



MISSION COMMUNITY

Together with God - Together for God

# Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity

13<sup>th</sup> September 2020

## Email Sunday Service

A warm welcome to all who worship with us

### Introduction

We have confidence to enter the Sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he has opened for us.

*Hebrews 10.19-20*

### Hymn

*This hymn can be sung or said as a poem*

1. Be thou my guardian and my guide,  
and hear me when I call;  
let not my slippery footsteps slide,  
and hold me lest I fall.

2. The world, the flesh, and Satan dwell  
around the path I tread;  
O save me from the snares of hell,  
thou quickener of the dead.

3. And if I tempted am to sin,  
and outward things are strong,  
do thou, O Lord, keep watch within,  
and save my soul from wrong.

4. Still let me ever watch and pray,  
and feel that I am frail;  
that if the tempter cross my way,  
yet he may not prevail.

*Isaac Williams (1802-1865)*



### Prayers of Penitence

The gospel calls us to turn away from sin  
and be faithful to Christ.

As we offer ourselves to him in penitence and faith,  
we renew our confidence and trust in his mercy.

**Amen.**

### 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.**

### The Liturgy of the Word



#### Old Testament: Genesis 50.15-21

*Realising that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, 'What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?' So they approached Joseph, saying, 'Your father gave this instruction before he died, "Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you." Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father.' Joseph wept when they spoke to him.*

Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, 'We are here as your slaves.' But Joseph said to them, 'Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones.' In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

### **New Testament: Romans 14.1-12**

Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarrelling over opinions. Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgement on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. Who are you to pass judgement on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand. Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. Those who observe the day, observe it in honour of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honour of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honour of the Lord and give thanks to God. We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. Why do you pass judgement on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgement seat of God. For it is written, 'As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God.' So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

### **Gospel Reading: Matthew 18.21-35**

Then Peter came and said to him, 'Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?' Jesus said to him, 'Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times. 'For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, "Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything." And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow-slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, "Pay what you owe." Then his fellow-slave fell down and pleaded with him, "Have patience with me, and I will pay you." But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he should pay the debt. When his fellow-slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, "You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow-slave, as I had mercy on you?" And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he should pay his entire debt. So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.'

*A short time of Silence may be taken*

## Homily

Today we continue on the subject of forgiveness from last week where Christian communities would get together to be able to resolve the problem of wrong-doing amongst them.



Forgiveness is prominent in all three of our readings today, but to actually do this is something that not everyone is comfortable with. You may think that this shouldn't be the case; you make a mistake or do something wrong, you realise it, you are sorry, so you move on.

But for some people it is not that simple, they find it really hard to forgive after they have been hurt. None of us can say that we haven't been hurt at some time or other on life's path, but the big question here is how we cope with this.

It can depend upon the mind. Some people can let go of certain situations much easier than others and they do not want to let it fester and become a hatred. On the other hand that is exactly what can happen. The person who has been wronged in whatever way is not able to let go and so it can bring on anger and resentment. This means that they are more or less anchored in life, any human and spiritual development that is natural, especially to Christians, gets bogged down.

So, returning to the beginning of this homily and how people get together to reconcile others, we lead on to the Gospel reading from Matthew today. The disciples had gathered together with Jesus for a little while now around the Galilee region - as we have heard over the last few weeks of Matthew's account - and they had been asking questions. Now Peter - who was the main voice of them - came forward to ask Jesus how to forgive, "How often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" But Jesus replied, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy seven times..." He then moved on to tell them the parable of the wicked slave. What he meant, when he interpreted the parable to them, was something like this: Only the perfect God can forgive and forget. The way that we can deal with situations of wrong-doing is that we should always have a soft and loving heart, and always be ready to forgive, as others would forgive us. You can never forgive enough! Just as the Lords Prayer says "forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us." So to love God is to forgive.

As I said a little earlier, sometimes there are situations where people can live in an almost suspended time warp, where someone has been offended or had some terrible things done to them and the hurt can drag on and develop into a family or territorial feud that lasts for many generations. The one simple thing that can fix it is when they say sorry to each other, but no one is brave enough, to utter that small five letter healing word.

Well before the six day war between Israel and Jordan they had been sworn enemies with other wars and armed conflicts an all too regular part of these two neighbours lives. In between the outbreaks of violence there was always a tension which some commentators called a 'Cold Peace'. But in the summer of 1994 King Hussein of Jordan and the Prime Minister of Israel Yitzhak Rabin signed a peace accord. This was done to try to ensure that their children would not grow up with the hate and violent skirmishes that often turned to war and was a blight on all of their lives.

As a part of the preparation of the peace treaty the Israeli foreign minister, Shimon Peres, crossed over the Dead Sea by helicopter to end nearly half a century of hostility. He said "It took just fifteen minutes to ride over, but it took forty six long years for us to arrive at this time and this place of peace and promise." After signing the treaty, King Hussain said, "Out of all

*the days of my life, I don't believe there is one such as this." Sadly, after all this, there is still hostility and animosity between the two countries. But this historic treaty shows that peace is a process, and so too is reconciliation. They both take time. Even a great deal more than the seventy seven times of forgiveness that Jesus expressed to Peter.*

*As Christians to whom discipleship is paramount, we must not fall into the mindset of false forgiveness where there is amnesty and pardoning one minute and retreat and failure the next.*

*In the confession in our worship before God we confess and are forgiven by God. If God can forgive us, then who are we to not forgive in return?*

*A short time of Silence may be taken*

## **Prayers**

*These can be formal or improvised and end with:*

### **The Lord's 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.**

## **Hymn**

*This hymn can be sung or said as a poem*

1. Drop, drop, slow tears,  
and bathe those beautiful feet,  
which brought from heaven the news  
and Prince of Peace.
2. Cease not, wet eyes,  
his mercies to entreat;  
to cry for vengeance, sin  
doth never cease.
3. In your deep floods,  
drown all my faults and fears;  
nor let his eye see sin,  
but through my tears.

*Phineas Fletcher(1582-1650)*

## **Closing Prayers**

In darkness and in light,  
in trouble and in joy,  
help us, heavenly Father,  
to trust your love,  
to serve your purpose,  
and to praise your name;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

### **Just a thought:**

It is in pardoning that we are pardoned.

*Francis of Assisi*