**Morning Prayer on Sunday 25th October – The Last 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 1**

1 Blessed are they who have not walked in the counsel of the wicked, \* nor lingered in the way of sinners, nor sat in the assembly of the scornful. 2 Their delight is in the law of the Lord \* and they meditate on his law day and night. 3 Like a tree planted by streams of water bearing fruit in due season, with leaves that do not wither, \* whatever they do, it shall prosper. 4 As for the wicked, it is not so with them; \* they are like chaff which the wind blows away. 5 Therefore the wicked shall not be able to stand in the judgement, \* nor the sinner in the congregation of the righteous. 6 For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, \* but the way of the wicked shall perish.

**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

**Leviticus 19.1-2,15-18**

1 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 2 ‘Speak to all the congregation of the people of Israel and say to them: You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy.

15 You shall not render an unjust judgement; you shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great: with justice you shall judge your neighbour. 16 You shall not go around as a slanderer among your people, and you shall not profit by the blood of your neighbour: I am the LORD. 17 You shall not hate in your heart anyone of your kin; you shall reprove your neighbour, or you will incur guilt yourself. 18 You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbour as yourself: I am the LORD.’

**1 Thessalonians 2.1-8**

1 You yourselves know, brothers and sisters, that our coming to you was not in vain, 2 but though we had already suffered and been shamefully mistreated at Philippi, as you know, we had courage in our God to declare to you the gospel of God in spite of great opposition. 3 For our appeal does not spring from deceit or impure motives or trickery, 4 but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the message of the gospel, even so we speak, not to please mortals, but to please God who tests our hearts. 5 As you know and as God is our witness, we never came with words of flattery or with a pretext for greed; 6 nor did we seek praise from mortals, whether from you or from others, 7 though we might have made demands as apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, like a nurse tenderly caring for her own children. 8 So deeply do we care for you that we are determined to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you have become very dear to us.

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**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to **Matthew [22.34-46]**

All **Glory to you, O Lord**

34 When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, 35 and one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. 36 ‘Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?’ 37 He said to him, ‘“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.” 38 This is the greatest and first commandment. 39 And a second is like it: “You shall love your neighbour as yourself.” 40 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.’ 41 Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them this question: 42 ‘What do you think of the Messiah? Whose son is he?’ They said to him, ‘The son of David.’ 43 He said to them, ‘How is it then that David by the Spirit calls him Lord, saying, 44 “The Lord said to my Lord, ‘Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet’”? 45 If David thus calls him Lord, how can he be his son?’ 46 No one was able to give him an answer, nor from that day did anyone dare to ask him any more questions.

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

**Matthew 22:34f**

25/10/20 covid 19

I wonder, if Jesus ever felt, when he was faced with the Pharisees, here we go again. I don’t think we could blame him if he did, because it seems, when we read the gospels, as if every-time Jesus turns around, there are the Pharisees, waiting to test him, to trip him up, wanting to show him up as a fraud, that he can’t possibly be the Messiah, after all he doesn’t fit the picture of a Messiah that they have. And, every time Jesus turns the tables on them, avoids their trap and leaves them no doubt furious but probably slightly bewildered as well.

Well, here Jesus goes again. The Pharisees, hearing that he has silenced the Sadducees, probably think that they can do better than that and so they ask him which is the greatest commandment, no doubt hoping that Jesus would choose one and they could then condemn him for not valuing all of the commandments that God had given them. But Jesus’ answer isn’t just a smart alec one or a nah nah you can’t catch me out, he tells them that the greatest commandment is to love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul and mind and the second is to love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments hang everything else. You can almost sense the Pharisees being stopped in their tracks, how can they argue with that. Apart from anything else, love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul and mind is not only what they believe but what they bind on to themselves every day. A commandment that they knew and lived their lives

by. But actually, I think that Jesus is telling them something new. He is telling them, I believe, that it is not enough to bind these words on to their heads or arms, the commandments have to change their hearts, souls and minds. Perhaps what he is pointing out to them is similar to the difference between the law telling parents that they have to look after their children and the love, that most parents have for their children that drives them to do the best that they possibly can for them. If, says Jesus, you truly love God with all your heart, soul and mind then that is life changing and the second commandment then naturally follows on, it’s not something that is onerous, because out of love for God, naturally comes love for those he has created.

