



# Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity 1st September 2024

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

All hail the power of Jesu's name!  
Let angel's prostrate fall;  
bring forth the royal diadem,  
to crown him Lord of all!

Hail him, ye heirs of David's line,  
whom David Lord did call,  
the God incarnate, Man divine,  
and crown him Lord of all!

Ye seed of Israel's chosen race,  
ye ransomed of the fall,  
hail him who saves you by his grace.  
and crown him Lord of all!

Sinners, whose love can ne'er forget  
the wormwood and the gall,  
go spread your trophies at his feet,  
and crown him Lord of all!

Let every tribe and every tongue  
To him their hearts enthrall,  
Lift high the universal song  
And crown him Lord of all!

## Invitation to Confession

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

God of mercy,  
we acknowledge that we are all sinners.  
We turn from the wrong that we have thought and said.  
and done,  
and are mindful of all that we have failed to do.  
For the sake of Jesus, who died for us,  
forgive us for all that is past,  
and help us to live each day.  
in the light of Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

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

## The Collect

Almighty God,  
whose only Son has opened for us  
a new and living way into your presence:  
give us pure hearts and steadfast wills.  
to worship you in spirit and in truth.  
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 Deut. 4. 1-2, 6-9

### Obedience Commanded

4 Now, Israel, hear the decrees and laws I am about to teach you. Follow them so that you may live and may go in and take possession of the land the Lord, the God of your ancestors, is giving you. 2 Do not add to what I command you and do not subtract from it, but keep the commands of the Lord your God that I give you.

6 Observe them carefully, for this will show your wisdom and understanding to the nations, who will hear about all these decrees and say, "Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people." 7 What other nation is so great as to have their gods near them the way the Lord our God is near us whenever we pray to him? 8 And what other nation is so great as to have such righteous decrees and laws as this body of laws I am setting before you today?

9 Only be careful and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them fade from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them.

This is the word of the Lord.  
Thanks be to God.

## Psalm 15

1 Lord, who may dwell in your sacred tent?

Who may live on your holy mountain?

2 The one whose walk is blameless,  
who does what is righteous,  
who speaks the truth from their heart;

3 whose tongue utters no slander,  
who does no wrong to a neighbour,  
and casts no slur on others;

4 who despises a vile person  
but honours those who fear the Lord;

who keeps an oath even when it hurts, and does not change their mind;

5 who lends money to the poor without interest; who does not accept a bribe against the innocent.

Whoever does these things will never be shaken.



17 Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. 18 He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.

### Listening and Doing

19 My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, 20 because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires. 21 Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.

22 Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. 23 Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror 24 and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. 25 But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.

26 Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves, and their religion is worthless. 27 Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

This is the word of the Lord.  
Thanks be to God.

### HYMN

1 O for a heart to praise my God,  
a heart from sin set free;  
a heart that's sprinkled with the blood  
so freely shed for me:

2 A heart resigned, submissive, meek,  
my great Redeemer's throne;  
where only Christ is heard to speak,  
where Jesus reigns alone:

3 A humble, lowly, contrite heart,  
believing, true, and clean,  
which neither life nor death can part  
from him that dwells within:

4 A heart in every thought renewed,  
and full of love divine:  
perfect and right and pure and good —  
a copy, Lord, of thine.

5 Thy nature, gracious Lord, impart,  
come quickly from above;  
write thy new name upon my heart,  
thy new best name of Love.

The Gospel  
Mark 7. 1-8 14-15

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

The Holy Gospel is from the 7<sup>th</sup> chapter of the Gospel of Mark beginning at the 1<sup>st</sup> verse.  
Glory to you O Lord

### **That Which Defiles**

7 The Pharisees and some of the teachers of the law who had come from Jerusalem gathered around Jesus and saw some of his disciples eating food with hands that were defiled, that is, unwashed. 3 (The Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they give their hands a ceremonial washing, holding to the tradition of the elders. 4 When they come from the marketplace they do not eat unless they wash. And they observe many other traditions, such as the washing of cups, pitchers and kettles.

5 So the Pharisees and teachers of the law asked Jesus, “Why don’t your disciples live according to the tradition of the elders instead of eating their food with defiled hands?”

6 He replied, “Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites as it is written:

“These people honour me with their lips,  
but their hearts are far from me.

7 They worship me in vain;  
their teachings are merely human rules.’

8 You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to human traditions.”

14 Again Jesus called the crowd to him and said, “Listen to me, everyone, and understand this. 15 Nothing outside a person can defile them by going into them. Rather, it is what comes out of a person that defiles them.”

17 After he had left the crowd and entered the house, his disciples asked him about this parable. 18 “Are you so dull?” he asked. “Don’t you see that nothing that enters a person from the outside can defile them? 19 For it doesn’t go into their heart but into their stomach, and then out of the body.” (In saying this, Jesus declared all foods clean.)

20 He went on: “What comes out of a person is what defiles them. 21 For it is from within, out of a person’s heart, that evil thoughts come—sexual immorality, theft, murder, 22 adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. 23 All these evils come from inside and defile a person.”

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

### **Reflection**

There is a call to much inner reflection in the readings this week. ‘Watch yourself closely...’ advises Deuteronomy; ‘Do not... deceive yourself...’ advises James; and in the Gospel Jesus nails it all by saying ‘what comes out from a person is what defiles...’ which applies to us all.

It is too easy to criticise the fussiness of the Pharisees and ‘stand apart’ from it. What we fail to appreciate is that much of what they taught and did, was to try and keep what Deuteronomy calls them to. The people of Israel had the ‘commands of the Lord’, it was important that they observed them. However, over time, despite the warning in Deuteronomy not to ‘add or subtract’, the Laws to maintain observance had multiplied into hundreds covering every aspect of life. What was meant to be life-giving for the people had become a burden. As Jesus commented elsewhere, they bound burdens on people impossible to keep and ignored the weightier matters of the Law.

