



**DURHAM  
CATHEDRAL**

THE SHRINE OF ST CUTHBERT

# Praying Together

*during the week beginning Sunday 20 September  
The Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity*

*During this time of great anxiety and uncertainty, we want to stay in touch with our regular worshippers and indeed with everyone who is associated with the Cathedral family. We are delighted that we have been able to reintroduce congregational worship here at the Cathedral and there is more information about that later on in this booklet. Durham Cathedral is also open for private prayer and quiet reflection.*

*If you'd like to come to the cathedral for worship and/or prayer, there are some important measures we'd like you to know about, to ensure the safety of members of the public and staff. You can find this information on our website: [www.durhamcathedral.co.uk](http://www.durhamcathedral.co.uk) We will continue to live stream services as well so that, if you can't re-join us yet, you will still be able to engage with us online.*

## **Gospel**

**Matthew 20. 1-16**

Jesus said, 'For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire labourers for his vineyard. After agreeing with the labourers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the market-place; and he said to them, "You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right." So they went. When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, "Why are you standing here idle all day?" They said to him, "Because no one has hired us." He said to them, "You also go into the vineyard." When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, "Call the labourers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first." When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, saying, "These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat." But he replied to one of them,

“Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?” So the last will be first, and the first will be last.’

## Thought for the Day

by the Reverend Canon Michael Everitt

Whenever I see a Driving Instructor driving their car themselves without their student I feel compassion towards them. Whilst we all aspire to drive safely and considerately, anyone who has their name and contact details emblazoned on their vehicle as one responsible enough to teach others, cannot be seen in any respect to be anything less than an exemplary driver. In a similar way I know how my judgement on a particular country’s armed forces was coloured by seeing serving soldiers on duty, leaning on walls in a street, with their one hand poised over the trigger and in their other, holding a lit cigarette.

St Paul to the Philippians extends this sense of expectation upon all who are called Christian. “Only live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel and are in no way intimidated by your opponents.” Philippian 1:27,28a

This is a difficult challenge, to discern in all dynamics of our life how to be true to that first phrase, “**Only live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ.**” It is a call not simply to a small group but to the whole community of faith. It is a reminder to us all of what the Spirit enables us to become and also the ramifications of this. For if we are to live out being the Body of Christ in the world, then we must remember that Christ was misunderstood and condemned. In our Gospel reading of the parable of the workers in the vineyard we see the revolutionary nature of the Kingdom of Heaven, which we pray for in the Lord’s prayer. It goes against my own default personality. I am the type of person who knowing that my flight is at 10:00am will think I need to be at the airport for 8:00am to ensure plenty of time, and then will actually aim for nearer to 6:30am, just in case there are delays on the road etc. I will then prowl around looking for the opening time of my gate, to get to it instantly and similarly position myself in the departure lounge to be able to respond to the call for seats. Yet others have to be announced over loudspeakers and arrive at the gate

and their seat with seconds to spare. We all take off together and arrive together, those who have taken hours like me, and those who are right at the end. It is true, and it is obvious.

In a similar way the kingdom of heaven is open to all who accept no matter at what time of the day. Those who arrive at the very end of the day receive grace upon grace and are rewarded with the promise that those first commissioned were promised. Just as there is no difference between neurotic timekeepers like me, or those who understanding of deadlines is a precision skill with the departure of an aeroplane or at a more crucial level the truth that a good parent does not love one child more than other. Those who were reached and responded early are treated as well as those who respond late. This is obvious when put in relational terms, however the cry of the labourers who have toiled throughout the day, is a natural human response, when instead of relational or grace we view life as simply transactional and commodified. This is where St Paul's challenge to only live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ really hits home.

Our relationship with Christ and who we become through him, changes everything. We cannot pretend to be one thing in one context and another elsewhere. The Christian person's life in all its spheres is called upon to reflect who Jesus is. Our behaviour must demonstrate who we have become, which is recipients of the immensity of God's grace, love, forgiveness and life. In our working life and in our personal life, in our political engagement and in our recreational activities there is this constant call, often against the clamour of other voices, to seek the Spirit of God and be shaped to show Christ. Our faith is not limited, for the kingdom of heaven is not constrained.

As with me on an aeroplane, we might forget how we all are to be treated, awaiting an agreed and common departure time. As with me on the road, looking at a driving instructor's car, we might forget that others will be looking to see if we keep to what we profess and claim to be about. Whilst others might seek to intimidate and say that faith and politics, faith and business, faith and the complexities of modern-day living should be distinct and separate. The use of the word "Only" rings out, it is in all things that we are to seek to live like Christ in our lives, not just in some. When we find that we are not, we need to seek amendment in our lives, to allow ourselves to be reshaped and redirected, to realise the immensity of God's love and invitation to all and then once again:

"Only to live our life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ."

