

Evening Prayer Service for the Feast of St. George

Please participate with your microphone muted and say the responses in bold font aloud or to yourself. After the reading of Legend of Saint George, we will have a group discussion in the Gallery View.

Preparation

Leader: Here, and in all your churches in the whole world, we adore you, O Christ, and we bless you

All: because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world. AMEN

Leader: Alleluia, the Lord is risen indeed:

All: Come let us adore, Alleluia. (John and Terry are live mic to be the voice of the congregation throughout)

All: Holy One, you have brought us through this day to a time of reflection. Make us wise in our understanding, open in our listening, generous in our giving and vulnerable in our sharing.

Self-Reflection

Leader: As we prepare to enter into this evening's service, I invite you to take a few moments in silence to state a prayer intention to yourself: What is the Dragon in your life that you wish to see tamed? What trouble, fear or fault do you bring before God that needs to be tamed so that you will be made whole?

Collect for the Feast of St. George

Leader: Let us pray

Holy One, Heavenly God, give us the courage of Saint George to stand up for what we believe. Give us the strength to overcome the dragons in our lives and in the world. And where we see people in distress, give us the compassion to help them, and enable us to become the instruments of God's love. **Amen**

Psalm 18: 1-4, 6-7

You rescued me, O God, because you delighted in me. Hallelujah!

I love you, Most High, my strength,
O God, my stronghold, my crag and my haven.

My God, my rock in whom I put my trust,
my shield, the horn of my salvation and my refuge,
you are worthy of praise.

I will call upon God,
and so shall I be saved from my enemies.

The breakers of death rolled over me, O God
and the torrents of oblivion made me afraid.

I called upon the Holy One in my distress
and cried out to my God for help.

You heard my voice from your heavenly dwelling
and my cry of anguish came to your ears.

You rescued me, O God, because you delighted in me. Hallelujah!

The Scriptures. Joshua 1: 7-9

Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to act in accordance with all the law that my servant Moses commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, so that you may be successful wherever you go. This book of the law shall not depart out of your mouth; you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to act in accordance with all that is written in it. For then you shall make your way prosperous, and then you shall be successful. I hereby command you: Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go. The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

The Legend of Saint George Taming the Dragon

Voice One

Saint George was a valiant knight in the days of old, who dedicated his life to rescuing people who were beset by many types of evil . He travelled for many months by land and sea until he came to Libya, where he met a poor hermit who told him that everyone in that land was in great distress, for a Dragon had long ravaged the country.

Voice Two

“Every day,” said the old man, “the Dragon demands the sacrifice of a beautiful maiden and now all the young girls in the whole land have been killed. The king's daughter alone remains, and unless we can find a knight who can slay the Dragon she will be sacrificed tomorrow.”

Voice One

When Saint George heard this story, he proclaimed: “I must try to save the princess, and rescue the people of this place!”

Voice Two

So he rested that night in the hermit's hut, and at daybreak set out to the valley where the Dragon lived. When he drew near he saw a group of people, leading a beautiful girl dressed in pure Arabian silk. The princess Sabra was being taken to the place of death and everyone was weeping.

Voice One

The knight spurred his horse and overtook the procession. He comforted them with brave words and persuaded the princess to return to the palace. And he urged everyone else to take shelter in their homes. Then he entered the valley, pretending not to be afraid.

Voice Two

As soon as the Dragon saw Saint George, it rushed from its cave, roaring with a sound louder than thunder. (But the Dragon was afraid, too, because Saint George looked fierce.) The Dragon's head was immense and its tail fifty feet long. But Saint George continued to pretend that he was not afraid. He struck the monster with his spear, hoping he would wound it. Alas, the Dragon's scales were so hard that the spear broke into a thousand pieces, and Saint George fell from his horse. And then the horse ran away.

Voice One

Fortunately, Saint George rolled under an enchanted orange tree that God had put there, and against which poison could not prevail. Thus, the Dragon's terrible venom could not hurt him. Within a few minutes Saint George had recovered his strength and was able to fight again. He reached for his sword now that his spear had been shattered to pieces.

Voice Two

Refreshed from having been sheltered under the orange tree, Saint George rushed on foot at the Dragon with his sword, and pierced the Dragon under one of its wings where there were no scales.

Voice One

And as the Dragon fell, knowing that its scales would not suffice to save it from the onslaught of Saint George, the Dragon said: “Now I will breathe fire and finish this bothersome knight off for good.” Then the Dragon tried to take a very deep breath, the kind needed to reach all the way through its body to be able to breathe fire. But in doing so, the Dragon realized then that it was too painful to take in so much air because of the wound Saint George had caused with his sword.

Voice Two

At the same time, Saint George became fearful that the Dragon was going to breathe fire upon him; and he

knew that without armor, his sword would be useless to defend himself against the blast of flames. Dropping his sword, he fell to his knees and called upon God to save him and all the people he had tried to protect.

Voice One

Then the Dragon, unable to get enough breath to make fire, and witnessing St. George's loving concern for all the townspeople, knelt down alongside Saint George. At once enlightened, the Dragon raised its one unharmed wing in praise to God, vowing never again to demand a human sacrifice. Now, the other wing where Saint George had wounded the Dragon did eventually heal over, but a scar remained on the inside, rendering the Dragon incapable of ever breathing deadly fire again.

Voice Two

When all the people heard that Saint George and the Dragon had made peace with one another, they came out from where they had been sheltered. And they welcomed the Dragon to be part of their community because they realized that they needed to love the Dragon as one of their own—and to feed it vegetables every day.

Voice One

Saint George rode off to find other people to rescue, knowing now that it was not by his power alone that he could save people. And the Dragon became the protector of the town. Whenever any harm, whether from other people or from nature approached the town, the Dragon would call upon God's name, and the mere gesture of attempting a very deep breath as part of his prayer frightened any pestilence or evil away. For the Dragon's breath carried the grace of God.

Voice Two

And everyone lived in peace and daily gave thanks and praise to God.

Homily, Terry Doyle, TSSF

Group Reflections (Lead by Connie) *We will suspend the PowerPoint to go to the full mosaic; Please raise your hand to offer reflections and Connie will unmute your microphone.*

Collect

All: For the roots of our community, for what we share together, for the path that lies before us now and our future in your hands, we give you thanks and praise.

Prayers and Petitions

Leader: God of grace and hope:

All: Help us to move from fear to trust.

Leader: Your grace surrounds and fills us:

All: Remind us that you provide us all we need

Leader: Your healing love is offered to all

*After a few moments of silence, please offer your petitions and prayers of praise
silently or aloud with your microphone muted*

Leader: May we be full of peace in our waiting.

And full of joy in our praise to you.

*Leader: Let us pray: **The Lord's Prayer***

The Conclusion

*Leader: May God who raises us show us compassion and love. **AMEN***

Leader: Let us bless the Lord, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Thanks be to God. Alleluia, Alleluia!