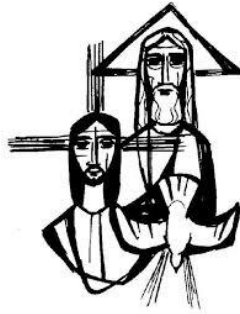


Our Sunday Service Together

15th September 2024

16th 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 116.1-8

I love the Lord, for he has heard the voice of my supplication;
because he inclined his ear to me on the day I called to him.

The snares of death encompassed me; the pains of hell took hold of me; by grief and sorrow was I held.

Then I called upon the name of the Lord: 'O Lord, I beg you, deliver my soul.'

Gracious is the Lord and righteous; our God is full of compassion.

The Lord watches over the simple; I was brought very low and he saved me.

Turn again to your rest, O my soul, for the Lord has been gracious to you.

For you have delivered my soul from death, my eyes from tears and my feet from falling.

I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living.

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 Isaiah 50.4-9a

The Lord God has given me the tongue of a teacher, that I may know how to sustain the weary with a word.

Morning by morning he wakens — wakens my ear to listen as those who are taught.

⁵ The Lord God has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, I did not turn backwards.

⁶ I gave my back to those who struck me, and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard; I did not hide my face from insult and spitting.

⁷ The Lord God helps me; therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set my face like flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame; he who vindicates me is near.

Who will contend with me?

Let us stand up together.

Who are my adversaries?

Let them confront me.

⁹ It is the Lord God who helps me; who will declare me guilty?

All of them will wear out like a garment; the moth will eat them up.

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 Mark 8.27 to end

Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi; and on the way he asked his disciples, 'Who do people say that I am?' ²⁸ And they answered him, 'John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets.' ²⁹ He asked them, 'But who do you say that I am?' Peter answered him, 'You are the Messiah.' ³⁰ And he sternly ordered them not to tell anyone about him.

³¹ Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and, after three days rise again. ³² He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. ³³ But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, 'Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.'

³⁴ He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, 'If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ³⁵ For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. ³⁶ For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? ³⁷ Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? ³⁸ Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.'

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

The crowds, and those who have met Jesus one or two times, might be forgiven for not really understanding who he is and what his mission is, but Peter?

Ok, so it isn't that Peter has not realised Jesus is God's Messiah, however there is a clear mismatch with Jesus teaching about the Messiah and Peter's expectations. The prophet Isaiah might have wanted a quiet word with Peter himself and asked had he never read his words about the 'suffering servant' of the Lord (Isaiah 52 and 53 in our modern collection of Isaiah's prophesies). Peter, may of course have replied, yes but that is about the nation and not an individual; isn't it?! I suspect a good conversation would be had between the two men.

We will never know how Peter gained his image of who God's Messiah was exactly and what their mission would entail. Was it through misreading the Torah, was it through inherited traditions, was it someone's errant teachings; or a combination of them all?

Whichever it is, Peter is clearly shocked at what Jesus says and tries really hard to divert his actions – rebuke is a very strong word indeed, but this is what we hear he does to Jesus. That said, Jesus' own reply sounds even harsher – get behind me Satan! Peter is accused of siding with the enemy of all that God has ever purposed; Peter must have shuddered at hearing the words.

Jesus then begins to teach everyone gathered and says very challenging things - if you want to follow me, deny yourself and be a sacrifice yourself, lose your life for the gospel, and be ashamed of the word's ways. We know that through the history of Christianity some folks have taken these words quite literally separating themselves from the world completely, and even being crucified.

In the pattern of mark's telling of events Jesus words build on what has happened to one side between Jesus and Peter. As such they give clarity and understanding to what otherwise seems quite a harsh argument between the two friends. Might it be that to see the full dimension of His calling folks need to step aside from a self-focused life and live sacrificially for the loving purposes of God in the world – to deny themselves, lose their life (in terms of self-focus) and see the life they have been gifted in Christ. Might it be that devoting life to the good things of Jesus, to the gospel reveals everything about the one who embodies God's good news?

Might it be that the follower of Jesus has to become ashamed of the world's way, of the all too easy ways of violence and hatred, greed and life diminishing patterns that we see about us?

Might it be that the only way to be Jesus' follower is to take his journey, walk his way? Might it be that Jesus offers to Peter, to all who sought to follow him then, and to us today, a way in which we will know fully he is God's Messiah, the proof in the pudding if you like?

Peter was challenged when he heard that the way of the Messiah of God was that of the suffering servant prophesied by Isaiah. Jesus challenged Peter and all who would follow to come and know the fullness of his calling as Messiah by walking his way - offering soul and body to be a living sacrifice, sent in the power of the Spirit, to live and work to the praise and glory of the Father.

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*

God our Father, your kingdom embraces the whole of creation. Guide your church throughout the world to assist in your harvest and speak your truth into areas of doubt. We pray for those who are persecuted for their faith, and for all Christian charities, who take risks to bring your word into places of violence and oppression.
Lord of faith and trust, help us to trust in you.

Lord, you search the secret motives of our leaders to reveal hypocrisy and virtue. Pour out your spirit of integrity on all world leaders. Grant us all the wisdom to discern your voice and the courage to follow your will.
Lord of faith and trust, help us to trust in you.

Lord, you see fully into our hearts and know what we can become. We pray for those who affirm and encourage others, especially teachers and those who care for young and vulnerable people.
Lord of faith and trust, help us to trust in you.

Lord, you know our needs and concerns before we ask. Hear us as we bring before you all who are sick or in special need...
Bless them and fill them with your healing strength.
Lord of faith and trust, help us to trust in you.

Lord, there is no darkness that can extinguish your eternal light. In this faith we entrust to you all who have died...
Raise us with them to your eternal kingdom.
Lord of faith and trust, help us to trust in you.

The Collect

All: O Lord, we beseech you mercifully to hear the prayers of your people who call upon you; and grant that they may both perceive and know what things they ought to do, and also may have grace and power faithfully to fulfil them; 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 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