

St. Mary's, Stoke D'Abernon

Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity



20th September 2020

A Message from our Rector

Today's reading from Matthew shows us just how countercultural the Bible can be. Jesus' parable about the labourers in the vineyard flies in the face of everything we understand and expect of equality and fair dealing in the workplace and thus, in society as a whole. Here we see the Son of God advocating unequal compensation -- that those who labour all day long should be paid the same amount as those who only work a short time.

It's no wonder that those hired early in the morning, who worked strenuously for hours under a hot sun, should feel aggrieved against their employer and those who just spent an hour picking grapes in the cool of the evening. 'It's not fair', they grumbled bitterly when they received the same pay as the latecomers. No doubt those who were listening to Jesus reacted the same way. Equal pay for equal work, is what they were probably thinking.

This is certainly society's view today, as evidenced by those words above which have become a popular slogan in the language of our modern democracy.

So what is Jesus trying to tell us? The key to understanding his message comes at the beginning of the gospel passage, when Jesus explains that the parable is about the Kingdom of heaven. Right at the outset, he is signalling to us that God's Kingdom is very different from human kingdoms.

We live in a world which seeks equality, where everyone is to be treated equally. An example is equal pay for equal work. At the heart of this moral standard lies individualism -- we see this in the parable, where the workers who worked all day grumbled about those who didn't. It is part of the human condition to put oneself first, to be instinctively selfish.

But the Kingdom of God is very different. It is about spiritual generosity and grace. God offers his Kingdom to everyone, regardless of who they are, through his grace. And His grace is a free gift of love, not a reward for good work or long labours. God's kingdom is open to all who seek Him, no matter when. It's entirely up to Him who He chooses to welcome, by his abundant grace. We can only be grateful that this abundance is open to all, including us sinners!

Best Wishes,

Mary-Beth

Bible References

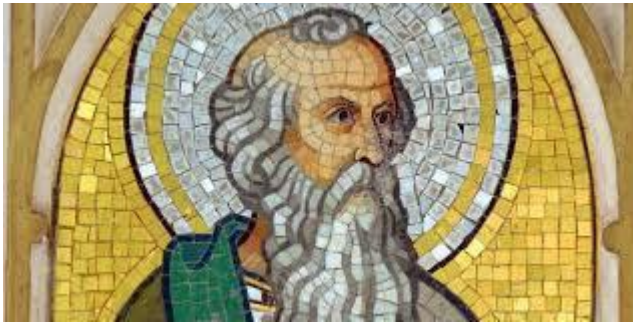
Year A	Psalm	First reading	Second reading
Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity September 20th, 2020	Psalm 105 : 1- 6, 37-end	Phil 1 : 21 - end	Matt 20 : 1-6
Monday, September 21st	Psalm 119 : 65- 72	2 Cor 4 : 1-6	Matt 9 : 9-13
Tuesday, September 22nd	Psalm 119 : 1-8	Prov 21 : 1-6, 10- 13	Luke 8 : 19-21
Wednesday, September 23rd	Psalm 119: 1-5- 112	Prov 30 : 5-9	Luke 9 : 1-6
Thursday, September 24th	Psalm 90 : 1-6	Eccl 1 : 2-11	Luke 9 : 7-9
Friday, September 25th	Psalm 144 : 1-4	Eccl 3 : 1-11	Luke 9 : 18-22
Saturday, September 26th	Psalm 90 : 1-2, 12 - end	Eccl 11 : 9 – 12 :8	Luke 9 : 43 - 45

Hyperlinks to Guildford Cathedral Services :

<https://www.guildford-cathedral.org/worship/services>

Collect

God, who in generous mercy sent the Holy Spirit
upon your Church in the burning fire of your love:
grant that your people may be fervent
in the fellowship of the gospel
that, always abiding in you,
they may be found steadfast in faith and active in
service;
through 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



Parish Notices

Sunday Services at St. Mary's

In order to assist us in observing social distancing guidelines and avoid the potential disappointment of being refused entry we ask all worshippers who wish to attend services to continue to notify the Parish office, either by telephone on 01932 866005, or by email at: admin@stmarysstokedabernon.org.uk

Please bring a face mask with you to wear in church

Monthly Concerts

We are delighted to resume our St. Mary's mid- week lunchtime concert programme with an organ recital in church given by Oliver MacFarlane at 1pm on Thursday 24th September

This is our first concert since lockdown. Regrettably we will not be able to provide pre recital refreshments.

There will be a Retiring Collection at the end of the performance

As with current church services, in order to preserve social distancing guidelines. audience numbers will be limited. Intending attendees must therefore pre register with our parish office admin@stmarysstokedabernon.org.uk

Possible future concerts (TBC)

Paul Ayres, organist, composer and arranger 22 October

Pupils of Yehudi Menuhin School 19 or 26 November

Hall Opening

The Church Hall is open again for regular bookings with effect from 1st September. Other hall bookings may be permitted subject to review on a case by case basis.

Our Terms and Conditions of letting have been adapted to reflect Social Distancing and other current Government Covid-19 health protection measures. These Terms & Conditions are available on the Website or upon application from the Parish Administrator. All applications for hall lettings should be submitted to the Parish Administrator in the usual way.

Email. admin@stmarysstokedabernon.org.uk Tel. 01932 866005

Parish Notices - continued

Chair Yoga

Chair yoga has resumed on Mondays from 10.30am in the hall. As it is deemed an exercise class (rather than a social event) it does not fall under the new legislation regarding numbers.

APCM

A reminder that the rescheduled date for the 2019 APCM is Sunday 18th October. With this week's change in Government instructions to further, significantly limit maximum numbers of people gathering in social settings, the APCM will now take place as a virtual 'Zoom' meeting only. Further details on timing and Zoom meeting joining instructions will be advised in due course and the Annual Report will be emailed to you in advance.