

People in the early church expected the age to end within their own lifetimes; however, some today see the Transfiguration (which follows in Chapter 17) as fulfilment of this prophecy.

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~ Notices ~

Easter Vestry - Notice is given that the Easter Vestries will be held on the following dates and places:

Kilnasoolagh Church - 17th September 7.30pm (*changed*)

St Columba's and Christ Church Spanish Point - 20th September after 11.30 service at St Columba's

Elections will be held for the following posts: People's and Rector's Church Wardens, People's and Rector's Glebe Wardens, and other members of the Select Vestry; the Secretary and Treasurer will also be appointed. As this year marks the *Triennium* we shall also be electing the Parochial Nominators and Diocesan Synod Representatives. For a description of roles and responsibilities please see the Parish Handbook (available at the back of Church and also by emailing the Rector). *Please also ensure that you are on the list of registered members of your parish Church - see Church Wardens to check.*

Resumption of Services - A number of precautions are in place due to Covid 19 and we accept that this will mean some inconvenience and changes to our normal routine. Rather than worry people, we hope that these measures will reassure you that we are taking the anti-virus advice very seriously in order to ensure that our churches are as welcoming and safe as possible. The first few services will use a shorter liturgy with music but without hymns. Communion will resume later in the year.

Virtual Camino - I have been walking during August to raise funds for Focus Ireland, the charity that provides homes for the homeless across the country. I started on Scattery Island and have continued across the Burren and West and East Clare. Please support if you can - Covid is bad enough for those of us with the safety of our own homes - pity those who have nowhere for shelter or protection. The link to the Justgiving page is on the front page of our website: <https://clareanglicans.ie>

Prayers - Prayers are said daily for the welfare of our community, our nation and the world. If you have any particular issue that you would like to be prayed for, do please email me on frkevinobrien@me.com or call me on 065 672 4721.

Online services - Please note that these are to continue each Sunday, in addition to the regular meditations during the week on Facebook. During this time away our website <https://clareanglicans.ie> has significantly developed, so please do scroll down the opening page to explore the new sections and information. There are six new sections:

- Worship - a number of videos of services
- Pray - leaflets and resources on ways of praying
- Explore - videos of some inspiring speakers
- Think Question Believe - a parish podcast
- Viewpoint - videos on the basics of Christianity
- Rector's Blog - articles, thoughts, opinions

More sections will soon be added.

Rector: Email: frkevinobrien@me.com Tel: 065 672 4721

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12th Sunday after Trinity (Year A)

Readings and Hymns

Collect

O God, whose Son has shown the way of the cross to be the way of life: transform and renew our minds that we may not be conformed to this world but may offer ourselves wholly to you as a living sacrifice through Jesus Christ our Saviour; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

Suggested Hymns - *For the online service you might like to view these hymns with lyrics on YouTube.*

- 1) Lord thy word abideth
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qcghwj7zZZg>
- 2) God is our fortress and our rock
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V9uGNb8Zfic>
- 3) Brother, sister, let me serve you
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G_ufwqwquqY
- 4) Be still my soul
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uAT6PWayxCI>

Jeremiah 15:15-21

O Lord, you know;
remember me and visit me,
and bring down retribution for me on my persecutors.
In your forbearance do not take me away;
know that on your account I suffer insult.
Your words were found, and I ate them,
and your words became to me a joy
and the delight of my heart;
for I am called by your name,
O Lord, God of hosts.
I did not sit in the company of merry-makers,
nor did I rejoice;
under the weight of your hand I sat alone,
for you had filled me with indignation.
Why is my pain unceasing,
my wound incurable,
refusing to be healed?
Truly, you are to me like a deceitful brook,
like waters that fail.
Therefore, thus says the Lord:
If you turn back, I will take you back,
and you shall stand before me.
If you utter what is precious, and not what is worthless,
you shall serve as my mouth.
It is they who will turn to you,
not you who will turn to them.
And I will make you to this people
a fortified wall of bronze;
they will fight against you,
but they shall not prevail over you,
for I am with you
to save you and deliver you, says the Lord.
I will deliver you out of the hand of the wicked,
and redeem you from the grasp of the ruthless.

Psalms 115

Not to us, Lord, not to us,
but to your name give the glory, ♦
for the sake of your loving mercy and truth.
Why should the nations say, ♦
'Where is now their God?'

