**Morning Prayer on Sunday 5th July – The Fourth Sunday after Trinity**

**Preparation**

O Lord, open our lips

**and our mouth shall proclaim your praise.**

Bless the Lord all you works of the Lord:

sing and praise and exalt him for ever.

Bless the Lord you heavens:

sing his praise and exalt him for ever.

Bless the Lord you angels of the Lord:

sing his praise and exalt him for ever.

**Thanksgiving Prayer**

Blessed are you, creator of all,

to you be praise and glory for ever.

As your dawn renews the face of the earth

bringing life and life to all creation,

may we rejoice in this day you have made;

As we wake refreshed from the depths of sleep,

open our eyes to behold your presence

and strengthen our hands to do your will,

that the world may rejoice and give you praise.

Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

**Blessed by God for ever.**

**Bless the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit;**

**sing his praise and exalt him for ever.**

This opening prayer may be said

The night has passed, and the day lies open before us;

let us pray with one heart and mind.

Silence is kept.

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 Word of God**

**Psalm 145.8-15**

8 The Lord is gracious and merciful, \* long-suffering and of great goodness. 9 The Lord is loving to everyone \* and his mercy is over all his creatures. 10 All your works praise you, O Lord, \* and your faithful servants bless you. 11 They tell of the glory of your kingdom \* and speak of your mighty power, 12 To make known to all peoples your mighty acts \* and the glorious splendour of your kingdom. 13 Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom; \* your dominion endures throughout all ages. 14 The Lord is sure in all his words \* and faithful in all his deeds. 15 The Lord upholds all those who fall \* and lifts up all those who are bowed down.

**Glory to the Father and to the Son**

**and to the Holy Spirit;**

**as it was in the beginning is now**

**and shall be for ever. Amen.**

**Canticle**

**A Song of David**

**Splendour and majesty are your, O God;**

**you are exalted as head over all.**

Blessed are you, God of Israel, for ever and ever,

for yours is the greatness, the power,

the glory, the splendour and the majesty.

Everything in heaven and on earth is yours;

yours is the kingdom, O Lord,

and you are exalted as head over all.

Riches and honour come from you

and you rule over all.

In your hand are power and might;

yours it is to give power and strength to all.

And now we give you thanks, our God,

and praise your glorious name.

For all things come from you,

and of your own have we given you.

**Glory to the Father and to the Son**

**and to the Holy Spirit;**

**as it was in the beginning is now**

**and shall be for ever. Amen.**

**Splendour and majesty are yours, O God;**

**you are exalted as head over all.**

Scripture Reading

**Zechariah 9.9-12**

9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem! Lo, your king comes to you; triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. 10 He will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the war horse from Jerusalem; and the battle-bow shall be cut off, and he shall command peace to the nations; his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth. 11 As for you also, because of the blood of my covenant with you, I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit. 12 Return to your stronghold, O prisoners of hope; today I declare that I will restore to you double.

**Romans 7.15-25a**

15 I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. 16 Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. 17 But in fact it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me. 18 For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. 19 For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. 20 Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me. 21 So I find it to be a law that when I want to do what is good, evil lies close at hand. 22 For I delight in the law of God in my inmost self, 23 but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind, making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. 24 Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? 25 Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!

Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead.

**And Christ shall give you light.**

You have died and your life is hid with Christ in God.

**Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead.**

Set your minds on things that are above,

not on things that are on the earth.

**And Christ shall give you light.**

When Christ our life appears

you will appear with him in glory.

**Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead,**

**And Christ shall give you light.**

Gospel Canticle

**You have raised up for us a mighty Saviour,**

**born of the house of your servant David.**

Blessed be the Lord the God of Israel,

who has come to his people and set them free.

He has raised up for us a mighty Saviour,

born of the house of his servant David.

Through his holy prophets God promised of old

to save us from our enemies,

from the hands of all that hate us,

To show mercy to our ancestors,

and to remember his holy covenant.

This was the oath God swore to our father Abraham:

to set us free from the hands of our enemies,

Free to worship him without fear,

holy and righteous in his sights

all the days of our life.

And you, child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High,

for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way,

To give his people knowledge of salvation

by the forgiveness of all their sins.

In the tender compassion of our God

the dawn from on high shall break upon us,

To shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death,

and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

**Glory to the Father and to the Son**

**and to the Holy Spirit;**

**as it was in the beginning is now**

**and shall be for ever. Amen.**

**You have raised up for us a mighty Saviour,**

**born of the house of your servant David.**

**Gospel Reading**

Matthew (11.16-19, 25-end)

All **Glory to you, O Lord** At that time Jesus said, 16 ‘To what will I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the market-places and calling to one another, 17 “We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we wailed, and you did not mourn.” 18 For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, “He has a demon”; 19 the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, “Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax-collectors and sinners!” Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds. 25 I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; 26 yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. 27 All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. 28 Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.’

