

## Reflection on today's gospel: Mark 3:20-35

Today's Gospel reading is from only the third chapter of Mark's Gospel, but Jesus's ministry has started at full throttle; after numerous miraculous healings, including of lepers and a paralysed man, crowds are flocking to him, to be healed, to hear his teaching, or just to see what all the fuss is about. But Jesus has also flouted conventions upheld and promoted by the religious authorities, and in this passage the first signs of real opposition appear.

In their strong desire to keep control of Jewish religious teaching and practice the scribes go as far as accusing Jesus of doing Satan's bidding when he heals and teaches of God's love. Jesus demolishes their flawed argument and points out a more serious problem: if they are willing to proclaim day to be night just because he is not behaving exactly as they want, it might be they who are promoting the Devil and, by opposing God's work, cutting themselves off from accepting God's offered forgiveness.

His family's objection is more born out of concern for him, but also maybe for their reputation. Like the scribes, they also fail to consider the evidence that Jesus is doing God's work.

And that might make us stop and think: are there times when we criticise others who are sharing God's love in the community just because they are not doing it as we would? Prayer for correct discernment before rushing to judgement can help to keep us in tune with the workings of God's Holy Spirit.

*Ian Totterdell, Churchwarden*



### Codes for the Zoom worship at 10.30

These are codes for Sundays from 11.04.21 until the end of June

**Meeting ID:** 843 1587 4178

**Passcode:** 180903

**Telephone numbers** (as previously) 0203 051 2874, 0203 481 5237, 0203 481 5240, 0131 460 1196

**NEXT SUNDAY 13.06.2021 2nd Sunday after Trinity**

**SERVICES** 10.30am by Zoom, 12 noon in Church

#### READINGS



OT Ezekiel 17: 22-end  
NT 2 Corinthians 5: 6-10 (11-13)  
14-17  
GOSPEL Mark 4: 26-34

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# St Thomas, Exeter

**Sunday 6th June 2021**

**First Sunday after Trinity**

**10.30am by Zoom (phone-in available)**

**12 noon Mass in Church**

Many thanks for **your suggestions** about how we move forward out of this present time and into something resembling the past, but taking account of our recent experiences, and honouring our hopes for the future. Please keep them coming—by email, post, telephone, carrier pigeon ... Revd Sarah is helping to organise these around the **4 Rs** and there will be feedback in due course.

**RETURN:** what are you looking forward to once lockdown ends? **RETAIN:** what do you want to keep from your experience of worship and parish life during lockdown? **RESIST:** what don't you want to return to doing? **RENEWAL:** what is your hope for the future?

June 11 is the feast of **St Barnabas**, companion of St. Paul and Apostle. Here's a Collect for this day:

Bountiful God, giver of all gifts, who poured your Spirit upon your servant Barnabas and gave him grace to encourage others: help us, by his example, to be generous in our judgements and unselfish in our service; through Jesus Christ our Lord.



## Collect

O God, the strength of all those who put their trust in you, mercifully accept our prayers and, because through the weakness of our mortal nature we can do no good thing without you, grant us the help of your grace, that in the keeping of your commandments we may please you both in will and deed; 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**

## Genesis 3: 8-15

They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, 'Where are you?' He said, 'I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.' He said, 'Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?' The man said, 'The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate.' Then the Lord God said to the woman, 'What is this that you have done?' The woman said, 'The serpent tricked me, and I ate.' The Lord God said to the serpent, 'Because you have done this cursed are you among all animals and among all wild creatures; upon your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will strike your head, and you will strike his heel.'

## 2 Corinthians 4: 13-16, 5: 1

But just as we have the same spirit of faith that is in accordance with scripture—'I believed, and so I spoke'—we also believe, and so we speak, because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus, and will bring us with you into his presence. Yes, everything is for your sake, so that grace, as it extends to more and more people, may increase thanksgiving, to

the glory of God. So we do not lose heart. Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. <sup>17</sup>For this slight momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure, <sup>18</sup>because we look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal. For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

## Mark 3: 20-35

and the crowd came together again, so that they could not even eat. When his family heard it, they 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.'

## Post Communion

Eternal Father, we thank you for nourishing us with these heavenly gifts: may our communion strengthen us in faith, build us up in hope, and make us grow in love; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

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## NOTICES

**PCC Meeting** 9th June by Zoom and telephone.

### **Knit and Natter Update for June 2021**

Until Thursday 17th June, we shall be following the pattern of Sunday services—one on Zoom and one in person. Zoom K & N will continue from 11.15am to 11.55am, thanks to Vanessa. At 19 Maple Road we shall meet in person from 10.30 to 12 noon for tea, coffee and chat. We shall review our meeting pattern again after 21st June. All details from Jenny on 01392 498725.

**House Group.** Tuesday evenings. Please contact Ian Totterdell for Zoom details.

**Community Larder** The Community Larder will be collecting on **Tuesdays only** from 10am-12noon. The collecting point is in the Choir Vestry via the Tower door. Please continue to be generous.

**200 Club** If you would like to join the 200 Club please see Andrew Withers.

**Volunteers** required. The rota for cleaning the St Thomas Chapel in the Church is being reinstated. If you are interested in helping with this important task, please ring Jenny Thomas on 01392 213207 for details.

**Advance Notice** Young at Hearts will start on June 23rd with a cream tea and a good 'ole natter. The 3 Musketeers are looking forward to seeing all our old family.