

An Early Evening Devotion
Thursday December 15, 2011

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.

A Reading Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians

From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view;^{*} even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view,^{*} we know him no longer in that way. ¹⁷So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! ¹⁸All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; ¹⁹that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself,^{*} not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. ²⁰So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. (2 Corinthians 5:16-20)

Reflection on the reading

Bishop Douglas writes: "Paul is saying that God in Jesus, fully human and fully divine, has indeed done a new and unique thing. In the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, God has crossed the divisions that alienate us from God and from one another. In Jesus, God has given us a new order, a new life, a new way of being in the world by which we can indeed be restored to unity with God and each other in Christ. That is God's mission. That is Jesus' mission. That is our mission as the Body of Christ today. And Paul further reminds us that God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, has indeed given to each and every one of us the ministry of reconciliation. As followers of Jesus, we are called to live in, make known, and extend God's restoring and reconciling love in the whole world. We are ambassadors for Christ entrusted with God's message of reconciliation. Let me say it again: We are indeed ambassadors for Christ entrusted with God's message of reconciliation. Putting that message of reconciliation first, "Putting God's mission first" is our current vocation and our future hope."

What are your thoughts about Bishop Douglas' thoughts on Paul's words and the church?

What are signs of God's mission happening right now at Christ Church Cathedral?

What are the things that are essential for us if we are to "put God's mission first?"

For what do we wish to pray, give thanks and give praise?

The Lord's Prayer

The Collect

Lord Jesus, stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past; be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts, and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. Amen.