



**Daily Readings, reflections**  
**and prayers**  
**Mon 13 – Sun 19 July**

**Pattern for daily Morning Prayer**

O Lord, open our lips  
and our mouth shall proclaim your praise.  
Blessed are you, Lord God of creation . . .  
Blessed be God for ever!

The night has passed, and the day lies open  
before us; let us pray with one heart and  
mind . . . *[silence]*

As we rejoice in the gift of this new day, so may  
the light of your presence, O God, set our  
hearts on fire with love for you; now and for  
ever. Amen.

**Canticle** *[please see the daily listing]*

. . . Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to  
the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is  
now, and shall be for ever. Amen.

**Bible Readings and Reflection**  
*[please see the daily listing]*

**Prayers**

**The Collect for the week (Trinity 6)**

Almighty God, send down upon your Church  
the riches of your Spirit, and kindle in all who  
minister the gospel your countless gifts of  
grace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**The Lord's Prayer**

**The Conclusion**

The Lord bless us and preserve us from all evil,  
and keep us in eternal life.  
Let us bless the Lord.  
Thanks be to God.

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**Monday 13 July**

**Canticle:**

- 1 O come, let us sing out to the Lord;  
let us shout in triumph to the rock of our salvation.
- 2 Let us come before his face with thanksgiving,  
and cry out to him joyfully in psalms.
- 3 For the Lord is a great God,  
and a great king above all gods.
- 4 In his hand are the depths of the earth,  
and the peaks of the mountains are his also.
- 5 The sea is his and he made it;  
his hands moulded dry land.
- 6 Come, let us worship and bow down,  
and kneel before the Lord our maker.
- 7 For he is the Lord our God;  
we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.
- 8 If only you would hear his voice today:  
for he comes to judge the earth.
- 9 He shall judge the world with righteousness,  
and the peoples with his truth.

Glory . . . *(from Psalms 95, 96)*

**Bible Readings:**

Isaiah 1: 11-17; Matthew 10:34 - 11:1

*Reflection:*

Challenging readings today! Whoever said that  
religion is like a comfort blanket? Through Isaiah,  
God criticises those who just go through the  
motions (or even follow the Church's year –  
'your new moons and appointed festivals my  
soul hates'!). What God wants to see is not  
empty religion, but justice.

And when we pray at Evening Prayer for peace,  
that we 'may pass our time in rest and  
quietness', we are shocked to hear Jesus's words  
in Luke's gospel, 'Do not think that I have come  
to bring peace ... I have not come to bring peace  
but a sword.' We are called to take up the cross,  
and cannot expect life to be routine, or easy.  
How can we square this with the blessed and  
privileged lives which most of us lead?

The essential is, whatever our situation, to be  
open to God: in thankfulness for what we have,  
and in readiness to do for him and our neighbour  
what he calls us to do.

*Prayers:*

For situations of conflict, that there may be  
peace with justice. For our own communities,  
that all may be given respect. For schools: for  
students and teachers, and support workers.

## Tuesday 14 July

### **Canticle:**

- 1 My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,  
my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,
- 2 For he has looked with favour on his lowly servant.  
From this day all generations will call me blessed:
- 3 The Almighty has done great things for me  
and holy is his name.
- 4 He has mercy on those who fear him,  
in every generation.
- 5 He has shown the strength of his arm  
he has scattered the proud in their conceit.
- 6 He has cast down the mighty from their thrones  
and has lifted up the lowly.
- 7 He has filled the hungry with good things  
and the rich he has sent away empty.
- 8 He has come to the help of his servant, Israel,  
for he has remembered his promise of mercy,
- 9 The promise he made to our forebears,  
to Abraham and his children for ever.

Glory . . . *(from Luke 1)*

### **Bible Readings:**

Isaiah 40: 1-11; Matthew 11: 2-15

### *Reflection:*

John's frustration is understandable. After all, he was the forerunner, 'making the way straight' for Jesus's ministry. John had proclaimed that the kingdom of heaven had come near. Was he expecting a political Messiah who would rouse the people to action to shake off the yoke of foreign oppression?

Jesus refers John's disciples to the signs of healing and liberation he had shown: these had been the signs expected of the Messiah in the Old Testament and in Judaism. He wanted to show John, gently, that he was indeed the One who was to come. His messiahship was not what people maybe expected, and they should not be disappointed; his messiahship was one of healing and blessing.

