Greetings!

I enclose the virtual service sheet for Sunday, when we celebrate the feast of St Lawrence (or Laurence).

Many thanks to Preb Jan for this week's reflection.

The psalm set for Sunday, 148, is an inspiration for many hymns of praise. One of the most popular hymns to sing along to is, 'O praise ye the Lord', set to a rousing tune by Hubert Parry; organists have fun with the last verse in particular.

https://youtu.be/ZzyzGe4i_Sc?list=TLPQMDgwODIwMjBza5k7zKY4cg

Gustav Holst sets words of Psalm 148 in his joyful setting of, 'Lord who has made us for thine own', joyful that is unless you are a soprano, there are a couple of top B flat entries towards the end! Here, Tenebrae are up to the challenge:

https://youtu.be/Q3F1Gq1IoLI

Christopher Tye's gentle setting of, 'Give almes of thy goods', seems appropriate as we commemorate the sacrificial giving of St Lawrence. Those who would like to sing along will find it in the Oxford Book of Tudor Anthems or on the CPDL website.

https://youtu.be/O_UzVhoQJ3M

Finally, many thanks to Martin for this recent live video of a new call and response song, 'Is He Worthy?' – Peterson/Shrive – expressively sung by the West Coast Baptist College Choir, USA, and reflecting passages from Revelations, especially chapter 5.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qkpUlxGCOtM

With all good wishes
Chris

St Lawrence. Sunday 9th. August.

The saints were faithful unto death and now dwell in the heavenly kingdom forever. As we celebrate their joy, let us bring to the Lord our sins and weaknesses, and ask for his mercy. *(Common Worship)*

CONFESSION Lord, forgive us when we neglect you and fail others, when we are less than generous in sharing the wealth you have showered upon us, when we sow sparingly and reap sparingly.
If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1.9)

COLLECT. Almighty God, who sent your Holy Spirit to be the life and light of your church, open our hearts to the riches of your grace, that we may bring forth the fruit of the Spirit in love and joy and peace; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever, Amen.

READINGS. Ezekiel 1.2-5,24-end, Psalm 148.1-4, 12-13, 2Cor 9.6-10, Matt 17.22-end.

REFLECTION

St Augustine wrote of St Lawrence...
'...let us imitate Lawrence if we truly love Christ. We cannot show a better proof of our love.'
St Lawrence looked to Christ Jesus seeking to follow his example. Jesus laid down his life for others and Lawrence believed that he, Lawrence, should live a sacrificial life. Standing up for Jesus brought Lawrence into confrontation with the mighty earthly power of Rome. He pays the ultimate price. In a society that seemingly encourages us to put self at the centre, sacrificial living can be quite a challenge. Being Christ's body here on earth requires us to give. It may be precious time, money and so on. At times that's relatively easy; at others very hard as sacrifices have to be made. There is, of course, always a choice. A heartening thing to come out of the coronavirus pandemic surely is the way many, many people have given of themselves to help others. Much has been and is being sacrificed. Unknowingly, perhaps, such people are indeed imitating St Lawrence. Happy St Lawrence Day!

PRAYERS. We praise and thank you for the extravagant beauty of your creation, and for the generous love you show to us.
We pray for your Church here on earth, that like St Lawrence we may stand up for Jesus, and follow his example.
We pray for the nations of the world, for the many areas torn apart by conflict; we continue to pray for the peoples of the Middle East, especially in Syria and Yemen. Empower those who strive to find a peaceful solution to conflict.
We bring before you those who are physically or mentally ill, those who are coping with the long-term effects of coronavirus, those who are distressed, bereaved or lonely. Especially we pray for those affected by the explosion in Beirut, and for those known to us personally…..
We give thanks for NHS workers, carers and all those who try to bring comfort and healing to those in need. Strengthen and support them in these difficult times.

We say **THE LORD's PRAYER** (in your favoured version).
We share **THE GRACE.**

FINAL PRAYER. Stir up, we beseech thee, O Lord, the wills of thy faithful people, that they who have freely received of thy bounty, may of thy bounty freely give; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
(Bishop Dowden)