

st john's

ANGLICAN CHURCH
CAMBERWELL

BRINGING PEOPLE INTO COMMUNION
WITH GOD AND WITH EACH OTHER



A JOURNAL
OF
SCRIPTURE & PRAYER

PENTECOST
June-July 2018

A resource for daily devotion

the season of pentecost

With the seasons of Lent and Easter behind us, we settle into the steady rhythm of the Sundays after Pentecost, sometimes called “ordinary time” in the Church’s calendar. The liturgical colour for this season is green, nature’s colour of growth, reminding us that continual growth in the faith is necessary for every Christian’s journey. This is a time for quiet consolidation of our personal devotional practice, a consolidation that this journal is designed to encourage.

Though each person’s day-by-day journey will be private, knowing that other parishioners are sharing the journey will remind us that we are praying as part of the worldwide Church of God, even when we are praying alone.

The Journal is centred on the daily reading of a brief passage of Scripture taken from the lectionary (appointed daily Bible readings) of our Church, in this season mostly taken from the Gospels of Mark and Matthew.

Though the daily readings are short, the idea is **not** to read hurriedly! Rather, the Journal has been prepared to encourage quiet reflection and meditation on the reading whenever that is possible. Some days there will be less time than others; sometimes the only available moment you have might be on the train on your way to work, or waiting for an appointment or while you eat breakfast. But whenever you can, set aside 10 to 15 minutes to savour the reading and pray the reading.

If you have your own copy of *A Prayer Book for Australia* – the prayer book we use at St John’s – you may like to use the daily reading in the Journal as the reading for either morning or evening prayer from *A Prayer Book for Australia*, which provides separate services for morning and evening prayer for each day of the week.

If you do not own a copy of *A Prayer Book for Australia*, please consider buying one. Copies are available through St Peter’s Bookroom for \$34.95, including a very attractive small version that is ideal for travelling (or as a gift).

Commencing prayers:

Prayer at the start of the day

Christ my companion,
you meet me at the beginning of each new day
and walk with me on the road.
Open my heart to know you and receive you,
that I may serve you in love for others
today and always. Amen.

Prayer at the ending of the day

Christ my companion,
you have walked with me on the road today
and met me in those I have encountered.

Open my heart to know you
and receive you in your word,
so I may rest in peace and safety,
confident in your abiding love,
tonight and always. Amen.

Concluding prayers:

Pentecost daily prayer

Spirit of truth
whom the world can never grasp,
touch our hearts with the shock of your coming;
fill us with desire for your disturbing peace;
and fire us with longing
to speak your uncontainable word.
Through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Prayer for the parish

Holy One,
you have revealed to your Church,
through your servant John,
the dazzling vision of your light,
the eternal Word of your truth,
the deep wisdom of your heart.
May we who are inspired by John
also walk in the way of Jesus the Christ;
here at the Junction,
wherever you send us,
in the service of love;
we pray in the name of Christ. Amen.

Friday 1 June

'My house shall be a house of prayer'

Mark 11: 11-26

Jesus entered Jerusalem and went into the temple; and when he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve. On the following day, when they came from Bethany, he was hungry.

Seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to see whether perhaps he would find anything on it. When he came to it, he found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. He said to it, ‘May no one ever eat fruit from you again.’ And his disciples heard it.

Then they came to Jerusalem. And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who were selling and those who were buying in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold doves; and he would not allow anyone to carry anything through the temple. He was teaching and saying, ‘Is it not written, “My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations”? But you have made it a den of robbers.’ And when the chief priests and the scribes heard it, they kept looking for a way to kill him; for they were afraid of him, because the whole crowd was spellbound by his teaching. And when evening came, Jesus and his disciples went out of the city.

In the morning as they passed by, they saw the fig tree withered away to its roots. Then Peter remembered and said to him, ‘Rabbi, look! The fig tree that you cursed has withered.’ Jesus answered them, ‘Have faith in God. Truly I tell you, if you say to this mountain, “Be taken up and thrown into the sea”, and if you do not doubt in your heart, but believe that what you say will come to pass, it will be done for you. So I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. Whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone; so that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses.

Saturday 2 June

By whose authority?

