

5th – 10th October *Compiled by Canon Janet Chapman (Rector)*

Monday 5th October

Psalm 111 : 1-6

Luke 10 : 25 -37

Today's psalm includes the lines 'he gave food to those who feared him' and today's Gospel is the parable of the Good Samaritan. Imagine yourself as the person who is set upon, lying in the ditch, seeing the Priest and Levite go by, but now someone, a Samaritan even(!), comes close. What are your feelings as they clean your wounds, put you on a donkey and take you to the inn? Pray for those who cross boundaries to help others.

Tuesday 6th October *(William Tyndale, Translator of the Scriptures, Martyr 1536)*

Psalm 139 : 1-9

Luke 10 : 38-end

Hopefully, there is a bit of Martha and a bit of Mary in all of us. Like work and life it is a case of getting the right balance; there will always be more to be done than there is ever time for. Lay down the 'to do' list for now and read through the psalm verses slowly and gently. If you are a knitter maybe do a couple of rows for each one. Then ask "is there anything I've been putting off for a long time I could make a start on today?" Ask God to show it to you – and then... on with the day!

Wednesday 7th October

Psalm 117

Luke 11 : 1-4

Note the characteristics of God which the psalmist draws to our attention: steadfast love and faithfulness. It is because of this we can always turn to God in prayer – with or without words. I sometimes try to sunbathe in prayer. Have a go..... simply picture God's love falling upon you, warming your face and heart. Soak it in for a few moments. Now for words.... Luke's version of the Lord's prayer..... note here not 'deliver us from evil' but 'do not bring us to the time of trial.' What do you find most trying at the moment? Tell God about it – he is listening with his faithful ear and in steadfast love.

Thursday 8th October

Psalm 85 : 8-13

Luke 11: 5-13

Imagine that you are woken late at night by unexpected visitors who are hungry, but your cupboard is empty. Who would you turn to? Give thanks for those people. Remember a time when you have asked/hoped for something and your request has been met. How did you feel? What if it was almost met and you realise that if you could have been more specific in your request you would not have been disappointed. God wants to meet our needs – maybe we need to be more specific in our requests and prior to that be more searching in our heart's desires.

Friday 9th October

Psalm 111 : 4-end

Luke 11 : 14-23

Corfe Castle in Dorset is now in ruins thanks to the Civil War. Surprisingly, it has never been overcome by an invading force in battle; rather, when under siege by the Roundheads with the castle-dwellers were holding out, it was a servant who betrayed her mistress (the master was away fighting for the Royalists) and opened a side door to enable the invasion. Pray for God's protection, particularly at your weak points.

Saturday 10th October (Paulinus, Bishop of York, Missionary, 644)

Psalm 105 : 1-7

Luke 11 : 24-28

Here's a chilling parable for the many of us who have been having "a good clear out" during lockdown! Take a moment to take stock of what clutter you have or haven't got or how you use your time. Are you using it 'for better or for worse?' In your situation hear the words of Jesus to the woman in the crowd, "Blessed are those who hear the word of God and obey it!" What word has God got for you today and how can you both hear it and obey it? *Seek the Lord and his strength (today's psalm verse 4).*

12th – 17th October *Compiled by Revd Theresa Morton (Assistant Curate)*

Monday 12th October (Wilfred, bishop, missionary, 709)

Psalm 113

Luke 11 : 29-32

In the Gospel passage, the crowds are curious to find out what wonders Jesus is going to perform, and to hear the stories he tells. But how much attention will they really pay to his message? It seems they're not grasping that they need to turn their lives around, as the people of Nineveh did, to repent and focus their lives on God.

Is the Word of God more than just a collection of stories to us? Perhaps today ask God to embed his message deep into your heart, and help you live your life accordingly.

Tuesday 13th October (Edward the Confessor, king, 1066)

Psalm 119 : 41-48

Luke 11 : 37-41

Today's passage in Luke continues a similar theme to yesterdays. But what Jesus is concerned with here is integrity. It's all well and good appearing righteous on the outside, but are we the same on the inside? We should give every part of us over to God's use – then, as Psalm 119:45 says, we can walk in liberty. What do you need to do to achieve that liberation?

Wednesday 14th October

Psalm 1

Luke 11 : 42-46

Psalm 1 exalts God's law, or instruction, and the blessings we can receive by following it. One of the problems Jesus highlights is that the Pharisees and Lawyers insist on keeping the law in very particular ways, and this can cause unnecessary burdens on people. Instead, he says, the emphasis should be on love and justice.

