

**COLLECT, READINGS AND REFLECTION**  
**SUNDAY 18 JUNE 2023- TRINITY 2**

**COLLECT**

Lord, you have taught us  
that all our doings without love are nothing worth:  
send your Holy Spirit  
and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of love,  
the true bond of peace and of all virtues,  
without which whoever lives is counted dead before you.  
Grant this for your only Son Jesus Christ's sake,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. Amen.

**Psalms 116.1, 10-17**

- 1 I love the Lord,  
for he has heard the voice of my supplication; ♦  
because he inclined his ear to me  
on the day I called to him.
- 10 How shall I repay the Lord ♦  
for all the benefits he has given to me?
- 11 I will lift up the cup of salvation ♦  
and call upon the name of the Lord.
- 12 I will fulfil my vows to the Lord ♦  
in the presence of all his people.
- 13 Precious in the sight of the Lord ♦  
is the death of his faithful servants.
- 14 O Lord, I am your servant, ♦  
your servant, the child of your handmaid;  
you have freed me from my bonds.
- 15 I will offer to you a sacrifice of thanksgiving ♦  
and call upon the name of the Lord.
- 16 I will fulfil my vows to the Lord ♦  
in the presence of all his people,
- 17 In the courts of the house of the Lord, ♦  
in the midst of you, O Jerusalem.  
Alleluia.

## **Romans 5.1-8**

### **Results of Justification**

Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 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. And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, 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.

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

## **Gospel Acclamation**

Alleluia! **Alleluia!**

Speak Lord, for your servant is listening. You have the words of eternal life.

**Alleluia!**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Matthew, chapter 9 verse 35 until chapter 10 verse 8.

**Glory to you, O Lord**

### **The Harvest Is Great, the Labourers Few**

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. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; therefore, ask the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest.'

### **The Twelve Apostles**

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. 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; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax-collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed him.

### **The Mission of the Twelve**

These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: 'Go nowhere among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. As you go, proclaim the good news, "The kingdom of heaven has come near." Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons. You received without payment; give without payment.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## A Reflection from Hannah...

Are you slightly terrified by our Gospel reading this week?! The level of authority Jesus gives to the twelve disciples is astonishing- cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons. No small task then! As Christ's followers today, we too are given authority to be Jesus' hands and feet in the world- as the beautiful words of St Teresa of Avila go:

*Christ has no body but yours,  
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,  
Yours are the eyes with which he looks  
Compassion on this world,  
Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good,  
Yours are the hands, with which he blesses all the world.  
Yours are the hands, yours are the feet,  
Yours are the eyes, you are his body.*

No matter how 'old' our faith, it is still a thing of wonder to consider that we- with all our flaws and shortcomings- are invited to join in the mission of God to herald God's kingdom in the depths of earth. And of course, to be caught up in the loving action of the triune God is to live in the pattern of Christ which, as Paul notes in our first reading, includes the way of the cross.

And that reminder mitigates us against one of the great misunderstandings of the life of faith. A bit like how we tend to identify with the Good Samaritan rather than the destitute man left for dead in that story, it's all too easy to read passages like this week's Gospel, and to only find ourselves in half of the story. Perhaps it's our western privilege, or perhaps it's the forming influence of a culture that (wrongly) values independence and the individual; but often we see ourselves exclusively as one of the disciples, receiving that commission from Jesus. We then see those crowds- who are 'harassed and helpless like sheep without a shepherd'- as the other, the ones who need help. We might see them in the hassled busyness of a supermarket, in the irritated strings of traffic clogging up the road, in the discovery that we are 'twelfth in the queue' when we phone the doctors. In other words we see them all around, and we define them simply as the ones who are NOT us.

But the truth is, that we are as much the crowds as we are the disciples. Amongst other things, the cross reminds us that we are all caught up in the sin of this world, which means none of us is immune from its effects. We all, at times, feel lost. Feeling harassed and helpless is a surprisingly prescient description of the human condition in a society which never sleeps, and in which so much seems beyond our control.

So perhaps the challenge this week is to notice our place in the whole story- both as followers who by the Holy Spirit are invited to join in with the liberating work of the Kingdom, AND as the poor lost souls who need it. If we notice both bits, we will be better placed to be blessed by a bigger picture as we both live as Christ's ministers AND receive that same ministry through others with heartfelt thankfulness.