

Evening Prayer: Rite Two

Thursday, March 12, 2026

Opening Sentence (BCP 115)

Officiant: Yours is the day, O God, yours also the night; you established the moon and the sun. You fixed all the boundaries of the earth; you made both summer and winter. *Psalm 74:15, 16*

Confession of Sin (BCP 116)

Officiant: Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Silence may be kept.

All: **Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone.**
We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

Priest: Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life.

All: **Amen.**

The Invitatory and Psalter (BCP 117)

Officiant: O God, make speed to save us.

People: **O Lord, make haste to help us.**

All: **Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.**

O Gracious Light *Phos hilaron* (BCP 118)

All: **O gracious Light, pure brightness of the everliving Father in heaven, O Jesus Christ, holy and blessed!**

Now as we come to the setting of the sun, and our eyes behold the vesper light, we sing your praises, O God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. You are worthy at all times to be praised by happy voices, O Son of God, O Giver of life, and to be glorified through all the worlds.

The Psalm Appointed (Psalm 8, BCP 592)

- 1 O Lord our Governor, *
 how exalted is your Name in all the world!
- 2 Out of the mouths of infants and children *
 your majesty is praised above the heavens.
- 3 You have set up a stronghold against your adversaries, *
 to quell the enemy and the avenger.
- 4 When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, *
 the moon and the stars you have set in their courses,
- 5 What is man that you should be mindful of him? *
 the son of man that you should seek him out?
- 6 You have made him but little lower than the angels; *
 you adorn him with glory and honor;
- 7 You give him mastery over the works of your hands; *
 you put all things under his feet:
- 8 All sheep and oxen, *
 even the wild beasts of the field,
- 9 The birds of the air, the fish of the sea, *
 and whatsoever walks in the paths of the sea.
- 10 O Lord our Governor, *
 how exalted is your Name in all the world!

All: **Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.**

The Lessons

Reader: A reading from the book of Wisdom. (7:24-8:1)

For wisdom is more mobile than any motion; because of her pureness she pervades and penetrates all things. For she is a breath of the power of God, and a pure emanation of the glory of the Almighty; therefore nothing defiled gains entrance into her. For she is a reflection of eternal light, a spotless mirror of the working of God, and an image of his goodness. Although she is but one, she can do all things, and while remaining in herself, she renews all things; in every generation she passes into holy souls and makes them friends of God, and prophets; for God loves nothing so much as the person who lives with wisdom. She is more beautiful than the sun, and excels every constellation of the stars. Compared with the light she is found to be superior, for it is succeeded by the night, but against wisdom evil does not prevail.

She reaches mightily from one end of the earth to the other, and she orders all things well.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

The Song of Mary *Magnificat* (BCP 119)

All: **My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior; *
for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.
From this day all generations will call me blessed: *
the Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his Name.
He has mercy on those who fear him *
in every generation.
He has shown the strength of his arm, *
he has scattered the proud in their conceit.
He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, *
and has lifted up the lowly.
He has filled the hungry with good things, *
and the rich he has sent away empty.
He has come to the help of his servant Israel, ***

**for he has remembered his promise of mercy,
The promise he made to our fathers, *
to Abraham and his children for ever.
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: *
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.**

The Gospel

Reader: A reading from the Gospel according to John. (14:23-26)

Jesus answered him, ‘Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. Whoever does not love me does not keep my words; and the word that you hear is not mine, but is from the Father who sent me.

‘I have said these things to you while I am still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you.

Homily The Rev. Dr. Mark W. Frazier

The Apostles’ Creed (BCP 120)

All: **I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth; I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

The Prayers (BCP 121)

Officiant: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Officiant: Let us pray.

All: **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, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.**

Suffrages A (BCP 121)

Officiant: Show us your mercy, O Lord;

All: **And grant us your salvation.**

Officiant: Clothe your ministers with righteousness;

All: **Let your people sing with joy.**

Officiant: Give peace, O Lord, in all the world;

All: **For only in you can we live in safety.**

Officiant: Lord, keep this nation under your care;

All: **And guide us in the way of justice and truth.**

Officiant: Let your way be known upon earth;

All: **Your saving health among all nations.**

Officiant: Let not the needy, O Lord, be forgotten;

All: **Nor the hope of the poor be taken away.**

Officiant: Create in us clean hearts, O God;

All: **And sustain us with your Holy Spirit.**

The Collects

The Collect for Gregory of Nyssa

Officiant: Almighty God, who has revealed to your Church your eternal Being of glorious majesty and perfect love as one God in Trinity of Persons: Give us grace that, like your bishop Gregory of Nyssa, we may continue steadfast in the confession of this

faith, and constant in our worship of you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who live and reign for ever and ever.

All: **Amen.**

A Collect for Peace (BCP 123)

Officiant: Most holy God, the source of all good desires, all right judgments, and all just works: Give to us, your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, so that our minds may be fixed on the doing of your will, and that we, being delivered from the fear of all enemies, may live in peace and quietness; through the mercies of Christ Jesus our Savior.

All: **Amen.**

Prayer for Mission (BCP 125)

Officiant: O God, you manifest in your servants the signs of your presence: Send forth upon us the Spirit of love, that in companionship with one another your abounding grace may increase among us; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: **Amen.**

Announcements

General Thanksgiving (BCP 125)

All: **Almighty God, Father of all mercies, we your unworthy servants give you humble thanks for all your goodness and loving-kindness to us and to all whom you have made.**

We bless you for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all for your immeasurable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ; for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory.

And, we pray, give us such an awareness of your mercies, that with truly thankful hearts we may show forth your praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up our selves to your service, and by walking before you in holiness and righteousness all our days; through Jesus

Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory throughout all ages. Amen.

