



**COLLECT, READINGS AND REFLECTION
SUNDAY 9 JUNE 2024- 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.

Psalm 130

- 1 Out of the depths have I cried to you, O Lord;
Lord, hear my voice; ♦
let your ears consider well the voice of my supplication.
- 2 If you, Lord, were to mark what is done amiss, ♦
O Lord, who could stand?
- 3 But there is forgiveness with you, ♦
so that you shall be feared.
- 4 I wait for the Lord; my soul waits for him; ♦
in his word is my hope.
- 5 My soul waits for the Lord,
more than the night watch for the morning, ♦
more than the night watch for the morning.
- 6 O Israel, wait for the Lord, ♦
for with the Lord there is mercy;
- 7 With him is plenteous redemption ♦
and he shall redeem Israel from all their sins.

Genesis 3.8-15

They heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, 'Where are you?' He said, 'I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.' He said, 'Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?' The man said, 'The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate.' Then the LORD God said to the woman, 'What is this that you have done?' The woman said, 'The serpent tricked me, and I ate.' The LORD God said to the serpent,

'Because you have done this,
 cursed are you among all animals
 and among all wild creatures;
upon your belly you shall go,
 and dust you shall eat
 all the days of your life.

I will put enmity between you and the woman,
 and between your offspring and hers;
he will strike your head,
 and you will strike his heel.'

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 Mark, chapter 3, verses 20-35.

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 Mark, chapter 3, verses 20-35.

Glory to you, O Lord

And then at the end:

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Mark 3.20-35

and the crowd came together again, so that they could not even eat. When his family heard it, they went out to restrain him, for people were saying, 'He has gone out of his mind.' And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, 'He has Beelzebul, and by the ruler of the demons he casts out demons.' And he called them to him, and spoke to them in parables, 'How can Satan cast out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but his end has come. But no one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his property without first tying up the strong man; then indeed the house can be plundered.

'Truly I tell you, people will be forgiven for their sins and whatever blasphemies they utter; but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit can never have forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin'— for they had said, 'He has an unclean spirit.'

The True Kindred of Jesus

Then his mother and his brothers came; and standing outside, they sent to him and called him. A crowd was sitting around him; and they said to him, 'Your mother and your brothers and sisters are outside, asking for you.' And he replied, 'Who are my mother and my brothers?' And looking at those who sat around him, he said, 'Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother.'

A Reflection from Hannah...

Have you noticed how so much of the rhetoric of the election campaign is to blame someone, or something else?! So when accused of causing problems or not solving problems in a certain area of corporate life, a common answer from politicians and candidates is that it is the fault of the previous government, or the current government, or the pandemic, or the strikes, or the war in Ukraine...

It's a sad fact of human nature that we work so hard to exonerate ourselves and implicate someone (or something) else- particularly when it really is our fault. One of the most striking things about the Old Testament writings is the way in which they capture the human experience so vividly. The terribly sad episode from Genesis this week is a case in point. The man and the woman have done what was forbidden, and they know it. So what do they do? They hide! Have we ever done the same? Frequently, I suspect... it's seen most obviously in children- I remember spotting two feet under the closed cupboard door where the biscuits were kept, asking 'where are you?' and getting no reply. That's a very similar scene to God in the garden, walking in the cool of the evening. The answer Adam gives to God's question belies so much about how we respond when caught 'red handed' and cornered. He manages simultaneously to blame God and Eve for what went on. Rather than simply say 'it was the woman', he says 'the woman whom *you* gave to be with me', suggesting that God set him up!

Immediately that sin enters the world, all the muddle of alienation and misunderstanding is played out in this simple scene. Relationships have changed profoundly, and those changes have consequences. But, if we were to read on in Genesis, we would be reminded that God's care for us, even as we languish in desolation, continues. Verse 21 says:

'And the LORD God made garments of skins for the man and for his wife, and clothed them.'

Even though they are cast out and the world is a changed place, God continues to love and look after Adam and Eve.

The Gospel reading, which see Jesus hounded by the crowd and accused of all sorts of things shows us, on a different scale, how sin causes confusion, misunderstanding and enmity- even to the point of humanity being unable to recognise God in their midst. As God walked in the garden of Eden, so now God incarnate walks around Galilee, and his presence brings both jubilee and chaos- as the first increases, so does the second.

All of this just shows us that we humans are in need of God's redemption, God's salvation, God's power at work in us. By ourselves, we can never compete with the sad fact of sin- of all that diminishes us and separates us from the good things of God's kingdom. And yet, even in the unsteady tones of this week's Gospel passage, the invitation to restoration, kinship and life in all its fullness is still there- unrelenting- beckoning us into that intimate, familial relationship which is the life of God:

'Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother.'