

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

You are just, O Lord, and your judgement is right; treat your servant in accord with your merciful love.

COLLECT

O God, by whom we are redeemed and receive adoption, look graciously upon your beloved sons and daughters, that those who believe in Christ may receive true freedom and an everlasting inheritance.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

FIRST READING 35:4-7

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

Say to all faint hearts,

'Courage! Do not be afraid.

'Look, your God is coming,

vengeance is coming,

the retribution of God;

he is coming to save you.'

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,

the ears of the deaf unsealed,

then the lame shall leap like a deer

and the tongues of the dumb sing for joy;

for water gushes in the desert,

streams in the wasteland,

the scorched earth becomes a lake,

the parched land springs of water.

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps 145

Response: My soul, give praise to the Lord.

1. It is the Lord who keeps faith for ever, who is just to those who are oppressed.

It is he who gives bread to the hungry, the Lord, who sets prisoners free. (R.)

2. It is the Lord who gives sight to the blind,

who raises up those who are bowed down,

the Lord who loves the just,

the Lord, who protects the stranger. (R.)

3. The Lord upholds the widow and orphan,

but thwarts the path of the wicked.

The Lord will reign for ever,

Zion's god, from age to age. (R.)

SECOND READING 2:1-5

A reading from the letter of St James

My brothers, do not try to combine faith in Jesus Christ, our glorified Lord, with the making of distinctions between classes of people. Now suppose a man comes into your synagogue, beautifully dressed and with a gold ring on, and at

the same time a poor man comes in, in shabby clothes, and you take notice of the well-dressed man, and say, 'Come this way to the best seats'; then you tell the poor man, 'Stand over there' or 'You can sit on the floor by my foot-rest'. Can't you see that you have used two different standards in your mind, and turned yourselves into judges, and corrupt judges at that?

Listen, my dear brothers: it was those who are poor according to the world that God chose, to be rich in faith and to be the heirs to the kingdom which he promised to those who love him.

The word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

Speak, Lord, your servant is listening: you have the message of eternal life.

Alleluia!

GOSPEL 7: 31-37

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark

Returning from the district of Tyre, Jesus went by way of Sidon towards the Sea of Galilee, right through the Decapolis region. And they brought him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they asked him to lay his hand on him. He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, put his fingers into the man's ears and touched his tongue with spittle. Then looking up to heaven he sighed; and he said to him, 'Ephphatha', that is, 'Be opened'. And his ears were opened, and the ligament of his tongue was loosened and he spoke clearly. And Jesus ordered them to tell no one about it, but the more he insisted, the more widely they published it. Their admiration was unbounded. 'He has done all things well,' they said 'he makes the deaf hear and the dumb speak.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

O God, who give us the gift of true prayer and of peace, graciously grant that, through this offering, we may do fitting homage to your divine majesty and, by partaking of the sacred mystery, we may be faithfully united in mind and heart. Through Christ our Lord.

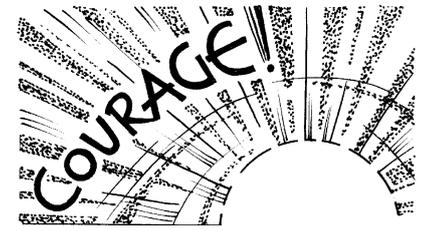
COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Like the deer that yearns for running streams, so my soul is yearning for you, my God; my soul is thirsting for God, the living God.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Grant that your faithful, O Lord; whom you nourish and endow with life through the food of your Word and heavenly Sacrament, may so benefit from your beloved Son's great gifts that we may merit an eternal share in his life. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

GOSPEL REFLECTION



What is the definition of a community? A Christian community? What are the hallmarks of a genuine Christian community?

What is the role of a Christian community in today's world? What is the role of a Christian community relative to its members? How does a Christian community go about fulfilling these roles?

Does a Christian community have a duty to look after the welfare of its members? Does it have the same obligation to look after the welfare of all God's people?

Where do you draw the line on how you look after the welfare of your community members? Is this line arbitrary? Is this line based on gospel values or on the values of the world?