Mark 11.27-33

Again they came to Jerusalem. As he was walking in the temple, the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders came to him and said, ‘By what authority are you doing these things? Who gave you this authority to do them?’ Jesus said to them, ‘I will ask you one question; answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things. Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin? Answer me.’ They argued with one another, ‘If we say, “From heaven”, he will

say, “Why then did you not believe him?” But shall we say, “Of human origin”?”—they were afraid of the crowd, for all regarded John as truly a prophet. So they answered Jesus, ‘We do not know.’ And Jesus said to them, ‘Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.’

Sunday 3 June

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Mark 2:23-3:6

One sabbath Jesus was going through the cornfields; and as they made their way his disciples began to pluck heads of grain. The Pharisees said to him, ‘Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the sabbath?’ And he said to them, ‘Have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry and in need of food? He entered the house of God, when Abiathar was high priest, and ate the bread of the Presence, which it is not lawful for any but the priests to eat, and he gave some to his companions.’ Then he said to them, ‘The sabbath was made for humankind, and not humankind for the sabbath; so the Son of Man is lord even of the sabbath.’

Again he entered the synagogue, and a man was there who had a withered hand. They watched him to see whether he would cure him on the sabbath, so that they might accuse him. And he said to the man who had the withered hand, ‘Come forward.’ Then he said to them, ‘Is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the sabbath, to save life or to kill?’ But they were silent. He looked around at them with anger; he was grieved at their hardness of heart and said to the man, ‘Stretch out your hand.’ He stretched it out, and his hand was restored. The Pharisees went out and immediately conspired with the Herodians against him, how to destroy him.

Monday 4 June

The parable of the evil tenants

Mark 12: 1-12

Jesus began to speak to them in parables. “A man planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a pit for the wine press, and built a watch-tower; then he leased it to tenants and went to another country. When the season came, he sent a slave to the tenants to collect from them his share of the produce of the vineyard. But they seized

him, and beat him, and sent him away empty-handed. And again he sent another slave to them; this one they beat over the head and insulted. Then he sent another, and that one they killed. And so it was with many others; some they beat, and others they killed. He had still one other, a beloved son. Finally he sent him to them, saying, 'They will respect my son'. But those tenants said to one another, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours'. So they seized him, killed him, and threw him out of the vineyard. What then will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the tenants and give the vineyard to others. Have you not read this scripture: 'The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord's doing, it is amazing in our eyes?'" When they realized that he had told this parable against them, they wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowd. So they left him and went away.

Tuesday 5 June

The things that are God's

Mark 12: 13-17

They sent to him some Pharisees and some Herodians to trap him in what he said. And they came and said to him, "Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality, but teach the way of God in accordance with truth. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not? Should we pay them, or should we not?" But knowing their hypocrisy, he said to them, "Why are you putting me to the test? Bring me a denarius and let me see it." And they brought one. Then he said to them, "Whose head is this, and whose title?" They answered, "The emperor's". Jesus said to them, "Give to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's". And they were utterly amazed at him.

Wednesday 6 June

God of the living

Mark 12: 18-27

Some Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him and asked him a question, saying, "Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies, leaving

a wife but no child, the man shall marry the widow and raise up children for his brother. There were seven brothers; the first married and, when he died, left no children; and the second married her and died, leaving no children; and the third likewise; none of the seven left children. Last of all the woman herself died. In the resurrection whose wife will she be? For the seven had married her.” Jesus said to them, “Is not this the reason you are wrong, that you know neither the scriptures nor the power of God? For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. And as for the dead being raised, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the story about the bush, how God said to him, ‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’? He is God not of the dead, but of the living; you are quite wrong.”

Thursday 7 June

The two commandments

Mark 12: 28-34

One of the scribes came near and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that Jesus answered them well, he asked him, “Which commandment is the first of all?” Jesus answered, “The first is, ‘Hear, O: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength’. The second is this, ‘You shall love your neighbour as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these.’” Then the scribe said to him, “You are right, Teacher; you have truly said that ‘he is one, and besides him there is no other’; and ‘to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the strength’, and ‘to love one’s neighbour as oneself—this is much more important than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices.” When Jesus saw that he answered wisely, he said to him, “You are not far from the kingdom of God”. After that no one dared to ask him any question.

Friday 8 June

The crowd listens with delight

Mark 12: 35-37

While Jesus was teaching in the temple, he said, “How can the scribes say that the Messiah is the son of David? David himself, by the Holy Spirit, declared, ‘The Lord

said to my Lord, “Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet”.’ David himself calls him Lord; so how can he be his son?” And the large crowd was listening to him with delight.