Jesus's respect for his cousin John is apparent. He was indeed the forerunner, challenging the people and making them ready for the news that was truly good news.

### *Prayers:*

That a troubled world may hear the good news of God's love. For the Church's work of service.

## Wednesday 15 July

### **Canticle:**

- 1 Seek the Lord while he may be found,  
call upon him while he is near;
- 2 Let the wicked abandon their ways,  
and the unrighteous their thoughts;
- 3 Return to the Lord, who will have mercy;  
to our God, who will richly pardon.
- 4 'For my thoughts are not your thoughts,  
neither are your ways my ways', says the Lord.
- 5 'For as the heavens are higher than the earth,  
so are my ways higher than your ways  
and my thoughts than your thoughts.
- 6 'As the rain and the snow come down from above,  
and return not again but water the earth,
- 7 'Bringing forth life and giving growth,  
seed for sowing and bread to eat,
- 8 'So is my word that goes forth from my mouth;  
it will not return to me fruitless,
- 9 'But it will accomplish that which I purpose,  
and succeed in the task I gave it.'

Glory . . . *(from Isaiah 55)*

### **Bible Readings:**

Proverbs 8: 32-36; Matthew 11: 16-24

### *Reflection:*

Jesus says, *What is this generation like?* Like children in the playground who always want to do something other than what's suggested to them. Human nature is perverse! Whether we're playing weddings or funerals, someone always wants to do something different. *John the Baptist gave everything up and lived in the desert, Jesus says, and everyone said he was mad;* Jesus himself spent time with the sinners, and everyone called him a glutton and drunkard!

Human nature is perverse! Jesus must find us all a bit difficult! Perhaps (he was a human being, after all) he found human nature rather exasperating, and hence the Woes to Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum, three towns where people had seen Jesus's works of power but had not been moved to faith.

*Be warned!*, Jesus is saying. *Look around you and see for yourselves what God is doing.*

### *Prayers:*

That we may recognise God at work around us, and see the part God wants us to play in this. For health workers and carers.

## Thursday 16 July

### **Canticle:**

- 1 Come, let us go up to the mountain of God,  
to the house of the God of Jacob;
  - 2 That God may teach us his ways,  
and that we may walk in his paths.
  - 3 For the law shall go out from Zion,  
and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.
  - 4 God shall mediate between the nations,  
and shall judge for many peoples.
  - 5 They shall beat their swords into ploughshares,  
and their spears into pruning hooks.
  - 6 Nation shall not lift up sword against nation,  
neither shall they learn war any more.
  - 7 O people of Jacob, come:  
let us walk in the light of the Lord.
- Glory . . . *(from Isaiah 2)*

### **Bible Readings:**

Psalm 92: 1-11; Matthew 11: 25-end

#### *Reflection:*

Psalm 92 was used in the Jewish Temple at the time of the morning sacrifice. Isn't it appropriate for our desire to come to public worship again – with the music of the lute and harp – to praise God together!

We know what a yoke is: it's a harness used to link two beasts of burden so that they can pull a load together. But if you've been to an agricultural museum, you might have seen a human yoke, a yoke designed for one person to use, and if you have seen one you'll know it's carved and shaped in such a way that it fits beautifully around the shoulders and comfortably around the back of the neck. You could carry two buckets full of life-giving water very easily for a very long distance without any problem. And you've still got your hands free! Life is always a challenge. Christianity doesn't offer ease, a holiday from the burdens of human life. But the yoke that Jesus offers is an easy one – it's designed for us, individually and personally; it doesn't drag us down, it doesn't chafe or bind, or cause us to collapse in exhaustion. It's well fitted for us.

#### *Prayers:*

For people who are struggling: worried about health, about jobs or businesses; for those who are lonely.

## Friday 17 July

### **Canticle:**

- 1 Christ Jesus was in the form of God,  
but he did not cling to equality with God.
  - 2 He emptied himself, taking the form of a servant,  
and was born in our human likeness.
  - 3 Being found in human form, he humbled himself,  
and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross;
  - 4 Therefore, God has highly exalted him, and  
bestowed on him the name above every name,
  - 5 That at the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow,  
in heaven and on earth and under the earth.
  - 6 And every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father.
- Glory . . . *(from Philippians 2)*

### **Bible Readings:**

Psalm 32; Matthew 12: 1-13

#### *Reflection:*

The psalm celebrates the liberation we experience when we acknowledge our failings, and receive God's forgiveness. Pride is not a comfortable garment!