Do you minister to the physical needs of your community as readily as you minister to their spiritual needs? What is the difference between physical needs and spiritual needs?

How can you help someone who is completely wrapped up in their possessions, to the neglect of their faith life?

GOSPEL ACTION

Truly see the needs of your community this week. Weigh your own needs against the good of the community. Begin to look at the broader needs of your neighbourhood; where can you help?

Readings – 24th Sunday Year B

First Reading: Isaiah 50:5-9

Second Reading: James 2:14-18

Gospel: Mark 8:27-35

Season of Creation reflections

We first celebrated the Season of Creation in our parish last year with a family service in the church garden. The season enables us to look deeper into the meaning of creation and our responsibility as stewards of Creation and one way to start is our image of God, the Creator; Father, Son, Holy Spirit, Trinity. In your mind's eye what image appears? Does your image encompass the vastness of the Universe of unimaginable size, power and beauty and the mystery of the Creator?

The 2021 Season of Creation begins at a critical and delicate time for the human family as we face the climate crisis threatening Earth and its future. UN Secretary General António Guterres and Pope Francis have both added their voices to the overwhelming global consensus of scientists in warning that there is only a short time left for the nations of the world to take the steps needed to reduce carbon emissions and keep the average temperature of the planet from rising more than 1.5 degrees Celsius. If those steps are not taken with a sense of urgency and global solidarity, irreversible turning points will bring great devastation with lasting destructive impacts. In some of the worst-case scenarios, Earth's ability to sustain the human population could be reduced from its current capacity [presently approaching 8 billion people] to about 1 billion. It is hard to imagine the suffering that the loss of 7 billion people and countless other living beings to fires, floods, droughts, other forms of violent weather, starvation, and more would impose. It is widely acknowledged that the nations of the world are failing to take adequate steps to meet the true urgency of the planetary crisis.

This Season of Creation helps us to appreciate the sense of urgency and commitment to serious change that are essential for the future wellbeing of our common home. Too great an emphasis on the severe threats of devastation can often lead to discouragement, depression, and inaction. Can the scriptures help us to walk the fine line that will help us as people of faith to face and embrace the urgency of the situation threatening Earth and all creatures, for whom it is home, with hope and a ready commitment to the transformations so desperately required?

In the first reading, the prophet Isaiah urges his people to "Be strong, fear not" because God is faithful and is engaged in their history to save them. He sees the work of God in the eyes that are opened, the ears that hear again, in the lame and the mute being healed and Earth being restored to fruitfulness and life. The faithful presence and work of God are the surest foundation against

discouragement and losing hope in the face of the current crises. As St. Paul wrote so powerfully, "If God is for us, who can be against?" Do we share Isaiah's prophetic faith here and now? Are we able to see the needs, hear the call, and act for healing and renewal of Earth? Where do we see eyes being opened to the climate realities and dangers? Where do we see people who were deaf to the issues or refused to listen begin to hear and understand? Where are those who had been mute beginning to speak up with concern and care for creation? Where do we see people whose response to the planetary crises had been halting in the past taking more bold steps? At the personal and at the political level? Through international collaboration and networking? Where are we seeing Earth being healed and renewed through prophetic human efforts? Where do we recognize God at work in these efforts to address the climate crisis threatening our Mother Earth?

In the second reading, James focuses upon the widespread human temptation to honour wealth as a sign of success and value. How can we honour God with our lifestyles and promote sufficiency instead of excess?

In the Gospel, Jesus heals the deaf man and enables him to speak clearly. Are we ready to pray for the healing power of Christ to be at work in us and through us so that we may hear and speak clearly the Word of God given us to share in this critical time?

We are at a crisis point in the future of Our Common Home. Action over the next ten years is essential and we all need to take part, individually, as families and neighbourhoods and as a parish. On our own we may think that our actions are insignificant, but Pope Francis assures us that 'All is not lost' In the scriptures today we hear how the Eyes of the Blind will be opened and the ears of the deaf unsealed. Can we open our eyes and unseal our ears and act?