Saturday 9 June

The widow’s mite

Mark 12: 38-44

As Jesus taught, he said, “Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes, and to be greeted with respect in the market-places, and to have the best seats in the synagogues and places of honour at banquets! They devour widows’ houses and for the sake of appearance say long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation.” He sat down opposite the treasury, and watched the crowd putting money into the treasury. Many rich people put in large sums. A poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which are worth a penny. Then he called his disciples and said to them, “Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury. For all of them have contributed out of their abundance; but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on.”

Sunday 10 June

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Mark 3.20-35

Jesus’ family went out to restrain him, for people were saying, “He has gone out of his mind”. And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, “He has Beelzebul, and by the ruler of the demons he casts out demons”. And he called them to him, and spoke to them in parables, “How can Satan cast out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but his end has come. But no one can enter a strong man’s house and plunder his property without first tying up the strong man; then indeed the house can be plundered. Truly I tell you, people will be forgiven for their sins and whatever blasphemies they utter; but whoever blasphemes against the Holy

Spirit can never have forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin”— for they had said, “He has an unclean spirit”.

Then his mother and his brothers came; and standing outside, they sent to him and called him. A crowd was sitting around him; and they said to him, “Your mother and your brothers and sisters are outside, asking for you”. And he replied, “Who are my mother and my brothers?” And looking at those who sat around him, he said, “Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother.”

Monday 11 June

The Beatitudes

Matthew 5: 1-12

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

‘Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

Tuesday 12 June

BARNABAS, APOSTLE & MARTYR

Matthew 10: 7-13

Jesus said, ‘As you go, proclaim the good news, “The kingdom of heaven has come near”. Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons. You received without payment; give without payment. Take no gold, or silver, or copper in your belts, no bag for your journey, or two tunics, or sandals, or a staff; for labourers deserve their food. Whatever town or village you enter, find out who in it is worthy, and stay there until you leave. As you enter the house, greet it. If the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it; but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you.’

St Barnabas is called an apostle, although he was not one of Jesus’ original 12 disciples. It seems he was converted to Christianity shortly after Pentecost, immediately sold his possessions, and brought the money to the apostles, to share among the needy. He was clearly a highly-regarded member of the earliest Christian community. In the Acts of the Apostles, we are told that he was a “good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith”. He worked closely with St Paul and with him, was a leading missionary to the Gentiles. It is thought that he was martyred by being stoned to death in Cyprus.

Wednesday 13 June

The Law and the prophets

Matthew 5: 17-19

Jesus said, “Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfil. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.”

Thursday 14 June

Be reconciled

Matthew 5:20-26

Jesus said, ‘For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. You have heard that it was

said to those of ancient times, “You shall not murder”; and “whoever murders shall be liable to judgement”. But I say to you that if you are angry with a brother or sister, you will be liable to judgement; and if you insult a brother or sister, you will be liable to the council; and if you say, “You fool”, you will be liable to the hell of fire. So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift. Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are on the way to court with him, or your accuser may hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you will be thrown into prison. Truly I tell you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.’

Friday 15 June

Jesus’ moral teaching

Matthew 5:27-32

Jesus said, “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery’. But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to go into hell. It was also said, ‘Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce’. But I say to you that anyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of unchastity, causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.”

Saturday 16 June

Let your ‘yes’ be ‘yes’

Matthew 5: 33-37

Jesus said: “Again, you have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, ‘You shall not swear falsely, but carry out the vows you have made to the Lord’.” But I say to you, Do not swear at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, or by

the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. Let your word be ‘Yes, Yes’ or ‘No, No’; anything more than this comes from the evil one.”

Sunday 17 June

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Mark 4:26-34

Jesus said, “The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground, and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how. The earth produces of itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head. But when the grain is ripe, at once he goes in with his sickle, because the harvest has come.” He also said, “With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable will we use for it? It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade.” With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it; he did not speak to them except in parables, but he explained everything in private to his disciples.

Monday 18 June

Turn the other cheek

Matthew 5: 38-42

Jesus said: “You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth’. But I say to you, Do not resist an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also; and if anyone wants to sue you and take your coat, give your cloak as well; and if anyone forces you to go one mile, go also the second mile. Give to everyone who begs from you, and do not refuse anyone who wants to borrow from you.”

