

2019 Jerusalem Sunday Liturgical Resources

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2019 Theme: Multi-Narrative Pilgrimage

- Travel that immerses one in a soulful engagement with a land, its peoples and their history, favouring every narrative.
- Responsible Christian travel.

Context:

Tourism is one of the fastest growing industries globally. According to the United Nations World Trade Organization (UNWTO) tourism accounted for 10% of the global economy in 2016 and is projected to increase by 4% or more, annually until 2030.

Last year Israel welcomed 4 million tourists up 14% from the previous year, and up 38% from 2016. Christian pilgrims comprise 56% of those who visit Israel.

A study of Catholic pilgrimage sites in Europe has reported that Western Europe's 6,000 pilgrim centres are generating over 60 million 'religiously motivated' visits each year. This phenomenon is being called a renaissance in pilgrimage; a resurgence of interest to encounter places of spiritual significance.

One might ask is this renaissance in pilgrimage only because travel is becoming more accessible or more affordable. Is it because of an increase in disposable income or the Baby Boom effect, or is something deeper taking place? The churches of Europe are empty but its pilgrim routes are overflowing. What might we learn from this?

On Sunday, June 2 “Jerusalem Sunday,” consider giving attention to the global resurgence in pilgrimage and to wonder what spiritual principles might comprise ‘responsible tourism’ for Christians, especially those visiting the biblical lands of Israel-Palestine and Jordan. In over 30 years of leading pilgrimage programs to Israel the best term I have found to inform the development of travel itineraries is “multi-narrative pilgrimage.” Jesus did not favour one people nor the story of one people. Christian pilgrims who follow a Lord who said “Blessed are the peacemakers,” deserve to be immersed in the totality of a land; in the story of all of its peoples, their hopes and dreams, and a geography made sacred by the activity of God in salvation history.

Sentences:

Blessed is the one whose strength is in you, O God,
Whose heart is set on the pilgrim way. Psalm 84:5

I was glad when they said unto me “Let us go into the house of the Lord”
And now our feet are standing within your gates O Jerusalem.” Psalm 122:2

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: may they prosper who love you! Psalm 122.6

Appointed Texts (Revised Common Lectionary) NRSV

Acts 16:16-34

Psalm 97

Revelation 22:12-14,16-17, 20-21

John 17:20-26

Acts 16:16-34 : Paul and Silas in Prison

One day, as we were going to the place of prayer, we met a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners a great deal of money by fortune-telling. While she followed Paul and us, she would cry out, "These men are slaves of the Most High God, who proclaim to you a way of salvation." She kept doing this for many days. But Paul, very much annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, "I order you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And it came out that very hour.

But when her owners saw that their hope of making money was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the authorities. When they had brought them before the magistrates, they said, "These men are disturbing our city; they are Jews and are advocating customs that are not lawful for us as Romans to adopt or observe." The crowd joined in attacking them, and the magistrates had them stripped of their clothing and ordered them to be beaten with rods. After they had given them a severe flogging, they threw them into prison and

ordered the jailer to keep them securely. Following these instructions, he put them in the innermost cell and fastened their feet in the stocks.

About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was an earthquake, so violent that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were unfastened. When the jailer woke up and saw the prison doors wide open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, since he supposed that the prisoners had escaped. But Paul shouted in a loud voice, "Do not harm yourself, for we are all here." The jailer called for lights, and rushing in, he fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. Then he brought them outside and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" They answered, "Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." They spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. At the same hour of the night he took them and washed their wounds; then he and his entire family were baptized without delay. He brought them up into the house and set food before them; and he and his entire household rejoiced that he had become a believer in God.

Psalm 97 : The Glory of God's Reign

The LORD is king! Let the earth rejoice; let the many coastlands be glad!
 Clouds and thick darkness are all around him;
 righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne.
 Fire goes before him, and consumes his adversaries on every side.
 His lightnings light up the world; the earth sees and trembles.
 The mountains melt like wax before the LORD, before the Lord of all the earth.
 The heavens proclaim his righteousness; and all the peoples behold his glory.
 All worshipers of images are put to shame, those who make their boast in worthless idols; all gods bow down before him.
 Zion hears and is glad, and the towns of Judah rejoice,
 because of your judgments, O God.
 For you, O LORD, are most high over all the earth; you are exalted far above all gods.
 The LORD loves those who hate evil; he guards the lives of his faithful;
 he rescues them from the hand of the wicked.
 Light dawns for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart.
 Rejoice in the LORD, O you righteous, and give thanks to his holy name!

