

**Sunday 21 September 2025,
Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity**

Collect:

Merciful God,
your Son came to save us and bore our sins on the cross:
may we trust in your mercy and know your love,
rejoicing in the righteousness
that is ours through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Readings for this week:

Amos 8:4-7; Psalm 113; 1 Timothy 2:1-7; Luke 16:1-13

Our portion from the prophet Amos begins with a summons to hear then proceeds to denounce certain Israelites for injustice to those less fortunate, homing in on specific examples of oppressive behaviour. Those with economic power are accused of impatience to sell for profit, using deceitful practices to defraud those who are more honourable or less able to contest their judgement. Enslavement and denial of charity to the poor are also condemned with God swearing punishment on those who oppress others. Psalm 113 acts as a reminder that all wealth and position come from God. Nothing we have is our own, it belongs to God and therefore should be shared with all.

In 1 Timothy we find Paul urging that we pray for everyone. Just as all that we have comes from God and should be shared equally, so all prayer should be indiscriminate, not favouring on party over another, although the context of what is prayed for will change. So, we should pray for our leaders and those with power. We pray for them that we might live quietly, peacefully, with dignity. But we can only have those things if they are governing well, for the good of all and not for themselves or partisan elites. If they are working for selfish gain, then our prayers will change, become more radical, revisiting the words of Amos.

Amos calls out oppressive dishonesty that makes the rich richer and the poor poorer. In the Gospel we have something quite different, where the dishonesty of the steward is not the focus of Jesus' parable. Instead, what matters is how he secures his own future either by cutting out his own commission to lower the amounts owed by clients to his master, or by not letting on to the debtors that he had been fired, so that they, thinking that their reductions are legitimate, praise the master for his generosity, and he, in turn, commends the steward for his actions. The parable probably ends at verse 9, with 8b being Luke's comment on it, while in verses 10-13 he gathers together saying of Jesus about possessions. Looking at the parable this way, Jesus is once again telling the disciples to use possessions for good, to bring aid to others and to open up the way of the kingdom.

Lord God, the source of truth and love,
keep us faithful to the apostles' teaching and fellowship,
united in prayer and the breaking of bread,
and one in joy and simplicity of heart,
in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Readings for next week:

Genesis 28:10-17; Psalm 103:9-22; Revelation 12:7-12; John 1:47-51
St Michael and All Angels