I suspect that for Jesus, when the Phairsees asked their question, there was probably a sense of great sadness, as well as possibly frustration, as he knew that time was running out for them. Time and time again he had faced them with the truth of who he was and time and time again they had rejected the truth. And of course the time was rapidly approaching when Jesus himself, through his death and resurrection would be the fulfilment and embodiment of those two great commands. He now asks them a question that at face value could possibly look as if he is turning the tables on them, trying to trip them up. He asks them, whose son is the Messiah and when they answer the Son of David, he takes them back to the Scriptures to show them how David called him Lord, and asks them therefore how the Christ could then be David’s son. The very foundation of your belief, Jesus is surely saying, needs to be looked at in a

different way, you need to put away your expectations and pre-conceived ideas of how God will work and instead see what he is doing. Jesus’ love of God with his whole heart, soul and mind will cause him to walk the path of obedience to the cross, to lay down his life for his neighbour, God’s world.

What then does this passage have to say to us today?

Many of us will have had experiences during this current Pandemic of seeing people being good neighbours. And if there is anything positive to come out of this year it is that. People have been able to see others struggling and unlike, in the story of the good Samaritan, passing by on the other side of the road, they have stepped in and helped.

Our world teaches us that we need to look after number 1, that we have to put ourselves first and yet at the moment with everything that is going on in the world around us perhaps that message is being challenged and so, possibly Jesus’ message is a timely one for us as well, perhaps Jesus says to us that we need to look not at the things that the world values, but to return to that which is important, the commandment to love God with everything we have, our hearts, our soul, our mind, our money, our safety and security, our future and as we do that and allow God’s love to flow through us for our neighbour, so we can see the values of and the Kingdom of Heaven coming in here on earth. **Amen**

**Prayers**

Blessed are you, Lord our God.

You have created light out of darkness

and gave us eyes to see the beauty and wonders of your creation.

Lord, through the visible things of this world

lead us to see the invisible;

extend our vision beyond our eyes

that we may see with our hearts also.

Blessed are you, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

We give thanks for the beauty and colour of our world,

for the gift of sight.

We ask your blessing upon men and women

who help us to see beyond the obvious,

upon all who are prophets and visionaries.

We pray for all who study your word

and who celebrate your sacraments.

We remember those training for ministry

and ask your blessing upon theological colleges

and all who teach Religious Education.

Silence

Lord, open our eyes

**to see the invisible.**

We give thanks for explorers, discoverers and inventors;

for all who have enriched the world by their wisdom

or by extending themselves.

We ask your blessing upon the leaders of nations,

upon governments and ruling bodies.

We pray for the United Nation and all peacekeeping forces.

We remember today all writers and broadcasters,

artists and craft workers,

and all who influence our lives by their actions.

Silence

Lord, open our eyes

**to see the invisible.**

We rejoice in the protection and the peace of our homes.

We thank you for our families and friends

and ask your blessing upon them.

We pray for families who have become bored with life

and with each other,

For couples who have lost the spirit of exploration

and adventure.

We ask your blessing upon all who influence

the minds of the young and the vulnerable.

Silence

Lord, open our eyes

**to see the invisible.**

Lord we give thanks for all who have guided us

into the ways of goodness and love,

all who have enriched our lives by their wisdom.

We remember before you all who have lost their way in life.

We pray for the confused, the disillusioned and the despairing.

We remember all who are ill at home or in hospital.

We pray especially for all who suffer from blindness

or partial vision.

Silence

Lord, open our eyes

**to see the invisible.**

Lord, open our eyes to your kingdom that is growing among us;

let us see your presence and love at work.

We give thanks for your saints

and for all our loved ones who have departed this life.

May they rejoice where faith has vanished into sight

in the glory of eternal life.

Silence

Merciful Father,

**accept these prayers**

**for the sake of your Son,**

**our Saviour Jesus Christ.**

**Amen.**

The Collect for the Day

God of all grace, your Son Jesus Christ fed the hungry with the bread of his life and the word of his kingdom: renew your people with your heavenly grace, and in all our weakness sustain us by your true and living bread; who is alive and reigns, 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.**