Revelation 22:12-14, 16-17, 20-21 The River of Life

"See, I am coming soon; my reward is with me, to repay according to everyone's work. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end." Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they will have the right to the tree of life and may enter the city by the gates. "It is I, Jesus, who sent my angel to you with this testimony for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David,

the bright morning star." The Spirit and the bride say, "Come." And let everyone who hears say, "Come." And let everyone who is thirsty come. Let anyone who wishes take the water of life as a gift. The one who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus! The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all the saints. Amen.

John 17:20-26 Jesus Prays for his Disciples

"I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. Father, I desire that those also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory, which you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.

"Righteous Father, the world does not know you, but I know you; and these know that you have sent me. I made your name known to them, and I will make it known, so that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them."

Sermon Notes: Text selected: Gospel: John 17:20-26

Engaging listeners:

Consider opening the homily with some of the facts cited in the “context” statement above re. current trends in travel and a renaissance in pilgrimage, to stir initial interest.

Pilgrimage:

Christian theology makes no provision for pilgrimage. The word ‘pilgrimage’ does not appear in the New Testament nor in the teachings of the early church.

The whole thrust of the Christian message is that the disciples of Jesus are to go out to the “ends of the earth.” (Acts 1:8) From the Mount of Olives the resurrected Christ commissions the disciples to go out to the world; baptize, teach, make disciples . . . and know that I am with you to the end of the age. (Matt 28:19-20) The implication is to leave Jerusalem behind.

Christianity emerges as a spiritual tradition with no specific sacred territory. In the NT epistles if there is a spiritual ‘destination’ for Christians it is to be “in Christ.” There is no need to be *in* Jerusalem or *in* Bethlehem but to be “in Christ” rooted and built up in him. (Col 2:7) If one speaks of Jerusalem it is the heavenly Jerusalem “our mother and our hope.” (Gal 4:26) “Set your eyes on the things above.” (Col 3:2)

Judaism and Islam:

By contrast, pilgrimage was an integral aspect of Judaism and Islam. In Judaism the annual pilgrim feasts were mandatory; expected of every Jew. Three times a year one went up to Jerusalem to the Temple for Succoth, Passover and Pentecost. One’s faith was renewed in the practice of going up together in community. The final 34 psalms of the Book of Psalms were the ‘pilgrims hymnbook’ with psalms of ascent sung by joyous pilgrims as they approached the Holy City.

In Islam, pilgrimage is one of the five pillars of observance. It is expected that if one has the funds and the physical ability to make the pilgrimage to Mecca you are to ‘make haj’ (pilgrimage) at least once in your lifetime.

In other world religious traditions pilgrimage can be detected as a recurring spiritual practice. Pilgrimage has been called an instinct of the spiritual life.

Christian pilgrimage to the Holy Land:

The earliest recorded special visit to Jerusalem occurred in the year 170 CE. Melito, Bishop of Sardis (Sardis is near Ephesus) made a scholarly visit to confirm aspects of the Gospel accounts for himself. Thirty years later, Alexander from Cappadocia visited the land “to inquire of the places” and “to pray.” He demonstrated the principle aspects of pilgrimage; the desire to engage a geography of spiritual significance and to do so devotionally. Over the following thirty years further recorded visits occurred by Origen and other Christian leaders and scholars. Then in the early 300’s Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea Maritima (located on the Mediterranean coast about a half hour drive north of present day Tel Aviv) produced a gazetteer of the holy land listing 340 locations that corresponded to the gospels. The Onomasticon (places names in scripture) became a handbook for the swell of Byzantine Christians making pilgrimage to the land. Eusebius is credited as the first to refer to the biblical lands as the “Fifth Gospel.” What this means is that the land itself, its topography, climate, agricultural variations, locations and proximities all together serve as a fifth gospel that can inspire startling fresh insights into the other four gospels.