Tuesday 19 June

Love your enemies

Matthew 5: 43-48

Jesus said: “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy’. But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax-collectors do the same? And if you greet only your brothers and sisters, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”

Wednesday 20 June

True piety

Matthew 6: 1-6, 16-18

Jesus said: “Beware of practising your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven. So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

“And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

“And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”

Thursday 21 June

The Lord's Prayer

Matthew 6: 7-15

Jesus said: "When you are praying, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. Pray then in this way:

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come.

Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our.

do not bring us to the time of trial, but rescue us from the evil.

For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

Friday 22 June

Treasures in heaven

Matthew 6: 19-23

Jesus said: "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light; but if your eye is unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!"

Saturday 23 June

Do not worry

Matthew 6: 24-34

Jesus said: “No one can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth. Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these.

“But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear?’ For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today’s trouble is enough for today.”

Sunday 24 June

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Mark 4:35-41

When evening had come, Jesus said to his disciples, “Let us go across to the other side”. And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. Other boats were with him. A great gale arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him up and said to him, “Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?” He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea,

“Peace! Be still!” Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm. He said to them, “Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?” And they were filled with great awe and said to one another, “Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?”

Monday 25 June

Do not judge

Matthew 7: 1-5

Jesus said: “Do not judge, so that you may not be judged. For with the judgement you make you will be judged, and the measure you give will be the measure you get. Why do you see the speck in your neighbour’s eye, but do not notice the log in your own eye? Or how can you say to your neighbour, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye’, while the log is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your neighbour’s eye.”

Tuesday 26 June

The narrow gate

Matthew 7:6-14

Jesus said, “Do not give what is holy to dogs; and do not throw your pearls before swine, or they will trample them under foot and turn and maul you. Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. Is there anyone among you who, if your child asks for bread, will give a stone? Or if the child asks for a fish, will give a snake? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him! In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets. Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the road is easy that leads to destruction, and there are many who take it. For the gate is narrow and the road is hard that leads to life, and there are few who find it.”

Wednesday 27 June

'By their fruits you will know them'

Matthew 7:15-20

Jesus said, “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorns, or figs from thistles? In the same way, every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus you will know them by their fruits.”

Thursday 28 June

Doing God’s will

Matthew 7: 21-29

Jesus said: “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord’, will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only one who does the will of my Father in heaven. On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many deeds of power in your name?’ Then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; go away from me, you evildoers’.

“Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell—and great was its fall!”

Now when Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes.

Friday 29 June

PETER & PAUL, APOSTLES & MARTYRS

John 21:15-22

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you”. Jesus said to him, “Feed my lambs”. A second time he said to him, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you”. Jesus said to him, “Tend my sheep”. He said to him the third time, “Simon son of John, do you love me?”

Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, “Do you love me?” And he said to him, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you”. Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep. Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go.” (He said this to indicate the kind of death by which he would glorify God.) After this he said to him, “Follow me”.

Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them; he was the one who had reclined next to Jesus at the supper and had said, “Lord, who is it that is going to betray you?” When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, “Lord, what about him?” Jesus said to him, “If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? Follow me!”

Saturday 30 June

Jesus heals the centurion's servant

Matthew 8: 5-13

When Jesus entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him, appealing to him and saying, “Lord, my servant is lying at home paralysed, in terrible distress”. And he said to him, “I will come and cure him”. The centurion answered, “Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; but only speak the word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to one, ‘Go’, and he goes, and to another, ‘Come’, and he comes, and to my

slave, 'Do this', and the slave does it." When Jesus heard him, he was amazed and said to those who followed him, "Truly I tell you, in no one in Israel have I found such faith. I tell you, many will come from east and west and will eat with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while the heirs of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." And to the centurion Jesus said, "Go; let it be done for you according to your faith". And the servant was healed in that hour.

When Jesus entered Peter's house, he saw his mother-in-law lying in bed with a fever; he touched her hand, and the fever left her, and she got up and began to serve him. That evening they brought to him many who were possessed by demons; and he cast out the spirits with a word, and cured all who were sick. This was to fulfil what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah, "He took our infirmities and bore our diseases".

Sunday 1 July

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Mark 5:21-43

When Jesus had crossed again in the boat to the other side, a great crowd gathered round him; and he was by the lake. Then one of the leaders of the synagogue named Jairus came and, when he saw him, fell at his feet and begged him repeatedly, "My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be made well, and live." So he went with him. And a large crowd followed him and pressed in on him.

