



**COLLECT, READINGS AND REFLECTION  
SUNDAY 26 MAY 2024- TRINITY SUNDAY**

**COLLECT**

Holy God,  
faithful and unchanging:  
enlarge our minds with the knowledge of your truth,  
and draw us more deeply into the mystery of your love,  
that we may truly worship you,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. AMEN.

**Psalm 29**

- 1 Ascribe to the Lord, you powers of heaven, ♦  
ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.
- 2 Ascribe to the Lord the honour due to his name; ♦  
worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.
- 3 The voice of the Lord is upon the waters;  
the God of glory thunders; ♦  
the Lord is upon the mighty waters.
- 4 The voice of the Lord is mighty in operation; ♦  
the voice of the Lord is a glorious voice.
- 5 The voice of the Lord breaks the cedar trees; ♦  
the Lord breaks the cedars of Lebanon;
- 6 He makes Lebanon skip like a calf ♦  
and Sirion like a young wild ox.
- 7 The voice of the Lord splits the flash of lightning;  
the voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness; ♦  
the Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.
- 8 The voice of the Lord makes the oak trees writhe  
and strips the forests bare; ♦  
in his temple all cry, 'Glory!'
- 9 The Lord sits enthroned above the water flood; ♦  
the Lord sits enthroned as king for evermore.
- 10 The Lord shall give strength to his people; ♦  
the Lord shall give his people the blessing of peace.

## Isaiah 6.1-8

### A Vision of God in the Temple

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lofty; and the hem of his robe filled the temple. Seraphs were in attendance above him; each had six wings: with two they covered their faces, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. And one called to another and said:

'Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts;  
the whole earth is full of his glory.'

The pivots on the thresholds shook at the voices of those who called, and the house filled with smoke. And I said: 'Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; yet my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!'

Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding a live coal that had been taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. The seraph touched my mouth with it and said: 'Now that this has touched your lips, your guilt has departed and your sin is blotted out.' Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?' And I said, 'Here am I; send me!'

***At Morning Prayer, the Gospel is simply the second reading, people sit to hear it and is introduced in the same way as the first:***

The second reading is from John, chapter 3, verses 1-17.

***and then at the end:***

For the word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God.**

***For Eucharists/ Communion people stand to hear the Gospel and it is introduced with an Acclamation, as below:***

Alleluia. **Alleluia.**

My sheep hear my voice, says the Lord. I know them, and they follow me.

**Alleluia.**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to John, chapter 3, verses 1-17.

**Glory to you, O Lord**

***And then at the end:***

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## John 3.1-17

### Nicodemus Visits Jesus

Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, 'Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God.' Jesus answered him, 'Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.' Nicodemus said to him, 'How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?' Jesus answered, 'Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, "You must be born from above." The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.' Nicodemus said to him, 'How can these things be?' Jesus answered him, 'Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?

'Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

'For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

'Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

## ***A Reflection from Hannah...***

You may have watched the drama series *The Chosen*? It's about the followers of Jesus- based on scripture, but with some imaginative filling-in of their backstories and context. It's rather marmite- you either love it or hate it! But what is quite interesting in the first series at least, is that the only 'established' actor, the only person in the cast who looks familiar, is Erick Avari- who plays Nicodemus. The makers of this series clearly saw something intriguing about Nicodemus, and so (presumably) spent a good bit of their budget casting him carefully. And intrigue certainly characterises this night-time conversation early in John's Gospel.

The 'dark' context adds to the mystery and secrecy- Nicodemus has come to Christ in the small hours to talk about big things. This passage has been chosen for Trinity Sunday because it is a conversation about God's power at work in Jesus, with Jesus explaining that it is the Holy Spirit who will enable and enliven our lives so that we are re-born and can participate in the life of God.

And though on the one hand, we might say that this is a very tenuous holding forth of the doctrine of the Trinity; we must also remember that all of scripture is- there is a mystery that we never quite get to the bottom of. The call upon our lives to be re-born and to follow Christ- the call of discipleship- requires of us utter, or at least increasing, dependence on Christ through the Holy Spirit as we die thousands of tiny deaths and are re-born many times over.

And there is freedom in that, but it requires courage. And on that point, there is a sense in which we are left wondering whether Nicodemus consistently had the courage- he was there, as part of the Sanhedrin who put Jesus on trial- it was he who suggested he should be heard before being judged- was he openly a follower at that point? He was there at Jesus' burial- lovingly caring for his body and laying it in the tomb. The suggestion is that it was not one big once-and-forever event that happened that night, to Nicodemus, in the shadows. No, it was more likely (as it is more likely for us) to have been a gradual process of the Holy Spirit, in her gentleness, grace and provocation, transforming Nicodemus into the likeness of Christ. In a way, the story of Nicodemus, though very lightly touched on in scripture, is a kind of allegory for the Christian pilgrimage- there are moments of clarity and moments of mystery as faith grows, and there is the patient hand of God drawing him onwards.