The discussion about sabbath observance reminds us that outward observance of rules and regulations are not enough.

Rules and regulations are always open to interpretation. Don't we know this from our experience of lockdown! It seemed impossible to be clear about precisely what we were and what we were not allowed to do; and of course this continues. Ultimately, it is up to each one of us to understand the reason for the rules, and to take responsibility for minimising the risk of receiving or spreading infection. Sometimes we may need to go even further than is demanded by mere compliance with rules.

But still, our human nature needs structure to guide our behaviour. A game of cricket would be no fun if there were no rules! As St Paul said, the Law was necessary as a temporary measure to ensure that people complied with God's will. Jesus showed that the only true Law was the law of love.

#### *Prayers:*

For police, and the courts; for youth and community workers. For the emergency services.

## Saturday 18 July

### **Canticle:**

- 1 You are worthy, our Lord and God,  
to receive glory and honour and power.
- 2 For you have created all things,  
and by your will they have their being.
- 3 You are worthy, O Lamb, for you were slain,  
and by your blood you ransomed for God  
saints from every tribe and language and nation.
- 4 You have made them to be a kingdom and priests  
serving our God, and they will reign with you on  
earth.  
To the One who sits on the throne and to the Lamb  
be blessing and honour and glory and might,  
for ever and ever. Amen.  
Glory . . . *(from Revelation 4)*

### **Bible Readings:**

Micah 2: 1-5; Matthew 12:14-21

### *Reflection:*

‘The Pharisees went out and conspired against Jesus, how to destroy him.’ Chilling words; even more so when the only reason for this hostility to Jesus was that they found his integrity and powerful message of love a real threat to their power. Yet the crowds, the simple people, followed him.

So many good people are destroyed because they pose a threat to the corrupt and deceitful in this world. It is a fact of life that some people are evil and cruel; this has always been true, and the prophet Micah noted that these people perform their evil deeds ‘because they can’.

Power of whatever sort is dangerous, and we need to be aware even of the limited power that we have over the lives of other people.

To suffer at the hands of others is the experience of oppressed people everywhere, and Jesus identifies with this. St Matthew sees Jesus’s experience as the fulfilment of the prophecy of Isaiah about the Servant of God, the one on whom the Spirit of God is bestowed, making him strong yet meek in carrying out his mission to the very end – a mission of love and truth.

### *Prayers:*

For community leaders, politicians, decision makers. For our local communities; our church both local and national; the nations of the world. For our friends, our families, and for ourselves.

## Sunday 19 July

### **Canticle:**

- 1 Great and wonderful are your deeds,  
Lord God the almighty.
- 2 Just and true are your ways,  
O Ruler of the nations.
- 3 Who shall not revere you and praise your name, O  
Lord? for you alone are holy.
- 4 All nations shall come and worship in your presence  
for your just dealings have been revealed.  
To the One who sits on the throne and to the Lamb  
be blessing and honour and glory and might,  
for ever and ever. Amen.  
Glory . . . *(from Revelation 15. 3-4)*

### **Bible Readings:**

Romans 8: 12-25; Matthew 13: 24-30, 36-43

### *Reflection:*

St Paul shows that it was the Spirit of God that raised Jesus from the dead, and that lives in us: so we are honour bound to live and to be led by the Spirit. What’s more, this Spirit living in each one of us, is the one who prays through us! This is a most intimate statement of the union which Christians enjoy with God – as intimate as that of Jesus himself with his Father.

Three things follow from this. First, human suffering is one with the suffering of the whole of creation; second, our prayers are the groaning of the very Spirit of God; and third, the hope that is set before us depends on solid patience.

In a world which see things very differently we need to hold on to this conviction. ‘For the Lord’s sake – be different!’ We need God’s values.

Using very different imagery, the Parable of the Sower shows that the fruits of the kingdom must inevitably grow alongside the fruits of opposition to its claims. God will show what is of lasting value.

### *Prayers:*

For the Church and the world.  
For the Church engaged with the world.  
For the world which God loves.

### **The Collect for today (Trinity 6)**

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.