



# Worshipping & Praying Together as a community dispersed

during the week beginning  
Sunday, 4<sup>th</sup> October

The Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

## The Parish of Christ Church Cathedral, Newcastle.

The worshipping communities of the Cathedral and St Peter's Hamilton.

This Sunday is not only the eighteenth Sunday after the feast of Pentecost. It is also the Feast of St Francis of Assisi. At another time we would be looking forward to the blessing of the pets at our Evensong Service this coming Sunday. We long to sing again and to share in the beauty of Evensong, and hopefully, next year we might be able to bring our pets along to Evensong at Francistide for blessings by the Cathedral clergy. It is always a wonderful celebration of our joy in God's magnificent creation and our relationship with creation.



St Francis is renowned for his care and love for God's creation, calling all of God's creation his 'brothers' and 'sisters'. Whilst this is the popular understanding of St Francis, he is also revered for his conviction to live as an imitator of Christ, committed to spreading the Gospel message. Francis instituted a Rule of Life for the professed members of the three orders of the Society of St Francis; The Brothers (first order), The Poor Clares (second order) and the Secular and Third Orders (third order). The professed members of these orders continue this practice today, living according to a Rule of Life inspired by St Francis so that they too may seek to be imitators of Christ.

Francis of Assisi died on 3 October 1226, at the age of 44. He was canonized as a saint just two years after his death on 16 July 1228, by Pope Gregory IX.

**Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer continue to be streamed every day,  
and Holy Communion at the Cathedral is streamed on Sundays and Wednesdays:**

**You Tube:** <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCXyas2uhJUNOnDetOpPdUOg>

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/christchurchcathedralnewcastle/>

**Eucharists are offered at Christ Church Cathedral on Sundays at 8.00am and 11.00am,  
and Monday to Friday at 8.30am (following Morning Prayer).**

**Eucharists are also offered at St Peter's Hamilton at 11.00am on Tuesdays and Thursdays.**

**Families@Five has returned to the Cathedral at 5.00pm on the first Saturday of each month.**

**Please encourage family and friends to join with us. All are welcome!**

*If you, or a family member or a friend, are looking for opportunities to support the ministries of our parish, please contact Dean Katherine, Reverend Angela, or any of our Parish Council representatives for a confidential, no obligation, conversation.*

## The Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

### *Exodus 20: 1-4, 7-9, 12-20*

Then God spoke all these words: I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; you shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not acquit anyone who misuses his name. Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. Six days you shall labour and do all your work. Honour your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you. You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour. You shall not covet your neighbour's house; you shall not covet your neighbour's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbour. When all the people witnessed the thunder and lightning, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking, they were afraid and trembled and stood at a distance, and said to Moses, "You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, or we will die." Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid; for God has come only to test you and to put the fear of him upon you so that you do not sin."

### *Psalm 19*

1 The heavens declare the glory of God:  
and the firmament proclaims his handiwork  
2 One day tells it to another:  
and night to night communicates knowledge.  
3 There is no speech or language:  
nor are their voices heard;  
4 Yet their sound has gone out through all the world:  
and their words to the ends of the earth.  
5 There he has pitched a tent for the sun:  
which comes out as a bridegroom from his chamber,  
and rejoices like a strong man to run his course.  
6 Its rising is at one end of the heavens,  
and its circuit to their farthest bound:  
and nothing is hidden from its heat.  
7 The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul:  
the command of the Lord is true and makes wise the simple.

8 The precepts of the Lord are right

and rejoice the heart:

the commandment of the Lord is pure

and gives light to the eyes.

9 The fear of the Lord is clean and endures for ever:

the judgements of the Lord are unchanging

and righteous every one.

10 More to be desired are they than gold

even much fine gold:

sweeter also than honey than the honey that drips from the comb.

11 Moreover by them is your servant taught:

and in keeping them there is great reward.

12 Who can know their own unwitting sins?:

O cleanse me from my secret faults.

13 Keep your servant also from presumptuous sins

lest they get the mastery over me:

so I shall be clean and innocent of great offence.

14 May the words of my mouth and the meditation

of my heart be acceptable in your sight:

O Lord my strength and my redeemer.

### ***Philippians 3***

Finally, my brothers and sisters, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you is not troublesome to me, and for you it is a safeguard. Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of those who mutilate the flesh! For it is we who are the circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and boast in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh - even though I, too, have reason for confidence in the flesh. If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the

sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press onward to the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus. Let those of us then who are mature be of the same mind; and if you think differently about anything, this too God will reveal to you. Only let us hold fast to what we have attained.

Brothers and sisters, join in imitating me, and observe those who live according to the example you have in us. For many live as enemies of the cross of Christ; I have often told you of them, and now I tell you even with tears. Their end is destruction; their god is the belly; and their glory is in their shame; their minds are set on earthly things. But our citizenship is in heaven, and it is from there that we are expecting a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. He will transform the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, by the power that also enables him to make all things subject to himself.

