

Sunday Worship at Home, 19th June 2022, First Sunday after Trinity



Opening Prayers:

God meets us in our scattered lives, **let us worship him together**

God of our days and years, we set this time apart for you.

Form us in the likeness of Christ so that our lives may glorify you. **Amen**

A Prayer of Confession:

God shows his love for us in that, while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Let us then show our love for him by confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

We are often slow to follow the example of Christ. **Lord, have mercy.**

We often fail to be known as Christ's disciples. **Christ, have mercy.**

We often fail to walk the way of the cross. **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 First Sunday after Trinity

O God, the strength of all those who put their trust in you, mercifully accept our prayers and, because through the weakness of our mortal nature we can do no good thing without you, grant us the help of your grace, that in the keeping of your commandments we may please you both in will and deed; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

Reading: from Luke 8:26-39

Jesus arrived at the country of the Gerasenes, which is opposite Galilee. As he stepped out on land, a man of the city who had demons met him. For a long time he had worn no clothes, and he did not live in a house but in the tombs. When he saw Jesus, he fell down before him and shouted at the top of his voice, 'What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, do not torment me' — for Jesus had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. Jesus then asked him, 'What is your name?' He said, 'Legion'; for many demons had entered him. They begged him not to order them to go back into the abyss. Now there on the hillside a large herd of swine was feeding; and the demons begged Jesus to let them enter these. So he gave them permission. Then the demons came out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and was drowned. When the swineherds saw what had happened, they ran off and told it in the city and in the country. Then people came out to see what had happened, and when they came to Jesus, they found the man from whom the demons had gone sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid. Those who had seen it told them how the one who had been possessed by demons had been healed. Then all the people of the surrounding country asked Jesus to leave them; for they were seized with great fear. So he got into the boat and returned. The man from whom the demons had gone begged that he might be with him; but Jesus sent him away, saying, 'Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you.' So he went away, proclaiming throughout the city how much Jesus had done for him.

Reflection on the reading:

There is something particularly chilling in a film when the character, possessed by a demon or some other being, speaks in a voice that is not theirs or even in more than one voice at the same time. It immediately hits us as wrong, and powerfully conveys the character's struggle for their own identity and existence. The man in our story may have had a problem that in the modern world would not identify as demon possession but a mental illness called multiple personality disorder. Our own identity is important to us and our own mental wellbeing, but it is also important to others. It is common when meeting someone for the first time to be asked two questions first "what is your name?" and "what do you do?" In reality I am many things. I am Christian, British, white, male, priest, vicar, husband, father, scientist, singer, hobby farmer, car driver, railway modeller.... the list goes on. All of these go together to create my own self-identity but they are not all of equal importance. At different times any of these may become more important than the others, other things added, and once important things fade away. Our identity may easily become confused. But some of it cannot or should not ever change. For me the most important thing of all should be one at the beginning, not buried in the middle – my Christian faith. In our Gospel story, Jesus brings the man healing. He is no longer confused but calm, "in his right mind" and sitting at the feet of Jesus. In Luke's Gospel this story comes immediately after Jesus calmed the storm on the sea of Galilee. The onlookers to both miracles, the disciples in the boat, and the people from the possessed man's hometown, both have the same reaction to seeing God's power in action they were amazed and afraid of what Jesus did. The man himself however, simply told everyone how much Jesus had done for him. **Amen.**

A version of the Creed

We believe in God the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on 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:

God of peace and justice, God of love and healing; we pray for all those in our benefice who are ill at this time, and those who are caring for them whether at home or in hospital; we pray for those struggling with rising cost of fuel and food, and who are fearful of how they may pay for tomorrow; we pray for the people of Ukraine who fear what this day will bring; we pray that those in authority will seek peace and the laying down of weapons; we pray for all your precious children living at risk or in fear, that you would hold and protect them.

Finish with The Lord's Prayer

Conclusion

May God Almighty, Father Son and Holy Spirit, who set the church on fire on the day of Pentecost, bless us and give us his peace. Amen.

Reverend Eddie