

Parish of Ribbleton

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

Sunday 13th September

14th Sunday after Trinity

Alleluia, alleluia.

'I give you a new commandment,' says the Lord:

'love one another as I have loved you.'

Alleluia

PRAYER FOR THE DAY

Almighty God,
whose only Son has opened for us a new and living way
into your presence:
give us pure hearts and steadfast wills to worship you in
spirit and in truth;
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 (Genesis 50:15-21)

When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead,
they said, 'What if Joseph holds a grudge against us and
pays us back for all the wrongs we did to him?'
So they sent word to Joseph, saying,
'Your father left these instructions before he died:
'This is what you are to say to Joseph: I ask you to
forgive your brothers the sins and the wrongs they
committed in treating you so badly.'
Now please forgive the sins of the servants of the God of
your father.'
When their message came to him, Joseph wept.
His brothers then came and threw themselves down
before him.
'We are your slaves,' they said.
But Joseph said to them,
'Don't be afraid. Am I in the place of God?
You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good
to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of
many lives.
So then, don't be afraid.
I will provide for you and your children.'
And he reassured them and spoke kindly to them.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM (Psalm 103:8-13)

The response to the Psalm is:

**Bless the Lord, O my soul, •
and all that is within me bless his holy name.**

The Lord is compassionate and gracious,
slow to anger, abounding in love.
He will not always accuse,
nor will he harbour his anger for ever;
he does not treat us as our sins deserve
or repay us according to our iniquities. **R/**

For as high as the heavens are above the earth,
so great is his love for those who fear him;
as far as the east is from the west,
so far has he removed our transgressions from us.
As a father has compassion on his children,
so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him; **R/**

SECOND READING (Romans 14:1-12)

Accept the one whose faith is weak, without quarrelling over disputable matters.

One person's faith allows them to eat anything, but another, whose faith is weak, eats only vegetables.

The one who eats everything must not treat with contempt the one who does not, and the one who does not eat everything must not judge the one who does, for God has accepted them.

Who are you to judge someone else's servant?

To their own master, servants stand or fall.

And they will stand, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

One person considers one day more sacred than another; another considers every day alike.

Each of them should be fully convinced in their own mind.

Whoever regards one day as special does so to the Lord. Whoever eats meat does so to the Lord, for they give thanks to God; and whoever abstains does so to the Lord and gives thanks to God.

For none of us lives for ourselves alone, and none of us dies for ourselves alone.

If we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord.

So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.

For this very reason, Christ died and returned to life so that he might be the Lord of both the dead and the living.

You, then, why do you judge your brother or sister?

Or why do you treat them with contempt?

For we will all stand before God's judgment seat.

It is written:

"As surely as I live," says the Lord, "Every knee will bow before me; every tongue will acknowledge God."

So then, each of us will give an account of ourselves to God.



GOSPEL (Matthew 18:21-35)

Then Peter came to Jesus and asked,

'Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me?

Up to seven times?'

Jesus answered,

'I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.

Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants.

As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand bags of gold was brought to him.

Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt.

At this the servant fell on his knees before him.

"Be patient with me," he begged, "and I will pay back everything."

The servant's master took pity on him, cancelled the debt and let him go.

But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver coins.

He grabbed him and began to choke him.

"Pay back what you owe me!" he demanded.

His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him,

"Be patient with me, and I will pay it back."

But he refused.

Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt.

When the other servants saw what had happened, they were outraged and went and told their master everything that had happened.

Then the master called the servant in.

"You wicked servant," he said, "I cancelled all that debt of yours because you begged me to.

Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?"

In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed.

This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart.'



Sunday Reflection

Reading the Gospels is like a treasure hunt, where occasionally you come across a treasure you don't expect.

The Gospels are largely made up of stories and memories that the gospel writers have collected, and edited together to provide an account that helps people to understand who Jesus was.

That's why, for example, events can seem to happen in a different order from one Gospel to another, and details can differ.

Sometimes the gospel writer doesn't quite manage to make things run smoothly!

Today's Gospel starts with Peter's question about forgiving someone from the fellowship who has hurt him. Over and over again, is Jesus' advice.

And it ends with a dire warning about what happens if we don't forgive from our hearts.

But the treasure in the middle is about a different kind of forgiveness entirely!

It's not about forgiving a sin, a hurt; it's about forgiving a debt – a very large one.

Jesus' parable is about a king.

In Jesus' tales, a king or a rich man usually represents God the Father.

One of the king's servants owes his master a vast fortune, which he can't repay;

but after he gets down on his knees, the king lets him off, and cancels, or forgives, the debt.

In contrast, this same servant then refuses to forgive the debt of a fellow servant who owes him a far smaller amount.

It's pretty obvious that that's not acceptable;

and the king hears about it, and punishes the wicked servant accordingly.

God – the 'king' of the parable – is unbelievably generous to us.

No matter what we think we know of God's generosity, that's only a small part of it; we owe him literally everything.