By the 4th century Christian pilgrimage had come of age. A new devotional practice had arisen in the imagination of Christians sending thousands to visit the land and prayerfully encounter the gospel accounts on location so as to return home with renewed vigor and faithfulness.

(see essay by Peter Walker “Pilgrimage in the Early Church” in Explorations in a Christian Theology of Pilgrimage, Bartholomew and Hughes 2004)

Without exaggeration, Christian pilgrims to the biblical lands since then, over 17 centuries, always joined in the worship of the local Christian community, sought the comfort of Christian guest houses and monastic centres and requested local Christians to present the places of spiritual significance. Oddly, this cannot be said of many Christian pilgrimage tours to the holy land today. Very often now Christian pilgrims are not taken by their Guides into Bethlehem, are not allowed to shop in the local Christian shops but are taken to the shopping districts of another ethnicity, are not taken to worship with the local Christian community on Sundays, and are presented with an experience and commentary that cannot easily be described as “multi-narrative.” Christian Pilgrims to the land of the Holy One need become informed; need to ask for a Christian guide, ask to worship on Sundays with the local Christian community, ask to visit for instance one of the magnificent outreach ministries of the Anglican church in the land such as the centre on the Mount of Olives serving children with disabilities called the Princess Basma Centre. Why is this important?

Gospel: Jesus prays for the whole body of believers: “May they all be one.”

The gospel reading presents the conclusion at the end of Jesus’ Farewell Discourses. (John chapters 14–17) In this culminating section of Jesus’ prayer he prays no longer only for his disciples. Instead, looking to the future, he prays for all who will believe saying, “May they all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.” The mission purpose of life-giving witness to the world is hinged to the unity of the Body. The love of God is revealed in the koinonia of the Christian community. “The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.” The sending of the Son and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (promised earlier in the discourse) heals a broken koinonia. (Genesis 3-4, Rom 1:18-3:20) God’s action of restored koinonia, through the incarnation and paschal mystery of Jesus Christ, fashions a pilgrim community, reconciled in Christ and sent into a broken world as agents of God’s love, healing and compassion. “You will know them by their fruits.” (Matt 7:16)

Jerusalem Sunday:

Jerusalem Sunday invites particular attention and prayer for one of the principal global partnerships of our Anglican Church of Canada; the people, churches and ministries of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem and the Middle East. Who are they? They are a remnant community spread thinly across the Middle East and Jerusalem. They are part of a Christian minority in these lands. They face complex contextual challenges affecting every aspect of their lives. Even though millions of Christian pilgrims, for instance, visit the land of the Holy One in hopes of walking on the stones where Jesus walked those Christian pilgrims rarely pause to notice, or worship with, or learn about the “living stones” of the local Christian community.

The Anglican Church of Canada has had a long and meaningful relationship with the Anglican (Episcopal) Diocese of Jerusalem and the Middle East. They are a diocese of some 7000 members formed into 30 parishes who worship in the name of Jesus and serve faithfully in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Israel, the West Bank and Gaza. They oversee an enormous outreach ministry of some 30 institutions, employing more than 5000 people providing education, vocational training, medical care in hospitals and clinics, rehabilitation for the hearing impaired, care for children with disabilities, and residential support to the elderly. They are a vibrant faithful community offering a bold witness to the compassionate love of God in action. They need to know that they are not

forgotten, not ignored, but recognized and valued as part of our oneness in Christ.

So today we will pray for them. In some Canadian parishes the open collection on Jerusalem Sunday will be directed to the National Church / Canadian Companions of Jerusalem to strengthen directly the ministry on the Mount of Olives for children with disabilities called The Princess Basma Centre run by the Anglican Diocese of Jerusalem. Be generous.

Summer Travel Approaches:

As many Canadians prepare for summer holidays and travel to other settings one might wonder in what ways the journey to be undertaken can become a form of pilgrimage; become more than just a drive, become an intentional effort to immerse oneself into another landscape seen to be sacred, with a sacred human-divine story, where a resident community of the koinonia in Christ give witness to the Risen Presence of Jesus in the world. Join them. Worship with them. Learn about them . . . that the world may know the love of God in Christ.

