

Sunday 11 July 2021

The Sixth Sunday after Trinity



Sermon © Lucie Reilly.

Prayers of intercession © Thomas Reilly.

Liturgy © 2000 The Archbishops' Council.

Bible readings © the publishers of the NRSV translation.

- The liturgy assumes the service is Eucharistic. The prayers of consecration are included at the end.
- The hymns are YouTube links. To hear the hymns please hover the mouse over each link, press Ctrl and then return.
- To see service transcripts from previous weeks, please visit the page, <http://www.medlockhead.co.uk/resources/index.htm>

Introduction and welcome

HYMN 1 10,000 reasons

(please click on this link to hear the hymn)

The Welcome

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

All Amen.

The Lord be with you

All And also with you.

The Preparation

**All Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Our Lord Jesus Christ said:

The first commandment is this:

‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is the only Lord.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,
with all your soul, with all your mind,
and with all your strength.’

And the second is this: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’

There is no other commandment greater than these.

On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

All Amen. Lord, have mercy.

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son Jesus Christ to save us from our sins, to be our advocate in heaven, and to bring us to eternal life.

Therefore, let us confess our sins in penitence and faith,
firmly resolved to keep God’s commandments
and to live in love and peace with all.

All Almighty God, our heavenly Father,
we have sinned against you
and against our neighbour
in thought and word and deed,
through negligence, through weakness,
through our own deliberate fault.
We are truly sorry
and repent of all our sins.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
who died for us,
forgive us all that is past
and grant that we may serve you in newness of life
to the glory of your name.
Amen.

Almighty God,
who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy upon you,
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,
and keep you in life eternal;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

The Gloria

This Gloria is sung to the tune of 'Cwm Rhondda'. Click [here](#) for the tune.

All Glory be to God in Heaven,
Songs of joy and peace we bring,
Thankful hearts and voices raising,
To creation's Lord we sing.
Lord we thank you, Lord we praise you,
Glory be to God our King:
Glory be to God our King.

Lamb of God, who on our shoulders,
Bore the load of this world's sin;
Only Son of God the Father,
You have brought us peace within.
Lord, have mercy, Christ have mercy,

**Now your glorious reign begin:
Now your glorious reign begin.**

**You O Son of God are Holy,
You we praise with one accord.
None in heav'n or earth is like you,
Only you are Christ the Lord.
With the Father and the Spirit,
Ever worshipped and adored:
Ever worshipped and adored.**

The Collect for the Sixth Sunday after Trinity

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.

All Amen.

First reading

A reading from the Second Book of Samuel

David again gathered all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand. David and all the people with him set out and went from Baale-judah, to bring up from there the ark of God, which is called by the name of the Lord of hosts who is enthroned on the cherubim. They carried the ark of God on a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill. Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, were driving the new cart with the ark of God; and Ahio went in front of the ark. David and all the house of Israel were dancing before the Lord with all their might, with songs and lyres and harps and tambourines and castanets and cymbals.

When they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah reached out his hand to the ark of God and took hold of it, for the oxen shook it. The anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah; and God struck him there because he reached out his hand to the ark; and he died there beside the ark of God. David was angry because the Lord had burst forth with an outburst upon Uzzah; so that place is called Perez-uzzah, to this day. David was afraid of the Lord that day; he said, 'How can the ark of the Lord come into my care?' So David was unwilling to take the ark of the Lord into his care in the city of David; instead David took it to the house of Obed-edom the

Gittite. The ark of the Lord remained in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite three months; and the Lord blessed Obed-edom and all his household. *2 Samuel 6:1-19*

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

Second reading

A reading from St Paul's Letter to the Ephesians

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, To the saints who are in Ephesus and are faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory. *Ephesians 1:1-14*

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

HYMN 2 Still

[\(click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)

Gospel reading

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark

All Glory to you O Lord.

[King Herod heard of Jesus]; his name had become known. Some were saying, 'John the baptiser has been raised from the dead; and for this reason these powers are

at work in him.' But others said, 'It is Elijah.' And others said, 'It is a prophet, like one of the prophets of old.' when Herod heard of it, he said, 'John, whom I beheaded, has been raised.'