When Jesus was asked what “Was the most important Law?” (by someone trying to trip him up) he side-stepped the question. To answer choosing one would bring him in line with other Rabbis. By prescribing two commandments: to love God and to love your neighbour as yourself, Jesus drew all the Law together into. Do that, he said, and you have kept the whole Law. Someone has said, “Love God – and do what you like.” True, for if we loved God with our ‘heart, mind, soul and strength’, we would thereby keep the commandment to love others as ourselves.

Regrettably, we don’t. But into this comes the helpful words of James in his letter to the church.

‘Be a good listener – really hear, be slow to speak, measure your words, avoid getting angry for then you are not in control of yourself and cannot act right. Don’t just ‘talk the talk but fail to walk the walk. Do what you know is right in God. and importantly watch what comes out of your mouth.

I confess to being very weak on all accounts and in much need of spiritual maturity. Where this comes into focus is where this applies daily; how does this work out in our families, work colleagues and into the world. We can also be hypocrites (actors); one person to those on the outside, but not so good with people we live or work with.

Turning to the gospel, Jesus’ words add to this suggesting we need give attention to what is in our hearts, the seat of our will and emotions. We need an internal ‘spring clean’. When we read his list, we perhaps dismiss some as not applicable to us, but get beneath what the words signify and more applies to us than we may think.

*“...sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly...”*

Remember Jesus’ words that the thought is as much as the act. If nothing else, we can all sign up to ‘folly’ and perhaps much else.

All of this can send us into a spiral of negativity if we take it one way, but one of positivity if we take it another. If we are ‘beyond hope’ then the person and saving work of Jesus has no point. I frequently remind myself that Jesus said he came “...seek and save the lost.” Therefore, that includes me. Not the ones who think they have it all together, which maybe the Pharisees rather felt they had.

Jesus’s words to them are hard; “You observe the Law outwardly, but your hearts are far from God...”. So perhaps there is comfort for those, who like me, read the scripture and respond with the thought ‘There is much I need to do here! ‘

‘Do’ being the operative word, which immediately rings alarm bells. It reminds me of the horse in Animal Farm whose mantra was ‘I must work harder’, if I remember correctly. I do recall that he was eventually sent to the knacker-man. There is a sense that effort is required on our part to follow the teachings of Christ but always this should be a response of loving discipleship. Jesus tells us to take his yoke upon us – an illustration that would have been easily understood at that time. Yoked animals work together side by side. Further, Jesus says his yoke is easy and his burden light. The other week a salutary thought came to me that it is not a question of my trying harder but obeying what I already know to do.

The upward spiral is to remind ourselves that overarching all this is a truth we must keep in mind. We do not walk this Christian path on our own or by our own efforts. Always the presence of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Jesus, is with us to help, correct, guide, strengthen and so much more. Importantly to bring Joy. Yes, we are all not where we ought to be, but we are on our way rejoicing. The Spirit of God is at work within us to change us. We take Joy in the gift of forgiveness and new life that we find

when Jesus is an integral part of our daily life. For which a shout of Hallelujah! should come from us ...  
ah but we are self-controlled Anglicans!! Or are we?

## 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.

## Intercessions

In peace, let us pray to Jesus our Lord,  
who ever lives to make intercession for us.

Jesus calls us to obedience.

Lord, you call men and women to follow you. Challenge us. Keep us from just being converts - taking comfort in ideas about you - but help us hear and understand your call to be your disciples, to learn from you, to be changed by you and to make a difference with our lives.

Jesus calls us to hope.

For your church here and throughout the world we pray. Enable us by your spirit to proclaim boldly that you are the source of truth, of real life, and the way to know God as Father. Help us do this by the way we live as well as what we say. We hold in our prayers our sisters and brothers suffering greatly for their faith in Jesus Christ.

Jesus calls to responsibility

We hold in our prayer those who have authority and power. Our King and Government and leaders of nations. By your Spirit, strengthen what is good and restrain what is evil. Make us good stewards of the gift of creation and give us wisdom to repair and restore, for we are accountable for our common life.

Jesus gives us forgiveness.

Search my heart Lord, help me to release any I hold in unforgiveness so that they and I may be free.

Jesus calls us to love.

You have blessed us with so much for which we give thanks. Now open our hands and our hearts as we are often the answers to our prayers. Break our hardness open to generosity – not just the easy way with money but with the gift of time, of ourselves.

Jesus is the resurrection.

Comfort the bereaved. Receive in your mercy those who have died recently and those who come to our minds now whom we remember – those who were dear to us. We are thankful for their lives, how they enriched ours, and we place them in your love.

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

Amen.

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.

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

**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 Christ triumphant, ever reigning,  
Saviour, Master, King!  
Lord of heaven, our lives sustaining,  
hear us as we sing:  
Yours the glory and the crown,  
the high renown, the eternal name.

2 Word incarnate, truth revealing,  
Son of Man on earth!  
power and majesty concealing  
by your humble birth:  
Yours the glory and the crown,  
the high renown, the eternal name.

3 Suffering servant, scorned, ill - treated,  
victim crucified!  
death is through the cross defeated,  
sinners justified:  
Yours the glory and the crown,  
the high renown, the eternal name.

4 Priestly king, enthroned for ever  
high in heaven above!  
sin and death and hell shall never  
stifle hymns of love:  
Yours the glory and the crown,  
the high renown, the eternal name.

5 So, our hearts and voices raising  
through the ages long,  
ceaselessly upon you gazing,  
this shall be our song:  
Yours the glory and the crown,  
the high renown, the eternal name.