

A Service for the 2nd. Sunday After Trinity. 21st. June 2020

Reverend Gillian Butcher. Minor Canon.

Welcome to our Sunday Morning Service in which we will share in music, reading and prayer from our friends within our Cathedral Community.

Today is the Second Sunday After Trinity, when in the Gospel of Matthew we hear that only God has the power not Satan. God knows all things and can do all things. Christ alone is the focal point – with total faith in the cross & with blessing afforded by the victory of the cross.

We begin with a simple Prayer of Confession, asking for God's cleansing and forgiveness, so we may be ready to hear and receive all he desires to give us in this time together.

Most Merciful God,

We confess to you, before the whole company of heaven and one another that we have sinned in thought, word and deed, and in what we have failed to do. Forgive us our sins, heal us by your spirit, and raise us to new life in Christ. Amen

We pray the Collect for today ;

Almighty and Merciful God, of whose only gift comes that thy faithful people do unto thee true and laudable service; grant, we beseech thee, that we may so faithfully serve thee in this life, that we fail not finally to attain thy heavenly promises; through the merits of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen .

Opening Hymn ;

Our Reading is from the Gospel of St. Matthew, Chapter 10, verses 24 – 39 .

Read by Janet Ingram.

V 24; A disciple is not above the teacher, nor a slave above the master, it is enough for the disciple to be like the teacher, and the slave like the master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household !

So have no fear of them, for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered, and nothing secret that will not become known. What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops. Do not fear those that kill the body but cannot kill the soul, rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground unperceived by your Father. And even the hairs of your head are all counted, So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows.

Everyone therefore who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven; but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven.

Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword.

For I have come to set a man against his father., and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and one's foes will be members of one's own household.

Whoever loves father or mother more than me ; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me ; and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Those who find their life will lose it ; and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.

Reflection; Rev. Gillian Butcher.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit Amen

People ask ; “ Where am I to find help ? “ “ Where should I look ? “

How can I find a route towards healing when I have no sense of what a hopeful future looks like ?

,” Do not be afraid “ is easily said. So we need to trust.

Amid great horrors our dialogue becomes coarse and aggressive, we find it difficult to listen to all the news and current affairs programs. Bad news seems everywhere, abuse, cruelty of unspeakable proportions, political divisions, and a vortex of hate that has crept into much of what we do.

Personal suffering - fear of sickness, anxiety, even the experience of death of loved ones without being able to comfort them in the last moments of life or to acknowledge their passing in the dignified way they would wish – brings the feeling that they have let them down.

How can we sustain people at times of questioning , give them hope for the future – show resilience in the face of the pandemic ?

Listen more deeply to one another. Keep in contact in any way we are able. Christ is our teacher.

Christianity is about relationship - relationship with God, with others, with the earth and with ourselves. We must take hold of opportunities to restore right relationships – people are of infinite importance in the economy of God. Try to have the same attitude to life Christ had to human situations and especially to people. He had a unique ability to be at ease with the rich and the poor, intellectual and the uneducated, male and female, he brought sympathy, empathy, understanding and encouragement, appropriate words and gestures. He offered both comfort and criticism; to be close or to know when to keep at a distance – to challenge or to respect the decision of those who could not face his demands.

By his attitudes he showed the unique importance of every individual, that indeed people matter.

In a world seemingly overwhelmed by mass suffering on an unbelievable scale, it is important that we feel again the Gospel emphasis on the value of each and every human being. Everybody matters and is known by God. Whether their need at the moment is for a physical cure , emotional healing, mental or spiritual healing to mend their broken hearts, to make them whole – that is love in action.

We need positive forces in a world dominated by negative, degrading and destructive attitudes. Relationships – be they individual, national, cultural, international, even ecclesiastical – are

damaged by greed, violence, racial prejudice, the violation of creation and other modern obscenities;- Ruthlessness, selfishness and corruption.

We must all help people to find life in it's fullness and wholeness. Act with a Positive Nature.

God has concern, not with always being judgemental or condemning but with salvation; to create, recreate , redeem and renew.

How then can Christians be negative, arrogant, dogmatic or exclusive, yet claim to be mediums of the divine message to the world ? By seeking to make people whole, not only to feel better , but, to BE better, by our attitude to them.

Listen and hear them. Look and take notice - recognise their pain, minister to them with strength and encouragement . Christianity is positive or it is nothing. Encouragement should be the hallmark of a caring community. Every member has the right to expect, in their time of wretchedness or dereliction, support, acknowledgment of their problem or weakness. How can we begin to care if sharing is discouraged ? For there is also a need for encouragement for ourselves. It is right to expect care from others but that does not take away the obligation on us to get up from our depths, go on and fight again .

Too often we seek refuge in self- pity , defeatism and resentment when we are facing darkness .We need to seek the strength to cope with it. To find strength in the resources of our faith, for we too have the tools of encouragement in the spiritual resources that are found in the great sequence of the saving act of God in Jesus; the crucifixion, the descent into the dark places, the resurrection and the sending of the Comforter Spirit.

God has the power not the devil as Matthew tells us. It is a tale of triumph and of victory , of strong and profound hope.

“ You cannot go back and change the beginning, but you can start

Where you are and change the ending “ CS Lewis.

Amen.

Prayers;

Closing Hymn

Go with confidence into the days ahead, trusting in God's unfailing love and faithfulness. God will not abandon you, for you are the work of His hands – His own creation – His love endures forever. So go in joy to love and serve the Lord. Amen.