### ***Matthew 21: 33-46***

Jesus said to the chief priests and leaders of the people: “Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a watchtower. Then he leased it to tenants and went to another country. When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other slaves, more than the first; and they treated them in the same way. Finally he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, ‘This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance.’

So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?” They said to him, “He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time.” Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the scriptures: ‘The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord’s doing, and it is amazing in our eyes’? Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom.

The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls.” When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them. They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet.

## Reflection on a page by *The Reverend Angela Peverell*

Our Gospel reading this week picks up where we left off last week... Jesus is still in the temple on this second day of Holy Week. Jesus is telling the chief priests and the elders yet another parable or allegory in response to their scheming and malice. If the parable of the two sons was not direct enough, this parable of the wicked tenant farmers explicitly exposes their defiance against Jesus and their plotting to eliminate him.

This allegory of the wicked tenant farmers is an extremely violent and terrifying narrative with devastating consequences for the perpetrators of the crimes against the landowner, his servants, and his son. From our vantage position of the twenty-first century, we can very plainly see that Jesus is predicting both his own humiliating and violent death and the siege of Jerusalem by the Romans following the Jewish revolt, and the destruction of the (second) temple in 70 AD, the very temple that Jesus was standing in when he told this parable to the chief priests and the elders.

Even when Jesus is drawing on the poem of the vineyard in Isaiah 5, the chief priests and the elders cannot see their own reflections in the allegorical mirror that Jesus is holding up to them:

*And now I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard.*

*I will remove its hedge, and it shall be devoured;*

*I will break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down.*

*I will make it a waste; it shall not be pruned or hoed, and it shall be overgrown with briars and thorns;*

*I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. (Isaiah 5:5-6)*

It is not until Jesus quotes directly from Psalm 18: 22-23, that the chief priests and the Pharisees (Matthew includes the Pharisees at this point) realise that this awful allegory is actually about them: *“Have you never read in the scriptures: ‘The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord’s doing, and it is amazing in our eyes?’” (Matthew 21:42)*

Even then, the chief priests and the elders are so full of anger, they do not respond with repentance. They plot to have him arrested. They are more anxious about the reaction of the crowds of people who are following Jesus than heeding his warning.

The inability of the Jewish chief priests and others to recognise Jesus as the Messiah, in stark contrast to the Jewish people of the city who lined the streets only the day before, singing also from Psalm 118, *“Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!”* (v 26), ultimately causes their own destruction and dispersion (again) for their refusal to recognise God’s Son, the Messiah.

Verse 43 of Matthew’s account of Jesus’s encounter with the chief priests in the temple is, therefore, our call to action. Jesus tells them that the kingdom of God will be taken away and given to new tenants to produce the fruits of the kingdom. These new tenants are intentionally, all faithful Christian people, from all the nations, spread throughout the whole world.

It is God’s intention that as the Christian people of our time and place, that we bear fruit for the Kingdom of God as the “new” tenants of the vineyard: *“But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.” (2 Peter 2: 9)*

## Readings for next week – The Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost

**Exodus 32: 1-14**

**Psalm 106: 1-6, 20-24**

**Philippians 4**

**Matthew 22: 1-14**



### **Prayers for use during the COVID-19 Pandemic**

Ever present God,  
be with us in our isolation,  
be close to us in our distancing,  
be healing in our sickness,  
be joy in our sadness,  
be light in our darkness,  
be wisdom in our confusion,  
be all that is familiar when all is unfamiliar,  
that when the doors reopen  
we may with the zeal of Pentecost  
inhabit our communities  
and speak of your goodness  
to an emerging world.  
For Jesus' sake. **Amen.**

Keep us, good Lord,  
under the shadow of your mercy  
in this time of uncertainty and  
distress.  
Sustain and support the anxious and  
fearful,  
and lift up all who are brought low;  
that we may rejoice in your comfort  
knowing that nothing can separate us  
from your love  
in Christ Jesus our Lord. **Amen.**

*Please do not hesitate to contact Dean Katherine or Reverend Angela if you have any concerns at this time and if you would like for us to visit you at home.*

**Parish office: (02) 4929 2052 or [cathedral@newcastlecathedral.org.au](mailto:cathedral@newcastlecathedral.org.au)**

**Dean Katherine: 0407 201 693 or [katherinebowyer@newcastleanglican.org.au](mailto:katherinebowyer@newcastleanglican.org.au)**

**Reverend Angela: 0400 076 515 or [revangela.peverell@newcastlecathedral.org.au](mailto:revangela.peverell@newcastlecathedral.org.au)**