

Parish of Ribbleton

St. Mary Magdalene (SMM) The Ascension (ASC) -Longsands (LS)

Sunday 9th August

9th Sunday after Trinity

Alleluia, alleluia.

Jesus said:

Jesus said to his disciples,

'Take courage! Don't be afraid.'

Alleluia

PRAYER FOR THE DAY

Almighty God,
who sent your Holy Spirit
to be the life and light of your Church:
open our hearts to the riches of your grace,
that we may bring forth the fruit of the Spirit
in love and joy and peace;
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.
Amen

FIRST READING (1 Kings 19:9-18)

Elijah reached Horeb, the mountain of God.
There he went into a cave and spent the night.
And the word of the LORD came to him:
'What are you doing here, Elijah?'
He replied, 'I have been very zealous for the LORD God
Almighty.
The Israelites have rejected your covenant, torn down your
altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword.
I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me
too.'
The LORD said, 'Go out and stand on the mountain in the
presence of the LORD, for the LORD is about to pass by.'
Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart
and shattered the rocks before the LORD, but the LORD
was not in the wind.
After the wind there was an earthquake, but the LORD was
not in the earthquake.
After the earthquake came a fire, but the LORD was not in
the fire.
And after the fire came a gentle whisper.

When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and
went out and stood at the mouth of the cave.
Then a voice said to him,
'What are you doing here, Elijah?'
He replied, 'I have been very zealous for the LORD God
Almighty.
The Israelites have rejected your covenant, torn down your
altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword.
I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me
too.'
The LORD said to him, 'Go back the way you came, and
go to the Desert of Damascus.
When you get there, anoint Hazael king over Aram.
Also, anoint Jehu son of Nimshi king over Israel, and
anoint Elisha son of Shaphat from Abel Meholah to
succeed you as prophet.
Jehu will put to death any who escape the sword of Hazael,
and Elisha will put to death any who escape the sword of
Jehu.
Yet I reserve seven thousand in Israel – all whose knees
have not bowed down to Baal and whose mouths have not
kissed him.'

RESPONSORIAL PSALM (Psalm 85:8-13)

The response to the Psalm is:

Surely his salvation is near those who fear him.

I will listen to what God the LORD says;
he promises peace to his people, his faithful servants –
but let them not turn to folly.

Surely his salvation is near those who fear him,
that his glory may dwell in our land. **R/**

Love and faithfulness meet together;
righteousness and peace kiss each other.
Faithfulness springs forth from the earth,
and righteousness looks down from heaven. **R/**

The LORD will indeed give what is good,
and our land will yield its harvest.
Righteousness goes before him
and prepares the way for his steps. **R/**

SECOND READING (Romans 10:5-15)

Moses writes this about the righteousness that is by the law:

‘The person who does these things will live by them.’ But the righteousness that is by faith says:

‘Do not say in your heart,

“Who will ascend into heaven?” (that is, to bring Christ down) ‘

or “Who will descend into the deep?” (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).

But what does it say?

‘The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart,’

that is, the message concerning faith that we proclaim:

if you declare with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’

and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.

As Scripture says, ‘Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame.’

For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile – the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, for, ‘Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.’

How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in?

And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard?

And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?

And how can anyone preach unless they are sent?

As it is written:

‘How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!’

GOSPEL (Matthew 14:22-33)

Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd.

After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray.

Later that night, he was there alone, and the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it.

Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake.

When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified.

‘It’s a ghost,’ they said, and cried out in fear.

But Jesus immediately said to them:

‘Take courage! It is I. Don’t be afraid.’

‘Lord, if it’s you,’ Peter replied, ‘tell me to come to you on the water.’

‘Come,’ he said.

Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came towards Jesus.

But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out,

‘Lord, save me!’

Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him.

‘You of little faith,’ he said, ‘why did you doubt?’

And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down.

Then those who were in the boat worshipped him, saying, ‘Truly you are the Son of God.’

Sunday Reflection

Walking on Water

Some of the disciples were fishermen by trade, but Jesus had put all of them well outside their comfort zone.

They'd stayed on with Jesus longer than they'd intended, to help collect the leftover food from the thousands of men, women and children who'd shared the bread and fish.

By the time they were on the water in the fishing boat it was dark.

Very dark.

Storm clouds covered the moon, and they could see little beyond the bow of the boat.

Although the Sea of Galilee is an inland lake, it's a big one; the wind whips down from the surrounding hills and stirs the water into a frenzy.

Navigation had to give way to survival.

These lads were brought up to know their Bible – our Old Testament.

They knew how it all began (Genesis 1:2).

"The earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep."

They knew what that felt like.

They also knew what came next.

"...and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters."

And here was their companion and teacher, coming towards them over the turbulent waters, out of the darkness.

The power of the Holy Spirit in creation, revisited in Jesus.

If they'd been afraid of the storm, they were terrified out of their wits by the sight of Jesus; not just because it was unexpected, but because here before them the awesome power of the Spirit of God was revealed, at work in their fellow human being.

It's a long way from the image of the Spirit descending like a dove at Jesus' baptism, but in God infinite gentleness and supreme power live hand in hand.

