

The Vine at Home
25th Sunday of Ordinary Time – Year B
Sunday 19th September 2021

Call to worship

Happy are we as we tread your path, O God

May we delight in your words, and meditate on the ways that you will speak to us during this act of worship, so that when we go out, inspired and challenged by what we have heard, we do so like fruitful trees, ready to prosper for you. Amen.¹

Hymn: 570 STF – As we gather, Father seal us

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r6ODRHtO7VY>

Opening Prayers

Loving parent God, we praise and thank you,

You do us good not harm, all the days of our lives.

You provide food for our households, with the fruits of your hands.

You open your hand to the poor, and reach out to the needy.

You open your mouth with wisdom, and the teachings of kindness are on your tongue.

Loving parent God, we praise and thank you
for all the ways you provide for us,
for all the ways you encourage us,
for all the ways you show us how to live.

Help us to live according to your example, so that our very lives are an act of praise to you.
Amen

A prayer of confession

All wise, all loving God, we confess to you our reliance on our own wisdom.

We covet what we do not have and compromise ourselves to obtain it

Forgive us, God.

We engage in conflicts and disputes, and allow our disagreements to overtake us,

Forgive us, God.

We envy others, and allow our own selfish ambition to rule our hearts,

Forgive us God.

We yearn to be the greatest, and to lift ourselves up in power and glory,

Forgive us, God.

Forgive us, and sow in us a harvest of righteousness.

¹ Call to Worship written by Melissa Quinn

Help us to receive your forgiveness and wisdom, and let your grace within us, be pure, peaceable, gentle, and willing to yield.

As we know ourselves to be forgiven, may we bring your mercy and good fruits to others, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy, but with the gentleness and wisdom you dare give. Amen.²

Let us now say the Lord's Prayer

Readings: Proverbs 31:10-31 - Ode to a Capable Wife

- 10** A capable wife who can find? She is far more precious than jewels.
11 The heart of her husband trusts in her, and he will have no lack of gain.
12 She does him good, and not harm, all the days of her life.
13 She seeks wool and flax, and works with willing hands.
14 She is like the ships of the merchant, she brings her food from far away.
15 She rises while it is still night and provides food for her household and tasks for her servant-girls.
16 She considers a field and buys it; with the fruit of her hands she plants a vineyard.
17 She girds herself with strength, and makes her arms strong.
18 She perceives that her merchandise is profitable. Her lamp does not go out at night.
19 She puts her hands to the distaff, and her hands hold the spindle.
20 She opens her hand to the poor, and reaches out her hands to the needy.
21 She is not afraid for her household when it snows, for all her household are clothed in crimson.
22 She makes herself coverings; her clothing is fine linen and purple.
23 Her husband is known in the city gates, taking his seat among the elders of the land.
24 She makes linen garments and sells them; she supplies the merchant with sashes.
25 Strength and dignity are her clothing, and she laughs at the time to come.
26 She opens her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue.
27 She looks well to the ways of her household, and does not eat the bread of idleness.
28 Her children rise up and call her happy; her husband too, and he praises her:
29 "Many women have done excellently, but you surpass them all."
30 Charm is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.
31 Give her a share in the fruit of her hands, and let her works praise her in the city gates.

James 3:13 - 4:3, 7-8a - Two Kinds of Wisdom

13 Who is wise and understanding among you? Show by your good life that your works are done with gentleness born of wisdom. **14** But if you have bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not be boastful and false to the truth. **15** Such wisdom does not come down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, devilish. **16** For where there is envy and selfish ambition, there will also be disorder and wickedness of every kind. **17** But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy. **18** And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace for^[a]those who make peace.

Friendship with the World

4 Those conflicts and disputes among you, where do they come from? Do they not come from your cravings that are at war within you? **2** You want something and do not have it; so

² Opening prayers written by Melissa Quinn

you commit murder. And you covet^[b] something and cannot obtain it; so you engage in disputes and conflicts. You do not have, because you do not ask. **3** You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, in order to spend what you get on your pleasures.

Mark 9:30-37 - **Jesus Predicts His Death a Second Time**

³⁰ They left that place and passed through Galilee. Jesus did not want anyone to know where they were, ³¹ because he was teaching his disciples. He said to them, “The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men. They will kill him, and after three days he will rise.” ³² But they did not understand what he meant and were afraid to ask him about it.

³³ They came to Capernaum. When he was in the house, he asked them, “What were you arguing about on the road?” ³⁴ But they kept quiet because on the way they had argued about who was the greatest.

³⁵ Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, “Anyone who wants to be first must be the very last, and the servant of all.”

³⁶ He took a little child whom he placed among them. Taking the child in his arms, he said to them, ³⁷ “Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me.”

Reflections on the reading

[The following is an extract from the full reflection for this week, written by Holly Adams. To read and make use of the full version, find out if your circuit is subscribed to The Vine – you can email us on thevine@twelvebaskets.co.uk]

So, what if God’s good news involves us giving up our power and our privilege in some way?

Just like the disciples in today’s gospel, realising that the status we have been chasing is in fact meaningless can be difficult. The gospel presents us with a costly task: to abandon our worldly understanding of greatness.

This might mean we give away our time and our money to others who have less than us. This might mean we stop talking and let marginalised people speak up. This might mean we go out into our communities to listen, really listen, to the needs of the people who live alongside us. This might mean we change our systems or our language or our traditions to allow all people to participate.

Let us pause for a moment to reflect on whether one of these challenges is the one we face. What do we need to ‘give up’ or ‘let go of’?

[Pause for reflection. You could play some quiet / reflective music].

But if we can do this, we will find our lives and communities fuller and richer – we will find we are like trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in its season. We will find grace pouring into our lives, affirming us, empowering us, as we join in with God’s mission of Kingdom building in the world.

Prayers of intercession

Christ of welcome, who calls us to embrace you in our lives, we bring before you our prayers.

We pray for our world, for people living with injustice, for places of conflict, for all who do not have enough, for a safe place to live, For the continued global struggle with Covid-19

Servant Lord,

Welcome all to you

We pray for the places where we live, for people living in poverty, for those reliant on food banks and benefits, for anyone charged with making decisions that affect others,

Servant Lord,

Welcome all to you

We pray for those known to us, for all who are grieving in many different ways, for anyone struggling with their mental or physical health, for those for whom life is difficult at the moment,

Servant Lord,

Welcome all to you

We pray for the people, places and situations on our hearts:

Silence

Servant Lord,

Welcome all to you

Christ of welcome, may all who need to hear your invitation, fall into your open arms, and discover your love for themselves. In your name we pray. Amen.³

Hymn: 611 STF – Brother, sister, let me serve you

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M4YNHUWRcVw>

Blessing

Servant Lord, let us welcome you into our hearts,
And in doing so inspire us to serve others, and welcome all as children of God.

In your name. Amen.⁴

³ Prayers of intercession written by Melissa Quinn

⁴ Additional prayers by Melissa Quinn

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