Now there was a woman who had been suffering from haemorrhages for twelve years. She had endured much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had; and she was no better, but rather grew worse. She had heard about Jesus, and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, for she said, "If I but touch his clothes, I will be made well". Immediately her haemorrhage stopped; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease. Immediately aware that power had gone forth from him, Jesus turned about in the crowd and said, "Who touched my clothes?" And his disciples said to him, "You see the crowd pressing in on you; how can you say, 'Who touched me?'" He looked all round to see who had

done it. But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling, fell down before him, and told him the whole truth. He said to her, “Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease”.

While he was still speaking, some people came from the leader’s house to say, “Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the teacher any further?” But overhearing what they said, Jesus said to the leader of the synagogue, “Do not fear, only believe”. He allowed no one to follow him except Peter, James, and John, the brother of James. When they came to the house of the leader of the synagogue, he saw a commotion, people weeping and wailing loudly. When he had entered, he said to them, “Why do you make a commotion and weep? The child is not dead but sleeping.” And they laughed at him. Then he put them all outside, and took the child’s father and mother and those who were with him, and went in where the child was. He took her by the hand and said to her, “Talitha cum”, which means, “Little girl, get up!” And immediately the girl got up and began to walk about (she was twelve years of age). At this they were overcome with amazement. He strictly ordered them that no one should know this, and told them to give her something to eat.

Monday 2 July

‘Follow me’

Matthew 8: 18-22

Now when Jesus saw great crowds around him, he gave orders to go over to the other side. A scribe then approached and said, ‘Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go.’ And Jesus said to him, ‘Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.’ Another of his disciples said to him, ‘Lord, first let me go and bury my father.’ But Jesus said to him, ‘Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead.’

Tuesday 3 July

'Lord, save us!'

Matthew 8:23-27

When Jesus got into the boat, his disciples followed him. A gale arose on the lake, so great that the boat was being swamped by the waves; but he was asleep. And they went and woke him up, saying, "Lord, save us! We are perishing!" And he said to them, "Why are you afraid, you of little faith?" Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a dead calm. They were amazed, saying, "What sort of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?"

Wednesday 4 July

Jesus casts out demons

Matthew 8: 28-34

When Jesus came to the other side, to the country of the Gadarenes, two demoniacs coming out of the tombs met him. They were so fierce that no one could pass that way. Suddenly they shouted, 'What have you to do with us, Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?' Now a large herd of swine was feeding at some distance from them. The demons begged him, 'If you cast us out, send us into the herd of swine.' And he said to them, 'Go!' So they came out and entered the swine; and suddenly, the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and perished in the water. The swineherds ran off, and on going into the town, they told the whole story about what had happened to the demoniacs. Then the whole town came out to meet Jesus; and when they saw him, they begged him to leave their neighbourhood.

Thursday 5 July

'Your sins are forgiven'

Matthew 9: 1-8

After getting into a boat Jesus crossed the water and came to his own town. And just then some people were carrying a paralysed man lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, 'Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven.' Then

some of the scribes said to themselves, ‘This man is blaspheming.’ But Jesus, perceiving their thoughts, said, ‘Why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier, to say, “Your sins are forgiven”, or to say, “Stand up and walk”? But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins’—he then said to the paralytic—‘Stand up, take your bed and go to your home.’ And he stood up and went to his home. When the crowds saw it, they were filled with awe, and they glorified God, who had given such authority to human beings.

Friday 6 July

Jesus calls not the righteous, but sinners

Matthew 9:9-13

As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth; and he said to him, “Follow me”. And he got up and followed him. And as he sat at dinner in the house, many tax-collectors and sinners came and were sitting with him and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax-collectors and sinners?” But when he heard this, he said, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. Go and learn what this means, ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice’. For I have come to call not the righteous but sinners.”

Saturday 7 July

New wine in new wineskins

Matthew 9:14-17

The disciples of John came to Jesus, saying, ‘Why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but your disciples do not fast?’ And Jesus said to them, ‘The wedding-guests cannot mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them, can they? The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast. No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old cloak, for the patch pulls away from the cloak, and a worse tear is made. Neither is new wine put into old wineskins; otherwise, the skins burst, and the wine is spilled, and the skins are destroyed; but new wine is put into fresh wineskins, and so both are preserved.’