As for our God, he is in heaven; ♦
 he does whatever he pleases.
 Their idols are silver and gold, ♦
 the work of human hands.
 They have mouths, but cannot speak; ♦
 eyes have they, but cannot see;
 They have ears, but cannot hear; ♦
 noses have they, but cannot smell;
 They have hands, but cannot feel;
 feet have they, but cannot walk; ♦
 not a whisper do they make from their throats.
 Those who make them shall become like them ♦
 and so will all who put their trust in them.
 But you, Israel, put your trust in the Lord; ♦
 he is their help and their shield.
 House of Aaron, trust in the Lord; ♦
 he is their help and their shield.
 You that fear the Lord, trust in the Lord; ♦
 he is their help and their shield.
 The Lord has been mindful of us and he will bless us; ♦
 may he bless the house of Israel;
 may he bless the house of Aaron;
 May he bless those who fear the Lord, ♦
 both small and great together.
 May the Lord increase you more and more, ♦
 you and your children after you.
 May you be blest by the Lord, ♦
 the maker of heaven and earth.
 The heavens are the heavens of the Lord, ♦
 but the earth he has entrusted to his children.
 The dead do not praise the Lord, ♦
 nor those gone down into silence;
 But we will bless the Lord, ♦
 from this time forth for evermore. Alleluia.

Romans 12: 9-21

Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honour. Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.' No, 'if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads.' Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Matthew 16: 21-28

From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, 'God forbid it, Lord! This must never happen to you.' But he turned and said to Peter, 'Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling-block to me; for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.' Then Jesus told his disciples, 'If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who

lose their life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life? Or what will they give in return for their life?

'For the Son of Man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay everyone for what has been done. Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.'

Commentary

Jeremiah - From Chapter 1, we know that Jeremiah was either born or began his ministry in 627 BC. During his life, Babylonia succeeded Assyria as the dominant power in the Middle East. He was a witness to the return to worship of the Lord (instituted by the Judean king Josiah), and then (after Josiah's death in battle in 609), the return of many of the people to paganism. When Babylon captured Jerusalem in 587, Jeremiah emigrated to Egypt. God called him to be a prophet to Judah and surrounding nations, in the midst of these political and religious convulsions

Romans 12:9-21 - In the preceding chapters, Paul has told us about the "mercies of God" (v. 1), i.e. what God has done for those who have faith in him. In vv. 1-8, he began to explain what our response should be, what is involved in living the ethical life, what obedience to God means, what Christian ethics is, what serving the Lord (v. 11) is. "Let love be genuine" (v. 9) introduces instructions on what it means to be loving towards others. V. 10 can be rendered: Have brotherly love for your fellow Christian; treat him or her with the greatest honour. Then vv. 11-12: do not allow your "zeal" for Christ to slacken; be fervent in the Holy Spirit; "serve the Lord". Rejoice in the hope of the glory of God, looking beyond the present suffering to the future, keep praying. We are to share with ("Contribute to", v. 13) the "saints", the holy ones, our fellow Christians. Practising hospitality to Christians from other places ("strangers", v. 13) was important in the early Church, public accommodation being infested with prostitutes and bandits. Paul now says what pursuing "what is good" (v. 9) requires in our attitude to those beyond the community. He seems to be drawing on the gospel tradition (but not the gospels per se – they were yet to be written.) V. 14 is in the Sermon on the Mount. Hold all in mutual esteem, not thinking oneself better than others (v. 16). Seek out what is "noble" (v. 17) in others. To the extent that you can control the situation, "live peaceably with all" (v. 18). Never even desire revenge (v. 19); leave handling sin to God (at the end of time). Perhaps v. 20 says that by shaming "your enemies" they may come round, repent. Do good when faced with evil (v. 21).

Matthew 16:21-28 - Jesus has been instructing his disciples about the mission they are to carry out on his behalf, about telling the good news. Now his message to them shifts to teaching them that he, the Messiah, must (per God's will and purpose), undergo great suffering – something inconceivable to most Jews. ("Jerusalem" is the city where prophets are put to death.) Peter grasped that Jesus is "the Messiah, the Son of the living God", (v. 16) but he cannot yet deal with the impending death of the Messiah, rather than his direct ascendance to glory. Then v. 24: to be Jesus' followers, we must devote the whole thrust of our lives to God ("deny themselves"), not reserving any part for our personal goals. Be willing to give up physical comfort and safety, accepting martyrdom if necessary. This approach to life will lead to true life with God. V. 26 asks a rhetorical question: nothing that one can get or "gain" now measures up to what God will give to the faithful in the time to come. There will be a reckoning, when Jesus comes in glory at the end of time. Some who hear these words now will still be alive at the Judgement Day (v. 28).