

Christ is the head of the Church, the firstborn, the source of life and growth, the beginning of life and creation. 'In him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.'

Luke 23: 33-43

This Gospel reading may seem out of sequence as we approach Advent and prepare for Christmas. However, the Crucifixion is one of the ways in which we see Christ revealed to the world as King, for the Crucifixion is his triumph rather than his defeat, and it leads not to our death but to his Resurrection and our promise of life. Christ has been betrayed, arrested, mocked, beaten and sentenced to death. He has walked to Calvary, 'the place that is called the Skull,' accompanied by Simon of Cyrene, who helped him to carry his cross, two criminals and a some soldiers who crucified him. On the Cross, Christ continues his ministry of giving forgiveness to those who do not know what they are doing. The division of his clothing fulfils the prophecy in Psalm 22: 18. To be deprived of one's clothing in the Bible is to lose one's identity, as happened to prisoners, slaves, prostitutes and damned people. The mob contemplates what is happening, but the leaders scoff at the Crucified Christ. In an image that draws on Psalm 69: 21, the soldiers offer Christ 'sour wine,' which is to have the effect of reviving him and to prolonging his agony on the Cross. Ironically, the two titles Christ is mocked with – 'Messiah of God, his chosen one' and 'King of the Jews' – are both true. He refuses to subvert God's plan by saving himself from a horrible death. One of the two criminals joins with the mob, challenging Jesus to save himself. However, the other criminal responds positively: 'Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.' Only a king can offer pardon. Christ assures this second criminal of the immediate promise of a place with him in Paradise.

~ Notices ~

Ukraine To donate to the Church of Ireland Bishops' Appeal please use our website link: <https://clareanglicans.ie> or go direct to: www.christianaid.ie

Living the Questions Course Start date: From Weds 19th Oct. 19.00 at Rectory. Please use sign-up sheet to confirm. Booklets are now available at the back of church.

Choir Please let the Rector know if you might like to join a choir for St Columba's Church.

Book Club Meets on the first Monday of every month at 11.00am – usually at the glór café but please check with Sue beforehand – or see the previous Sunday's pew sheet.

Concerts booked

Saturday 10th December 1.00pm
Piano Concert Clare Music Makers

Sunday 11th December Coole Music School Children's Choir
Ste Lucia Concert – time in the afternoon to be confirmed.

Website: clareanglicans.ie

YouTube: www.youtube.com/c/clareanglicans

Facebook: www.facebook.com/clare.anglicans

Rector: Email: frkevinobrien@me.com

Tel: 065 672 4721



Christ the King and Mission Sunday (Year C) 2022

Readings and Hymns

Collect: God the Father, help us to hear the call of Christ the King and to follow in his service, whose kingdom has no end; for he reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, one glory. **Amen**

Suggested Hymns: *In conjunction with the online service you might like to view these hymns on YouTube - with internet links and lyrics so that you can sing along:*

Hymn 1 - (281) Rejoice the Lord is King

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aDFAv0eh-s8>

Hymn 2 - (20) The King of love my Shepherd is

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nWfZ-8s71-k>

Hymn 3 - (468) How shall I sing that majesty

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kOI-YWWWpEXk>

Jeremiah 23: 1-6

Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! says the Lord. Therefore, thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, concerning the shepherds who shepherd my people: It is you who have scattered my flock, and have driven them away, and you have not attended to them. So, I will attend to you for your evil doings, says the Lord. Then I myself will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the lands where I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their fold, and they shall be fruitful and multiply. I will raise up shepherds over them who will shepherd them, and they shall not fear any longer, or be dismayed, nor shall any be missing, says the Lord. The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. And this is the name by which he will be called: 'The Lord is our righteousness.'

Canticle - The Song of Zechariah)

Blessed be the Lord the God of Israel, *
who has come to his people and set them free.
He has raised up for us a mighty Saviour, *
born of the house of his servant David.
Through his holy prophets God promised of old *
to save us from our enemies,
from the hands of all that hate us,
To show mercy to our ancestors, *
and to remember his holy covenant.
This was the oath God swore to our father Abraham: *
to set us free from the hands of our enemies,
Free to worship him without fear, *
holy and righteous in his sight all the days of our life.
And you, child, shall be called the prophet
of the Most High, *
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way,
To give his people knowledge of salvation *
by the forgiveness of all their sins.
In the tender compassion of our God *
the dawn from on high shall break upon us,
To shine on those who dwell in darkness
and the shadow of death, *

and to guide our feet into the way of peace.
Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit*
as it was in the beginning is now and shall be for ever.
Amen.

