



THE CATHEDRAL AND METROPOLITICAL CHURCH OF CHRIST, CANTERBURY

Memorial Service



Martyrdom of Thomas of Canterbury

29th December 2024

5.30pm

Nave

Welcome to Canterbury Cathedral for this Service

Livestreaming

This service will be livestreamed and you may be seen on camera, although we will not deliberately take any close-ups of the congregation.

By attending you agree to be seen in this way.

If you have any concerns please speak to a member of the clergy.

Cover Image: From the West Window, Chapter House



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The Commission of the People of God

Extracts from a letter from Pope Francis July 2023 beginning his '*Commission of New Martyrs-Witnesses of the Faith*'

Martyrs in the Church are witnesses of the hope that comes from faith in Christ and incites to true charity. Hope keeps alive the deep conviction that good is stronger than evil, because God in Christ conquered sin and death. Indeed, martyrs have accompanied the life of the Church in every age, and flourish as "ripe and excellent fruits of the Lord's vineyard" even today. As I have said many times, martyrs "are more numerous in our time than in the first centuries": they are bishops, priests, consecrated men and women, lay people and families, who in the different countries of the world, with the gift of their lives, have offered the supreme proof of charity.

It is therefore a matter of continuing historical research in order to gather the testimonies of life, up to the shedding of blood, of these sisters and brothers of ours, so that their memory can stand as a treasure cherished by the Christian community. The research will concern not only the Catholic Church, but will extend to all Christian denominations. Even in our times, in which we are witnessing a change of epoch, Christians continue to show, in contexts of great risk, the vitality of Baptism that unites us. A not insignificant number, indeed, are those who, despite being aware of the dangers they face, manifest their faith or participate in the Sunday Eucharist. Others are killed in the effort to assist in charity the lives of the poor, in caring for those rejected by society, in cherishing and promoting the gift of peace and the power of forgiveness. Still others are silent victims, as individuals or in groups, of the upheavals of history. To all of them we owe a great debt and we cannot forget them.

ORDER OF SERVICE

Stand as the choir enters

Introit

Choir Opem nobis, O Thoma, porrige. Rege stantes, jacentes erige, mores, actus et vitam corrige, et in pacis nos viam dirige.

Grant us help, O Thomas. Rule those who stand, raise up those who are brought low, correct our morals, deeds and lives, and guide us into the way of peace.

Music: Giovanni da Palestrina (c.1525-8-1594)

Welcome and Introduction The Dean

The Cantor and choir sing the **Preces**

O Lord, open thou our lips
and our mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

O God, make speed to save us.
O Lord, make haste to help us.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Praise ye the Lord.
The Lord's name be praised.

Sit

The choir sings Psalm 2

Why do the heathen so furiously rage together :
and why do the people imagine a vain thing?

The kings of the earth stand up, and the rulers take counsel together :
against the Lord, and against his Anointed:

Let us break their bonds asunder :
and cast away their cords from us.

He that dwelleth in heaven shall laugh them to scorn :
the Lord shall have them in derision.

Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath :
and vex them in his sore displeasure:

Yet have I set my King :
upon my holy hill of Sion.

I will preach the law :
whereof the Lord hath said unto me,
Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.

Desire of me, and I shall give thee the nations for thine inheritance :
and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession.

Thou shalt bruise them with a rod of iron :
and break them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

Be wise now therefore, O ye kings :
be learned, ye that are judges of the earth.

Serve the Lord in fear :
and rejoice unto him with reverence.

Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and so ye perish from the right way :
if his wrath be kindled, (yea but a little)
blessed are all they that put their trust in him.

Stand

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son :
and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be :
world without end. Amen.

Sit

First Lesson Ecclesiasticus 2.1-11

My child, when you come to serve the Lord,
prepare yourself for testing.

Set your heart right and be steadfast,
and do not be impetuous in time of calamity.

Cling to him and do not depart,
so that your last days may be prosperous.

Accept whatever befalls you,
and in times of humiliation be patient.

For gold is tested in the fire,
and those found acceptable, in the furnace of humiliation.

Trust in him, and he will help you;
make your ways straight, and hope in him.

You who fear the Lord, wait for his mercy;
do not stray, or else you may fall.

You who fear the Lord, trust in him,
and your reward will not be lost.

You who fear the Lord, hope for good things,
for lasting joy and mercy.

Consider the generations of old and see:

has anyone trusted in the Lord and been disappointed?