So Jesus' first words are to calm the disciples.

"Do not be afraid."

Peter, impetuous as ever, leaves the boat,

and finds through Jesus' example that same Spirit power at work in himself.

Just for a moment, he too can step onto the waves.

But he falters when he realises just what he's attempting, and the fear returns.

Jesus reaches out and lifts him up – and the sea becomes calm.

Being Jesus' disciples can be frightening for us too.

God challenges us to do things that can take us well beyond our own comfort zone.

It's the way we discover how powerful the Holy Spirit can be.

And when we falter, and our faith needs restoring, he catches us and lifts us up.

And the sea becomes calm.

Fr Chris



Intercessions

Lord, our God, Lord of all, you richly bless all who call on you. Plant your word in our hearts and mouths that your church may proclaim the message of faith, the good news of salvation, to those who have not heard

Hear our prayers for all who you have called and commissioned to work as leaders and prophets in your Church.

Bless and encourage those who serve the church locally: among them our bishops – Julian, Jill and Philip.

Grant fresh vision and courage those who minister to our parish - Fr Keith, Fr Chris, Captain David and Linda, - and our parish wardens, Ron and Jacqueline. Inspire us to support them by prayer and action. Make us powerful in sharing of the gospel.

Comfort and renew those who live in fear and danger because of their faith, we pray today for the Christian communities of Syria, Lebanon and Pakistan.

Lord in your mercy Hear our prayer

Lord, our God, the Almighty, you speak to us - not in the noise and turmoil of fire, wind and earthquake - but in the gentle whisper. When the powerful and political posture to create a world of fear and mistrust, may we hear your voice promising peace to your people and blessings to all who call on your name.

We pray for all in positions of power and authority in our world, especially for those making decisions about controlling the coronavirus pandemic. May they be open to your kingdom values and seek always to serve the wellbeing of our most vulnerable citizens.

Sustain those who work to restore peace and justice and to bring healing in our broken world.

Bless all who find their lives in turmoil because of war, disease and natural disasters. Open our eyes and hearts to their needs and grant a safe haven to all who flee in fear from their homes and communities.

We hold before you the people of Yemen and of Syria - and the people of Lebanon.

Lord in your mercy Hear our prayer

Lord, our God, Lord of love and faithfulness, you give to your people all that is good. Give us the will and the words to build up and nurture our neighbourhoods and communities. Put away from us the ways of cynicism and complacency, of malice and evil.

Open our eyes to see Christ beside us and to see the wonder of your love and wisdom in the ordinary things of life.

Bless all who live and work in our parish - our neighbours and work-mates, our friends and families.

Support and encourage those of our neighbours who struggle with the demands and needs of daily life, and

those needing to use the community Pantry and foodbanks in our city

May we be open to their needs and serve you by serving them.

Bless the children and young people of our parish and keep them safe over the summer break.

Lord in your mercy Hear our prayer

Lord, our God, Lord of life, you assure us of your presence in the trials and troubles of our lives, calling us to you in faith – and reaching out to us when our faith falters.

Open our hearts to the weak and weary, to those who find life threatening and dangerous.

In your tender love restore health to those who are sick, peace to those who are anxious, comfort to those who mourn, and hope to those who despair.

We hold before you those who have asked for our prayers, those known to us, and those named on our prayer list. May they know your healing touch in their lives.

Bless all who work to bring comfort and healing to those who suffer in any way.

Protect and encourage those who work in our hospitals and emergency services, and all who care for the elderly and frail at home or in residential care.

Draw close to those who feel alone in their troubles and grant them the comfort of your presence.

Lord in your mercy Hear our prayer

Lord, our God, eternal Lord, you raised Christ Jesus from the dead and through him you promise us salvation. As we reach the boundary of death, grant us faith to journey through it into the unconfined space and joy of heaven.

We remember those who have been killed this week in the ongoing conflicts and disaster in our world, among them those killed in Beirut and Kerala this week.

We pray for those known to us who have died recently, and those whose anniversary of death is around this time.

Rest eternal grant unto them, O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon them. May they rest in peace and rise in glory

Lord in your mercy Hear our prayer

Lord, our God, Lord of our lives, we call on your name and ask your blessing on our lives. We bring to you, in faith, the silent prayers of our hearts - for ourselves and for those we love and care for.

Lord in your mercy Hear our prayer

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

Readings for Sunday 16th August

Isaiah 56:1&6-8; Psalm 67;

Romans 11:1-2a&29-32; Matthew 15:21-28

We note with sadness the death of Joan Roberts, a longstanding member of the congregation at St Mary Magdalene's.

Please note that because of the coronavirus legislation, only her family and invited guests will be able to attend the service. We will hold a memorial service for her when regulations allow.

If you would like to sing:

Lead us heavenly Father lead us

<https://youtu.be/SE1slSZFkjA>

#Our God reigns

<https://youtu.be/IQRmFXNA2Q>

Jesus is Lord

<https://youtu.be/8HHYt40whHQ>

Do not be afraid

<https://youtu.be/EAdRk9c1R1o>

More resources are on our website

<https://www.parishofribbleton.com>

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