Suggested Hymns

Pilgrimage Theme:

- CP 482 Come and Journey with a Saviour
- CP 565 Guide Me O Thou Great Jehovah
- CP 430 Will You Come and Follow Me
- CP 513 Guide My Feet
- CP 512 I Want Jesus to Walk With Me

From Common Praise:

- CP 278 Jerusalem the Golden
- CP 472 Let There Be Light
- CP 575 Let Streams of Living Justice
- CP 418 Draw The Circle Wide
- CP 576 For the Healing of the Nations
- CP 388 Glorious Things of Thee are Spoken (.. Zion city of our God..)
- CP 596 O Holy City Seen of John
- CP 157 Rise Up and Shine

From Evangelical Lutheran Worship:

- 704 When Pain of the World Surrounds Us
- 546 To Be Your Presence
- 628 Jerusalem, My Happy Home

From other sources:

- Sent By The Lord Am I (Iona Community, GIA Publications)
- Lord, When You Came to the Seashore (Gather 781)
- Christ, Be Our Light (Gather 590)

Prayers of The People

PRAYER FOR JERUSALEM SUNDAY

Written by the Most Rev. Fred Hiltz

O God, we give thanks that your dear Son has gathered us in the embrace of his redeeming love and sent us to make that love known to the ends of the earth.

We pray your continued blessings on the steadfast witness of the Church in Jerusalem and throughout the Middle East.

Give your deep joy to those who welcome the pilgrims seeking to know this land and its many peoples.

Grace those who proclaim the Gospel.
 Guide all who teach a new generation of young people.
 Draw near to those who are sick and bless those who tend them.

Sustain the hope in all who long and labour for a just and lasting peace in the land of The Holy One.

And may the companions of Jerusalem be many and faithful.

We pray in the name of our merciful Saviour, Friend, and Brother, our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

LITANY A

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: may they prosper who love you! (Psalm 122.6)
 Let us pray to God, the Holy Spirit, saying;

Come, Holy Spirit, Come

Come, Holy Spirit: hear us as we pray for the Church here and everywhere. For our Bishops and leaders, for our Clergy and teachers, for the Anglican Communion around the world and, particularly today, for the church in Jerusalem, for both Archbishop Suheil and the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem and Bishop Ibrahim Azar and the Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and The Holy land, that all may proclaim your word of peace and reconciliation.

Come, Holy Spirit, Come

Come, Holy Spirit: hear us as we pray for justice and peace on earth. For leaders of this country of Canada and for leaders of all nations, particularly remembering today Israel, Palestine, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon. May peace and harmony abundantly bless these achingly beautiful and historic places of your Creation, O God.

Come, Holy Spirit, Come

Come, Holy Spirit: hear us as we pray for the holy city of Jerusalem. Bring to those who lead Jewish, Muslim, and Christian communities a spirit of cooperation and collaboration as this ancient and blessed city continues to be 'holy' for us all.

Come, Holy Spirit, Come

Come, Holy Spirit, be with all those in need. We pray for victims of war and violence, for refugees and prisoners, for all who are afflicted or oppressed, that they may be held in your healing power. We pray for those who have died . . . that they may live eternally in God's presence, and for those who mourn, that they may be comforted.

Come, Holy Spirit, Come

(add other local biddings)

Into your hands, O God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy, through Jesus Christ our risen and ascended Lord. **Amen.**

LITANY B

In thanksgiving, let us offer our prayers to the source of all love and life, saying, "We give you thanks, O Lord God."

For the Anglican Church of Canada and the Anglican Communion of which we are a part, for the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem and the Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, for their faithful witness in a difficult time and for their commitment to peace and reconciliation, and today, for the ministries of women as mothers and family caregivers, teachers, physicians, nurses and health practitioners, researchers, administrators, organizers and more.

We give you thanks, O Lord God.

For the ministries of the Diocese of Jerusalem, for institutions of education and healing, for ministries of witness and reconciliation, of the work of peace-making and service to those in need,

We give you thanks, O Lord God.

