

Our Sunday Service Together

September 3rd 2023

13th Sunday after Trinity



An Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
one God, who was, and who is, and who is to come, the Almighty.

Alleluia

Preparation

All: This is the day that the Lord has made.
Let us rejoice and be glad in it.
Through the brokenness of Christ, we become one body
as one body we now gather in the name of Christ to offer our praise and thanksgiving, to receive God's
holy word, to pray for the needs of the world,
and to seek the forgiveness of our sins, that by the power of the Holy Spirit
we may give ourselves to the service of God.

Our Confession

Let us come to the light of Christ, confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

All: Jesus Christ, risen Master and triumphant Lord, we come to you in sorrow for our sins, and confess to
you our weakness and unbelief.

We have lived by our own strength, and not by the power of your resurrection.
In your mercy, forgive us, hear us and help us.

We have lived by the light of our own eyes, as faithless and not believing.
In your mercy, forgive us, hear us and help us.

We have lived for this world alone, and doubted our home in heaven.
In your mercy, forgive us, hear us and help us.

Be still for a moment in confession and in receiving God's Grace in Christ

All: May Almighty God, who in Jesus Christ has given us a kingdom that cannot be destroyed, forgive us
our sins, open our eyes to God's truth, strengthen us to do God's will and give us the joy of his
kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Risen Lord. **Amen.**

The opening prayer

All: The night has passed, and the day lies open before us; let us pray with one heart and mind.

Silence is kept.

All: As we rejoice in the gift of this new day, so may the light of your presence, O God, set our hearts on fire with love for you; now and for ever. Amen.

The Psalmody 26.1-8

Give judgement for me, O Lord, for I have walked with integrity;

I have trusted in the Lord and have not faltered.

Test me, O Lord, and try me; examine my heart and my mind.

For your love is before my eyes; I have walked in your truth.

I have not joined the company of the false, nor consorted with the deceitful.

I hate the gathering of evildoers and I will not sit down with the wicked.

I will wash my hands in innocence, O Lord, that I may go about your altar,

To make heard the voice of thanksgiving and tell of all your wonderful deeds.

Lord, I love the house of your habitation and the place where your glory abides.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son: and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

Scripture Reading Romans 12.9-21

Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honour. Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.' No, 'if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads.' Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

At the end of the reading we say:

All: This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Gloria

All: Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth.

Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

The Gospel Matthew 16.21-28

From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, 'God forbid it, Lord! This must never

happen to you.’ But he turned and said to Peter, ‘Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling-block to me; for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.’

Then Jesus told his disciples, ‘If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life? Or what will they give in return for their life?’

‘For the Son of Man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay everyone for what has been done. Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.’

at the end of the reading we say:

All: This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

A Reflection for the day

Peter has just declared that Jesus has to be the promised Messiah, in Greek the ‘Christ’. As Jesus explains what being the Messiah will involve Peter exclaims ‘never’ and in a flash he is accused of being the arch enemy of God’s work – of being like Satan. Wow!

In becoming the Christ, Jesus offers his all, his heart, mind, soul and life to God’s work of redeeming humanity, of rescuing Israel. This will include, for him crucifixion, it is his calling, his journey, and Peter has to accept this and not get in his way. Jesus is set on completing his calling and so he says ‘get behind me’ to Peter.

We then here Jesus say all his followers need to ‘take up their cross’, and we respond...? Does Jesus really mean we have to expect to face death at the hands of people that do not like Christianity. Well, certainly for many of the first disciples that was their fate. For many over the centuries and even folks in some places today dying for their faith has also been a reality. But it isn’t the sort of thing that happens to us today in England, so how can we ‘take up our cross’ and follow Jesus?

St Paul offers us a way to ‘follow’, a way we can bear our cross and offer to God our ‘spiritual worship’. *‘Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honour. Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep’.* In other words, do everything you can, be who you are wholeheartedly, with 100%, in the way you alone can – after all it is your cross to bear, not someone else’s.

It may be that some will find opposition and rejection to the good things God calls us to; we may even feel like we are being persecuted for the love we show. Sadly, we can often feel our offering is little and nothing thanks, in part, to the secularist notion of successfulness that has permeated much of Western Christianity, and with it the loss of our true calling, to faithfulness.

Jesus, is faithful in his calling, to death on a cross – not anyone’s idea of a successful work for God. We know it was successful because he was faithful to his calling to be the Christ, and his ability as the Son of God to alone fulfil that calling. It is to this sense of faithfulness, wholehearted faithfulness, that Jesus call each of us to. Being faithful to who we are and in bearing our cross is to be ‘Christ-like’; to be a Christian.

How will we be faithful to who we are and offer ourselves wholeheartedly to the purposes of God and His goodness this coming week?

The Creed

All: I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, 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, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come 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.

Prayers

We make our intercessions

Lord, as you love us, help us to love one another. Give to your church a burning zeal through your Spirit and keep us ardent in our spirits. *Lord in your mercy, Hear our prayer.*

Lord, we pray for peace and unity in your church. Increase our fellowship with one another and our openness to others of your church not yet gathered with us. Give us courage to share your love for this world, to tell of our lives with you, that the faintest whiff of faith in others may be fanned into flame for your glory. *Lord in your mercy, Hear our prayer.*

We pray for peace in our hearts, our community, in this nation, and across your world, that as much as it may be possible for us we may live in peace with all people. We pray for peace keeping organisations, for NGOs, for the United Nations. We pray for police and probation services. We give thanks for all who offer and work for peace in this world. *Lord in your mercy, Hear our prayer.*

May our homes be places of peace and love. We pray for those caught in domestic violence, homelessness, unemployment and spiralling debt. Be with our local foodbank and increase people's generosity to their work. But as we pray this we ask that the systems of injustice, poor decisions by government and the greed of many would be turned by your love to the ways of your kingdom. *Lord in your mercy, Hear our prayer.*

We pray for all not at peace, for broken relationships, the broken hearted and broken in spirit. For those who suffer from a breakdown in wellbeing, for all being affected by hatred or revenge. *Lord in your mercy, Hear our prayer.*

We hold before you those sick in body, mind or spirit. Those facing operations or end of life care. Be close in peace and through doctors and nurses bring healing. *Lord in your mercy, Hear our prayer.*

Be with those who mourn the loss of a loved one at this time. Lord, when you come in your glory, make us to be one with you and the saints who are now at peace.

Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of Jesus Christ, the prince of peace. Amen.

The Collect

All: Almighty God, who called your Church to bear witness that you were in Christ reconciling the world to yourself: help us to proclaim the good news of your love, that all who hear it may be drawn to you; through him who was lifted up on the cross, and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen

Gathering our prayers and praises into one, let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us

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, the power, and the glory
for ever and ever. Amen.

The Conclusion

All: Christ, as a light illumine and guide me this day.
Christ, as a shield overshadow me.
Christ under me, Christ over me; Christ beside me on my left and my right.
This day be within and without me. Amen