



Fifteenth Sunday after TRINITY 25th September

Accession of King Charles III observed

In the name of the + Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

The Greeting

Grace, mercy, and peace
from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

HYMN

Ye that know the Lord is gracious,
ye for whom a cornerstone
stands, of God elect and precious,
laid that ye may build thereon,
see that on that sure foundation
ye a living temple raise,
towers that may tell forth salvation,
walls that may re-echo praise.

Living stones, by God appointed
each to his allotted place,
kings and priests, by God anointed,
shall ye not declare his grace?
Ye, a royal generation,
tell the tidings of your birth,
tidings of a new creation
to an old and weary earth

Tell the praise of him who called you
out of darkness into light,
broke the fetters that enthralled you,
gave you freedom, peace and sight:
tell the tale of sins forgiven,
strength renewed and hope restored,
till the earth, in tune with heaven,

Invitation to Confession

The Lord is full of compassion and mercy,
slow to anger and of great kindness.

Lord God,
we have sinned against you;
we have done evil in your sight.
We are sorry and repent.
Have mercy on us according to your love.
Wash away our wrongdoing and cleanse us from our sin.
Renew a right spirit within us
and restore us to the joy of your salvation,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

May the Father of all mercies
cleanse us from our sins,
and restore us in his image
to the praise and glory of his name,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Collect

God, who in generous mercy
sent the Holy Spirit upon your Church in the burning fire of your love:
grant that your people may be fervent
in the fellowship of the gospel
that, always abiding in you,
they may be found steadfast in faith and active in service;
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

A prayer for the King

Almighty God, the fountain of all goodness,
bless our Sovereign Lord, King Charles,
and all who are in authority under him;
that they may order all things in wisdom and equity, righteousness and peace,
to the honour and glory of your name
and the good of your Church and people;
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

A reading from the Old Testament Isaiah 35 4-7a

Strengthen the feeble hands,
steady the knees that give way;
⁴ say to those with fearful hearts,
"Be strong, do not fear;
your God will come,
he will come with vengeance;
with divine retribution
he will come to save you."
⁵ Then will the eyes of the blind be opened
and the ears of the deaf unstopped.
⁶ Then will the lame leap like a deer,
and the mute tongue shout for joy.
Water will gush forth in the wilderness
and streams in the desert.
⁷ The burning sand will become a pool,
the thirsty ground bubbling springs.

This is the word of the Lord
Thanks be to God

1 Praise the Lord!

Praise the Lord, O my soul!

2 I will praise the Lord as long as I live;
I will sing praises to my God all my life long.

3 Do not put your trust in princes,
in mortals, in whom there is no help.

4 When their breath departs, they return to the earth;
on that very day their plans perish.

5 Happy are those whose help is the God of Jacob,
whose hope is in the Lord their God,

6 who made heaven and earth,
the sea, and all that is in them;

who keeps faith for ever;

7 who executes justice for the oppressed;
who gives food to the hungry.

The Lord sets the prisoners free;

8 the Lord opens the eyes of the blind.

The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down;
the Lord loves the righteous.

9 The Lord watches over the strangers;
he upholds the orphan and the widow,
but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin.

10 The Lord will reign for ever,
your God, O Zion, for all generations.

Praise the Lord!



Epistle

James 2. 1-13

2 My brothers and sisters, believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ must not show favouritism. ²Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in filthy old clothes also comes in. ³If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, "Here's a good seat for you," but say to the poor man, "You stand there" or "Sit on the floor by my feet," ⁴have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?

⁵Listen, my dear brothers and sisters: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him? ⁶But you have dishonoured the poor. Is it not the rich who are exploiting you? Are they not the ones who are dragging you into court? ⁷Are they not the ones who are blaspheming the noble name of him to whom you belong?

⁸If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, "Love your neighbour as yourself,"^[a] you are doing right. ⁹But if you show favouritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers. ¹⁰For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it. ¹¹For he who said, "You shall not commit adultery,"^[b] also said, "You shall not murder."^[c] If you do not commit adultery but do commit murder, you have become a lawbreaker.

