

Welcome from Revd Jan Moore

An Opening sentence from the Book of Common Prayer

To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against him: neither have we obeyed the voice of the Lord our God, to walk in his laws which he set before us

Dearly beloved, the Scripture moveth us in sundry places to acknowledge and confess our manifold sins and wickedness; and that we should not dissemble nor cloke them before the face of Almighty God our heavenly Father; but confess them with an humble, lowly, penitent, and obedient heart; to the end that we may obtain forgiveness of the same, by his infinite goodness and mercy. And although we ought at all times humbly to acknowledge our sins before God; yet ought we most chiefly so to do, when we assemble and meet together to render thanks for the great benefits that we have received at his hands, to set forth his most worthy praise, to hear his most holy Word, and to ask those things which are requisite and necessary, as well for the body as the soul. Wherefore I pray and beseech you, as many as are gathered, to accompany me with a pure heart and humble voice unto the throne of the heavenly grace, saying after me:

Confession

Almighty and most merciful Father, We have erred, and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep, We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts, We have offended against thy holy laws, We have left undone those things which we ought to have done, And we have done those things which we ought not to have done, And there is no health in us: But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us miserable offenders; Spare thou them, O God, which confess their faults, Restore thou them that are penitent, According to thy promises declared unto mankind in Christ Jesu our Lord: And grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake, That we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life, To the glory of thy holy Name. **Amen.**

Absolution

May the Father of all mercies Cleanse us from our sins And restore us in His image, to the praise and glory of His name, through Jesus Christ our Lord
Amen.

Responses

Priest. O Lord, open thou our lips.
Answer **And our mouth shall shew forth thy praise**

Priest O God, make speed to save us.
Answer. **O Lord, make haste to help us**

Priest: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
Answer. **As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world
Without end. Amen**

Priest. Praise ye the Lord.
Answer. **The Lord's Name be praised.**

First reading (Old Testament) - Ezekiel 34: 11-16. 20-24

¹¹ "This is what the Sovereign Lord says: I will search for my sheep and look after them as a shepherd looks after his scattered flock when he is with them. I will rescue them from all the places where they were scattered on a day of clouds and darkness. ¹³ I will bring them out from the nations and gather them from the countries, and I will bring them into their own land. I will pasture them on the mountains of Israel, in the ravines and in all the settlements in the land. ¹⁴ I will tend them in a good pasture, and the mountain heights of Israel will be their grazing land. ¹⁶ I will search for the lost and bring back the strays. I will bind up the injured and strengthen the weak, but the sleek and the strong I will destroy. I will shepherd the flock with justice.

²⁰ I myself will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep. ²² I will save my flock, and they will no longer be plundered. I will judge between one sheep and another. ²³ I will place over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he will tend them. ²⁴ I the Lord will be their God, and my servant David will be prince among them. I the Lord have spoken.

Venite, Exultemus Domino (Psalm 95) Psalm set for today..

O come, let us sing unto the Lord :

let us heartily rejoice in the strength of our salvation.

Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving :

and show ourselves glad in him with psalms.

For the Lord is a great God :

and a great King above all gods.

In his hand are all the corners of the earth :

and the strength of the hills is his also.

The sea is his, and he made it :

and his hands prepared the dry land.

O come, let us worship and fall down :

and kneel before the Lord our Maker.

For he is the Lord our God :

and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without
end. **Amen.**

Second reading (New Testament) - Matthew 25: 31-end

"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. ³² All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³ He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. ³⁴ "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance: the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. ³⁵ For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, ³⁶ I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'

³⁷ "Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink?' ³⁸ When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothed you? ³⁹ When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'

⁴⁰ "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'

⁴¹ "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. ⁴² For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, ⁴³ I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.'

⁴⁴ "They also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?'

⁴⁵ "He will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.'

⁴⁶ "Then *they* will go away to eternal punishment, but the *righteous* to eternal life."

Jubilate Deo - Psalm 100

O be joyful in the Lord, all ye lands : serve the Lord with gladness, and come before his presence with a song.

Be ye sure that the Lord he is God : it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

O go your way into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise : be thankful unto him, and speak good of his Name.

