

COLLECT, READINGS AND REFLECTION
31 August 2022, 7th Sunday after Trinity

COLLECT

Lord of all power and might,
the author and giver of all good things:
graft in our hearts the love of your name,
increase in us true religion,
nourish us with all goodness,
and of your great mercy keep us in the same;
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.

Psalm 49.1–12*

- 1 Hear this, all you peoples; ♦
listen, all you that dwell in the world,
- 2 You of low or high degree, ♦
both rich and poor together.
- 3 My mouth shall speak of wisdom ♦
and my heart shall meditate on understanding.
- 4 I will incline my ear to a parable; ♦
I will unfold my riddle with the lyre.
- 5 Why should I fear in evil days, ♦
when the malice of my foes surrounds me,
- 6 Such as trust in their goods ♦
and glory in the abundance of their riches?
- 7 For no one can indeed ransom another ♦
or pay to God the price of deliverance.
- 8 To ransom a soul is too costly; ♦
there is no price one could pay for it,
- 9 So that they might live for ever, ♦
and never see the grave.
- 10 For we see that the wise die also; with the foolish and ignorant they perish ♦
and leave their riches to others.
- 11 Their tomb is their home for ever, their dwelling through all generations, ♦
though they call their lands after their own names.
- 12 Those who have honour, but lack understanding, ♦
are like the beasts that perish.

A reading from St Paul's letter to the Colossians (3.1-11)

3 So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ²Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth, ³for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.

⁵ Put to death, therefore, whatever in you is earthly: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed (which is idolatry). ⁶On account of these the wrath of God is coming on those who are disobedient. ⁷These are the ways you also once followed, when you were living that life. ⁸But now you must get rid of all such things—anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive language from your mouth. ⁹Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have stripped off the old self with its practices ¹⁰and have clothed yourselves with the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of its creator. ¹¹In that renewal there is no longer Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and free; but Christ is all and in all!

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, **Alleluia.**

Blessed are you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth for revealing the mysteries of the kingdom to mere children.

Alleluia.

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke, Chapter 12, verses 13 – 21
Glory to you, O Lord.

¹³ Someone in the crowd said to Jesus, 'Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me.' ¹⁴But he said to him, 'Friend, who set me to be a judge or arbitrator over you?' ¹⁵And he said to them, 'Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions.' ¹⁶Then he told them a parable: 'The land of a rich man produced abundantly. ¹⁷And he thought to himself, "What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?" ¹⁸Then he said, "I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. ¹⁹And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry." ²⁰But God said to him, "You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?" ²¹So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich towards God.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

A Reflection from Peter....

I daresay we'd all like to be thought of as holy people, spiritual people. We recognise a contrast between worldly people and spiritual people, between holiness and earthiness. Sometimes when students came for interview to Mirfield we would think, "Well, they're very holy, but would they be any good in the parish?"

In today's readings we hear both dimensions being addressed. But, as we see, they cannot be so easily held apart. The Gospel reading seems to be all about managing the affairs of the world. The first instance is the person who comes to Jesus with that familiar anxiety about what is going to happen to the family wealth. Clearly worried that he is about to be overlooked in the will he wants Jesus to intervene – but Jesus warns of the dangers of greed. Jesus goes on to tell the parable of the man who had considerable wealth in grain and goods. He decides he needs to plan for the future and puts up barns like those huge Amazon warehouses, but the parable points out that no matter how important planning is, you can't take your barn with you when you die!

By contrast the reading from Colossians seems to focus entirely on the spiritual: "Set your minds on things that are above!" But no sooner do we think that we are now able to leave behind all the worldly questions and get serious about being holy than Paul comes up with a list of very ordinary things that we have to overcome: anger, wrath, malice, slander and abusive language.

And where does Jesus fit in all this? He is hardly our image of a holy person: he can sometimes seem pretty abrasive and tough. He is very practical – saying things like "Give her something to eat" when he has healed a little girl. But it is in Jesus that we see how to hold together the things of the world and the things of the Spirit. St Paul sees it too – and recognises the renewal of everything that God is undertaking – and holds out to us the hope, the goal of the journey: "you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory."