

# Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2020

## Call to worship

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Let us pray:

Holy are you, Father our maker;

Holy are you, Christ our saviour;

Holy are you, Spirit our sanctifier.

Surrounded by the communion of saints, you live in community, three yet one, diverse yet united. Be a model for us of how the Church must live; be a model for us of how our communities must be healthy; be a model for us of how, in ourselves, we must be whole and holy.

God our Father, creator and protector; made in your image, we adore you.

Christ our brother, friend, saviour; converted by your love, we adore you.

Holy Spirit, our inspirer, comforter, counsellor and defender; blessed by your presence, we adore you.

God, three in one, whose nature we acknowledge as mystery, we praise you for every sign of your care and for every way in which you help, heal and uphold us.

Holy, holy, holy is God, our sovereign Lord, who was, and is, and is to come!

Before your mystery, o God, we fall silent, and let the child deep within us be content in the knowledge that we are known, wanted and loved by the One true God. Amen

## Confession

Merciful God, you made us in your image, with a mind to know you, a heart to love you and a will to serve you. But our knowledge is imperfect, our love is inconstant and our obedience is incomplete. Day by day we fail to grow in your likeness; yet you are slow to be angry with your children. For the sake of Jesus Christ, your Son, our Saviour, do not hold our sins against us, but in your tender love, forgive us.

(Silence)

### **Assurance of Pardon**

The almighty and merciful Lord grant you pardon and remission of all your sins.

God of love, your Son gave us a new commandment, that we should love one another, even as you love us, the unworthy and the wandering. Give us a mind to forget the wrongs we suffered and a heart to love one another; through the same Jesus Christ, your Son, our Saviour.

Amen

### **The Lord's prayer**

At the Saviour's command and formed by His divine teaching we pray together:

**Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen**

### **New Testament Reading:**

#### **The Gospel of Matthew 28:16-20**

16 Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. 17 When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. 18 And Jesus came and said to them: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of age".

## Reflection

In order to conclude his gospel, Matthew records the last encounter of the disciples with the risen and living Lord. Before ascending to the Father, Jesus leaves them with one last command. Instead of a conclusion, it seems more like a new beginning. This is the new beginning that you and me must make when we open our heart to believe that Jesus Christ is God the Son. The gospel is finished but the new life of the disciple is only starting now, with our faith in the living Lord Jesus Christ who died for us and yet, He is alive for ever. We are his disciples, here and now. We must take to heart what Jesus is saying in these final words and bring it to the world.

There are three things that Jesus says to us here.

The first one is that Jesus is really the Messiah, the Son of God. Recalling here the prophecy of Daniel chapter seven, Jesus announces for one last time that He is the revelation of the Father on earth. He is the Son of Man who ascends to heaven and is received by the Father, and is given all authority and power (Daniel 7:13-14).

Secondly, Jesus gives us a divine command. We are to go to the whole world and make disciples of all nations, baptising people in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Today is Trinity Sunday and we can see that the doctrine of the Trinity comes directly from the Lord himself.

1. There is only one God.
2. The Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit is each God.
3. The Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit are not the same.

A wise and well-known Christian said: "We are now touching a realm in which any falsely-directed attempt to gain too precise a knowledge is bound to end in disastrous foolishness". While Luther stated that if you can fully understand God with your limited human understanding, then God would not be God.

Jesus expects us to believe in the Triune God, therefore, let us leave the Trinity to our faith alone and continue on what Jesus wants from us here and now. Here is the missionary aspect of the gospel. Jesus tells us to go and make disciples of all nations. But this does not mean to go out there and win an argument with those who do not believe. This does not mean to try and win converts at all costs. The first and most important step to take is for us to be true disciples of Christ. A disciple is one who

listens to Jesus learning from Him: How to live; How to pray; How to do the will of the Father.

This is what we really need to practice in our churches today. How can we go and teach others to do something that we don't fully understand or don't really practice ourselves?

Would you teach your son or daughter how to fly a plane if you yourself don't know how to fly? You would crash to the ground with fatal consequences.

In the churches today we must recommit ourselves to practice what we preach. Not just the clergy but all of those who claim to be disciples of Jesus. Being disciples of the Lord means to start a life of learning that never ends. A constant practice of what we believe, practicing in word and deed for all to see that we are coherent with our faith. The gospel is meant to give shape and direction to our entire life so that we can apply Jesus' teaching to all areas like family matters, relationships, employment, education, government, economics and all areas that affect human lives.

There was a priest that I knew when I was younger, that every time he heard of crimes on the news, he used to say that there is not enough knowledge of God in the world and we need to teach more.

As we practice our discipleship, others will be looking at your life and considering why you live the way you do. As you live in Christ, He lives in you and you become monuments of His salvation, monuments of His resurrection, temples of His love and living proof of His grace. Through you, my dear disciples, people will learn and know that Jesus is alive today. Those who despair can find hope, those who suffer can find comfort, those who live in darkness can find the light of Christ in you.

The third and final thing that Jesus says is that He promised us to be with us until the end of time when He will return to judge the world. We must draw comfort and strength from the fact that He is with us. His Spirit is guiding us, changing us, making sure that we can hear His voice. The Lord is here with us now, do not be afraid. This is our reason for joy, our relationship with Him. This is the foundation of our mission, to bring God's love in the world. The church service starts in the middle of the streets, in the shops, in the offices, public events, and whenever a life meets another. You and I are called to that service, the mission of God. Amen

**Hymn:** [Holy, Holy, Holy](#) (Click on the words underlined to access this online version of the hymn)

### **Prayers of Intercession**

Let us pray:

Holy, holy, holy – let angels cry, who see and know you face to face.

Blessed are you, Maker of all from nothing;

Blessed are you, Saviour of all from sin;

Blessed are you, Spirit of all and in all, giver of life.

Blessed are you, God alone, yet God in community.

Bless, o God, your Church on earth with the harmony and diversity of heaven, that we may be one, as you are one.

Amen

### **Benediction:**

The blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be with you always. Amen

Rev. Bruno Boldrini