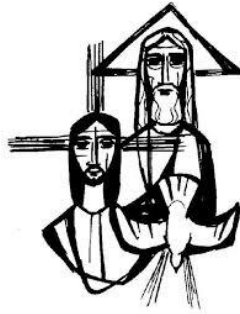


Our Sunday Service Together

6th October 2024

19th 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 Psalm Psalm 8

O Lord our governor, how glorious is your name in all the world!
Your majesty above the heavens is praised out of the mouths of babes at the breast.
You have founded a stronghold against your foes, that you might still the enemy and the avenger.
When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have ordained,
What are mortals, that you should be mindful of them; mere human beings, that you should seek them out?
You have made them little lower than the angels and crown them with glory and honour.
You have given them dominion over the works of your hands and put all things under their feet,
All sheep and oxen, even the wild beasts of the field,
The birds of the air, the fish of the sea and whatsoever moves in the paths of the sea.
O Lord our governor, how glorious is your name in all the world!
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen

Scripture Reading Genesis 2.18-24

Then the Lord God said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner.' ¹⁹ So out of the ground the Lord God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. ²⁰ The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner. ²¹ So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. ²² And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. ²³ Then the man said, 'This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; this one shall be called Woman, for out of Man this one was taken.' ²⁴ Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh.

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 10.1-16

He left that place and went to the region of Judea and beyond the Jordan. And crowds again gathered around him; and, as was his custom, he again taught them.

² Some Pharisees came, and to test him they asked, 'Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?' ³ He answered them, 'What did Moses command you?' ⁴ They said, 'Moses allowed a man to write a certificate of dismissal and to divorce her.' ⁵ But Jesus said to them, 'Because of your hardness of heart he wrote this commandment for you. ⁶ But from the beginning of creation, "God made them male and female." ⁷ "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, ⁸ and the two shall become one flesh." So they are no longer two, but one flesh. ⁹ Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.'

¹⁰ Then in the house the disciples asked him again about this matter. ¹¹ He said to them, 'Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her; ¹² and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery.'

¹³ People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. ¹⁴ But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, 'Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. ¹⁵ Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.' ¹⁶ And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.

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

I wonder if we read this account from Mark and see a conversation about marriage and divorce. Maybe you hear another argument between the Pharisees and Jesus. Or is it Jesus getting angry for the injustice done to the children by those who follow Jesus. Maybe it is all three things.

It is easy to hear Jesus talking about marriage and divorce, after all this is a topic we can relate to, even if we have never experienced it ourselves; I am sure we know someone who has. Jesus wonderfully affirms the reality of the law Moses gave to Israel, but he reminds the Pharisees this regulation was given because you are hard hearted people. Jesus, in effect challenges the Pharisees to wonder why they needed the regulation from Moses. He does so by talking about the origins of humanity as recorded in the stories in Genesis, and reminds everyone what they were created for – to be in relationships of knowing and being known!

Knowing and being known are at the heart of being human; we long to be known, to be in relationships that involve intimacy on such a level that they are like being of 'one flesh with another'. We read that God exists in this 'knowing' in a 'oneness'. It is little wonder that we read of God's concern for Adam, made in the image of God, a concern that he too should fully know and be known.

God invites Adam to come to know himself as he invites Adam to wonder and watch the world about him, as God has watched creation blossom himself. Then Adam is invited to declare the names of the animals he has come to know and with the naming give them identity, give them purpose. This is nothing short of 'blessing', to give a gift and to give purpose. Just as God wondered and blessed, declaring all is good, so Adam in wondering and naming discovers his identity as 'the image of God'; as one who is called to bless the world about him.

However, God sees that Adam is not 'complete', there is something missing. The animals do not provide Adam with a true and complete companion in the world. God decides a helper is needed whom Adam can know and be known by. This 'partner' will not come from the earth, as the animals have, this true partner will come from Adam who declares now I can both know and be completely known, because here is a being of my bone and flesh! Further, as human children grow up they will naturally come to form deep, flesh of my flesh, relationships and know and be known.

But the Pharisees don't seem to have any concerns about any of this, and maybe that is Jesus point. The Pharisees and the disciples are very concerned for the laws of Moses, so much so, they have forgotten the true calling of Israel, of all humanity – to be in relationship with God, with each other and the earth that are full of wondering, of knowing and being known. It isn't that the laws of Moses are irrelevant, they simply are not what defines humanity; and Jesus has come for the entire world to restore Adam, humanity in relationship with God, with each other and with the earth.

It is no surprise that Jesus gets indignant with his disciples when it comes to the children; if they are not able to come to him, to the one who will restore humanity to its true nature of being then all that will be left is the second rate teaching of the law. Let the children come!

Jesus reminds each of us that we should come to him and know our true humanity, in all its diversity, being known and truly knowing our purpose – being blessed. And in coming to that identity we are to step out and bless the world, declaring goodness where we see it.

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 of Lords, King of Kings, so move the hearts and minds of the leaders of nations that we would see mercy, grace, provision for all in need and above all things your peace. We pray for your peace in Ukraine, Syria, Afghanistan, Sudan, in Gaza and Israel, Lebanon. *Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his name.*

Gracious God, we pray for your church throughout the world, that your way may be known upon earth, and your saving power among all nations. We pray for all church leaders and all those who are seeking new ways to live and tell the story of Jesus in changing times.
Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his name.

God of compassion, the Canaanite woman's persistence led to Jesus's blessing. Challenge the boundaries we set to our charity and concern. Grant that we may all rejoice in your love and share it.
Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his name.

God of hospitality, you set a place for everyone at your table. Open our hearts to embrace those who are easily excluded and despised. We pray for peace and unity among all people and across nations.
Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his name.

God of healing, grant your healing love to all who are weighed down with sickness or anxiety. We pray especially for ... *Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his name.*

God of hope, you bring life to all who call upon your name. Draw into your family all who have died and be with those who are bereaved....

Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his name.

The Collect

All: O God, forasmuch as without you we are not able to please you; mercifully grant that your Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts; 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