be afraid;**

**For the Lord God is my strength and my song,**

**And has become my salvation.**

**With joy you will draw water**

**From the wells of salvation.**

**On that day you will say,**

**Give thanks to the Lord, call upon his name;**

**Make known his deeds among the nations,**

**Proclaim that his name is exalted.**

**Sing God’s praises, who has triumphed gloriously,**

**Let this be known in all the world.**

**Shout and sing for joy, you that dwell in Zion,**

**For great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.**

**All the earth, shout and sing for joy,**

**For great in your midst is the Holy One.**

*Isaiah 12: 2-6*

**Hymn:** Holy, Holy, Holy.

In church the hymn or music will be played for us to listen to reflectively.

**Readings**: Proverbs 8: 1. 22-31, Colossians 1: 15-20.

**Hymn**: We have a Gospel to proclaim.

In church the hymn or music will be played for us to listen to reflectively.

**Gospel Reading**: John 1: 1-14.

**Reflection:** This will be delivered by the Leader in church.

(For those at home a reflection will be sent through separately by Clive.)

**Hymn:** How sweet the name of Jesus sounds.

In church the hymn or music will be played for us to listen to reflectively.

**Prayers for others:** This morning let us pause for prayer for so many people and for so many situations.

We come boldly to the throne of grace,

Let us pray to the Father through Christ who is our light and life.

Heavenly Father, hear us as we pray this day in thanksgiving for the life and witness of St. Gilbert of Sempringham, as we remember all those women and men whom he called to witness in your name, we give thanks today for all surviving monastic communities and for the life of prayer and contemplation which they lead, holding us all in prayer throughout the complexity of our everyday lives.

We pray for the Diocesan team of vocational directors, and for all who seek to encourage and stimulate an awareness of personal calling amongst your faithful people. We pray for all being called into your church both Lay and Ordained, may your grace rest upon them, that they may feel your presence within them.

Father, your Christ in his temple brings judgement on the world:

Look in mercy on the nations, who long for his justice. We pray especially for the divisions within American Society, and the tensions and turmoil so evident in that nation. May the faith which is so strong among them build them up and unite them together peacefully in the name of the Lord.

Father we pray that you may continue to look in mercy on the needy in our world today. We pray for all struggling with the current pandemic, for all in hospital receiving critical care, we pray for their families and loved ones separated from them at this time. We continue to pray for all the carers, for Doctors, Nurses, Ancillary workers, Ambulance drivers, and for all within the NHS, be with them through their current struggles strengthen them in body and mind so that they may all stay safe and well.

Father, your Christ is the one in whom faithful servants find their peace, look in mercy on the departed, that they may see your salvation. We pray with a heavy heart as so many of our loved ones have been taken from us, for those who will rest within your loving embrace we give you thanks. For those who mourn their loved ones we pray that your love may rest upon them and bring them comfort amidst their sorrow.

Amen.

And so we pray

Our Father in heaven,

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.  
Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours  
now and for ever.

Amen.

**Hymn:** O, Jesus I have promised.

In church the hymn or music will be played for us to listen to reflectively.

**A Reading from the last letter of St. Gilbert to his canons:**

My dear sons, while God gave me power, whenever I came to visit you, I always invited you and drew you towards the love of God, as far as I could and knew how. I pray that my care of you may have found its fruition in lives lived for God. And now I am almost without any strength in my body. I am putting off this covering of the flesh; a way is opening up for me to depart from a life which for a long time now has been hard and weary for me. I cannot speak to you any longer with my voice so by this letter I urge you, for the love of God and for the salvation of your souls, be on the watch ever more carefully to overcome evil and set forward righteousness. Observe the whole Rule of our Order vigilantly and strictly, for you have been set free from the cares of business by the work of the lay brothers, so that you may have the chance to exercise the religious life in all its rigour I have specially gathered you together so that our Order may be ruled and protected by your unwavering religious observance. If you think my care of you has been useful and right, my sons, pray to the Lord, that he may not enter into judgement with me, but by his great gentleness may wipe away my sins and give me everlasting rest. To you whom I leave behind, I give the peace and mercy of God, his blessing and my own. May our joy in each other ever increase before the Lord, and may he himself be glad in us and because of us, whose kingdom and power are everlasting. Amen.

**Blessing:**

As we prepare to leave

And embrace the challenges

Of our lives and our world,

Let us ask for God’s blessing.

May God bless us with strength to seek justice. Amen.

May God bless us with wisdom to care for our earth. Amen.

May God bless us with love to bring forth new life. Amen.

In the name of God, the maker of the whole world, of Jesus, our new covenant,

And of the Holy Spirit, who opens eyes and hearts. Amen.

And the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,

be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**