The Laudato Si Action Platform launched by the Vatican earlier this year promotes Ecological Spirituality as fundamental to the way forward. What is Ecological Spirituality? This is a way to find a religious vision of creation and urges more contact with nature in a spirit of wonder, praise, joy, gratitude. The parish Laudato Si outdoor prayer sessions this summer promoted this spirituality. There are also ecological retreats and programmes, including the Global Healing videos we showed in church. Perhaps it's time to view the follow up Global Caring videos?

In 2015, Pope Francis wrote *Laudato Si'*, specifically to urge all people to take part and to influence those at the Paris Cop. This year, our own country is host to Cop26. We have a unique opportunity to urge our government to act and to influence those other governments and corporations to make significant change. We have a petition to sign on the newsletter and cards at the back of church. We can write to our MP Angela Eagle.

Over the last 18 months it has been difficult to meet as a parish but now we are returning to church and to the 'normal' activities of the parish, how can we, as a parish, ensure that we take the necessary and urgent steps to care for creation, for the common good and hear the cry of the poor and act upon it?

We have made pledges, the Our Common Home group have been acting throughout this period but are there now new ways of working together? Maybe a great appreciation of awesome nature of Creation can help us? That is why the work in the church garden has been so important. The contact with nature, the experience of growing food and sharing it and protecting biodiversity and the soil is part of our faith and to be celebrated. On the altar today you can see some of the produce from the church garden. Each week other produce has been shared with the volunteers, the parishioners and the local social supermarket. The gifts of knowledge, community and friendship are not visible but just as important. The garden is open after mass today. Please do come and look.

Other items in front of the altar represent Harvest gifts for Wirral Food bank. Your continuing support is helping over 6,000 individuals and families locally so far this year.

Prayer is an integral part of our faith and action. Every Wednesday at 7.30pm we are part of an international prayer chain for Cop26. The Prayer for Glasgow is emailed out every week and available today, please join in praying the prayer with us.

Working together we can make a difference.

Many thanks,

Our Common Home Group.

Bidding Prayers and Spiritual Communion

5th September 2021 – 23rd Sunday Ordinary Time Year B

Priest:

As we celebrate the Season of Creation we bring all our prayers before the Lord.

Reader:

For Christians and people everywhere: may they trust in the faithful presence and loving work of God in us, among us, and through us to respond to the Cry of the Earth at this crucial time.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For ourselves: may we be good stewards of Creation as we speak God's Truth and encourage one another in ways of living on Earth wisely, sustainably, justly and reverently.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For the success of the work of ecumenical and interfaith communities to promote global unity and restore Earth as a nurturing home to all its creatures.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For those who are hungry or in need: that we may hear and respond in faith and in hope to the Cry of the Poor among us and around the planet.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For unity and peace in our world, we pray for the people of Afghanistan especially at this time.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For all those in our parish who are sick, housebound or finding life difficult that they may experience the power of the healing peace, love and grace of Christ.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For all the faithful departed especially **Harry Lockwood, Cath Naughton, Lynne Ambrose** and all who have died recently: **"Eternal rest grant unto them..."**

We ask Our Lady to join her prayers with ours as we say: **"Hail Mary..."**

For a moment in silence we bring our own private prayers and intentions before the Lord.

Priest:

Loving Father,

We offer these and all our prayers to you,
through Jesus your Son,
who is Christ Our Lord, Amen.

Bidding Prayers and Spiritual Communion

5th September 2021 – 23rd Sunday Ordinary Time Year B

Spiritual Communion

Prayer of St Alphonsus

My Jesus,
I believe that you are present in this Holy Sacrament of the altar.
I love you above all things and
I passionately desire to receive you into my soul.
Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally,
come spiritually into my soul
so that I may unite myself wholly to you now and forever.
Amen.

CAFOD Prayer for Glasgow

Creator God,
We cry out to you
The earth is damaged and in chaos
People in poverty are suffering the most
Greed and consumerism are a disease
And your Church is too often asleep

Merciful Lord,
Protect your people and restore your earth,
Embolden governments to take action,
Awaken Church leaders
Give the youth influence
And guide businesses to change

In the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord
May we unite and be bold
Take heart and find hope in you,
Worship you with our lifestyles
Walk in your truth
and see justice and renewal in the earth

Amen