

Fear Not!

A Liturgy for Anxious Times

An Evensong written by Heather Choate Davis & Blake Flattley

A few guiding thoughts:

Since this is not a Word and Sacrament service, it can be entirely lay led if you so choose. During the service, there are moments of silence built in. For many people, silence might be a new worship element. Please don't rush the silences, but allow the Spirit to work through them.

Music Notes: If it's the first time for the congregation to walk through the liturgy, it's suggested to play and sing through the initial refrain or antiphon first as a leader, then invite the congregation to join a second time through. Feel free to add any repeats as you feel necessary within the context of the service flow as well as any musical underscores to bridge between singing.

Devotional Notes: We've included a poem by Teilhard de Chardin that we recommend in lieu of a brief homily. If a homily is preferred, we suggest no more than 5 minutes on Proverbs 3:5-6

Patient Trust, a poem of Teilhard de Chardin

Above all, trust in the slow work of God.
We are quite naturally impatient in everything
to reach the end without delay.
We should like to skip the intermediate stages.
We are impatient of being on the way to something
unknown, something new.
And yet it is the law of all progress
that it is made by passing through
some stages of instability—
and that it may take a very long time.
And so I think it is with you;
your ideas mature gradually—let them grow,
let them shape themselves, without undue haste.
Don't try to force them on,
as though you could be today what time
(that is to say, grace and circumstances
acting on your own good will)
will make of you tomorrow.
Only God could say what this new spirit
gradually forming within you will be.
Give Our Lord the benefit of believing
that his hand is leading you,
and accept the anxiety of feeling yourself
in suspense and incomplete.

Guiding Notes for leading the *lectio divina*:

Leader: Tonight we will listen to the Gospel using an ancient prayer practice called *lectio divina*, which means divine reading. This form of contemplative prayer is rooted in the biblical promise that the Word of God is living and active, and thru His Word God speaks to us, each in our own way. As we read the Gospel verse aloud, you're invited to listen for a word or phrase or image that tugs at your heart. Then, after the reading, we'll have a time of silence for you to ponder that word or phrase: to ask yourself what you know about it. What meanings or memories or associations it has for you. What other ideas or images come to mind as you consider it.

Our Gospel Reading is from Mark 5:35-43:

While Jesus was still speaking, some people came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue leader. "Your daughter is dead," they said. "Why bother the teacher anymore?"

Overhearing what they said, Jesus told him, "Don't be afraid; just believe." He did not let anyone follow him except Peter, James and John the brother of James. When they came to the home of the synagogue leader, Jesus saw a commotion, with people crying and wailing loudly. He went in and said to them, "Why all this commotion and wailing? The child is not dead but asleep." But they laughed at him.

After he put them all out, he took the child's father and mother and the disciples who were with him, and went in where the child was. He took her by the hand and said to her, "Talitha koum!" (which means "Little girl, I say to you, get up!"). Immediately the girl stood up and began to walk around (she was twelve years old). At this they were completely astonished. He gave strict orders not to let anyone know about this, and told them to give her something to eat.

SILENCE

Leader: Now, you'll hear the verse read thru a second time. In the second silence you may feel moved to ask Jesus what He's trying to teach you, or show you, by calling your attention tonight to that word or phrase or image.

(Leader or 2nd Reader) SECOND READING of Mark 5:35-43

SECOND SILENCE

Leader: We will listen now to the reading one last time. As you take His word into your heart, and as you ponder it in the silence, consider what obstacles may stand in the way of your making Jesus' words your own. Ask Him for the courage to face any resistance. And trust in His sure promise that all who ask will receive.

(Leader or 3rd Reader) THIRD READING of Mark 5:35-43

THIRD SILENCE