



Martin Bird's Prayers for Monday 10th to Sunday 16th August 2020

Monday 10th (Laurence)

Reading – Mark Chapter 1, verses 1 to 13

The beginning of the gospel about Jesus Christ, the Son of God. It is written in Isaiah the prophet: "I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way" "a voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.'"

And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. John wore clothing made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. And this was his message: "After me will come one more powerful than I, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰ Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased." At once the Spirit sent him out into the wilderness, and he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him.

Lord Jesus, your Father said as you were baptized, "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased." Thank you that, because of you, and what you have done for us, we can know, with certainty, that God does the same with us. He looks down on us and says that we are his sons, we are his daughters, and he is well pleased with us, because he created us. Help us to live up to that, knowing that we were created in God's image. Help us to do your work, during this pandemic and always, showing people around us the way forward, and spreading your love to all your people, so that more and more may come to you. May all know the joy of God looking down on us and saying, "That's my boy" and "That's my girl" and know that certainty for themselves – we are all children of God Amen

Tuesday 11th (Clare of Assisi)

Reading – Mark Chapter 1, verses 14 - 20

After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. “The time has come,” he said. “The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!” As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.” At once they left their nets and followed him. When he had gone a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John in a boat, preparing their nets. Without delay he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him.

Jesus, you say to us, as you said to your disciples, “Follow me!”. Help us to be as sure as the disciples and follow you with everything we have. Help us to know that following you is the only option that we have, and following anything or anyone else can only bring sadness and death. Following you brings the joy of eternal life through you and with you. Help us, and all people, to know this truth and hear your words afresh today – “Follow Me” and let us reply, in all joy and hope and certainty, “Lord, we will follow you. Make us fishers of people too.” Amen

Wednesday 12th

Reading – Mark Chapter 1, verses 21 - 28

They went to Capernaum, and when the Sabbath came, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach. The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law. Just then a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an impure spirit cried out, “What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!”

“Be quiet!” said Jesus sternly. “Come out of him!” The impure spirit shook the man violently and came out of him with a shriek.

The people were all so amazed that they asked each other, “What is this? A new teaching—and with authority! He even gives orders to impure spirits and they obey him.” News about him spread quickly over the whole region of Galilee.

Lord Jesus, in Capernaum people were amazed at your teaching. Help us to not get blasé about what we have heard from you and cease to be amazed ourselves. Help us to be amazed once more by your teaching, recognising it to be the awesome, world shaking, incredible thing that it is. It has the power to turn things upside down, and it shows the world a whole different, better way of living. May we live in the way you teach us to live, and, in so doing, turn our small part of the world upside down, and may our brothers and sisters across the world do likewise, so that more and more people may come to you, and the world can come closer and closer to the loving, caring place you created it to be.

Amen

Thursday 13th (Jeremy Taylor)

Reading – Matthew Chapter 18, verse 21 to Chapter 19, verse 1

Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?” Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.”

Lord Jesus, it is so tough for us to hear that we should be forgiving people seventy-seven times when they sin against us, but if everyone does the same, then this world would become a truly forgiving place where everyone can live in love with one another, rather than worrying about being judged on their errors. Lord, help us all to be so forgiving that the world will sit up and take notice, and so all people would see that forgiving each other really is the way forward. At the same time, help us not to fall into the trap of thinking that if we are going to be forgiven, we don't have to worry about what we are doing. Help us to truly repent of the bad things we have done and to try, in your strength, to not do the same things over and over again. May we all know your forgiveness, as we truly repent, and may we show your forgiveness to those who sin against us. In your name, and in your strength we pray, Amen

Friday 14th

Reading – Mark Chapter 2, verses 1 to 12

A few days later, when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. They gathered in such large numbers that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. Some men came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus by digging through it and then lowered the mat the man was lying on. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralyzed man, “Son, your sins are forgiven.” Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves, “Why does this fellow talk like that? He’s blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?” Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit that this was what they were thinking in their hearts, and he said to them, “Why are you thinking these things? Which is easier: to say to this paralyzed man, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up, take your mat and walk’? But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.” So he said to the man, “I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home.” He got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all. This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, “We have never seen anything like this!”

Lord Jesus, help us to be amazed all over again by what you did during your time on earth. You forgave sins, cured paralysis, brought people back to death, fed the 5,000 and so many other miraculous things, and you did all these things to bring your Father the glory. You did his work and it led you to the cross where you died for all of us, and when you were risen, your work was complete. Help us to be in awe of you once more, and praise you and our Father God as we should, because you are amazing, what you did was miraculous and by dying for us all, you allow us to have that pathway to God. May your whole world come to know this truth, and either start or continue their journey down this pathway to God and eternal life, through following you in their lives – we come to you
Lord Jesus, our friend, our redeemer and our saviour. Amen

Saturday 15th (The Blessed Virgin Mary)

Reading – Luke Chapter 1, verses 46 to 55

And Mary said: “My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things for me—holy is his name. His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation. He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts. He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble. He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful to Abraham and his descendants forever, just as he promised our ancestors.”

Lord Jesus, just as Mary praised you and knew you as her Saviour, so may we do likewise. May we live so that all those we know and those we meet may know that we do praise you with everything we are and through everything we do, and may that praise be built on the sure knowledge that you are our Saviour too. We remember with thanks all that Mary did by bringing you into this world, and that, through the virgin birth, it was shown just how special you were, even as a baby. Help us to follow you more closely this day, and praise you, with Mary, as our Saviour. Amen

10th Sunday after Trinity 16th

Reading – John Chapter 6, verses 51 to 58

I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.” Then the Jews began to argue sharply among themselves, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” Jesus said to them, “Very truly I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Your ancestors ate manna and died, but whoever feeds on this bread will live forever.”

Lord Jesus, thank you that you are the living bread that came down from heaven. We know with absolute certainty that if we feed on you we will live forever, because that is what you promise. Through your life, death and resurrection you have promised us eternal life through you. Keep our faith strong in these difficult times and help us to help others come to same faith. Eternal life is your gift to the world – may the whole world come to see that and come to you, so that we all may live together in peace, living our lives as you would have us live them. Thank you, Lord Jesus, for giving us your body and your blood so that we may look forward to eternity spent with you and your Father in heaven. Amen