Sunday 8 July

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Mark 6:1-13

Jesus left that place and came to his home town, and his disciples followed him. On the sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astounded. They said, “Where did this man get all this? What is this wisdom that has been given to him? What deeds of power are being done by his hands! Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us?” And they took offence at him. Then Jesus said to them, “Prophets are not without honour, except in their home town, and among their own kin, and in their own house”. And he could do no deed of power there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and cured them. And he was amazed at their unbelief.

Then he went about among the villages teaching. He called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. He ordered them to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts; but to wear sandals and not to put on two tunics. He said to them, “Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave the place. If any place will not welcome you and they refuse to hear you, as you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them.” So they went out and proclaimed that all should repent. They cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them.

Monday 9 July

Jesus heals a woman and a child

Matthew 9: 18-26

A leader of the synagogue came in and knelt before Jesus, saying, “My daughter has just died; but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live”. And Jesus got up and followed him, with his disciples. Then suddenly a woman who had been suffering from haemorrhages for twelve years came up behind him and touched the fringe of his cloak, for she said to herself, “If I only touch his cloak, I will be made well”. Jesus turned, and seeing her he said, “Take heart, daughter; your faith has

made you well”. And instantly the woman was made well. When Jesus came to the leader’s house and saw the flute-players and the crowd making a commotion, he said, “Go away; for the girl is not dead but sleeping”. And they laughed at him. But when the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took her by the hand, and the girl got up. And the report of this spread throughout that district.

Tuesday 10 July

Jesus has compassion for the crowds

Matthew 9: 32-38

A demoniac who was mute was brought to him. And when the demon had been cast out, the one who had been mute spoke; and the crowds were amazed and said, “Never has anything like this been seen in Israel”. But the Pharisees said, “By the ruler of the demons he casts out the demons”. Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and curing every disease and every sickness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest.”

Wednesday 11 July

Jesus sends out the Twelve

Matthew 10: 1-7

Jesus summoned his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to cure every disease and every sickness. These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon, also known as Peter, and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax-collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed him. These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: “Go nowhere among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. As you go, proclaim the good news, ‘The kingdom of heaven has come near’.”

Thursday 12 July

Proclaim the good news!

Matthew 10: 7-15

Jesus said to them, “As you go, proclaim the good news, ‘The kingdom of heaven has come near’. Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons. You received without payment; give without payment. Take no gold, or silver, or copper in your belts, no bag for your journey, or two tunics, or sandals, or a staff; for labourers deserve their food. Whatever town or village you enter, find out who in it is worthy, and stay there until you leave. As you enter the house, greet it. If the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it; but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet as you leave that house or town. Truly I tell you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgement than for that town.”

Friday 13 July

Be wise as serpents, innocent as doves

Matthew 10: 16-23

Jesus said, “See, I am sending you out like sheep into the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. Beware of them, for they will hand you over to councils and flog you in their synagogues; and you will be dragged before governors and kings because of me, as a testimony to them and the Gentiles. When they hand you over, do not worry about how you are to speak or what you are to say; for what you are to say will be given to you at that time; for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death; and you will be hated by all because of my name. But the one who endures to the end will be saved. When they persecute you in one town, flee to the next; for truly I tell you, you will not have gone through all the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes.”

Saturday 14 July

Do not be afraid

Matthew 10: 24-33

Jesus said, “A disciple is not above the teacher, nor a slave above the master; it is enough for the disciple to be like the teacher, and the slave like the master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household! So have no fear of them; for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered, and nothing secret that will not become known. What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops. Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground unperceived by your Father. And even the hairs of your head are all counted. So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows. Everyone therefore who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven; but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven.”

Sunday 15 July

EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Mark 6:14-29

King Herod heard of it, for Jesus’ name had become known. Some were saying, “John the baptizer has been raised from the dead; and for this reason these powers are at work in him.” But others said, “It is Elijah”. And others said, “It is a prophet, like one of the prophets of old”. But when Herod heard of it, he said, “John, whom I beheaded, has been raised”. For Herod himself had sent men who arrested John, bound him, and put him in prison on account of Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife, because Herod had married her. For John had been telling Herod, “It is not lawful for you to have your brother’s wife”. And Herodias had a grudge against him, and wanted to kill him. But she could not, for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he protected him. When he heard him, he was greatly perplexed; and yet he liked to listen to him.

