



Sunday 5th July 2026

The Fifth Sunday after Trinity

Gospel Reading

Matthew 11.16-19,25-30

‘But to what will I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the market-places and calling to one another,

“We played the flute for you, and you did not dance;
we wailed, and you did not mourn.”

For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, “He has a demon”; 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.’

Jesus Thanks His Father

At that time Jesus said, ‘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; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. 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.

‘Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. 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. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.’

Other Readings: Genesis 24.34-38,42-49, 58-67

Psalm 45.10-17 or

Canticle: Song of Solomon 2.8-13

Romans 7.15-25a

Homily

Do you remember playing games in the playground at primary school? Games like Tig or Stuck-in-the-Mud or British Bulldog? There were always those children who came up with the ideas and who got the game going and then put pressure on all the others to join in the game. If you didn’t join in, you got laughed at, or made to feel like you were spoiling the fun.

At the beginning of our gospel passage (v16-19) Jesus paints a picture of something similar from his day. Children playing a follow-my-leader game in the streets and complaining that the others are not joining in. This, he says, is what those around him at that time were like. They wanted Jesus to fit into their categories and play along with their games. They wanted the same from John the Baptist. But neither John nor Jesus did it the way they thought they should, and so they were disappointed.

But Jesus is making it clear **he's no plaything**. He's not following *our* lead. He breaks through our categories and is looking for a different kind of response from us. He is not joining in with us. That's not the way it works. Instead, we need to join in with *him*.

I wonder, do we sometimes treat Jesus the same way? Do we expect him to fit in with our agenda and serve our needs the way we want him to? Have we got disappointed with him and, like the people of his time, started accusing him in our hearts, of lowering his standards or showing kindness to the wrong people? Why isn't he doing what *I* want him to do the way *I* want it?

Jesus makes it clear that at the root of that kind of attitude is pride. In the next section (v25-26) he praises his Father in heaven that he hasn't revealed himself to those who think they know it all or have things taped, but that instead **he reveals himself to those who are childlike and humble**. Jesus works in partnership with his Father to move towards those who recognise their need of him and are ready to let *him* take the lead.

Jesus is looking for an attitude of dependence and submission to him, it is to those people **he offers his beautiful invitation**: 'Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.' (v28).

The invitation is to those who know they need his help. It is to those who are willing to submit to his yoke and recognise they need to learn from him. They are the ones who will find, in him, the rest that they need.

So, what is our response to his invitation today? Are we weary and laid down with heavy burdens? Are we trying to bear the weight of it all alone? Do we think we can do it without him?

Or will we come to him? Will we surrender our pride and choose instead to let the gentle One lead us? Will we allow him to come alongside us and take the strain and show us how to live? Are we willing to team up with him and learn from Him, who is humble in heart?

If we do, we will find deep soul satisfaction and perfect peace. True rest.

Submitting to him is like putting on clothing that fits perfectly. It's exactly what we need. Following him is not burdensome. It lightens the load. As Eugene Peterson translates it beautifully in 'The Message', if we keep company with Jesus, we learn to live 'freely and lightly' and begin to enjoy the 'unforced rhythms' of his amazing grace.

Will you come to Jesus and let him take the lead in your life today?

Conversation Questions

1. Can you think of a time when you were disappointed with Jesus not doing things as you had hoped? How do we learn to let go of our agenda and let Jesus lead his way?
2. What does it look like to submit to Jesus' yoke each day?
3. Is there anything else from the passage not already discussed that speaks to you? What is it?
4. What will you do this week in your Monday-to-Saturday ministry in response to what you have heard today? #everydayfaith

Prayer

Spend some time in prayer, responding to what you have heard today and listening to what God might be saying to you.

Collect of the day

*Almighty and everlasting God,
by whose Spirit the whole body of the Church
is governed and sanctified:
hear our prayer which we offer for all your faithful people,
that in their vocation and ministry
they may serve you in holiness and truth
to the glory of your name;
through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.*

(or)

*Almighty God,
send down upon your Church
the riches of your Spirit,
and kindle in all who minister the gospel
your countless gifts of grace;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

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