



This first Sunday after Trinity always feels to me to be a changing point in the churches calendar. For around the last 6 months we have focused on the major events of Jesus's life, his birth, death, resurrection, ascension and then finally the coming of the Holy Spirit. Now in this second half of the year we focus on his teachings, his parables and his example. At the beginning of the June, we started to see changes to the lockdown when the first real tentative steps to opening up our country came into force with a few of our children and teachers going back to school. Later in our worship Gary is going to talk a little on how Covid 19 and the return to school has affected those involved.

In our readings today there is a hint to two well known phrases we still use today.

The first is in Pauls letter to the Romans reminding us that all we endure in life is 'character building', he gives us permission to be a little boastful in our hope when supported by trusting in God through the Holy Spirit. Many people have endured many things these past weeks, throughout, we have Sunday by Sunday been supported by our faith to help us get through. Many have also come to realise some of the wonders of God's world that our busy lives have not allowed us to appreciate for a long time. During Johns Rutters tranquil version of 'All things bright and beautiful' we will see some of your images of that creation that have been all around us and boosted us over the past weeks.

And finally in our Gospel for today there is a bit of a reality check and a sense that nothing changes, suggesting that even in Jesus day He and his followers had a lot of work to do but that there was a shortage of workers to do it. Jesus advice on how to deal with those we come across in life has a ring of 'brush yourself down and start all over again', His advice to them, that pray was needed to bring the people to help spread that all important gospel and do the work of God.

## Collect for the day

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 forever, Amen

## A reading from Pauls letter to the Romans

<sup>5</sup> Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>2</sup> through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. <sup>3</sup> And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, <sup>4</sup> and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, <sup>5</sup> and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

<sup>6</sup> For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. <sup>7</sup> Indeed, rarely will anyone die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die. <sup>8</sup> But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us.

## A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew

<sup>35</sup> Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and curing every disease and every sickness. <sup>36</sup> When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. <sup>37</sup> Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; <sup>38</sup> therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest."

<sup>10</sup> Then Jesus summoned his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to cure every disease and every sickness. <sup>2</sup> These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon, also known as Peter, and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; <sup>3</sup> Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; <sup>4</sup> Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed him.

<sup>5</sup> These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: "Go nowhere among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans, <sup>6</sup> but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. <sup>7</sup> As you go, proclaim the good news, 'The kingdom of heaven has come near.' <sup>8</sup> Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons. You received without payment; give without payment. <sup>9</sup> Take no gold, or silver, or copper in your belts, <sup>10</sup> no bag for your journey, or two tunics, or sandals, or a staff; for labourers deserve their food.

<sup>11</sup> Whatever town or village you enter, find out who in it is worthy, and stay there until you leave. <sup>12</sup> As you enter the house, greet it. <sup>13</sup> If the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it; but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. <sup>14</sup> If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet as you leave that house or town. <sup>15</sup> Truly I tell you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town.

<sup>16</sup> “See, I am sending you out like sheep into the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. <sup>17</sup> Beware of them, for they will hand you over to councils and flog you in their synagogues; <sup>18</sup> and you will be dragged before governors and kings because of me, as a testimony to them and the Gentiles. <sup>19</sup> When they hand you over, do not worry about how you are to speak or what you are to say; for what you are to say will be given to you at that time; <sup>20</sup> for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. <sup>21</sup> Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death; <sup>22</sup> and you will be hated by all because of my name. But the one who endures to the end will be saved. <sup>23</sup> When they persecute you in one town, flee to the next; for truly I tell you, you will not have gone through all the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

### Returning to school – provided by Gary Laird

Lockdown is now easing and schools which have been open for key workers and vulnerable children are now increasing their numbers which will allow young people to see their friends.

Working with a number of schools at the moment allows me monitor the effects of the virus on school staff and pupils. As schools return the focus needs to be on the pastoral side of school with support for pupils and staff who have fears and anxieties. The pastoral side will relate to those children who have been confined indoors over the extended period. The Mental health of children and staff is constantly being reviewed with tangible support available.

I have witnessed so many hand washing demonstrations, so the tune happy birthday will always bring a smile to me. It is important for schools to open safely in order that children of all ages can meet their friends who they have missed. It will take time for schools to return to normal but we will get there. In some cases young people may well have to wait until the autumn.

Home schooling has been a challenge for parents and children and I honestly believe that parents have a greater appreciation of teachers and the work they do. Schools have had a significant role to play in the provision of education for the children of key workers and vulnerable children.

Staff are understandably concerned regarding the transmission of the virus in school and steps have been taken to reinforce hand washing, social distancing and groups working in bubbles. Children will remember 2020 for years to come but we will return to normal.

We have always said that school are the best years of your life, let's make it that way.



### Words from Fr Rodney

Last Thursday was the “Feast of Corpus Christi”, in which the Church gives thanks for Christ’s gift of the Eucharist to His Church. For several years we have kept this Sunday as ‘Corpus Christi Sunday’, our celebration and thanksgiving for Christ’s great gift to His Church across the centuries. It seems so strange that for over two months we haven’t been able to celebrate the Eucharist or to receive Holy Communion, something we would never of thought could happened. So on this Sunday we give thanks that Christ has continued to feed us through the scriptures, prayer and our ‘distanced’ worship and fellowship together, but long for the day when we can come together again in our churches to celebrate and share again together in the Eucharist, Christ’s greatest gift to us.

### Let us pray

God of grace, as we are joined in prayer with our brothers and sisters in faith across the world, we give thanks for the fellowship we share and for the many ways our lives have been touched by your love, poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit. We ask for wisdom and strength to guide our faith leaders and us as we attempt to meet the challenges we face moving forward. Enable us to support one another and our communities safely.

God of peace we bring before you our world facing so many problems today. We ask for healing for the many divisions so evident at this time and in particular we bring before you all those who feel harnessed and helpless in the face of disease, poverty and prejudice. We ask that compassion, tolerance and empathy replace self-interest, lack of understanding and hatred in the minds of all people, especially those in authority.

God of hope pray for our communities, particularly those who are vulnerable, isolated, worried about their future and struggling to cope at the present time. We also pray for our local schools and businesses making difficult decisions and ask that they move forward safely. We give thanks for the many acts of kindness we have experienced this past week and we continue to pray for the safety of our frontline key workers and their families, putting the needs of others before themselves every day.

God of love, we bring before you our families and friends. We thank you for their love and friendship and pray for their safety. We particularly thank you for any new friendships we have found ourselves making through speaking to our neighbours over the fence or across the road or in any other way we would not normally have had the time or opportunity to do. Today we also give thanks for the joy of all those single people isolated for so long who are able to meet their loved ones for the first time this weekend.

God of compassion who knows our suffering and who sent your son and his disciples into cities, towns and villages to bring hope and healing to those in need, we think of all those who are sick in body mind or spirit. We pray especially for all those who are suffering in the pandemic and we also bring before you any we wish to pray for today... We ask that they, their loved ones and all those who care for them are given the courage, faith and strength they need at this time.



God of hope, we pray for all those whose hearts have been saddened by the death of someone close and dear to them, we particularly pray for those who have died and were known to us...those who have lost their lives in the pandemic and any whose anniversary falls around this time. In our sadness help us to draw comfort from the Holy Spirit within us and as we remember that out of darkness comes light.

*In a moment of silence bring your own prayers to God*

The Lords prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name;  
thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever.

Amen.