Colossians 1: 11-20

May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, and may you be prepared to endure everything with patience, while joyfully giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light. He has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers - all things have been created through him and for him. He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.

Luke 23: 33-43

When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. Then Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.' And they cast lots to divide his clothing. And the people stood by, watching; but the leaders scoffed at him, saying, 'He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah of God, his chosen one!' The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine, and saying, 'If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!' There was also an inscription over him, 'This is the King of the Jews.' One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, 'Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!' But the other rebuked him, saying, 'Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong.' Then he said, 'Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.' He replied, 'Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise.'

Prayer

Stir up, O Lord, the wills of your faithful people; that plenteously bearing the fruit of good works they may by you be plenteously rewarded; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Commentary (Patrick Comerford)

These readings, marking the last Sunday in Pentecost, also mark the last Sunday at the end of our journey in the *Lectionary* with Christ on his journey to Jerusalem. We will begin it all again the following Sunday, but this coming Sunday gives us time to pause and reflect on the fact that we have followed Christ for seven months or so through Saint Luke's Gospel. We have seen Saint Luke's distinctive emphases on the poor and their inclusion in the Kingdom, their inclusion among those not normally invited as guests to the great feasts. In the Gospel reading, we are at the moment when Christ is crucified. The crucifixion is truly emphasised on Good Friday, but on Sunday morning the emphasis is on Christ the King and the request to him by one of the criminals to 'remember me' in the kingdom.

Jeremiah 23: 1-6

In the previous chapters in this book, the Prophet Jeremiah made prophecies about four of the last five kings of Judah. Now, rather than predicting the fate of Zedekiah, the last of these kings, God now speaks through Jeremiah about an ideal future king. Judah's kings or shepherds are blamed for destroying and scattering the sheep and for driving them away. They will be punished for your evil doings. However, God will gather the people back together again, and they will grow in numbers and prosper, and he will see that they are ruled by good kings or shepherds, so that they no longer live in fear or find they are in exile again. This new kind of king will rule wisely, his reign will be marked by justice and righteousness, and the people (Judah and Israel) will be united.

Canticle: Benedictus (Luke 1: 68-79) Zechariah was struck mute when he heard that his wife Elizabeth was to give birth to a child in their old age. Later, she gave birth to a son, and his parents have brought him to be circumcised and named. Elizabeth has favoured the name John, and when Zechariah agrees with her he is 'filled with the Holy Spirit,' his speech returns and he speaks 'this prophecy,' the song or canticle we know as *Benedictus* (*Book of Common Prayer* (2004), pp 107-108, 122). The name comes from the Latin for the opening word of Zechariah's song, 'Blessed' (verse 68). Zechariah recalls God's blessings to 'his people.' While the verbs in translations are in the past tense, the present is equally appropriate. The tense in Greek shows how God characteristically acts and what he is inaugurating in Christ. God is to give his people one who will save them from their enemies and from all who hate them. This fulfils the promises made to Abraham and others in the past that they would be rescued from their enemies so that they could serve God in holiness and righteousness. The child who is blessed in this canticle is Saint John the Baptist. He will be the prophet of the most high, although people who first heard Zechariah may have thought then of Elijah, not knowing yet of the mission of Christ as the long-expected and long-promised 'mighty saviour.' John's mission will be to prepare the way for the Lord, going before him, letting them know of the promise of salvation and forgiveness. Those who live in fear and under threat are promised a new way of living and new life in God's kingdom, when God's reign ushers in a time of peace.

Colossians 1: 11-20 The Epistle to the Colossians was written, according to the text, by the Apostle Paul and Saint Timothy to the Church in Colossae, a small Phrygian city near Laodicea and about 160 km from Ephesus in Asia Minor. The author or authors have heard how his readers have trust in Christ and of their hope of eternal life. In the face of opposition from false teachers within the Church, Saint Paul prays that God will make them strong so that they are prepared to endure everything. He reminds them how God has rescued us from the power of darkness and brought us into Christ's kingdom, where we find redemption and forgiveness. The second part of this reading (verses 15-20) is a hymn praising Christ as the king of this kingdom, listing his royal attributes in poetic form. Christ is described here as the icon (*εἰκών*, *eikon*) of the invisible God: when we look Christ, we see what God is like. Everything in creation, in heaven and on earth, has been created through him, from angels to humans, rulers and their subjects.