

ST. JOHN THE DIVINE, RASTRICK

Welcome to Morning Praise

2nd August 2020

*Click on the underlined links to take you to safe content on the internet.
If you are able light a candle as you start the service and if others are in the house
encourage them to reading some of the service with you.*

Introduction

This is the day that the Lord has made.
Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

We have come together in the name of Christ
to offer our praise and thanksgiving,
to hear and receive God's holy word,
to pray for the needs of the world,
and to seek the forgiveness of our sins,
that by the power of the Holy Spirit
we may give ourselves to the service of God.



Prayer of Penitence

Jesus says, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand.' So, let us turn away from our sin and turn to Christ, confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

Together we pray:

**Lord God, we have sinned against you.
we have done evil in your sight. We are sorry and repent.
Have mercy on us according to your love.
Wash away our wrongdoing and cleanse us from our sin.
Renew a right spirit within us
and restore to us the joy of your salvation,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Hymn: [Just as I am](#)

The Word of God - [Click Here](#)

Reading: Romans 9:1-5 read by Roger Ellis
Gospel: Matthew 14: 13-21 read by Pam Dimbleby

Reflection prepared by Rev Jill Swallow

This morning Jesus needs some peace and quiet, so He heads for a deserted place. He doesn't really find what he's looking for, because the crowds are gathering and demanding more. What to do? Jesus' attitude is one of compassion, and it is this attitude, His attitude towards the crowd, which opens up such a wonderful opportunity.

Of course Jesus could have dazzled the crowd with all sorts of stories. After all, they wanted more, and He had the crowd in the palm of His hand. But no. Jesus can see that a much greater lesson can be learned here, and He's spotted it. All good teaching is a two way process.

Whether you are the teacher, or the one being taught, both sides need to be involved and engaged. Jesus sees the need of the crowd, but what can they offer? Five loaves and two fish.....not much, but something. Jesus takes, blesses, breaks, and gives.

Whether it is with loaves and fishes back then, or bread and wine today, this is the way He works in our lives too. Don't we just love the blessing and the giving, but sometimes the breaking of us can be unbearable. Among the church services I've seen recently on the internet, this phrase was included in the intercessions: "We pray for those who are ill, and also for those who, in this pandemic, have lost more than their health." We were reminded of the very many people who have lost savings, employment, and their future security. For those who have lost their good name and reputation among their colleagues, or within a community. Also for those people during lockdown behind closed doors, who have lost their social confidence. It's hard to be broken, whilst desperately clinging on, and trusting that we are being blessed and shared. It's the way of the cross.

The feeding of the five thousand shows us how Jesus can use a little, to bring about much in the lives of others. How often, when we hear of a problem or crisis, do we hear that little voice in our heads saying: "It is so sad but there's precious little I can do about it". That 'precious little' of yours and mine is in effect our loaf and fish, and we know what Jesus managed to do with that. He can make much out of a little. Never think that what you can offer in any situation is of no use. Take to heart the four words that Jesus says in this morning's Gospel. Four simple words "Give it to me"

This morning, Jesus' attitude towards the crowd is one of compassion. From that compassion He spots an opportunity. He shows us how a little can become much, and in so doing displays for all to see and taste, God's generosity. His generosity and that sense of wonder will live long in the minds of those same people returning home that night. Minds full of wonder. Not a bad evening's work.....and all from so little.

Compassion, opportunity, generosity and wonder. We Christians can each put some of this into practice this week. After all in the words of the supermarkets: "It's what we do" and, as Jesus shows us this morning, "Every little helps". Amen

Hymn: [The Lord's my Shepherd](#)

The Creed

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again.
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Prayers of intercession prepared by Margaret Ellis [Click Here](#)

A Prayer for Church Growth

**God of Mission
Who along brings growth to your church,
Send your Holy Spirit to give
Vision to our planning
Wisdom to our actions
And power to our witness.
Help our church to grow in numbers,
In spiritual commitment to you,
And in service to our local community,
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen**

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray
**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.**

**Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and for ever. Amen.**

The Collect for today

Lord God,
your Son left the riches of heaven
and became poor for our sake:
when we prosper save us from pride,
when we are needy save us from despair,
that we may trust in you alone;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Hymn: I, the Lord of sea and sky

Final Prayer

Creator God,
you made us all in your image:
may we discern you in all that we see,
and serve you in all that we do;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Our service ends with the Grace,
**The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
and the Love of God,
and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
be with us all evermore. Amen.**

The UK Blessing — Churches sing 'The Blessing' over the UK