For Herod himself had sent men who arrested John, bound him, and put him in prison on account of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, because Herod had married her. For John had been telling Herod, 'It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife.' And Herodias had a grudge against him, and wanted to kill him. But she could not, for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he protected him. When he heard him, he was greatly perplexed; and yet he liked to listen to him. But an opportunity came when Herod on his birthday gave a banquet for his courtiers and officers and for the leaders of Galilee. When his daughter Herodias came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his guests; and the king said to the girl, 'Ask me for whatever you wish, and I will give it.' And he solemnly swore to her, 'Whatever you ask me, I will give you, even half of my kingdom.' She went out and said to her mother, 'What should I ask for?' She replied, 'The head of John the baptiser.' Immediately she rushed back to the king and requested, 'I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter.' The king was deeply grieved; yet out of regard for his oaths and for the guests, he did not want to refuse her. Immediately the king sent a soldier of the guard with orders to bring John's head. He went and beheaded him in the prison, brought his head on a platter, and gave it to the girl. Then the girl gave it to her mother. his disciples heard about it, they came and took his body, and laid it in a tomb. *Mark 6:14-29*

This is the Gospel of the Lord

All Praise to you O Christ.

Sermon

Today's Gospel reading comes immediately after last week's reading in which the twelve disciples went out with a message of repentance. That reading ends with, 'And they cast out many demons and anointed with oil many who were sick and healed them.' The disciples' activities naturally drew much attention, which is why today's reading begins with King Herod hearing about it.

Everyone, then, was speculating about Jesus: some thought he was John the Baptist brought back from the dead; others said he was Elijah, and still others said he was some other sort of prophet. The Bible doesn't tell us whether Herod had genuine pangs of conscience or whether he was merely superstitious, or feared for his own power—after all, wasn't the most famous story about Elijah the one where he confronted wicked King Ahaz and caused his downfall? So, it's understandable that he was afraid when he heard about Jesus and the rumours that he was John

the Baptist come back from the dead. And in part he was afraid because he had himself caused John the Baptist to be martyred, and the history of Israel records many instances of bad things happening to people who killed God's prophets.

John's death came because one of the jobs of a prophet is to speak the truth to power. This sometimes meant saying unpleasant things to very powerful people. In the case of Herod, this meant condemning his marriage. The Herod in today's Gospel was called Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great, who was also powerful, dreadful, and was the jealous king who sought to kill Jesus when he was just a baby. Herod Antipas' wife Herodias was the granddaughter of Herod the Great. She had been previously married to Herod's half-brother Philip, and if you're connecting the dots on the old family tree, you'll see that both of Herodias's husbands were also her uncles. It was ... an interesting family.

It gets better, though: Herod had somehow acquired an illegal divorce from his first wife to marry his niece Herodias, and she likewise had also illegally divorced Uncle Philip in order to marry Uncle Herod. It was a mess, and John the Baptist actively condemned the whole thing.

The text gives the impression that Herod himself would have left John alone if it were not for his wife. The text says, 'Herod ... sent and seized John and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife. Herodias had a grudge against him and wanted to put him to death.' Herod, on the other hand, seemed to have a different attitude toward John. We're told that he feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he kept him safe (albeit imprisoned) in spite of Herodias' wishes. Herod was even wanting to hear John's preaching, Mark says, though it perplexed him.

Herodias finally got her chance to execute John at Herod's birthday party. Her daughter provided entertainment for the party with a dance. Most commentators suggest this dance was fairly provocative, which may explain how and why it pleased Herod and the guests. Again, it was an ... interesting family. At any rate, her dance pleased Herod so much that he made an extremely foolish promise. "The king said to the girl, "Ask me for whatever you wish, and I will give it to you." And he vowed to her, "Whatever you ask me, I will give you, up to half of my kingdom". And she went out and said to her mother, "For what should I ask?" And she said, "The head of John the Baptist." And she came in immediately with haste to the king and asked, saying, "I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter". Herodias took advantage of Herod's foolishness and got her wish. And that was the end of John the Baptist.

The story of John the Baptist speaks powerfully to us today. Unlike Herod and Herodias, we should try to live decent, 'right' lives: we should acknowledge our

wrong-doing when we're faced with it, and not seek to escape endlessly the consequences of our actions.

And unlike Herod, we shouldn't stand by passively while people around us act maliciously. We shouldn't allow malice to flourish while we watch. And we should not ignore the consequences of our indifference.

The messages we can take from this are that God does not guarantee us a life free of suffering. Being faithful to God does not mean that God will grant us long life and good health and abundant wealth. Sometimes suffering just occurs—as we heard from last week's Scripture reading from the First Letter to the Corinthians in which St Paul said he lived with a metaphoric thorn in his side for most of his life: he prayed to God for healing—doubtless praying awfully hard; and yet his story of faith carried on and God walked alongside him.

Sometimes suffering just occurs. Sometimes suffering is a consequence of being faithful—when our faith calls us to speak truth to power, and push against malice or evil, and bear the consequences that almost surely will come.