¹² Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom, ¹³ because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

This is the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

HYMN

Father of heaven, whose love profound a ransom for our souls hath found, before thy throne we sinners bend; to us thy pardoning love extend.	Almighty Son, Incarnate Word, our Prophet, Priest, Redeemer, Lord, before thy throne we sinners bend; to us thy saving grace extend	Eternal Spirit, by whose breath the soul is raised from sin and death, Before thy throne we sinners bend; to us thy quickening power extend
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Jehovah - Father, Spirit, Son -
mysterious Godhead, Three in One,
before thy throne we sinners bend;
grace, pardon, life to us extend.

The Gospel
Mark 7 24-end

Alleluia, alleluia. Welcome with meekness the implanted word
That has the power to save your souls
Alleluia

The Holy Gospel is from the 7th chapter of the Gospel of Mark beginning at the 24th verse.

Glory to you O Lord

Jesus Honours a Syrophenician Woman's Faith

²⁴ Jesus left that place and went to the vicinity of Tyre.^[g] He entered a house and did not want anyone to know it; yet he could not keep his presence secret. ²⁵ In fact, as soon as she heard about him, a woman whose little daughter was possessed by an impure spirit came and fell at his feet. ²⁶ The woman was a Greek, born in Syrian Phoenicia. She begged Jesus to drive the demon out of her daughter.

²⁷ "First let the children eat all they want," he told her, "for it is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to the dogs."

²⁸ "Lord," she replied, "even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs."

²⁹ Then he told her, "For such a reply, you may go; the demon has left your daughter."

³⁰ She went home and found her child lying on the bed, and the demon gone.

Jesus Heals a Deaf and Mute Man

³¹ Then Jesus left the vicinity of Tyre and went through Sidon, down to the Sea of Galilee and into the region of the Decapolis.^[h] ³² There some people brought to him a man who was deaf and could hardly talk, and they begged Jesus to place his hand on him.

³³ After he took him aside, away from the crowd, Jesus put his fingers into the man's ears. Then he spit and touched the man's tongue. ³⁴ He looked up to heaven and with a deep sigh said to him, "Ephphatha!" (which means "Be opened!"). ³⁵ At this, the man's ears were opened, his tongue was loosened and he began to speak plainly.

³⁶ Jesus commanded them not to tell anyone. But the more he did so, the more they kept talking about it. ³⁷ People were overwhelmed with amazement. "He has done everything well," they said. "He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak."

This is the Gospel of the Lord
Praise to you O Christ

Reflection

"...saying, He hath done all things well"

This is such a beautiful testimony to the ministry of Jesus. Perhaps it reminds us of the words in Genesis when it describes the acts of God in creation – how the breath of God hovered over the waters bring into being the innumerable acts of creation and recreation of which we are part. *'And God saw all that was made and declared it good.'* Well done.

In today's gospel Jesus has spent many weeks, some have suggested as much as eight months travelling in the regions of Tyre and Sidon – today's Lebanon. During this time away from the confrontations amongst the Jews, no doubt Jesus was able to teach his closest followers. They would also learn by watching what he did; how he spoke to the crowds who in that area were predominantly gentile. Recall the earlier account of the Syrophenician woman's daughter; Jesus is illustrating the inclusion of gentiles into the Kingdom of God.

It is hard for us to appreciate how difficult this must have been for the disciples who had previously lived in strict accordance with Jewish food laws and avoiding contact with non-Jews. But it was a foundational teaching for the church which was to emerge after the resurrection – the message of Jesus of Nazareth was for the world.

This healing is probably the most tender recorded. Deafness is perhaps worse than blindness in some regards. How do you make sense of what is around you when you have no names for anything, no defined concepts for subtle emotions, you have no communication – how can you make yourself known?

This event happens as Jesus travels south into the gentile region of Decapolis. Who are the 'they' that ask Jesus to heal the man? The disciples to witness another healing? The people in the village who had heard of him by report? Not the man. Perhaps it was the disciples because they would have gone aside with Jesus and the fact that he tells them not to spread it about. He could not have said that to a crowd, but he could have as an instruction to his followers. But they are 'amazed beyond measure' and no doubt make the connection with their scriptures and the words of Isaiah. *'The eyes of the blind shall be open and the ears of the deaf unstopped, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing.'* (Isaiah 35.6) Like children they spread it abroad perhaps basking the reflected fame by association with their teacher.

Jesus takes the man away from the confusion of the crowd and acts out what he is doing. The man probably had little or no idea of what was happening to him. Jesus looks to heaven to point to God, puts fingers in his ears and spittle on his tongue. Vivid and visceral images – who could fail to understand - no words were necessary.

