**30 August 2020 Twelfth Sunday after Trinity**

**Collect**

Almighty and everlasting God, you are always more ready to hear than we to pray and to give more than either we desire or deserve: pour down upon us the abundance of your mercy, forgiving us those things of which our conscience is afraid and giving us those good things which we are not worthy to ask but through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

**First Reading Romans 12.9-21**

9Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; 10love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honour. 11Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. 12Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. 13Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.

14Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. 15Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. 16Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. 17Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. 18If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. 19Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, ‘Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.’ 20No, ‘if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads.’ 21Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

**Reflection**

When we stand up to say the creed, we are saying what we believe God is, and God has done and what shapes our belief. We have been doing this for hundreds of years, reciting who God is, but I do sometimes wonder if perhaps we ought to have a “so what” statement too.

You know what I mean: I love the companionship and fun of having a dog SO I have a Labrador and Newfoundland as part of our family.

I really dislike the taste and smell of fish SO I rarely eat or cook with seafood!

I am a Christian SO … what does it really mean to be a follower of Christ today?

What is the so what of being a Christian if it is not this stunning, challenging, and wonderful passage from St Paul? Can you image saying this together in church?

***I am a follower of Christ, and I am a believer, therefore I strive to act in such a way as to make my faith known in my living not my words alone. So this is how I choose to live:***

***I will***

**9Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good;**

***We will***

**10love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honour.**

**We shall not 11 lag in zeal,**

***But we shall***

**be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord.**

**12Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer.**

**13Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.**

***Though it may be hard and costly we will***

**14Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them.**

**15Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.**

**16Live in harmony with one another;**

***I will do my best to***

**not be haughty, but associate with the lowly;**

**do not claim to be wiser than I am/you are.**

**17not repay anyone evil for evil, live peaceably with all.**

***We shall remember***

**19Beloved, never avenge yourselves,**

**20No, ‘if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink;**

***I know the way to live in peace and love means that I cannot***

**21 be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.**

***And in living this way I will become a walking living breathing sacrament of the Love of God in the present time. Give me grace to be able to live this way always, and when I fall, guide me Lord back to the right pathway. Amen.***

**Prayers** **by John Iles** *we sit or kneel to pray:*

\*Heavenly Father, help us to follow the path that you have set before us; support us when we stumble; hold us fast when the going becomes rough; sustain us when darkness obscures the way; strengthen us when we become faint hearted and keep within us the vision of the goal towards which we journey.

Lord, hear us**. Lord, graciously hear us.**

\*Lord, help us to live out our lives in accordance with the commitments which, each week, we make to you in the words of the creed; give us the strength to act so that our faith is known by our deeds not just our words; may we love one another unreservedly; may we rejoice in the hope that you have given us and be a living disciple of your promise to humankind..

Lord, hear us. **Lord, graciously hear us.**

\*Speak to us, Lord, that we may hear your word; guide your church and its people through the Covid 19 pandemic so that it may emerge stronger in faith and more able to deal with the challenges which lie ahead; give wisdom to our Archbishop Justin, our Bishop Philip, Vanda our Rector and all clergy that they may inspired to find new ways to celebrate our faith.

Lord, hear us. **Lord, graciously hear us.**

\*Merciful Father, we pray for all those parts of our world which are engulfed in conflict; instil in the minds of all protagonists the benefits of seeking peaceful means to resolve their differences; make them hear the pleas of the majority to end the suffering of war and embrace a life of co-existence in harmony; bring comfort to those whose lives have been rent apart by conflict and give them hope in the future.

Lord, hear us. **Lord, graciously hear us.**

\*Lord God, we are blessed to live in a beautiful part of your world which, presently, is awash with holiday makers; help us to make them welcome and to do all we can to share with them the wonders of our beaches, cliffs and landscape; grant that they may respect our environment and return to their homes refreshed and leaving nothing more than their footprints in the sand.

Merciful Father,

**accept these prayers for the sake of your Son our saviour Jesus Christ.**

*concluding with:*

**Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever and ever Amen.**

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