

The Gospel

GOSPEL: Matthew 25.31–46

Jesus said to his disciples: 'When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand, "Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me."

Then the righteous will answer him, "Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?" And the king will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me."



Then he will say to those at his left hand, "You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me."

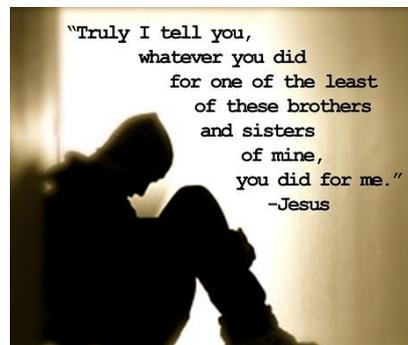
Then they also will answer, "Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?" Then he will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me." And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.'

Image: Last Judgment, by Ravenna

Some thoughts on today's Gospel reading from Sacred Space website

Try reading each "thought" slowly a couple of times then spend a while reflecting on what you have read and how it touches you (or doesn't!)

- This parable of the sheep and the goats is not about the future, but about opening my eyes here and now to the needs of my neighbour - the hungry, the homeless, the refugee, the isolated lonely ones. Jesus identifies with each one. If I turn away from my brothers and sisters in need, I am turning away from my brother Jesus.
- Let us not forget to reach out to others as we are asked to and the Father will delight in those who show kindly, compassionate, practical love to those in need.
- The things we are asked to do are so simple: give food and drink to 'Jesus' in those who are hungry and thirsty; to clothe 'Jesus' in those who are naked; to visit 'Jesus' in those who are sick and in jail. Whether we realise it or not, every time we spontaneously take care of a brother or sister in need it is Jesus himself we are serving.
- This message is simple, Lord. You will judge me on my love and service of others. You are there in the poor, the sick, the prisoners, the strangers. May I recognise your face.
- But where are the hungry, the naked, the homeless who would call on me if they could reach me? Or have I so organised my life that the needy never impinge on me? Lord, you have made this the sole criterion of judgment. How will I measure up?



- I pray that the Holy Spirit will guide me to recognise the good that God is doing in my life. I pray that my actions be sincere and come from my heart as an expression of my gratitude to God who does so much for me.

Katharine

Benefice online

Revd Mark has created the following videos. Please click on the links below to view them on your device.



[A service for Christ the King with Revd. Mark Hurley, David Smart and Cindy Bottard. Filmed at Bishops Lydeard and Combe Florey.](#)



These videos are hosted on the brand-new Bishops Lydeard Benefice YouTube channel, to which you can subscribe.

Up to date information about what is happening in the benefice can be found on our website bishopslydeardbenefice.org

Intercessions for Christ the King

Today we address our prayers to the second person of the Trinity, King of kings and Lord of lords, as we thank Him for the last year and for the fellowship of our worshipping community here in this benefice.

As we set out towards a new horizon, let us put our hands into His hand in the knowledge that it will be better than light and safer than a known way.

Guide us, O Lord, to a new beginning: in your mercy, hear our prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, may we grow in faith and knowledge of you. Help us to be your body on earth. Where we walk too slowly, give us courage and a helping nudge in the right direction. Where we run too fast, give us a stone in the shoe, and wisdom to ponder. If things take time, help us to hold on to hope. If solutions are slow to emerge, may we stay strong in faith. Give us the patience and forbearance to wait for the ripening of the fruit in due season.

Guide us, O Lord, to a new beginning: in your mercy, hear our prayer

All thrones, dominions, principalities and powers are subject to your reign, O Lord. The world is charged with your grandeur, whether flaming out like lightning or wrung from the press like oil. We are daily reminded of the continual renewing power of your creation in the way morning always waits on the other side of dark night. Your grandeur pervades every part of the created universe, if your people will only look at their surroundings and we, too, are part of your creation.

Guide us, O Lord, to a new beginning: in your mercy, hear our prayer

Lord and king, help us, your subjects, to be servants to one another, mindful that in imitating your example we shall meet you in the most unlikely of places. For our hands offering bread to the hungry and drink to the thirsty are yours. And the hands reaching out to receive are yours also. The sick that we take care of are you and the stranger that we welcome into our midst is you. You taught us by example how to touch the lives of our fellow men. Help us so that our own wounds may bear fruit in love. May the pains of the past create in us compassion. Stir up * in us generosity, graciousness in giving, and lavishness in love.

Guide us, O Lord, to a new beginning: in your mercy, hear our prayer

Lord, son of David, we pray for all who are in need. Heal us and give us the hope that we cannot grasp alone. When we cannot hope because we have forgotten how to dream, kindle a fire in our hearts. Hear us and help us; hear us and heal us. Heal us and let us follow; heal us and fill our hearts, our souls and our bodies with your Spirit; heal us and open the gates of heaven. Today we pray especially for Sandra Samuelson, and our Bishop, Peter.

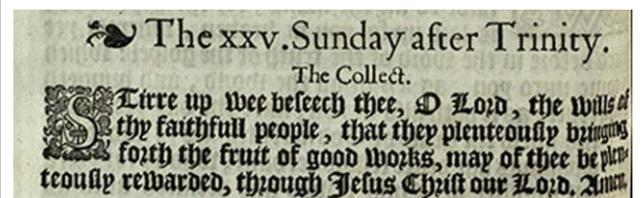
Guide us, O Lord, to a new beginning: in your mercy, hear our prayer

Lord of the dance, we pray for all those whom we love who have departed this life. As we cross the ocean of eternity, losing the shoreline as we seek new horizons, teach us how to trust. Let all that is dead in us die, knowing that all that is godly will be raised. Into light, into freedom, into the Trinity of God where you reign, draw us, our Saviour.

Guide us, O Lord, to a new beginning: in your mercy, hear our prayer

Collect for the Day

Eternal Father, whose Son Jesus Christ ascended to the throne of heaven that he might rule over all things as Lord and King: keep the Church in the unity of the Spirit and in the bond of peace, and bring the whole created order to worship at his feet; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**



A nod to 'Stir Up Sunday', the old name for this Sunday for which the collect was:

Stir up, O Lord,
the wills of your faithful people;
that they, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works,
may by you be plenteously rewarded;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**