But an opportunity came when Herod on his birthday gave a banquet for his courtiers and officers and for the leaders of Galilee. When his daughter Herodias came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his guests; and the king said to the girl, “Ask me for whatever you wish, and I will give it”. And he solemnly swore to her, “Whatever you ask me, I will give you, even half of my kingdom”. She went out and said to her mother, “What should I ask for?” She replied, “The head of John the baptizer”. Immediately she rushed back to the king and requested, “I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter”.

The king was deeply grieved; yet out of regard for his oaths and for the guests, he did not want to refuse her. Immediately the king sent a soldier of the guard with orders to bring John’s head. He went and beheaded him in the prison, brought his head on a platter, and gave it to the girl. Then the girl gave it to her mother. When his disciples heard about it, they came and took his body, and laid it in a tomb.

Monday 16 July

Welcoming in Jesus’ name

Matthew 10: 34-11.1

Jesus said, “Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and one’s foes will be members of one’s own household. Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it. Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. Whoever welcomes a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward; and whoever welcomes a righteous person in the name of a righteous person will receive the reward of the righteous; and whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple—truly I tell you, none of these will lose their

reward.” Now when Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples, he went on from there to teach and proclaim his message in their cities.

Tuesday 17 July

Repentance

Matthew 11:20-24

Jesus began to reproach the cities in which most of his deeds of power had been done, because they did not repent. ‘Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the deeds of power done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I tell you, on the day of judgement it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon than for you. And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven? No, you will be brought down to. For if the deeds of power done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I tell you that on the day of judgement it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom than for you.’

Wednesday 18 July

Knowing the Father

Matthew 11:25-27

Jesus said, ‘I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.’

Thursday 19 July

Jesus gives rest

Matthew 11: 28-30

Jesus said: “Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

Friday 20 July

Mercy, not sacrifice

Matthew 12:1-8

At that time Jesus went through the cornfields on the sabbath; his disciples were hungry, and they began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. When the Pharisees saw it, they said to him, “Look, your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the sabbath”. He said to them, “Have you not read what David did when he and his companions were hungry? He entered the house of God and ate the bread of the Presence, which it was not lawful for him or his companions to eat, but only for the priests. Or have you not read in the law that on the sabbath the priests in the temple break the sabbath and yet are guiltless? I tell you, something greater than the temple is here. But if you had known what this means, ‘I desire mercy and not sacrifice’, you would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of Man is lord of the sabbath.”

Saturday 21 July

Jesus the hope of the Gentiles

Matthew 12: 14-21

The Pharisees went out and conspired against him, how to destroy him. When Jesus became aware of this, he departed. Many crowds followed him, and he cured all of them, and he ordered them not to make him known. This was to fulfil what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah: “Here is my servant, whom I have, my beloved, with whom my soul is well pleased. I will put my Spirit upon him, and he will proclaim justice to Gentiles. He will not wrangle or cry aloud, nor will anyone hear his voice in streets. He will not break a bruised reed or quench a smouldering wick until he brings justice to victory. And in his name the Gentiles will hope.”

Sunday 22 July
MARY MAGDALENE,
APOSTLE TO THE APOSTLES

John 20: 1-18

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him”. Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went towards the tomb. The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, and the cloth that had been on Jesus’ head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. Then the disciples returned to their homes.

But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. They said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?” She said to them, “They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him”. When she had said this, she turned round and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? For whom are you looking?” Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away”.

Jesus said to her, “Mary!” She turned and said to him in Hebrew, “Rabbouni!” (which means Teacher). Jesus said to her, “Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God’. Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord”; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

Mary Magdalene was celebrated by the early Church as the ‘Apostle to the Apostles’ because, as the passage from John’s Gospel shows, she was the first witness to the Resurrection of Jesus. She was directed by Jesus to proclaim his resurrection to the other disciples who, initially, did not believe her. She was clearly very close to Jesus, having been healed by him of a severe mental or physical illness. There is no proof however that she was Jesus’ wife; that is probably a fiction. Nor is there any proof that she was a prostitute, as she has traditionally been depicted. It is more likely that she was one of the respected leaders of the early Church, ranking alongside Peter initially.

Monday 23 July

Greater than Solomon

Matthew 12: 38-42

Some of the scribes and Pharisees said to Jesus, “Teacher, we wish to see a sign from you”. But he answered them, “An evil and adulterous generation asks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For just as Jonah was for three days and three nights in the belly of the sea monster, so for three days and three nights the Son of Man will be in the heart of the earth. The people of Nineveh will rise up at the judgement with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the proclamation of Jonah, and see, something greater than Jonah is here! The queen of the South will rise up at the judgement with this generation and condemn it, because she came from the ends of the earth to listen to the wisdom of Solomon, and see, something greater than Solomon is here!”

