

## Reflection for 7th Sunday after Trinity

By Philip Baker

This gospel reading is one that covers yet more parables. One the first two are about how tiny things grow into large things; the mustard seed and the yeast. The second two about the pearl and the treasure, are about how people find things of great value and give up everything to obtain them. The fifth one about the fishing catch, is like last week's parable of the weeds in the wheat; it is again about the final judgement; sorting the good from the bad. But Jesus starts each and every one with the words, 'The kingdom of heaven is like...'. What does this all show us? The Kingdom of Heaven can plant a small seed of faith in our hearts that grows into something immense as in the first two. It shows that we can find that immense something and give up all to obtain it, as in the second two. But I leave you to ponder the thought of where does the last parable leave us?



Thanks to Sarah we have been awarded "Good to go" status, indicating that we are taking suitable measures to keep people safe from the virus in our church. Look for this logo in the church porch!



### NEXT SUNDAY 02.08.20 Trinity 8

**SERVICES** 12 noon Mass



### READINGS

OT Isaiah 55.1-5

NT Romans 9.1-5

GOSPEL Matthew 14.13-21

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# St Thomas, Exeter

**Sunday 26th July 2020**

**7th Sunday after Trinity**

Our regular **noon Mass service** in St Thomas's church began successfully last Sunday, and will be continuing weekly through the summer (at least). We're still getting used to the new format, with having to sit apart, no singing, and how to take communion while wearing a face covering, but the chance to worship together seems to be appreciated by those who have come. You should not feel obliged to come along any week, but you will be very welcome if you do join us. We should have a service sheet available for this Sunday. Face coverings, while not compulsory by law, are strongly encouraged to keep your fellow worshippers safe.

We are continuing to meet each week at 10:30 for **Sunday worship by Zoom**. The telephone numbers to join are the same: 0203 051 2874, 0203 481 5237, 0203 481 5240, 0131 460 1196, bearing in mind that's it's worth trying a second one if the first isn't very good. The meeting number is 846 4638 6622 and the access code/password 425499.

Even if you can't join us at either service, please continue to hold each other up to God, and pray for the wider community of St Thomas.



## Collect

Lord of all power and might,  
the author and giver of all good things:  
graft in our hearts the love of your name,  
increase in us true religion,  
nourish us with all goodness,  
and of your great mercy keep us in the same;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

## 1 Kings 3.5-12

At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, 'Ask what I should give you.' And Solomon said, 'You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart towards you; and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love, and have given him a son to sit on his throne today. And now, O Lord my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people, so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted. Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil; for who can govern this your great people?'

It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. God said to him, 'Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches, or for the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, I now do according to your word. Indeed I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you and no one like you shall arise after you.'

## Romans 8.26-39

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very

Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written,

'For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.'  
No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

## Matthew 13.31-33, 44-52

He 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.'

'The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Have you understood all this?' They answered, 'Yes.' And he said to them, 'Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.'

## Post-Communion Prayer

Lord God, whose Son is the true vine and the source of life,  
ever giving himself that the world may live:  
may we so receive within ourselves  
the power of his death and passion  
that, in his saving cup,  
we may share his glory and be made perfect in his love;  
for he is alive and reigns, now and for ever. **Amen**

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## NOTICES

**Knit & Natter** A reminder that this group is meeting on Thursdays 10.30—1 in the Pleasure Ground. Please ring Jenny Tuckett on 01392 498725 for more details.

**Pat Mounce** asks if anyone would like to take over the running of the bingo (when it can restart). If she does not hear from anyone **before the end of July** she will dispose of the books and equipment.