A Prayer of St. Chrysostom (BCP 126)

Officiant: Almighty God, you have given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplication to you; and you have promised through your well-beloved Son that when two or three are gathered together in his Name you will be in the midst of them: Fulfill now, O Lord, our desires and petitions as may be best for us; granting us in this world knowledge of your truth, and in the age to come life everlasting.

All: **Amen.**

Dismissal

Officiant: Let us bless the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Grace (BCP 126)

Officiant: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore. *2 Corinthians 13:14*

All: **Amen.**

Hagiography

Gregory of Nyssa *James Kiefer*

Gregory of Nyssa, his brother Basil the Great (14 June), and Basil's best friend Gregory of Nazianzus (9 May), are known collectively as the Cappadocian Fathers. They were a major force in the triumph of the Athanasian position at the Council of Constantinople in 381. Gregory of Nyssa tends to be overshadowed by the other two.

Gregory of Nyssa was born in Caesarea, the capital of Cappadocia (central Turkey) in about 334, the younger brother of Basil the Great and of Macrina (19 July), and of several

other distinguished persons. As a youth, he was at best a lukewarm Christian. However, when he was twenty, some of the relics of the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste (10 March) were transferred to a chapel near his home, and their presence made a deep impression on him, confronting him with the fact that to acknowledge God at all is to acknowledge His right to demand a total commitment. Gregory became an active and fervent Christian. He considered the priesthood, decided it was not for him, became a professional orator like his father, married, and settled down to the life of a Christian layman. However, his brother Basil and his friend Gregory of Nazianzus persuaded him to reconsider, and he became a priest in about 362. (This did not affect his marriage.)

His brother Basil, who had become archbishop of Caesarea in 370, was engaged in a struggle with the Arian Emperor Valens, who was trying to stamp out belief in the deity of Christ. Basil desperately needed the votes and support of Athanasian bishops, and he maneuvered his friend Gregory into the bishopric of Sasima, and (in about 371) his brother Gregory into the bishopric of Nyssa, a small town about ten miles from Caesarea. Neither one wanted to be a bishop, neither was suited to be a bishop, and both were furious with Basil.) Gregory did not get along well with his flock, was falsely accused of embezzling church funds, fled the scene in about 376, and did not return until after the death of Valens about two years later.

In 379, Basil died, having lived to see the death of Valens and the end of the persecution. Shortly thereafter, Macrina died. Gregory was with her in the last few days of her life. Afterwards, he took to writing sermons and treatises on theology and philosophy. His philosophy was a form of Christian Platonism. In his approach to the Scriptures, he was heavily influenced by Origen, and his writings on the Trinity and the Incarnation build on and develop insights found in germ in the writings of his brother Basil. But he is chiefly remembered as a writer on the spiritual life, on the contemplation of God, not only in private prayer and meditation, but in corporate worship and in the sacramental life of the Church.

His treatise *On the Making of Man* deals with God as Creator, and with the world as a good thing, as something that God takes delight in, and that ought to delight us. His *Great Catechism* is esteemed as a work of systematic theology. His *Commentary on the Song of Songs* is a work of contemplative, devotional, mystical theology.

His book *The Life of Moses* is available from the Paulist Press in the series *The Classics of Western Spirituality*. The reader who is expecting a straightforward biography will be startled -- not necessarily disappointed. An example of his treatment is the following:

In Numbers 13 and 14 we read that when Moses had led the Israelites out of Egypt and to the borders of Canaan, he sent twelve spies into the land to look it over. They returned to report two things: (1) The inhabitants of the land were fierce warriors and would prove a formidable enemy. (2) The land was a good land, with fertile soil and an abundance of natural resources. As proof, they brought back a cluster of grapes so large that they hung it from a wooden pole that two men carried horizontally between them. Ten of the spies said that the enemy was too strong to be defeated, and that the Israelites ought to turn back, but the remaining two, Joshua and Caleb, urged the people to remember that the LORD was with them, and had shown Himself mighty to save. The people listened to the ten and prepared to turn back. At this the LORD was angry and said, "Very well, you shall wander in the wilderness for forty years, until all the men of this generation have died, except for Joshua and Caleb. Only then shall the next generation go in to possess the homeland that I promised to Abraham for his descendants." Hence the well-known child's nursery rhyme that goes in part: Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh Were the only two who ever got thru to the land of milk and honey.

Gregory (following the example of the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 10) treats the Exodus as a type of our deliverance from the bondage of sin, and the Promised Land as a type of Heaven. He comments that the Israelites had been guilty of idolatry, of fornication, of repeated rebellions against Moses, of various disobediences to the commands of God, but that none of these moved God to deny them entrance into the Promised Land. It was only when they came to the Land, and God showed them what a good land He had prepared for them, and gave them a token of that goodness in the form of the cluster of grapes, hanging from a wooden pole between two spies, and they refused to trust in the promise of God to save them from their enemies, that they were turned back (indeed, that they turned themselves back). So, it is not failure to live virtuous lives that can keep us out of Heaven, but a refusal to believe in the mercy of God, and to trust His gracious declarations of His good will toward us, concretely expressed in the saving blood of Christ, Who is the True Vine, and Who for our sakes hung on the wood of the cross between two thieves, as the grape cluster hung on the wood of the pole between two spies, showing forth in His own

Person the sign of God's good will to us and His assurance that He is ready to overcome all our enemies.

As you see, it is not really a biography of Moses, and it will not be to everyone's taste, not even to every Christian's taste. And even Christians who find this approach helpful will grant that it has its pitfalls. Clearly anyone who follows Gregory's example runs the risk of being led on a random walk by the will-o-the-wisp of his own imagination. But many Christians have received spiritual nourishment from this way of reading the Scriptures, and the example of St. Paul, as aforesaid, favors the view that this approach is at least sometimes of legitimate value.