



TIMES OF THE LITURGY

Sunday - 7.45am - Lauds | 8.15am - Low Mass | 9.15am - Dominican Rite Mass (Extraordinary Form) | 11am - Sung Conventual Mass | 6pm - Low Mass | 7pm - Vespers.

Monday - Friday - 7am - Lauds | 7.30am - Conventual Mass | 6.15pm - Devotions and Meditation | 6.30pm - Vespers. [N.B. First Fridays of the month, Vespers in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament with a period of Adoration from 6.15pm.]

Saturday - 9am - Lauds | 9.30am - Conventual Mass | 4.30-6pm - Confessions | 6.15pm - Sung Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary | 6.30pm - Vespers.

THIS WEEK

Sun 20 **XIX SUNDAY.**

Mon 21 *feria*

Tue 22 S. John Paul II

Wed 23 *feria*

Thu 24 *feria*

Fri 25 *feria*

Sat 26 Ss Chad & Cedd

Sun 27 **XXX SUNDAY**

As part of a ten-part series of Holy Preaching talks on the Our Father, Sr Magdalene Eitenmiller OP will be speaking on "Hallowed be Thy Name" on Wednesday 23 October at 7.30pm, 155 Huntingdon Road, CB3 0DH. All welcome.

The UK premiere of the screening of the documentary Guardians of the Rainforest, on how indigenous women care for the rainforest through their spirituality. It was commissioned to be shown at the UN General Assembly in September 2023. A Q&A with the directors (Lia and Marianna Beltrami) and a reception will follow after the screening (which lasts about 52mins). Tuesday 19 Nov at 5pm, Divinity Faculty. More details here:

<https://www.interfaith.cam.ac.uk/events/film-screening-guardians-rainforest>

A Music Workshop Day & Eucharistic Rosary Procession will take place on Saturday 26 October at the Rosary Shrine in London. The day will begin at 10am and finish at 7.30pm with a Eucharistic Rosary Procession. To register, please email london.secretary@english.op.org.



Lauds, Mass, and Vespers are broadcast daily on Radio Maria.

To listen visit:

<https://radiomariaengland.uk/>

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cambridge.bursar@english.op.org

Do you think you could help out with the parish First Communion Catechists Team? We have about 80 children (some of them from this congregation) in preparation for the sacraments, which is great but also means we need lots of people! On the team some give catechesis, but we also need leaders for small groups to accompany the children, or simply to be in the room with us to maintain the required adult/child ratio. We need people to help with administration (80 children generate a lot of correspondence). If you think you can help, even occasionally, please contact Lisa Galantini at <olemfirstcommunion@rcdea.org>



THE LORD'S PRAYER IN THE GOSPEL OF ST MATTHEW

Who art in heavn

'Who art in heaven', literally means, 'in the skies'. That's a little awkward, don't you think? Are we worshipping a sky god then? To answer this question would bring us into the whole question of mythological thinking in the ancient world. Are the Gods real for pagans? Are they just metaphors? Are they convenient stories to inspire art, music and poetry? There is no simple answer to this. God's function at many levels in the ancient world, and the same god can appear as both a powerful supra human force and a comic figure in stories. So, the Greek god Hermes, Mercury being the Roman equivalent, is a trickster god and thief. Yet he is also the god who escorts the souls of the dead to the underworld, and the messenger of the gods. When the Hermae, images of Hermes were desecrated in Athens during the Peloponnesian war, the man believed to be responsible, Alcibiades, is forced into exile which is a major factor in the final defeat of Athens. The multiple layers of meaning, both mythical and real, intensely solemn yet open to mockery, which pervades what we call religion in the ancient mediterranean world, was described by the thinker, Eric Voegelin, as 'undifferentiated', and since then there has been a gradual separation of the multiple layers of meaning in ancient religion.

The Jewish world was different. While their God was clearly transcendent, not to be mocked, and not defined in human terms, the writers of the Old Testament were clearly aware of the mythological world around them. The prophets consistently oppose the compromise with idolatry, insisting that there could be no pretending in worship. Even though some of the language of the Old Testament might seem to attribute some reality to the pagan Gods, they were not real. Nonetheless they writers were not afraid to use the mythological language of the pagan religions to address greater truths. So the flood in the Book of Genesis, which is about the inability of humanity to change, makes use of a sillier story in Ugaritic, an earlier semitic language where the God Baal gets drunk and accidentally opens the windows of heaven, that is the skies, and floods the world.

Matthew is doing something like this when he talks of the kingdom of the heavens, the word is plural in Greek because plural in form in Hebrew, where God is not in the sky but the meaning of the sky is a metaphor for various aspects of God's being. The sky is above us, it has no boundaries, so it belongs to all human beings.

“So that you may become sons of your Father in heaven, because he makes his sun to rise on the bad and the good and causes it to rain on the just and the unjust” (Matthew 5:45).

We see a sky metaphor here, the Father in the sky, but it is a practical image of how God does not distinguish between the good and the bad on earth, just as the sky likewise is not on anyone's side. The sky too is seen as a place. Pagan writings and thought too are ambiguous about the reality of the sky as a place to live, but because their thought is undifferentiated to use Voegelin's word, they find it difficult to merely be metaphorical. The world of Judaism has no such problem. God is not bound by space in the Old Testament, he simply appears as he wishes, where and when he wishes but we find it difficult to think of presence except in spatial terms. It is safe for a Jew to talk of God as if in the sky, because this can only have a metaphorical meaning for them.

Heaven can be seen as a place with keys, as St Peter is told, when he is promised the keys of the kingdom of Heaven, Matthew 16:19. It is the place we are to go to, the place where we can store up treasures.

Store up treasures for yourself in the sky, where neither moth or ruse can degrade it, and where thieves can not break in and steal it (Matthew 6:20).

The true treasury is the heart, so that

The good man takes out good things from his own treasure, (or treasury), and the bad man takes out evil things from this evil treasure (Matthew 12:35).

It is a shame that out of embarrassment we are scared of allowing these 'sky' metaphors to emerge in the Gospels particularly Matthew. There is nothing wrong with looking at the sky and being inspired by it. The fact that the actual sky is merely empty space seen through a semi-transparent medium does not take away from that inspiration. With God every thing we say or think about him is always a metaphor of some sort, but the image of the sky as the special place of the Father is a particular gift of the Gospels, particularly Matthew. So in the quotation about treasure, we see how the image of the sky fits in with another image about a human being looking inside themselves to find out what they have stored in their own hearts. The human treasury is more insecure than the treasury of heaven, but we must produce treasure for that treasury while here on earth.

The Father in heaven is also seen as the one who looks down on us, but the image is not just of someone having a good vantage point. The Father sees what we do in secret, so that while it is the heavenly Father who knows what we need, Matthew 6:32, generally when talking about the knowledge of the Father, he is not called the Father in the skies. That might mislead us, and make us fail to see the intimate presence of the Father to our thoughts and actions.

One more use of the word, heaven, or sky which must not be examined, is the phrase, the kingdom of the heavens, which introduces the parables. The parables themselves are all about earthly activity, and the implications of such activity, for the true desires and needs of humanity, yet parables of the heavens they are, because it is only in the transcendent reality of the place we are to call our home, that these desires can be truly fulfilled.

THE PRIORY OF ST MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL

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