

The 6th Sunday after Trinity

Sunday 19th July 2020



The Collect for 6th Sunday after Trinity

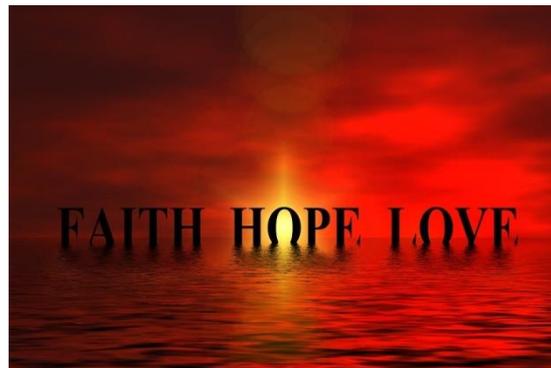
Merciful God,
you have prepared for those who love you
such good things as pass our understanding:
pour into our hearts such love toward you
that we, loving you in all things and above all things,
may obtain your promises,
which exceed all that we can desire;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Post Communion prayer

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.

Romans 8:12-25

So then, brothers and sisters, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh— for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, “Abba! Father!” it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him. I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labour pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.



The Gospel Reading: Matthew 13:24-30; 36-43

²⁴ He put before them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field; ²⁵but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. ²⁶So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. ²⁷And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, “Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?” ²⁸He answered, “An enemy has done this.” The slaves said to him, “Then do you want us to go and gather them?” ²⁹But he replied, “No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. ³⁰Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.” ’

36 Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, 'Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.' 37He answered, 'The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; 38the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, 39and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. 40Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. 41The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, 42and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. 43Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!



Reflection from the Rector:

So many have had to spend more time at home in these weeks and so as someone remarked to me recently many in the area could enter the best kept garden competition and win awards whether for their lawn with the best tram lines or the neatest edges or for the most weed free borders- for the most wonderful display of roses or whatever it is that you specialise in. Other vegetable gardens are their delight and just the other day it was a treat to be introduced to the household hens so to speak!

Growing things is at the centre of this morning's Gospel Reading. The Wheat and The Tares is one of the most practical parables Jesus ever told and a piece of good advice for us all. This finds echoes for me in the ancient service of Compline and the opening section, *Brethren be sober be vigilant because your adversary the devil as a roaring lion walketh about seeking whom he may devour whom resist steadfast in the faith.*

It's about being aware that there is a hostile force in the world that is out to destroy the good seed. There are good and bad influences on our lives. Recognising the destroyer, the bad influence, is not always very easy but we must be on our guard because the devil operates in very clever ways and we may not always realise, and secondly because others are watching us wanting to see evidence of Christlikeness

but also notice when we slip up and fall short of the glory of God and His plan for us. Good and evil exist side by side as the parable illustrates but it is when the harvest comes that the good seed will win through. We are working toward the harvest and must do all we can to nourish growth. It encourages us to think deeply and by that I mean to take our calling seriously in that we need to keep up to date in our relationship with our Lord through prayer and study in quiet time and reflection and so in our daily walk with Jesus feel we are growing closer to him however difficult that may seem at times. I find that having a bible text helps and you will all have your own favourite ones- one of mine, as I said last week, from Psalm 46 is “God is our strength and refuge” and so the words towards the end are amongst my favourites in all of the 150 psalms “ Be still and know that I am God”. It’s all we need at times and especially when words seem inadequate. The Julian Group has this at the heart of its meetings and it’s wonderful to be together and not speak but unite in prayer. The Wednesday reflections are also about growth in our spiritual lives. The good seed continues then to flourish alongside the bad and in the end it is easily distinguishable from the bad seed that has been sown by the devil and the two can be separated. It is God alone who does the judging which is another part of the teaching of this parable. It is very hard to be able to see those who are of Christ and those who are not and we must not judge. Folk can often get labelled without others knowing the facts. It also teaches us not to be hasty in judgments. If the reapers had their way there would have been an attempt to remove the bad growth to start with and in so doing we are told the good seed may have been taken out as well. No, let folk have a chance it’s saying, no one should be not allowed chance to grow. It is at the end of all things that the judgement day will come . We who are sown and growing in Christ have a responsibility to help those who are not of Christ by giving them a chance to come to Him. We call it Mission and Outreach and new ways are opening up in these days which are very exciting and we are grasping those with both hands and using them for the extension of The Kingdom.

There is a caution here in this parable to take heed over ourselves lest we fall, there is a warning not to judge, and there is a call to mission, and there is also a great sense of joy as well in that in a life that is trying to grow closer to our Lord the right kind of growth takes place and there is joy and fulfilment in growth and the ultimate happiness in what The Late Margaret Rhodes, a cousin of the Queen, referred to at the end of her autobiography as The Best is yet to be! To which I add “ Alleluia”. Amen.

***With greetings to you all from
The Rector and Revd Helen***

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