Or has anyone persevered in the fear of the Lord and been forsaken?

Or has anyone called upon him and been neglected?

For the Lord is compassionate and merciful;
he forgives sins and saves in time of distress.

Reading *A reading from T.S. Eliot's 'Murder in the Cathedral':*

Thomas reflects on his vocation.

Please stand as the choir sings

Magnificat *during which the Dean censes the Nave Altar*

Magnificat anima mea Dominum;
et exsultavit spiritus meus in Deo
salutari meo,

*My soul doth magnify the Lord :
and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my
Saviour.*

quia respexit humilitatem ancillae
suae;

*For he hath regarded :
the lowliness of his hand-maiden.*

Ecce enim ex hoc beatam me dicent
omnes generationes.

*For behold, from henceforth :
all generations shall call me blessed.*

quia fecit mihi magna, qui potens est,
et sanctum nomen eius,

*For he that is mighty hath magnified me :
and holy is his name.*

Et misericordia eius a progenie in
progenies timentibus eum.

*And his mercy is on them that fear him :
throughout all generations.*

Fecit potentiam in brachio suo;
dispersit superbos mente cordis sui;

*He hath shewed strength with his arm :
he hath scattered the proud
in the imagination of their hearts.*

deposuit potentes de sede, et exaltavit
humiles;

*He hath put down the mighty from their seat :
and hath exalted the humble and meek.*

esurientes implevit bonis
et divites dimisit inanes.

*He hath filled the hungry with good things :
and the rich he hath sent empty away.*

Suscepit Israel puerum suum,
recordatus misericordiae suae,
sicut locutus est ad patres nostros,
Abraham et semini eius in saecula.

*He remembering his mercy hath holpen his
servant Israel :
as he promised to our forefathers, Abraham
and his seed, for ever.*

Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto.

*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son :
and to the Holy Ghost;*

Sicut erat in principio, et nunc et
semper, et in saecula saeculorum.
Amen.

*As it was in the beginning, is now and ever
shall be : world without end. Amen.*

Francisco Guerrero (1528-99), Magnificat octavi toni

Please sit

Second Lesson 1 Peter 4.12-19

Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that is taking place among you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice in so far as you are sharing Christ's sufferings, so that you may also be glad and shout for joy when his glory is revealed.

If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the spirit of glory, which is the Spirit of God, is resting on you. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, a criminal, or even as a mischief-maker. Yet if any of you suffers as a Christian, do not consider it a disgrace, but glorify God because you bear this name.

For the time has come for judgement to begin with the household of God; if it begins with us, what will be the end for those who do not obey the gospel of God? And

'If it is hard for the righteous to be saved,
what will become of the ungodly and the sinners?'

Therefore, let those suffering in accordance with God's will entrust themselves to a faithful Creator, while continuing to do good.

Reading *A reading from T.S. Eliot's 'Murder in the Cathedral':*

Thomas commands that the doors be unbarred, despite the urgent warnings of the monks.

The doors burst open

Silence is kept

During the Nunc Dimittis the ministers move to the Martyrdom to lay red roses at the site of Thomas's murder and the cense the Altar of the Swordpoint.

Please stand as the choir sings

Nunc Dimittis

Nunc dimittis servum tuum, Domine,
secundum verbum tuum in pace:

Quia viderunt oculi mei salutare tuum

Quod parasti ante faciem omnium
populorum:

Lumen ad revelationem gentium, et
gloriam plebis tuae Israel.

Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto.

Sicut erat in principio, et nunc et
semper, et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

*Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart
in peace : According to thy word.*

For mine eyes have seen : thy salvation,

*Which thou hast prepared :
before the face of all people;*

*To be a light to lighten the Gentiles :
and to be the glory of thy people Israel.*

*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son :
and to the Holy Ghost;*

*As it was in the beginning, is now and
ever shall be : world without end. Amen.*

Tomás Luis de Victoria (c. 1548-1611), Nunc dimittis tertii toni

Sit or kneel

Prayers for the Departed The Dean

Eternal God, our maker and redeemer,
grant our Brother Thomas and all the faithful departed
the sure benefits of your Son's saving passion and glorious resurrection:
that, in the last day,
when you gather up all things in Christ,
we may with them enjoy the fullness of your promises;
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.