# A Form of Intercession

In faith and hope we pray,  
Lord of mercy,  
**Lord, hear us.**

Almighty God,  
you bring your chosen people together  
in one communion,  
in the body of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.  
We rejoice in your light and your peace  
with your whole Church in heaven and on earth.

Lord of mercy,  
**Lord, hear us.**

Give to all who mourn a sure confidence  
in your loving care,  
that we may cast all our sorrow on you  
and know the consolation of your love.

Lord of mercy,  
**Lord, hear us.**

Give your faithful people pardon and peace,  
that we may be cleansed from all our sins  
and serve you with a quiet mind.

Lord of mercy,  
**Lord, hear us.**

Give us strength to meet the days ahead  
in the joyful expectation of eternal life  
with those you love.

Lord of mercy,  
**Lord, hear us.**

Give to us who are still in our pilgrimage,  
and who walk as yet by faith,  
your Holy Spirit to lead us in holiness and righteousness  
all our days.

Lord of mercy,  
**Lord, hear us.**

May all who have been made one with Christ  
in his death and in his resurrection  
die to sin and rise to newness of life.

Lord of mercy,  
**Lord, hear us.**

## Calendar of Holy Days

**Monday 21 September**      **Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist**

O Almighty God,  
whose blessed Son called Matthew the tax collector  
to be an apostle and evangelist:  
give us grace to forsake the selfish pursuit of gain and the possessive  
love of riches  
that we may follow in the way of your Son Jesus Christ,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.  
Amen.

**Friday 25 September**      *Lancelot Andrewes, bishop, spiritual writer, 1626*  
*Sergei of Radonezh, monastic reformer,*  
*teacher of the faith, 1392*

**Saturday 26 September**      *Wilson Carlile, founder of the Church Army, 1942*

# Hymn

Blessèd City, heavenly Salem,  
Vision dear of peace and love,  
Who, of living stones upbuilt,  
Art the joy of heaven above,  
And, with angel cohorts circled,  
As a bride to earth dost move!

From celestial realms descending,  
Bridal glory round her shed,  
To his presence, decked with jewels,  
By her Lord shall she be led:  
All her streets, and all her bulwarks,  
Of pure gold are fashionèd.

Bright with pearls her portals glitter,  
They are open evermore;  
And, by virtue of his merits,  
Thither faithful souls may soar,  
Who for Christ's dear name in this world  
Pain and tribulation bore.

Many a blow and biting sculpture,  
Fashioned well those stones elect,  
In their places now compacted  
By the heavenly Architect,  
Who therewith hath willed for ever  
That his palace should be decked.

Laud and honour to the Father,  
Laud and honour to the Son,  
Laud and honour to the Spirit,  
Ever three, and ever One:  
One in love, and One in splendour,  
While unending ages run. Amen.

*Latin c 7th century tr. J M Neale*

# Poem: The Revival by Henry Vaughan (1622-1695)

*Welsh metaphysical poet, Henry Vaughan, writes of the natural world and the seasons' change and sees them echoed in God's mercy towards us—mercy which far outstrips the mere revival of life after its wintry sleep.*

Unfold, unfold ! Take in his light,  
Who makes thy cares more short than night.  
The joys which with his day-star rise  
He deals to all but drowsy eyes ;  
And, what the men of this world miss  
Some drops and dews of future bliss.

Hark ! how his winds have chang'd their note !  
And with warm whispers call thee out ;  
The frosts are past, the storms are gone,  
And backward life at last comes on.  
The lofty groves in express joys  
Reply unto the turtle's voice ;  
And here in dust and dirt, O here  
The lilies of his love appear !

## A Prayer for use during the Coronavirus outbreak

Keep us, good Lord,  
under the shadow of your mercy  
in this time of uncertainty and distress.  
Sustain and support the anxious and fearful,  
and lift up all who are brought low;  
that we may rejoice in your comfort  
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love  
in Christ Jesus our Lord.  
Amen.

## A Prayer of the Church in Denmark

Lord,  
I thank You with all my heart  
that You have taught me  
what You want me to do.  
Help me, God,  
through Your Holy Spirit  
and for the sake of Jesus Christ  
to preserve Your word in a pure heart  
and so be strengthened in my faith  
to live a better, holy life  
and in Your word find comfort  
in life as in death.  
Amen.

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