For the man who was healed this was no quick fix as if he could thenceforth seamlessly meld into society. We cannot imagine what it must be like to hear when all you have known is silence. How do

you learn language? But it had brought him into a wholeness of being, for we are meant to see and hear, and it is a sadness when this is denied to us.

We must not leave this as an event from the past but see how it all connects, both with the whole of Jesus' message and with us. How often does Jesus say to the Jews "Let him who has ears, hear and eyes see." Suggesting that deafness and blindness is not limited to the physical.

And with us? An encounter with Jesus the Christ means that our ears become unstopped, and our eyes are opened, and we do indeed sing. *'The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.'* (Ps 119.130). This is the light of the glory of God which shone from Moses and shines even greater from Christ, the glory of the gospel of redemptive grace.

Am I deaf or at least 'hard of hearing' when it comes to my discipleship? Do I need to come aside with Jesus more often to 'hear' by reading scriptures, and quietly listening? Do I even expect to hear anything or read anything that changes me, opens my 'ears', and my mind to new ideas to deeper knowledge? And if I do hear – am I then prepared and willing to speak?

"And you shall be my witnesses...."

The Creed

We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is,
seen and unseen.
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,
was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and was made man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.
We believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come.

In peace, let us pray to our Father in heaven.

O God our creator,
whose good earth is entrusted to our care
and delight and tenderness,
we pray:
May those who sow in tears
reap with shouts of joy.

For all who are in captivity to debt,
whose lives are cramped by fear
from which there is no turning
except through abundant harvest.
 May those who sow in tears
 reap with shouts of joy.

For all who depend on the earth for their
daily food and fuel,
whose forests are destroyed
for the profits of a few.
 May those who sow in tears
 reap with shouts of joy.

For all who labour in poverty,
who are oppressed by unjust laws,
who are banned for speaking the truth,
who long for a harvest of justice.
 May those who sow in tears
 reap with shouts of joy.

For all who are in captivity
to greed and waste and boredom,
whose harvest joy is choked
with things they do not need.
 May those who sow in tears
 reap with shouts of joy.

Turn us again from our captivity
and restore our vision,
that our mouth may be filled with laughter
and our tongue with singing.
Amen.

On the observance of the accession:

O God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
our only Saviour, the Prince of Peace:
give us grace seriously to lay to heart
the great dangers we are in by our unhappy divisions;
take away our hatred and prejudice
and whatever else may hinder us from godly union and concord,

that, as there is but one body, one Spirit and one hope of our calling,
one Lord, one faith, one baptism,
one God and Father of us all,
so may we henceforth be all of one heart and of one soul,
united in one holy bond of truth and peace, of faith and charity,
and may with one mind and one mouth glorify you;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen

Being made one by the power of the Spirit,
as our Saviour taught us, so we pray.

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours now and for ever.
Amen

Let us commend ourselves, and all for whom we pray,
to the mercy and protection of God.
Amen.

Blessings and Ending

Great God, you are one God,
and you bring together what is scattered
and mend what is broken.
Unite us with the scattered peoples of the earth
that we may be one family of your children.
Bind up all our wounds
and heal us in spirit,
that we may be renewed as disciples of Jesus Christ,
our Master and Saviour.
And the blessing of God, +
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen

HYMN

1 Alleluia, sing to Jesus!
His the sceptre, his the throne
Alleluia! his the triumph
His the victory alone
Hear the songs of holy Zion
Thunder like a mighty flood
'Jesus out of every nation
Has redeemed us by his blood

3 Alleluia! bread of heaven
Here on earth our food, our stay
Alleluia! here the sinful
Come to you from day to day
Intercessor, friend of sinners
Earth's redeemer, plead for me
Where the songs of all the sinless
Sweep across the crystal sea

2 Alleluia! not as orphans
Are we left in sorrow now
Alleluia! he is near us
Faith believes, but knows not how
Though the cloud from sight received him
Whom the angels now adore
Shall our hearts forget his promise
'I am with you evermore'?

4 Alleluia! King eternal
You, the Lord of lords we own
Alleluia! born of Mary
Earth your footstool, heaven your throne
You, within the veil have entered
Robed in flesh, our great high priest
Yours the blood and yours the body
In our eucharistic feast

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