Perhaps today pray for someone you know who is burdened by some kind of bureaucracy; for example, who is struggling to claim benefits, or can't get access to important information they need. Is there any practical help you could offer them?

Thursday 15th October (Teresa of Avila, teacher of the faith, 1582)

Psalm 98 : 1-4

Luke 11 : 47-end

"Christ has no body but yours, no hands, no feet on earth but yours, yours are the eyes with which he looks compassion on this world. Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good, yours are the hands with which he blesses all the world."

These words are attributed to St Teresa. Read them again slowly. Ponder.

Friday 16th October

Psalm 33 : 1-6,12

Luke 12 : 1-7

At first sight, today's two readings may seem to be complete opposites. On the one hand the Psalm urges us to praise God for his love and faithfulness, and yet Luke's Jesus speaks of being fearful of the God of judgment. How do we hold these in tension? Perhaps spend some time thinking about the covenant God offers us. If we love God with all our being, we don't need to be afraid of the truth being known about us, because the truth is we are endeavouring to be as faithful to God as he is to us.

Saturday 17th October (Ignatius, bishop, martyr, c107)

Psalm 8

Luke 12 : 8-12

It's clear from Jesus' words in Luke that he doesn't expect his followers to be half-hearted. When we are challenged by others about our faith we should be bold in how we speak of it. If we need a reminder of God's goodness to help us do this, perhaps this can be found in today's Psalm. But we are given assurance that the Holy Spirit will be with us, teaching us what to say.

Maybe this weekend, pray for the Spirit to help you be bold in sharing your faith with someone.

19th – 24th October *Compiled by Fr John Richards*

Monday 19th October

Psalm 100

Luke 12 : 13-21

As Christians we are often asked to think about our attitude towards our material possessions. It is obvious in this passage from Luke that Jesus has some very definite things to say about it all. Read the passage again and see if you need to make changes to your lifestyle. How could you make things better for others and the environment?

Tuesday 20th October

Psalm 85-end

Luke 12 : 35-38

Are we ready? Are we fully prepared to meet our God? It's an important question that Jesus asks of us. Leaving things undone or not completed can hinder us in our Christian journey. Are our lamps ready and in good working order? None of us knows the day or the hour when eternity will invade our time and the summons will come. How then, would we like God to find us?

Wednesday 21st October

Psalm 98

Luke 12 : 39-48

Today's reading is the second part of yesterday's meditation. Jesus is using the same parable to fully expound his teaching about preparing ourselves to meet God face to face. All aspects of our lives need to be examined and those things that prevent us from doing the will of God should be put right. The passage finishes with the warning that knowledge and privilege always bring responsibility and failure to use it wisely is doubly blameworthy in the person who had every chance to do well. That is something that we need to think and pray about.

Thursday 22nd October

Psalm 33 : 1-6

Luke 12 : 49-53

This is very difficult for us to understand. I think it's about making choices. All through our lives we are confronted with awkward and sometimes painful decisions and very often we make the wrong choice. In these few verses Jesus tells us that following him will not be easy. Loyalty to Christ has to take precedence over the dearest loyalties of this earth. Think of your own life and the difficult choices that you have had to make as a Christian.

Friday 23rd October

Psalm 24 : 1-6

Luke 12 : 54-end

Chapter 12 concludes with Jesus reinforcing what he has been teaching about time. He tells the people to read the signs of the times so that you will know that the kingdom of God is on the way. He says to his listeners that whilst there is still time, be prepared. There are some things that we cannot afford to put off. Above all, making our peace with God. Let us meditate by seeking God's presence and ask him for that precious peace, which the world cannot give.

Saturday 24th October

Psalm 122

Luke 13: 1-9

Jesus tells another parable that is full of grace but also contains many warnings. It's about being offered a second chance, and finally the threat of the last chance. The second chance is a beautiful thing. The fig tree normally takes three years to reach maturity. If it is not fruiting by that time it is not likely to fruit at all. But this fig tree was given another chance. We sometimes need second chances ourselves, and sometimes we need to give others a second chance! Has this happened in your life?