Tuesday 24 July

JAMES, APOSTLE & MARTYR

Matthew 20: 20-28

The mother of the sons of Zebedee came to Jesus with her sons, and kneeling before him, she asked a favour of him. And he said to her, “What do you want?” She said to him, “Declare that these two sons of mine will sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your kingdom”. But Jesus answered, “You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink?” They said to him, “We are able”. He said to them, “You will indeed drink my cup, but to sit at my

right hand and at my left, this is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father”. When the ten heard it, they were angry with the two brothers. But Jesus called them to him and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. It will not be so among you; but whoever wishes to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be your slave; just as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.”

James, the brother of John, was one of the sons of Zebedee the Galilean fisherman, initially called by Jesus from their fishing boats to follow him. James and John, with Peter, became prominent among the disciples, often depicted as being present at miracles such as the raising of Jairus's daughter, and of course at the transfiguration. Jesus nicknamed James and John the “sons of thunder”, which is probably a reference to their impetuous evangelical zeal and strong tempers. James was martyred by King Herod Agrippa in AD 44 because of his leading role in the early Church community.

Wednesday 25 July

The parable of the sower

Matthew 13: 1-9

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the lake. Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. And he told them many things in parables, saying: “Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Let anyone with ears listen!”

Thursday 26 July

Teaching in parables

Matthew 13: 10-17

The disciples came and asked Jesus, “Why do you speak to them in parables?” He answered, “To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. For to those who have, more will be given, and

they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. The reason I speak to them in parables is that ‘seeing they do not perceive, and hearing they do not listen, nor do they understand’. With them indeed is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah that says: ‘You will indeed listen, but never understand, and you will indeed look, but never perceive. For this people’s heart has grown, and their ears are hard of hearing, and they have shut their eyes; so that they might not look with their eyes, and listen with their ears, and understand with their heart and turn— and I would heal them.’ But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. Truly I tell you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, but did not see it, and to hear what you hear, but did not hear it.”

Friday 27 July

Jesus explains the parable

Matthew 13: 18-23

Jesus said: “Hear then the parable of the sower. When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.”

Saturday 28 July

The kingdom of heaven

Matthew 13:24-30

Jesus put before them another parable: ‘The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field; but while everybody was asleep, an

enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. And 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?” He answered, “An enemy has done this.” The slaves said to him, “Then do you want us to go and gather them?” But he replied, “No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. Let 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.”

Sunday 29 July

TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

John 6:1-21

Jesus went to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, also called the Sea of Tiberias. A large crowd kept following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing for the sick. Jesus went up the mountain and sat down there with his disciples. Now the Passover, the festival of the Jews, was near. When he looked up and saw a large crowd coming towards him, Jesus said to Philip, “Where are we to buy bread for these people to eat?” He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he was going to do. Philip answered him, “Six months’ wages would not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little”.

One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, said to him, “There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But what are they among so many people?” Jesus said, “Make the people sit down”. Now there was a great deal of grass in the place; so they sat down, about five thousand in all. Then Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated; so also the fish, as much as they wanted. When they were satisfied, he told his disciples, “Gather up the fragments left over, so that nothing may be lost”. So they gathered them up, and from the fragments of the five barley loaves, left by those who had eaten, they filled twelve baskets. When the people saw the sign that he had done, they began to say, “This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world”. When Jesus realized that they were about to come and take him by force to

make him king, he withdrew again to the mountain by himself. When evening came, his disciples went down to the lake, got into a boat, and started across the lake to Capernaum.

It was now dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. The lake became rough because a strong wind was blowing. When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the lake and coming near the boat, and they were terrified. But he said to them, “It is I; do not be afraid”. Then they wanted to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat reached the land towards which they were going.

Monday 30 July

The parable of the mustard seed

Matthew 13: 31-35

Jesus put before them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.” He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened”. Jesus told the crowds all these things in parables; without a parable he told them nothing. This was to fulfil what had been spoken through the prophet: “I will open my mouth to speak in; I will proclaim what has been hidden from the foundation of the world.”

Tuesday 31 July

Jesus explains the parable

Matthew 13: 36-43

Then Jesus 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”. He answered, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire,

so will it be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!”

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