**Morning Praise @ Home 3rd July 2022**

**Opening prayer**

Blessed are you, God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, you have blessed us with every spiritual blessing; enable us by your power to be true to our calling and live holy and blameless lives before you all our days, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. **Amen**

**Confession** Let us admit to God the sin which always confronts us.

**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 us to the joy of your salvation,** **through**

**Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen** cf Psalm 51

**Absolution** May the Father of all mercies cleanse us from our sins, and restore us in his image

to the praise and glory of his name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

### Bible Readings Psalm 30 Luke 10: 1 – 11, 16 – 20

**Reflection from Philip**

**The Fears holding us back…**

As a parent, I remember many occasions when I would say to my sons ‘Don’t be afraid!’

I’ll never forget my eldest when he was about 6 years old, pleading to be allowed to go on a small steam train, then as soon as it set off, he was terrified and screamed to get off. ‘Don’t be afraid’, I said, but it was no good! That train was moving and he continued screaming.

Or for myself, I remember doing an army cadet high rope course as a teenager. As I was standing high up on a small platform, looking down at a flimsy looking net beneath, supposedly to catch me if I fell from the rope I was being urged to crawl along, the army instructor shouted out a me ‘Don’t be afraid!’ And then a few other choice words…!

As we get older, it may be our sons who are giving the same message to their parents; when my father moved into a nursing home, I remember saying to him on numerous occasions ‘Don’t be afraid – it’ll be fine’.

No matter how often we hear that phrase, we still carry our own fears along with us throughout our lives. But sometimes the message is really important and we need to keep telling it in the hope it takes root.

When Jesus crossed the lake with his disciples and they encountered a storm, He said ‘Don’t be afraid. You don’t have to deal with this storm anymore.’

When Jesus spoke with the parents of a deathly sick child, he said ‘Don’t be afraid. Only believe and she will be well. ’

Jesus sat with his disciples and reassured them about how much the Lord cared for them ‘Don’t be afraid – your Father knows even how many hairs are on your head.’

Jesus keeps repeating this message because He knows how important it is and how we struggle with our fears.

In our passage from Luke, we read of Jesus saying ‘Do not be afraid’ to 70 of his followers as he sends them out to prepare for places for him to visit.

These are not the ‘big name’ disciples. We don’t know their names. They were the ‘ordinary’ followers, not big preachers or natural evangelists. They were folk like us.

Sent out in pairs to visit unfamiliar places, with a strong message to proclaim, they were, of course, nervous.

So Jesus gives them some comfort – a guide on how to deal with these fears.

Jesus identifies four fears he wants to help us with:

Fear of ***people***, Fear of ***failure***, Fear of ***things***, Fear of ***needs.***

Jesus wants us to go out and prepare people to know him.

He tells them - Don’t loiter and make small talk with everyone you meet on the way. When you enter a home, greet the family ‘Peace!’ If you are welcomed, it’s a good place to stay. If not….then take it back and just leave. Move on. Even ask if they had any idea that The Kingdom of God was right on their door step?

But some people will not want our help, or to listen to us. They might even be abusive. Jesus says when people welcome us, we are to stay and do good among them. But if they don’t welcome us, we are to go elsewhere. We will have brought God’s kingdom nearer, but sometimes people refuse to see it. If we do leave and move on, it can feel like failure.

To some, Jesus’ own ministry looked like failure when he died on a cross. But he rises from this apparent ‘failure’. He rises from the dead and so begins the global ministry of his disciples. Easter frees us from the fear of failure. Our goal is not worldly ‘success’, but faithfully sticking to God’s plan.

Today we live in a consumer culture. Adverts shout at us telling what we must buy, how we should look. We are constantly told we need new things. Jesus tells the 70 not to take luggage. Effectively, just a tooth brush! The way to the Kingdom is different – we don’t need to worry about things, about ‘stuff’. It’s not what we have that matters, but that we get to where we need to go.

The last of the fears Jesus helps with is the fear of needs. Jesus tells the 70 that as they travel they are to eat the food that is set in front of them.

Their hosts will see that they have not brought food; they will see they are hungry. Thus they will declare their need, their dependency.

Jesus tells them to rely entirely on the help of others. Jesus doesn’t arm them for battle – in fact Jesus sends them out seemingly unprepared and uncertain of what they will encounter.

They can’t control the outcome – that depends entirely on God.

Jesus demands a type of *vulnerable dependence* from his followers that in many ways goes against our protestant work ethic of thrifty saving for a rainy day – and all those things that we are all told are the prudent things to do.

But this group, in their vulnerability and dependence, are potentially transforming the lives of those who offer them hospitality. Their mission is peace; they avoid all forms of exploitation, self-centredness, personal gain. Their sole mission is to prepare others to meet Jesus.

Jesus wants us to share this single purpose. In the coming week, we will probably come across some of the same fears expressed in the reading. Fear of people, failure, things and needs. Things that might hold us back. But if we are prepared to listen, then we can also hear Jesus telling us once again; ‘Do not be afraid! And travel light!’

**Affirmation of faith**

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

**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?

**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? **We believe and trust in him. This is the faith of the Church.**

**This is our faith. We believe and trust in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen**

**Prayers of intercession led by John**

Almighty and merciful God, whose Son became a refugee and had no place to call his own; look with mercy on those who today are fleeing from danger, homeless and hungry.

Bless those who work to bring them relief; inspire generosity and compassion in all our hearts; and guide the nations of the world towards that day when all will rejoice in your Kingdom of justice and of peace;

through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Everlasting God, we make our prayers now for all people, everywhere, both close to us and far away.

Lord, in your mercy: **hear our prayer**

Lord, we give you thanks for Cathy’s ministry in our Parishes and we pray that your guidance and blessing will be with those who seek to find the right candidate to be our new Vicar this week.

Lord, in your mercy: **hear our prayer**

Holy God, whenever we start to get offended by your generosity or open-mindedness, give us the grace to repent and join your rejoicing. Guard the Church against self-righteousness and all rules and limits which you would not own, but always keep before us the rule of love.

Lord, in your mercy: **hear our prayer**

Creator God, we thank you for people who have risked and sacrificed much to provide us with all the benefits and comforts of our modern life.

Help us to encourage our young people to follow their examples and to build on their legacies so that future generations may enjoy continued progress but with constant thought for our responsible stewardship of your creation.

Lord, in your mercy: **hear our prayer**

Lord, we thank you for our families and friends and for the communities both church and secular that we belong to.

We ask that you help us with our relationships, help us make our strong ones to be stronger, our broken ones to be healed and our new ones to continue growing.

Lord, in your mercy: **hear our prayer**

Gracious God, we pray for all who suffer in body, mind or spirit and for those who care for them.

We pray for the sick; for those who mourn; for those without faith, hope or love.

Lord, in your mercy: **hear our prayer**

Mighty God, your love reaches beyond the grave. At the end of our days on earth be with us and with those we love and have gone before us.

We pray now for the family and friends of those who have recently died.

Lord, in your mercy: **hear our prayer**

Almighty God, we pray for ourselves; as we go from your house today to start the week ahead, we ask that in all we do, we may walk more closely with you at our side safe in the knowledge that your fatherly love and care knows no bounds.

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

**The Lord’s Prayer** As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

***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 today our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen***

**Closing prayer**

God give you grace to become the people He has called you to be,

that you may live and work to his praise and glory,

and the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit

be with us and remain with us always. **Amen**

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