26th – 31st October *Compiled by Fr David (Associate Priest)*

Monday 26th October

Psalm 1

Luke 13 : 10-17

You are at a church service, at a re-opening of church. During the sermon, a woman who is crippled and bent over with pain comes into the church. Is this someone you know or a newcomer? The preacher calls her over and says “Woman you are set free from your ailment”, he lays his hands on her and she stands up straight praising God. How do you feel about this? What message does the healing convey to you? Then the Church Warden rebukes the preacher and saying there are 6 days when work should be done. The preacher says “How many of you will buy a newspaper on a Sunday or wash your car, you hypocrites”. How do you feel now? Do you feel comfortable? Who do you want to support? If you think this could never happen, perhaps not in this extreme manner but do you always agree with what the preacher says?

Tuesday 27th October

Psalm 128

Luke 13 : 18-21

What is the kingdom of God like for you? To what would you compare it? The kingdom of God does not guarantee a life of joy and ease. Does that surprise you? Do you use yeast to bake bread? Even if you use yeast I suspect that in this modern age we tend to take the properties of yeast for granted. In the kingdom of God all that matters is living at one with God, ready to proclaim his message of salvation using words if we must. To what would you compare the kingdom of God? Some suggest that heaven on earth, the kingdom of God is in the good that men and women are moved to do for others; the introduction of the national health service, the welfare state, the bridge built to bring a fragile peace in Northern Ireland. How could you bring the hope of the kingdom of God to people today?

Wednesday 28th October (Simon and Jude Apostles)

Psalm 119 : 89-96

John 5 : 17-27

Who do you think Jesus is speaking to in this passage? Who is it that he appears to be talking to? If you heard someone in the High Street today saying that God was their Father what would you think? Would you think they were the messiah or that they were mad? What astonishing things have you witnessed being done in the name of God? Have they always been good acts that witness to the love of God? Have you witnessed someone recover from a serious illness against all odds? Is this to the credit of modern medicine or the love of God? Perhaps the skill of the surgeon is a gift from God.

Thursday 29th October

Psalm 144 : 1-2, 9-11

Luke 13 : 31-end

You are present with Jesus when a group of Pharisees rush in. They tell Jesus to flee for his safety. How would you have responded? Would you have got ready to go “on the run”? What does it convey when Jesus refers to Herod as “that fox”? Foxes are regarded as being cunning. What was cunning about Herod planning to kill Jesus? Perhaps it was in getting the Pharisees to tell Jesus of his plan in the hope that he would have not have to do anything. Imagine the scene today, the police say to a black man, “the boss is coming for you, you need to lay low and leave town, today!” Jesus then announces that he will finish what he has planned and then head for Jerusalem as planned, to be killed. This is like the black man I described then saying “I have a few things to attend to then I will go to the bosses’ home.”. What does it feel like to compare Jesus’ words with those of a black man? Black lives matter. How did Jesus’ life matter?

Friday 30th October

Psalm 111

Luke 14 : 1-6

You are in a group outside the leader's house, in the courtyard. Look around. Does the courtyard have plants and small trees; a lemon or olive or fig tree perhaps? Is there a water feature? Are there servants, perhaps preparing bowls of water for the guests to wash their feet? Do you recognise any of the people who are gathering? Do you see the man with dropsy hobbling in, with an awkward gait, with feet, legs, arms and body greatly swollen? When Jesus ask the lawyers and Pharisees if it is lawful to cure people on the sabbath how do they respond? Do they act surprised as if to ask what, do you want me to answer this? How would you answer? Jesus heals the man then suggests to the Pharisees and lawyers that they would not hesitate to pull an ox out of a well. What was the silence that followed like? Was it comfortable or not?

Saturday 31st October

Psalm 42 : 1-7

Luke 14 : 1, 7-11

Jesus goes for another meal at the house of a leader of the Pharisees. He must have been invited but why do you think Jesus was invited for a meal by various leaders of the Pharisees? Do you think Jesus was an honoured guest, a curiosity or just someone to make up the numbers? What do you think is meant by "on one occasion"? This suggests that it was not unusual for Jesus to dine with a leader of the Pharisees. Would you prefer to sit "at the top table" in a place of honour or lower down? Can you picture the look on the Pharisees faces when Jesus says this? Are the pleased, perplexed, angry or what? Is it your experience that all who humble themselves will be exalted? Does it matter that this took place on the sabbath? Perhaps it signifies a time when everyone was at ease.