For the beauty of the land of the Holy One, for the generous hospitality of the Christian community, for opportunities to share our stories and walk together on our pilgrim journey,

We give you thanks, O Lord God.

For all the blessings of this life, for strength in adversity, for comfort in sorrow, for grace to serve,

We give you thanks, O Lord God.

For the gift of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, in whose name we pray,

We give thanks, O Lord God. Amen.

A JERUSALEM PRAYER

From the Heads of Churches in Jerusalem
For the World Week for Peace in Palestine Israel 2011

Almighty and Merciful God, by the gift of the Holy Spirit, you gathered the first Christians in Jerusalem. Grant that, like the first church of Jerusalem, we may come together, and with courage, we may preach and live the Word, and the good news of truth, reconciliation, and peace.

God Creator, Giver of Life, Bearer of Pain, Initiator of Love, you made the world and everything in it. You created the human race in your image and likeness, and gave us the earth for all to share. Break down the walls that separate us.

God of Justice, your generosity is without bounds. Guard us from selfishness; inspire us to be instruments of love, and witnesses of your mercy and justice. Help us to face challenges and to struggle against all that is born of injustice. Lead us to act together in places and situations of want and need: where families are driven from their homes, where the vulnerable suffer in the hands of the powerful, where poverty and unemployment destroy lives.

God of Hope, you continue to call us to work for Peace in our world, broken and wounded by injustice, violence, and indifference. Alone, we are overwhelmed by challenges but together, and inspired by your Spirit, we can prevail beyond dreams and imagination. In fear we lose hope, and feel the futility of our efforts. Instill in our hearts and minds the image of your suffering and compassionate love as a source of courage and strength.

God, Protector of the widow, the orphan and the stranger, in a world where many know despair, you raised your Son Jesus Christ to give hope for humanity and renewal to the earth. Strengthen and unify your Church against the forces of evil in this part of the world, where aggression of all forms, killings and the blood of martyrs shed even in places of worship, obscure the hope of a new life.

God of Peace and Mercy, inspire nations to transform oppression and violence into freedom and peace for the sake of the poor, the vulnerable and the broken-hearted. Help us to respect and promote the equality and dignity of all, particularly in your Holy Land. Grant discernment to leaders and legislators, that righteousness and truth may flourish among all peoples throughout the world.

PSALM PRAYERS FROM THE BAS

Lord Jesus, give us the peace of the new Jerusalem. Bring all nations into your kingdom to share your gifts, that they may render thanks to you without end and may come to your eternal city, where you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. **Amen.** (Psalm 122)

Giver of life and source of all blessings, may the leaders of the nations serve your people with justice and protect them from violence, hardship, and exploitation. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and our King. **Amen.** (Psalm 21)

Shield and protector of all, hear the prayers of those who call upon you, and set them free from violence, persecution, and fear, that all may know that

deliverance belongs to you. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Redeemer. **Amen.** (Psalm 3)

God of eternal light, open our eyes to the vision of your holy city coming down from heaven; make our hearts sensitive to your presence, and our wills eager to join in the comfort and healing you bring to all the world. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord. **Amen.** (Psalm 87)

God of pilgrims, strengthen our faith, we pray. Guide us through the uncertainties of our journey, and hold before us the vision of your eternal kingdom, made known to us in Jesus Christ our Lord. (Psalm 78)

A PRAYER BY GERALD BUTT written for St. George's Cathedral, Jerusalem

O Lord soften the stone hearts
of those who preach and practice
intolerance and bigotry;
as the sun's setting glow
softens the stone walls
of your holy city, Jerusalem.

Lord, the rocky hills, the valleys,
the deserts and the sea shores
are filled with the echoes of centuries of pain.
Lord, bring peace to house and village.
Comfort the mothers who fret
and those who mourn.
Lord, keep strong the twisted old root
of the olive tree,
and protect the young vine.

Lord of water and stone,
of bread and wine,
Lord of the resurrection,
feed hope, and bring peace,
to this wracked but beautiful Holy Land. Amen.