

COLLECT, READINGS AND REFLECTION
SUNDAY 11 JUNE 2023 – TRINITY 1

COLLECT

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 for ever.

Psalms 50. 7-15

- 7 Hear, O my people, and I will speak: ♦
 'I will testify against you, O Israel; for I am God, your God.
- 8 'I will not reprove you for your sacrifices, ♦
 for your burnt offerings are always before me.
- 9 'I will take no bull out of your house, ♦
 nor he-goat out of your folds,
- 10 'For all the beasts of the forest are mine, ♦
 the cattle upon a thousand hills.
- 11 'I know every bird of the mountains ♦
 and the insect of the field is mine.
- 12 'If I were hungry, I would not tell you, ♦
 for the whole world is mine and all that fills it.
- 13 'Do you think I eat the flesh of bulls, ♦
 or drink the blood of goats?
- 14 'Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving ♦
 and fulfil your vows to God Most High.
- 15 'Call upon me in the day of trouble; ♦
 I will deliver you and you shall honour me.'

A Reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans, chapter 4, verses 13-25

For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, as it is written, 'I have made you the father of many nations')—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become 'the father of many nations', according to what was said, 'So numerous shall your descendants be.' He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. Therefore his faith 'was reckoned to him as righteousness.' Now the words, 'it was reckoned to him', were written not for his sake alone, but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

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 Matthew, chapter 9, verses 9 to 13 and 18 to 26

Glory to you, O Lord

As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth; and he said to him, 'Follow me.' And he got up and followed him.

And as he sat at dinner in the house, many tax-collectors and sinners came and were sitting with him and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, 'Why does your teacher eat with tax-collectors and sinners?' But when he heard this, he said, 'Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. Go and learn what this means, "I desire mercy, not sacrifice." For I have come to call not the righteous but sinners.'

While he was saying these things to them, suddenly a leader of the synagogue came in and knelt before him, saying, 'My daughter has just died; but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live.' And Jesus got up and followed him, with his disciples. Then suddenly a woman who had been suffering from haemorrhages for twelve years came up behind him and touched the fringe of his cloak, for she said to herself, 'If I only touch his cloak, I will be made well.' Jesus turned, and seeing her he said, 'Take heart, daughter; your faith has made you well.' And instantly the woman was made well. When Jesus came to the leader's house and saw the flute-players and the crowd making a commotion, he said, 'Go away; for the girl is not dead but sleeping.' And they laughed at him. But when the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took her by the hand, and the girl got up. And the report of this spread throughout that district.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

A Reflection from Peter

Today's Gospel gives us lots to think about. There are three major events. First, Jesus calls Matthew. Like the call of the first disciples there is a simplicity about it: "Follow me!" – and Matthew does. But there is more. Matthew is described as a tax collector – not a good occupation in those days, not least because it involved collecting taxes for the occupying Roman administration – and here we have a hint of Jesus radical commitment to making room for everyone.

This continues with the second event, a dinner at which many of those present were described simply as 'tax-collectors and sinners'. The religious leaders who were there are shocked and quiz Jesus' disciples about the fact that Jesus seemed content to share in the meal. Jesus reply is typically enigmatic. "Those who are well have no need of a doctor, but those who are sick. I have come to call not the righteous but sinners." Here we have not only Jesus' commitment to everyone, but a special concern to give to everyone the help they need to live a full and fulfilling life.

And that takes us to the third event, a double healing. As Jesus is on his way to find out what has happened to the synagogue's leader's daughter, there is the chance encounter with the mysterious woman who is healed just by touching Jesus' cloak. And the healing of the young girl is also simple: Jesus takes her by the hand and she gets up. This is not a moment for asking 'how does Jesus heal?'; not a time for wondering whether Jesus could heal all diseases or only some; not a moment for asking whether these were miraculous interventions or something more ordinary. Above all, we are to hold these three events together and be reminded of God's desire for all creation. God wills all to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. Jesus came to bring life in all its abundance. What that means, what it looks like, is different for each of us – but the life of God is for everyone.

God of truth,
help us to keep your law of love
and to walk in ways of wisdom,
that we may find true life
in Jesus Christ your Son.