

Blessed to be a Blessing: How our parting words inspire

The Sunday Forum

January 15, 2023

Commentary on the American Prayer Book by Marion J. Hatchett (pgs. 394-5)

- “There is no evidence of a blessing at the end of the Eucharist, or of any equivalent, before the fourth century.”
- “The Order of Communion of 1548 has the people depart with this blessing: The peace of God which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his son Jesus Christ our Lord. The people are to respond with Amen.”
- “...The 1549 Book of Common Prayer [has] an addition: And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be amongst you and remain with you alway.”
- “The present revision (BCP 1979) includes a slightly revised form of the conclusion of the 1549 blessing as an alternative”

Blessings “by the book” over a Sunday at St. Stephen’s

- 8:00AM -- Holy Eucharist Rite I, BCP page 339

*The Bishop when present, or the Priest, **gives** the blessing*

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be amongst you, and remain with you always. *Amen.*

or this

The blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you for ever. *Amen.*

- 9:00AM/11:15AM – Holy Eucharist Rite II, BCP page 366

*The Bishop, when present, or the Priest, **may** bless the people.*

Rubric from our Bulletin at St. Stephen’s: The Celebrant pronounces God’s blessing

Blessings “by the book” over a Sunday at St. Stephen’s

- 9:00AM Palmer Hall – Adapted from Holy Eucharist Rite II, BCP page 366

The Blessing Song

Go Now in Peace

Sung by all.

Natalie Sleeth

Go now in peace, go now in peace.

May the love of God surround you, everywhere, everywhere you may go.

- 5:30PM Celtic – Adapted from Holy Eucharist Rite II, BCP page 366

The Blessing

The Celebrant pronounces God’s blessing.

Celebrant Now, may the Lord Christ go before you to prepare your way;
Christ beside you, be companion to you everywhere you go;
Christ beneath you, strengthen and uphold you when you fall or fail;
Christ behind you, finish and complete what you must leave undone;
Christ within you, give you faith and courage, love and hope;
And Christ above you, bless and keep you, now and evermore. **Amen.**

Hatchett, pg. 395

“A blessing is permitted in Rite Two but no formal text is given. The celebrant of that Rite is free to seek out or compose a blessing proper to the day or season, adapt a traditional Anglican blessing to contemporary language, or use any of the Prayer Book blessing in contemporary language”

Other Blessings we use at St. Stephen's

Palm Sunday "Blessing"

Do not look forward in fear
to the changes in life;
rather look to them with full hope,
that as they arise, God,
whose very own you are,
will lead you safely through all things;
and when you cannot stand it,
God will carry you in His arms.

Do not fear what may happen tomorrow;
the same everlasting Father
who cared for you today
will take care of you then and every day.

God will either shield you from suffering,
or will give you unfailing strength to bear it.
Be at peace and put aside
all anxious thoughts and imaginations.

Saint Francis de Sales (1567-1622)

Other Blessings we use at St. Stephen's

Life is short and we do not have much time to gladden the hearts of those who are traveling the journey with us. So be swift to love, and make haste to be kind. And the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Paraphrase of Henri Frederic Amiel

Visual Representation...

We know we shall pass this way but once. If there is any kindness we can show, or any good thing we can do, let us do it now. Let us not defer it or neglect it, for we shall not pass this way again. And the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you always **Amen.**

Paraphrase of Etienne DeGrellet

Other Blessings we use at St. Stephen's

May joy and nothing less find you on the way.

May you be blessed and a blessing.

And may light guide you, and countless others, all the way home.

And the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you always. **Amen**

E. Carson Brisson

A Gaelic Blessing (A staple of my home parish, **St. Columba's** in Washington, DC)

Deep peace of the running waves to you.

Deep peace of the flowing air to you.

Deep peace of the shining stars to you.

Deep peace of the quiet earth to you.

Deep peace of the gentle night to you.

Deep peace of the God of peace to you.

And the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Other Blessings we use at St. Stephen's

May this new night of rest
Repair the wear of time,
Restore your vision of a deeper light,
Heal the wounds of disappointments,
And restore youth of heart
For the adventure
That awaits you tomorrow.

And the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit
be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Adapted from **John O'Donohue**

May the Peace of God go with you,
wherever God may send you.

May the Love of Christ guide you
through the wilderness and protect you through the storm.

May the joy of the Holy Spirit keep you
alert to mystery and wonder.

And when you come to God's household,
may the door be open wide for you to enter into your joy.

And the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit be among you and remain with
you always. **Amen.**

Other Favorites

- Favorite blessing from the Rev. Hill Brown (thanks to Jane Abbott!)

Care deeply,
Think kindly,
Act gently,
Give freely,
Be at peace with yourself and with the world

- A personal favorite that I use here on occasion, adapted from a previous rector of mine, the Rev. Michael Sullivan (who adapted it from a previous rector of his!)

Go forth from this place and be kind
Everyone here, in one way or another, carries something heavy
So love mercy, practice forgiveness, and be gentle with yourself
And show God's unconditional love and acceptance to yourself and to everyone you meet.
And the blessing of God Almighty: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
Be among you, those you love, and all those God calls you to love,
this day and forevermore. **Amen.**

From St. Cross Episcopal Church, Hermosa Beach, California



The peace of the ocean wave be with you. The peace of the ocean breeze surround you.
The peace of the quiet earth be in you. The peace of the night stars cover you.
The deep peace of the Son of Peace be always with you. Amen.

Our Dismissal at Celtic every Sunday


Go out into the world in peace,
have courage,
hold on to what is good,
return no one evil for evil,
strengthen the faint-hearted,
support the weak,
help the suffering,
honor everyone,
love and serve God,
rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.

Often used as a blessing, **adapted** from various biblical verses

The Blessing of Real Presence

“Behold what you are, become what you receive.”

Augustine of Hippo (354 – 430)

The image features a white background with decorative curved lines in the corners. In the top right and bottom left, there are thick, multi-layered curved lines that transition from a light blue color to a light green color. The text is centered in the middle of the page.

What're your favorites?