For the Lord is gracious, his mercy is everlasting : and his truth endureth from generation to generation.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son : and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be : world without end. **Amen.**

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth:

And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary, Suffered under Pontius Pilate, Was crucified, dead, and buried: He descended into hell; The third day he rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; The holy Catholic Church; The Communion of Saints; The Forgiveness of sins; The Resurrection of the body, And the Life everlasting. **Amen.**

Minister. The Lord be with you.

Answer. **And with thy spirit.**

Minister. Let us pray. Lord, have mercy upon us.

Answer. **Christ, have mercy upon us**

Minister Lord, have mercy upon us.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive them that trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil. **Amen.**

Responses

Minister. O Lord, shew thy mercy upon us.

Answer. **And grant us thy salvation.**

Minister. O Lord, save the Queen.

Answer. **And mercifully hear us when we call upon thee.**

Minister. Endue thy Ministers with righteousness.

Answer. **And make thy chosen people joyful.**

Minister. O Lord, save thy people.

Answer. **And bless thine inheritance.**

Minister. Give peace in our time, O Lord.

Answer. **Because there is none other that fighteth for us, but only thou, O God.**

Minister. O God, make clean our hearts within us.

Answer. **And take not thy Holy Spirit from us.**

Collect for the Last Sunday before Advent

God our Father, help us to hear the call of your Son, Christ the King and to follow in the service of Him whose kingdom has no end: for he reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, one glory. **Amen**

Collect, for Peace

O God, who art the author of peace and lover of concord, in knowledge of whom standeth our eternal life, whose service is perfect freedom: Defend us thy humble servants in all assaults of our enemies; that we, surely trusting in thy defence, may not fear the power of any adversaries; through the might of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Collect, for Grace

O Lord, our heavenly Father, Almighty and everlasting God, who hast safely brought us to the beginning of this day: Defend us in the same with thy mighty power; and grant that this day we fall into no sin, neither run into any kind of danger; but that all our doings may be ordered by thy governance, to do always that is righteous in thy sight; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all evermore. **Amen.**

Sermon- for the Last Sunday before Advent, Christ the King, Stir Up Sunday!
(script is given as Appendix at the end of the Liturgy)

Intercessions (also given as an Appendix for later reflection)

Response to Lord hear us is Lord Graciously Hear Us

The Blessing

The love of the Lord Jesus
Draw you to Himself,
The power of the Lord Jesus
Strengthen you in His service,

And the blessing of God Almighty,
The Father the Son and the Holy Spirit,
Be among us and remain with us always,
Amen.

Appendices

Sermon Script For further reflection... BCP Audio Matins for Nov 22 2020

Ezek 34: 11-16, 20-24 Matt 25: 31-end

In today's OT reading Ezekiel hears, that in his own days, God will search out and rescue God's own sheep even though dark clouds will scatter them.

And by this process he will bind up the injured and strengthen the weak whilst DEALING OUT Justice to the fat and over-strong.

Yes, God will JUDGE the Fat against the Lean and give to the Lean, King DAVID, who will be a Godly leader to nourish them

And in today's NT reading Jesus describes which sheep of God's fold will be saved for all eternity.. And we hear that it will be the ones who have welcomed Jesus, fed Him, given Him drink when he was parched, clothed him, visited Him in prison and cared for him when he was sick...

They know, of course, that they've done no such thing.

So Jesus explains that if they've done these things for anyone in need, they've created heavenly JOY on earth: a JOY which blesses and rejuvenates God the Father and Jesus his son, whom they seek to serve.

Alternatively those not doing these things effectively, detach themselves from God's grace and join the devil's work.

Earlier in Chapter 25 of Matthew, you could later read about foolish virgins who didn't have their lamps ready for the bridegroom. Result? They're shut out from the wedding feast. And you can read of the waste and loss of a lazy slave's one talent, because he didn't develop it. Instead he hid it to protect himself rather than using it to benefit others and himself.

Seems odd that Jesus still had to spell these things out to his listeners because if they had really followed their OT books of the Law and the Prophets, they would know it all too well. But clearly they just hadn't got the message.