Father in heaven,
we thank you because you made us in your own image
and gave us gifts in mind, body and spirit.
We thank you now for Thomas.
As we honour his memory,
make us more aware that you are the one
from whom comes every perfect gift,
including the gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Almighty God,
we come before you, the supreme judge,
and to Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant,
and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect;
we give you thanks for giving us an unshakeable kingdom
and we worship you in reverence and awe,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Libera Me, Domine

During which the ministers return from the Martyrdom bringing the light from the candles round the site of Thomas's death and sharing this light with the congregation. The Dean lights the Amnesty Candle by the Nave Altar in solidarity with all who are oppressed and treated unjustly today.

Libera me, Domine,
de morte aeterna
in die illa tremenda
quando coeli movendi sunt et terra
dum veneris judicare saeculum per
ignem.

*Deliver me, O Lord,
from eternal death,
on that fearful day
when the heavens are moved and the
Earth when you will come to judge the
world through fire.*

Prayers

The Minor Canon

You sent your Son to bring good news to the poor,
sight to the blind, freedom to captives
and salvation to your people:
anoint us with your Spirit;
rouse us to work in his name.

Father, by your Spirit
bring in your kingdom.

Send us to bring help to the poor
and freedom to the oppressed.

Father, by your Spirit
bring in your kingdom.

Send us to tell the world
the good news of your healing love.

Father, by your Spirit
bring in your kingdom.

Send us to those who mourn,
to bring joy and gladness instead of grief.

Father, by your Spirit
bring in your kingdom.

Send us to proclaim that the time is here
for you to save your people.

Father, by your Spirit
bring in your kingdom.

Lord of the Church,
**hear our prayer,
and make us one in mind and heart
to serve you in Christ our Lord. Amen.**

As we join our prayers with the Church Universal, we say, each in our
own language, the prayer that Jesus taught us.

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be 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.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

Notre Père...

Vater Unser...

Onze Vader...

Padre Nuestro...

Ojcie Nasz...

Baba Yetu...

E to matou Matua...

Ein Tad...

Lux aeterna

Lux aeterna luceat eis, Domine,
cum sanctis tuis in aeternum,
quia pius es.

*Let perpetual light shine upon them, O
Lord, with your saints for ever,
for you are merciful.*

Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine,
et lux perpetua luceat eis.

*Grant them eternal rest, O Lord,
and let perpetual light shine upon them.*

Music: Tomás Luis de Victoria (c. 1548-1611)

Almighty God,
by whose grace and power your holy martyrs
triumphed over suffering and were faithful unto death:
strengthen us with your grace,
that we may endure reproach and persecution
and faithfully bear witness to the name
of 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**

Stand

Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Blessed be God for ever.

Father, this Christmastide, we have sung your praise with shepherds and
angels: may Christ be born in our hearts today.

Praise to Christ our light.

We have heard of the joy of your holy martyrs in paradise;
help us, like them, to trust your word.

Praise to Christ our light.

We have greeted Jesus, the light of the world;
may we be filled with the light of your love.

Praise to Christ our light.



Christ is the King! O friends rejoice;
brothers and sisters with one voice
tell all the world he is your choice.
Alleluia.

⁴O Christian women, Christian men,
all the world over, seek again
the Way disciples followed then.
Alleluia.

²O magnify the Lord, and raise
anthems of joy and holy praise
for Christ's brave saints of ancient days.
Alleluia.

⁵Christ through all ages is the same:
place the same hope in his great name,
with the same faith his word proclaim.
Alleluia.

³They with a faith for ever new
followed the King, and round him drew
thousands of faithful hearts and true.
Alleluia.

⁶Let love's unconquerable might
your scattered companies unite
in service to the Lord of light.
Alleluia.

⁷So shall God's will on earth be done,
new lamps be lit, new tasks begun,
and the whole church at last be one.
Alleluia.

Words: George K A Bell (1883-1958)

Tune: VULPIUS

AM 486

Blessing The Dean

God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, give you the spirit of wisdom and revelation, to know the hope to which he has called you. **Amen.**

God, who has shown you a pattern of holy living and holy dying in the lives of Thomas and all the saints, bring you to share their glorious inheritance. **Amen.**

God, who calls you no longer strangers but fellow citizens with the saints, set your hearts and minds on things above, where Christ is seated at God's right hand. **Amen.**

And the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Organ Voluntary

Please remain standing while the choir and clergy depart

There will be a retiring collection for the work of the cathedral.

It costs £30,000 a day to keep the building open.

Please be as generous as you can.

If you would prefer, please use the QR code

