

Sunday 'Spiritual Communion' in Ordinary Time

*You may wish to find a space for prayer in front of a cross, a candle, or a special place. The words in **bold** you are encouraged to say out loud as worship and prayer.*

Opening Prayer

The Church of which we are members is not defined by the walls of a building but by the Body of Christ of which we are members.

We are joining with Christians everywhere to be nourished by the one who tells us, 'I am the Bread of Life'.

Opening Sentences in the Season of Ordinary Time

Bless the Lord all you works of the Lord: **♦ sing his praise and exalt him for ever.**

Bless the Lord you heavens: **♦ sing his praise and exalt him for ever.**

Bless the Lord you angels of the Lord: **♦ sing his praise and exalt him for ever.**

Bless the Lord all people on earth: **♦sing his praise and exalt him for ever.**



Prayers of Preparation and Confession

Almighty God to whom all hearts are open,all desires known,and from whom no secrets are hidden:cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,that we may perfectly love you,and worthily magnify your holy name;through Christ our Lord. Amen

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom

The fool has said in his heart, 'There is no God.'

God has looked down from heaven upon the children of earth,
to see if there is anyone who is wise and seeks after God.

We allow ourselves to think about our lives, what we are seeking and what our hearts say about God.

You may wish to pray:

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.



A reading from the Gospel

Read Matthew 10:40-42 (A reflection is attached to the end of the service sheet)

Intercessions

Let us pray for the needs of the world, for our local community, and for those close to you.

End with the Lord's Prayer.

Our Father...

Without you, O God, nothing is true, all things are open to deceit;
do not abandon us to our folly,
but give us hearts that seek you
and, at the last, give us joy in your heavenly city;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**O most merciful redeemer, friend and brother,
may I know you more clearly,
love you more dearly,
and follow you more nearly, day by day. Amen.**

Through dreams and visions, O God,
you broaden the horizon and hope of your people,
that we may discover the meaning of your covenant,
even in the midst of trial and exile.

Give us open and understanding hearts, that having heard your word,
we may seek Christ's presence in all whom we meet. Amen.

Blessing and Peace

May the Lord bless us, and preserve us from all evil,
and keep us in eternal life. **Amen.**

The Peace of the Lord be always with you



Reflection on Matthew 10 v 40-42

We read a short passage of scripture this morning. A simple passage of scripture. A very straightforward message; that the welcome you offer others is the welcome you offer Christ; that a cup of cold water goes a long way.

The sentiment is simple .. 'be welcoming' and 'be aware of others needs'. The call is simple .. offer hospitality and meet the basic needs of others. But the impact is far from modest. Take a moment to consider that in this scenario you are not the one instructed to be hospitable but the one in need of hospitality .. the one who needed a cup of cold water.

What we are taught in this lesson from the Messiah is that we should not overlook the simplest of things in our day to day interactions. That in showing welcome to those we meet we welcome God into our world and into our lives.

What a simple message. That if you want to invite God into your life. If you wanted to welcome Christ into our world .. then start with a welcome to others. Even the least significant in the world's eyes will teach us something about God if we welcome them into our homes and hearts. If you want to offer something of worth to God then offer someone a cup of cold water. In this action God's whole desire for humankind is quenched and God's thirst for human flourishing is satisfied.

The cost of what we are called to perform might seem small. After all, which of us does not have a cup of cold water 'on tap' to offer a guest? However the cost is perhaps not so much in the giving but in the awareness for the disciple of Jesus. Consider rather what it might cost you to become aware of the little ones' needs in our midst.

It might cost us time .. and as we all know 'time is precious'. To offer someone the 'time' that is needed to be welcoming or to provide refreshment is to offer one of the most precious things in the world. Perhaps in the modern world 'time' is more precious than ever! Would you be prepared to pay the price of stopping your agenda for an hour to meet a simple need for your neighbour?

It might cost us missed opportunities ... because when we are focused on the little ones we have no time for the important ones. The truth is it's difficult to listen to the demands of a child and concentrate on the words of others too. We can only focus on one thing at a time and to focus on getting a child a drink might mean disengaging from other opportunities. We have seen the opposite of this attitude in the hilarious moments where executives have been interrupted by children on Zoom meetings or interviews during lockdown. The child's need for a drink or the toilet cannot be met when we are engaged in other 'more important' tasks.

So Jesus offers us such a simple message in this sermon. Welcome others and you will be welcoming God. Meet the needs of children and you will be satisfying God's desires for human flourishing. But we must never underestimate what it will cost us to live like this. It will cost us time and opportunity in the world ... but it will come with great reward too.