We should be like the servant with the huge debt,

on our knees or sitting in our quiet place, and thinking about the size of that debt.

How can we possibly repay it?

Then Jesus tells us that we don't have to.

The Father has forgiven the debt.

We can breathe again!

But that's not the end of it.

The king expects his servant to behave in the same way.

God expects us to learn from his generosity, so that we will pass on that generosity in our own dealings with our fellow men and women.

So there's the golden nugget of treasure in today's Gospel:

God's overwhelming generosity freely given.

Pass it on!

Fr Chris

Intercessions

Forgive us, Lord, our many offences and weaknesses, and renew in us the knowledge of your loving mercy which has endured through all ages. Open our hearts to forgive as we have been forgiven and make your Church a place where deliverance abounds..

Bless those who live in fear and danger because of their faith, remembering the Christian communities in Nigeria and Pakistan.

We pray for those you have called to lead and teach your church - among them our bishops – Julian, Philip and Jill.

Guide and support Fr Keith, Fr Chris, Captain David and Linda, - and our parish wardens, Ron and Jacqueline - in their ministry among us.

We ask your blessing on Fr Keith as he makes decisions about his future.

Lord in your mercy Hear our prayer

Forgive us, Lord, our self-serving and indifference to the needs of others. Renew our desire to serve you as citizens of your dawning Kingdom. May we all rejoice in the freedom of your love.

Give courage and perseverance to those who work to restore peace and justice between the nations and peoples of our world.

Inspire all politicians and civic leaders with your compassion and a vision of justice tempered with mercy. May they serve their people with wisdom and humility, seeking always to serve the wellbeing of the most vulnerable among them.

We hold before you those who live in fear, need and turmoil. Comfort those driven from home and separated from family by warfare and terrorism, and strengthen those devastated by natural and man-made disasters.

We pray today the people of Syria, Yemen and Myanmar, for the people of California and Oregon, and those living in the migrant camp on Lesbos, whose lives have been devastated by fires there this week.

Give us hearts of compassion for their need and for your service.

Comfort and protect those who struggle to deal with the restrictions of the covid pandemic, especially where medical and food supplies are scarce.

Lord in your mercy Hear our prayer

Forgive us, Lord, our divisions and petty squabbles. Renew in us your desire to draw everyone into a community of mutual love and care. As we have been released from a debt we could never re-pay, may we offer release to those around us.

We ask your blessing on all who live in our parish, and on those who work for our comfort and wellbeing.

Encourage those who are suffering from loneliness or struggling with the restrictions imposed to reduce the spread of the coronavirus. Grant us the strength to bear this for the sake of our neighbours.

Comfort those of our neighbours who struggle with the demands and needs of daily life: those burdened by debt, those who are alone and afraid, and those abandoned by society. May we be open to their needs and serve you by serving them.

We hold before you those who need to use the Community Pantry and foodbanks in our city.

Lord in your mercy Hear our prayer

Forgive us, Lord, our frustration and anger in the face of trouble and suffering. Surround us with your compassion and mercy which brings us release.

In all things may we learn to trust and rejoice in your abiding love.

Give courage and hope to those whose bodies and spirits are heavy with suffering, grant ease from pain and weariness, and sustain them by your word.

We hold before you those who are sick, or in need or distress - and ask your blessing on those known to us, and those named on our prayer list.

May they know your healing touch in their lives.

Support and renew those who work in our hospitals and emergency services, and all involved in the care and support of the elderly, frail and vulnerable in our parish.

Lord in your mercy Hear our prayer

Forgive us, Lord, our failures and the things we have left undone. Hold us in your unending mercy. Receive in your love all who have died and bring us, with them, to that place where sins are cancelled and we dwell in your loving presence.

We remember those who have been killed this week in the ongoing conflicts and disasters in our world

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

Forgive us, Lord, our selfishness and doubt. Open our hearts to your constant love which searches out each one of us.

Trusting in that love, we bring the silent prayers of our hearts - for ourselves and those we love.

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 20th September

*Jonah 3.10 – 4.11; Psalm 145.1–8
Philippians 1.21–30; Matthew 20.1–16*

Dates for Your Diary:

Sunday 4th October: Harvest Festival

Gifts of tinned and dried foods for the Community Pantry would be greatly appreciated. Please place such items in a carrier bag so they can be quarantined before passing to the pantry.

Sunday 4th October: PCC Meeting

There will be a short meeting of the PCC after the service at SMM, in preparation for the APCM on the 11th October.

Sunday 11th October 2020 at 12.15pm

The Annual Meeting of Parishoners
(for the election of Parish Wardens)
followed by
The Annual Parochial Church Meeting

If you would like to sing:

Now thank we all our God

<https://youtu.be/s99dNPKYtHk>

Praise my soul the king of heaven

<https://youtu.be/mDe0ABw5IHs>

Living Lord

https://youtu.be/QA_g98042Q4

I the Lord of sea and sky

<https://youtu.be/4gpuYZK7wKU>

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