So God has done with Prophets. Jesus becomes the last one: presenting a final, and yet eternal chance for humankind to be reconnected to God. God has searched out his lost sheep since time began and wrung his hand and wept at the behaviours of Fat Selfish Sheep. For Fat Sheep today, we might read Fat Cats in many disguises on many a prowl for power, wealth and domination.

So what of our personal situation today?

Do we sometimes manage to persuade ourselves that our choices and decisions are inconsequential?

Today is Stir up Sunday – the time for stirring Christmas Cakes and Puddings and the day we honour Christ as our only King. So hopefully we are stirred up by the way Jesus' ministry was so personal. God's Judgement was, and is, given to us by a human being, like us, yet divine, like God. Jesus knew at first hand the results of torture, rejection, a parched thirst and crucifixion. And he saw every day on his own streets ...imprisoned spirits ...and the results of neglect and starvation.

And Jesus' ministry demonstrated, time and again to us, what to do about it.

So on this last Sunday before Advent we are stirred up by God's Suffering Servant King. Jesus. Today we are called to stretch our hearts, turn them inside/out even, with a passion for loving all creation as He did. All sorts

and conditions of men and women, young and old, whatever their language and the colour of their skin, their sexuality or their economic value.

Today's readings are about loving with the Passion of Jesus wherever we discern dis-ease, deprivation, depression or disaster in our midst.

I know this is a hard message in these currently dark times of fear and anxiety and anger all around us and perhaps within ourselves... But many of us sharing this act of worship also know that we are cushioned from the realities we see in our news. Yet I've just watched on my television an outburst of rage from a customer smashing shelves of wine on to the floor of a supermarket because they were asked to take the Covid Safe Path around the shop and another throwing violent abuse at an assistant who asked them to wear a mask. I want to weep at this almost as much as the terrible scenes of starving refugees. Jesus would surely want us to weep at all tragic and disturbing scenes of degraded and damaged life all over our planet. But maybe we feel swamped by our inability to change it. And maybe in our low mood even guilty in our cushioned good fortune.

So let's be practical. Little me and little you can't change the whole world. So, called today to a demanding gospel challenge, let us PRAY for those things that are outside our own capacity to change. Because if nothing else, We are people of Prayer. But, you know, there are other stories around every Cotswold corner under many a Cotswold stone which, when lifted a little, reveal needs! And maybe we ourselves have hidden our needs from others: too proud, too scared. But let us also be open to the promptings of the Holy Spirit in making a practical response to darkness under Cotswold stones and all kinds of suffering in our country. We are called to be salt and light, beacons of justice and carriers, not of a virus, but of HOPE and JOY.

Do you know the story of the man walking along a beach packed with stranded Starfish. He picks up one after another to throw back into the sea. It's a bottomless pit of a task because there are thousands and he can't save them all. A passer-by comments "No matter Mate... you can't save them all. Save yourself the effort". Picking up a single Starfish and delivering it back into the ocean, the man replies "No matter?! My effort matters to that one".

Intercessions

Loving God, you know us better than we know ourselves... you know of the gathered clouds in our own times. We feel like scattered sheep, distanced from those we love and those who love us. We thank you that we can come to you as we are – with all our fears, concerns, difficulties and challenges.

**Give to our Leaders Wisdom beyond human wisdom.
Give to our frontline workers strength beyond human strength, especially those in medical roles.**

Lord as we now list other needs, help us to name those personal to us..

Give comfort beyond human comfort to children, to those without employment, to those who suffer mental anxiety and depression, to those who are diseased, to those whose family stresses are beyond their capacity to cope, to the elderly, and to all who grieve.

Fill us with your Spirit to bring comfort and joy to others in these parched and difficult days that we may all find fresh springs of Hope in Jesus. Amen.

**Loving God,
your Son Jesus Christ came that we might have life and have it abundantly;
pour out your blessing upon our nation; where there is fear, strengthen us with the knowledge of your presence; where there is uncertainty, build us up in faith; where there is dishonesty, lead us into truth; where there is discord, may we know the harmony of your love; this too we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.**