2nd – 7th November *Compiled by Claire Whitmore (Ordinand)*

Monday 2nd November

Psalm 131

Luke 14 : 12-14

Yesterday, we marked All Saints Day, celebrating the faith of all who have gone before us, and the inexpressible joys of eternal life. In our Luke passage today, Jesus gives us a glimpse of what the table of the heavenly banquet looks like – filled with all those who are dispossessed and overlooked in this life, and calls us to seek to replicate that banquet with our choices on earth. How might you bring a glimpse of heaven into someone's life today?

Tuesday 3rd November

Psalm 22 : 22-27

Luke 14 : 15-24

The theme of the heavenly banquet continues today, with a parable from Jesus about the excuses made by reluctant guests. God is constantly inviting us into deeper communion – but it is so easy to let the apparently urgent priorities of daily living provide us with excuses to decline the invitation. Thinking about the past week, were there times when you failed to follow God's call? Were there times when you accepted and were rewarded?

Wednesday 4th November

Psalm 27 : 1-5

Luke 14 : 25-33

Jesus' challenging words in Luke today might feel alarming. In a time when we have come to rely on our loved ones more than ever, the idea of hating them feels shocking. I wonder if there is a clue to understanding this is the words of the psalmist: "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom then shall I fear?" In the light and love of our saving God, earthly worries and concerns fade into the background, and we can truly say that we are not afraid.

Thursday 5th November

Psalm 105 : 1-7

Luke 15 : 1-10

The story of the woman with the lost coin is one of my favourite stories in the Bible. I love the idea that God is represented by a poor woman in her daily tasks, and that we are God's precious coins, as precious to God as the ten coins of a woman's total wealth. The woman's relief and celebration with her friends is like a party in heaven. How does this image feel to you? Is it comforting? Or perhaps challenging? Do you prefer this story of the story of the lost sheep?

Friday 6th November

Psalm 122

Luke 16 : 1-8

Today's reading is one of Jesus' more confusing parables. On first reading, Jesus seems to endorse fraud and theft on the part of the dishonest manager – but we don't actually need to assume that this is an allegory for God at all. Many commentators offer different perspectives, but one interpretation that resonates with me suggests that Jesus is highlighting the differences between the ways of the world and the ways of God. The world, with its obsession with money, warps our values and distracts us from what is truly important.

Saturday 7th November

Psalm 112

Luke 16 : 9-15

Is Jesus' statement about dishonest wealth here meant to be taken seriously? Or ironically? It's hard to know. His later sentence "You cannot serve God and wealth" is clearer – but still one that is challenging to many. Spend some time today thinking about your money and how you handle it. This year has been challenging financially for many – perhaps for yourself. Or perhaps it has freed up some money that you might be able to pass on to a good cause. Give thanks to God today for the reminder that God is more steadfast and faithful than money.

9th to 14th November - compiled by Janice Wones (Reader)

Monday 9th November

Psalm 24 : 1-6

Luke 17 : 1-6

Have you ever misled or confused someone who asked you about your faith? Tell them that you are sorry and explain.

When someone comes to you and admits that they have done wrong to you, have you forgiven them, or have you harboured that resentment?

“Who may stand in (the Lord’s) Holy Place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart.”

Tuesday 10th November

Psalm 37 : 3-5, 30-32

Luke 17 : 7-10

You know what the Lord expects of you. Have you done it? Have you done all of it?

If you have, are you expecting some blessing as a reward?

Don’t. You have done no more than given what is due to God.

“Trust in the Lord and do good.”

Wednesday 11th November

Psalm 23

Luke 17: 11-19

Have you received some unexpected blessing? Have you been given some gift that you do not deserve?

Give heartfelt thanks to God now and tomorrow and the day after.

“Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life.”

Thursday 12th November

Psalm 146: 4-10

Luke 17: 20 -25

The kingdom of Heaven is now and not yet.

Are you living in the kingdom now? Are you doing God’s will now ‘on earth as it is in heaven’? Do you hold God’s truth carefully within you? Do you show it to those around you?

“The Lord reigns for ever...for all generations.”

Friday 13th November

Psalm 119: 1-8

Luke 17: 26-37

The kingdom of Heaven is now and not yet.

Are you ready and waiting? Are you prepared for the world to be transformed and the kingdom of God to replace all that is familiar? Are you prepared for your whole life to be made manifest to all?

“Blessed are those who keep his statutes and seek him with all their heart.”

Saturday 14th November

Psalm 112

Luke 18: 1-8

Do you persist in prayer? Do you keep asking for the same things, for the same people and the same situations?

Has it become just a habit? Or is it heartfelt? Do you mean it?

“His heart is secure, he will have no fear.”