This is the Gospel of the Lord. All **Praise to you, O Christ**

**Matthew 11.16-19, 25-end**

**05/07/20 COVID19**

The first few verses of this gospel passage feels to me a bit like Jesus talking to a group of grumpy children in a school playground. It’s almost like he’s saying, nothing we do is ever right. John the Baptist came and was considered to be a madman because he didn’t eat or drink but along comes Jesus, who does those things and he is accused of being a glutton and a drunkard. It’s almost as if the Jewish people just can’t see what God is doing because they are only too ready to complain! Jesus however moves away from their complaints and focusses on the relationship that he has with the Father and that he wants his followers to have as well.

I don’t know how interested you are in language. I am and am very aware that the language we use can convey all sorts of messages. The language in verses 25-30 is really quite interesting and is quite different to the language in the earlier part of the chapter. This is the language of invitation. Jesus invites us into a relationship with him and with his Father. One of the privileges that all Priests have is being able to take funerals and whenever I do I am always very aware of that privilege and that sense of being allowed into the family’s relationship with the person who died. I am always conscious, no matter how well I knew the person whose funeral I am taking it is nothing like the relationship that the family members had with that person and I am always fascinated by the things that I learn about the person. It is that sense of intimacy that Jesus invites us into. Those that have recognised Jesus as Messiah and chosen to follow him are invited into the kingdom family, the new relationship, the new covenant that God is offering to his people. Verse 28 I think, is one of the most encouraging verses in the Bible. ‘Come to me all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens and I will give you rest’. Jesus isn’t promising an easy life but he does invite us into that place of relationship with him and his Father that will give us the rest and the restoration, the renewal and the refreshment that we need to follow and to serve him. However heavy the burden we carry, we can lay it down before Jesus and know that the weight of it has been taken from us.

I sometimes am quite amazed at how words that were written and situations that happened so long ago can be so appropriate for todays society. We live in a world that is full of need, where people are often carrying very heavy burdens, particularly in the last few months. Many people have been worried about their jobs, about how they are going to pay bills, many people have been burdened down by fear and by the grief of losing loved ones. Sometimes I hear people’s stories and I wonder how on earth they can go on as their burdens just seem too much for them to carry. People desperately need to hear that invitation that Jesus offers but they will only do so if the invitation comes from us. They can only recognise Jesus if they see him in the way we live out our lives, if they hear us tell the story of our relationship with the Heavenly Father. As Jesus invites us into a relationship with his Heavenly father, he calls us then to follow him and to take that invitation out into the world so that others too may be able to lay down their burdens and rest in God’s love and peace. **Amen.**

**Prayers**

Blessed are you, Lord God, giver of life and light,

you give us of your love: you give us of yourself.

Open our ears to your call and our hearts to your love.

Send us out in the power of your Spirit

to proclaim the Good News of your saving love

as revealed in our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Blessed are you, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

We give thanks that you sent Jesus to live among us.

We pray that we may share in his mission,

that we may pass on the message of the Gospel

and show acts of mercy that reveal God’s love.

May your whole Church be moved to share

in the ministry that is theirs.

We remember today all involved in the healing ministry.

We ask you to bless all counsellors, spiritual directors

and all who lead us in our ministry.

Silence

Lord, hear us:

**show us your loving kindness.**

We remember all who are suffering under totalitarian states,

all who are oppressed

and forced to do what they do not want to do.

We ask your blessing on all who are seeking

to bring liberty and freedom to captive peoples.

Give courage and strength

to all who are working for relief agencies

and generosity to all who are called upon

to support them in their work.

Silence

Lord, hear us:

**show us your loving kindness.**

We give thanks for our homes and loved ones.

Through our families teach us to be sensitive

To the needs of others:

help us to listen carefully and to respond quickly.

We ask your blessing upon all

who have stopped communicating properly with each other,

that they may again be awakened

to those with whom they live and work.

Silence

Lord, hear us:

**show us your loving kindness.**

We give thanks that you, O God, care for us,

body, mind and spirit.

We remember in your presence all suffering people.

We pray especially for those who feel no one listens or cares.

We ask you to bless all who are homeless,

all who are deeply in debt.

We pray for all who are drug addicts

and all who cannot cope with life.

We remember all who are ill in our community.

Silence

Lord, hear us:

**show us your loving kindness.**

We rejoice in the Good News of eternal life.

we remember in your presence

friends and loved ones who are departed from us.

We share with them in the fellowship of all your saints

and commend them and ourselves to your unfailing love.

Silence

Merciful Father,

**accept these prayers**

**for the sake of your Son,**

**our Saviour Jesus Christ.**

**Amen.**

The Collect for the Day

O God, the protector of all who trust in you, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy: increase and multiply upon us your mercy; that with you as our ruler and guide we may so pass through things temporal that we lose not our hold on things eternal; grant this, heavenly Father, for our Lord Jesus Christ’s sake, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

The Lord’s Prayer is said

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**

The Lord bless us, and preserve us from all evil,

and keep us in eternal life.

**Amen.**

Let us bless the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**