

Sunday Worship at Home, 4th July 2021, Fifth Sunday after Trinity



Opening Prayers:

O Lord, open our lips

and our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Give us the joy of your saving help

and sustain us with your life-giving Spirit.

A Prayer of Confession:

The gospel calls us have faith in God and be faithful to Christ. As we offer ourselves to him in penitence and faith, we renew our confidence and trust in his mercy.

We have not always worshipped God, our creator. **Lord, have mercy.**

We have not always followed Christ, our Saviour. **Christ, have mercy.**

We have not always trusted in the Spirit, our guide. **Lord, have mercy.**

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins,
and bring us to everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

The Collect for the Fifth Sunday after Trinity

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 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. **Amen**

Reading: Mark 6:1-13

Jesus came to his home town, and his disciples followed him. On the sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astounded. They said, 'Where did this man get all this? What is this wisdom that has been given to him? What deeds of power are being done by his hands! Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us?' And they took offence at him. Then Jesus said to them, 'Prophets are not without honour, except in their home town, and among their own kin, and in their own house.' And he could do no deed of power there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and cured them. And he was amazed at their unbelief. Then he went about among the villages teaching. He called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. He ordered them to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts; but to wear sandals and not to put on two tunics. He said to them, 'Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave the place. If any place will not welcome you and they refuse to hear you, as you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them.' So they went out and proclaimed that all should repent. They cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them.

Reflection on the reading:

In the Old Testament reading set for today the Prophet Ezekiel is sent by God from his relatively comfortable place, by the river in Babylon to preach God's word to a stubbornly rebellious people. In the Epistle reading set for today Paul talks of God's grace being sufficient for him, that in his human weakness, when he is insulted, and facing hardships and setbacks he is strong for God. And in our Gospel reading we see the contrast between the stubborn lack of faith of Jesus' friends and neighbours compared with the faithful disciples who Jesus sends in his name to preach and heal. In fairness to the people in Jesus' home town of Nazareth, they knew his family, had seen him grow up from childhood and in their eyes he was just an ordinary man who had put down his carpenter's tools and left them. They had not seen him as the disciples had. The disciples had spent time with Jesus, watched him do miracles and heard his teaching. Where the people of Nazareth could not see God working in the ordinary life of the carpenter's son, that same carpenter's son could see God at work in the ordinary people he was with. So he sends them out in weakness, carrying no money or provisions for their journey they were totally dependent on the people they met and the grace of God. The vision for the Church of England for the 2020s is to be a church that is "Simpler, Humbler, Bolder". Simpler in that we must return to bring a church that is truly focussed on Jesus, his teaching, and his example, living lives that are Jesus centred and Jesus shaped. Humbler in not relying not on our own gifts, talents and strength, but using our God given gifts for God's work, relying on His grace to make us strong in our weakness. And Bolder in continuing to share God's love with those around us in what we say and do, even when we face rejection, hardship and setbacks. **Amen.**

The Creed

We believe in God the Father, from whom every family in heaven and earth is named.

We believe in God the Son, who lives in our hearts through faith, and fills us with his love.

We believe in God the Holy Spirit, who strengthens us with power from on high.

We believe in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen

Be still and pray: In your prayers, include prayers for the church, the needs of the world and our local community. Particularly pray for: Our Prime Minister, the Government and all world leaders they struggle to deal with the latest wave of COVID-19 infections and manage our release from lockdowns; for front-line health workers caring for the sick and vulnerable, and administering vaccinations; for healing and peace for those who are ill; and for the souls of those who have recently died and comfort for those who are mourning their loss.

Finish with The Lord's Prayer:

Conclusion

May God bless us and keep us, make his face to shine upon us, and give us his peace; **Amen**

Reverend Eddie