God does not promise us a life of ease and enjoyment if only we would be faithful enough, if only we'd pray hard enough. God has a vision, for us and for the whole of creation, in which God's love is enough for all. God calls us to that vision and calls us to take our place working alongside Him to make it visible, just a tiny glimmer at a time. And that, friends, is a vision worth struggling for. It is a vision worth praying for—the end, not only to our own personal sufferings, but an end to hunger; an end to war; an end to violence; an end to poverty; an end to injustice—and liberty for all, in the kingdom of God.

We face sufferings in our lives, and God is with us in the midst of them, encouraging us and supporting us, and being present to us in the hearts of those around us. And even in this situation, God holds fast to that vision and encourages us to believe, and press on.

Whatever we face this day, may God strengthen us, and bear us up, and remind us of the dream God has for us, and for all. **Amen.**

The Creed

Do you believe and trust in God the Father,
the source of all being and life,
the one for whom we exist?

All We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Son,
who took our human nature,

died for us and rose again?

All We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit,
who gives life to the people of God
and makes Christ known in the world?

All We believe and trust in him.

This is the faith of the Church.

All This is our faith.

**We believe and trust in one God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Amen.**

Prayers of intercession

Heavenly Father: we pray for the places in the world where there is more hatred than love, where there is more conflict than peace, where there is more suffering than comfort. Thank you for the people who give their lives to help make your world a better place.

Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Father of goodness and love hear our prayers for the sick, the hurting, the lost and for all who are in need. Send your comfort, your peace and your calming presence to those who are without hope. Protect the defenceless and hold them close to your heart.

Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Lord God,

Your church is a place of teaching, worship, friendship, and care. But we don't always understand the arguments that can divide us. Bind your people together, bind your church together, and make us one as you are one.

Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Merciful Lord, your love reaches beyond the grave. At the end of our days on earth be with us and with those we love. May those who have gone before us rest in your eternal peace. We remember those who have died, and we pray for all whose life is saddened by the death of a loved one—be with them in their loneliness.

Merciful Father,

All accept these prayers
for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.

The peace

Peace to you from God our heavenly Father.
Peace from his Son Jesus Christ who is our peace.
Peace from the Holy Spirit, the Life-giver
The peace of the Lord be always with you,
All And also with you.

HYMN 3 [Pass me not, O gentle saviour](#) (click on this link to hear the hymn)
or [Joyful, joyful](#) (click on this link to hear the hymn)

The liturgy of the Communion Service appears below

The Dismissal

The peace of God which passes all understanding,
keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God,
and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord;
and the blessing
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.
and the blessing of God the Almighty:
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
be with you now and remain with you always.
All Amen.

HYMN 4 [All creation worships](#) (please click on this link to hear the hymn)

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
All In the name of Christ. Amen.

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

Eucharistic Prayer (prayer E)

The Lord be with you

All and also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

All We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All It is right to give thanks and praise.

Father, you made the world and love your creation.
You gave your Son Jesus Christ to be our Saviour.
His dying and rising have set us free from sin and death.
And so we gladly thank you,
with saints and angels praising you, and saying,

**All Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

We praise and bless you, loving Father,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord;
and as we obey his command,
send your Holy Spirit,
that broken bread and wine outpoured
may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son.

On the night before he died he had supper with his friends
and, taking bread, he praised you.
He broke the bread, gave it to them and said:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

When supper was ended he took the cup of wine.
Again he praised you, gave it to them and said:
Drink this, all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant,
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did,
in him we plead with confidence his sacrifice made once for all upon the cross.

Bringing before you the bread of life and cup of salvation,
we proclaim his death and resurrection
until he comes in glory.

Great is the mystery of faith:

All Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

Lord of all life,
help us to work together for that day
when your kingdom comes
and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth.

Look with favour on your people,
gather us in your loving arms
and bring us with all the saints
to feast at your table in heaven.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father,
for ever and ever.

All Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**All 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.**

Breaking of the Bread

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

**All Though we are many, we are one body,
because we all share in one bread.**

**All Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
grant us peace.**

Draw near with faith.

Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ
which he gave for you,
and his blood which he shed for you.

Eat and drink in remembrance that he died for you,
and feed on him in your hearts
by faith with thanksgiving.

All We do not presume
to come to this your table, merciful Lord,
trusting in our own righteousness,
but in your manifold and great mercies.
We are not worthy
so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table.
But you are the same Lord
whose nature is always to have mercy.
Grant us therefore, gracious Lord,
so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ
and to drink his blood,
that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body
and our souls washed through his most precious blood,
and that we may evermore dwell in him,
and he in us.
Amen.

Communion is distributed.

Prayer after Communion

God of our pilgrimage,
you have led us to the living water:
refresh and sustain us
as we go forward on our journey,
in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen

All Almighty God,
we thank you for feeding us
with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.
Through him we offer you our souls and bodies
to be a living sacrifice.
Send us out in the power of your Spirit
to live and work
to your praise and glory.
Amen.