

'Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.  
'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.  
'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

'Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

'Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Reader For the Gospel of the Lord

**ALL Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.**

**PRAYER FOR THE WEEK.** O Lord, you have taught us that all our doings without love are worth nothing: send your Holy Spirit, and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of love, the true bond of peace and of all virtues, without which whoever lives is counted dead before you; grant this for your only Son Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

**Pray for the Faithful Departed** We remember before God: Alan Baxter, Priest, Charlotte Bayley, Ethel Manning, Caroline Leonard, Peter Jackson, Maxwell Glover, Eric Angliss, Constance Francis, Lyndsay Nettlefold, Frank Hansen, Mary Moline, Louise Willsmore, Grace Martin *whose anniversaries occur this week.*

**BIBLE READINGS NEXT SUNDAY Fifth Sunday after Epiphany**  
Isaiah 58.1-9a Ps 112 1 Corinthians 2.1-13 Matthew 5.13-20

#### **COMMEMORATIONS OF THE WEEK.**

**January 30 Charles, King of England**, beheaded by the Puritans 1649. **February 2 The Presentation of Christ in the Temple.** Described in Luke 2.22-38. **February 3 The first Anglican service** at Sydney Cove, conducted by Richard Johnson, Sydney 1788.

**February 4 Anskar**, (801-865), bishop and the 'Apostle of the North'. Born in France, he evangelised in Denmark and Sweden and built the first Christian church in Sweden.



Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

29 January 2017

**Sentence.** What does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? Micah 6.8

#### **Collect of the day.**

Foolish God, shaming the strong through the weakness of love; turning upside down the wisdom of the world: may your blessing dwell with the poor and hungry, the grieving and abused; may your peaceful revolution be our joy and our reward through Jesus Christ, the power of God. **Amen.**

#### **A reading from the book of the prophet Micah.**

*Called a 'minor prophet' Micah was active in the late 8th century BC. Assyria was an aggressive superpower making the region unstable. Jerusalem was becoming a corrupt city and Micah championed the rural traditions of early Israel, when the people had been close to God and religious practice firmly tied to just behaviour towards one another. This, the prophet said is what God desires and not extravagant sacrifices unrelated to ethical living.*

Hear what the LORD says:

Rise, plead your case before the mountains,  
and let the hills hear your voice.

Hear, you mountains, the controversy of the LORD,  
and you enduring foundations of the earth;  
for the LORD has a controversy with his people,  
and he will contend with Israel.

'O my people, what have I done to you?

In what have I wearied you? Answer me!  
For I brought you up from the land of Egypt,  
and redeemed you from the house of slavery;  
and I sent before you Moses,  
Aaron, and Miriam.

O my people, remember now what King Balak of Moab devised  
devised,

what Balaam son of Beor answered him,  
 and what happened from Shittim to Gilgal,  
 that you may know the saving acts of the LORD.’  
 ‘With what shall I come before the LORD,  
 and bow myself before God on high?  
 Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings,  
 with calves a year old?  
 Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams,  
 with tens of thousands of rivers of oil?  
 Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression,  
 the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?’  
 He has told you, O mortal, what is good;  
 and what does the LORD require of you  
 but to do justice, and to love kindness,  
 and to walk humbly with your God? Micah 6.1-8

**Reader** For the word of the Lord  
**ALL** **Thanks be to God**

**Psalm 15 APBA p 234**

*The concern of this song is the admission to the Temple of those whose lives and religious practices are consistent. Those whose behaviour towards others is exploitative or abusive are considered unfit to enter.*

**A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Corinthians.**

*Since crucifixion was usually only inflicted on slaves and rebels, Christ crucified would have been foolishness to Greeks and roman culture. Paradoxically, the crucifixion has become the power of God and wisdom of God to those who now place their trust in God made known in Jesus. The message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written, ‘I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.’ Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling-block to Jews and foolishness*

to Gentiles, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For God’s foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God’s weakness is stronger than human strength. Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, so that no one might boast in the presence of God. He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, in order that, as it is written, ‘Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.’ 1 Cor. 1.18-31

**Reader** May your word live in us  
**ALL** **And bear much fruit to your glory**

**Gospel Acclamation**

**ALL** **Alleluia, alleluia**  
 Jesus said, ‘Blessed are the peacemakers  
 for they will be called children of God.’

**ALL** **Alleluia, alleluia**  
 Reader The Lord be with you

**ALL** **And also with you**  
 Reader A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew.  
**ALL** **Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.**

*Matthew’s story presents Jesus as a new and greater Moses who teaches on the mountain top. These nine beatitudes describe the ideal spirituality for Matthew’s Jewish/Christian community which faced persecution and isolation from family after the destruction of the Temple in 70AD.*

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

‘Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.  
 ‘Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.  
 ‘Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.  
 ‘Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.