

Reflection on Mark 6: 14-29

In our gospel today, we heard of John the Baptist's martyrdom. Herod had broken the law by marrying Herodias, who was his brother's wife. John the Baptist had publicly rebuked him for this. It's not that surprising then, that Herodias was embittered and hostile against John – so when the opportunity to put an end to him arose, she leapt at it.

Herod's impulsive promise suggests he placed more value on the respect of his guests, than on John's life; he was willing to sacrifice others in order to maintain honour, power and prestige. This can be a very 'human' temptation, especially to those in power. Have we ever, I wonder, said or done things because we fear losing peoples' respect?

No-one likes having their 'sins' or shortcomings pointed out. We're all flawed; Jesus knows this about us more than anyone, yet still loves us. If we're honest to God about it though, we can begin to change from the inside outwards. We can't hide anything from God, BUT as in any relationship, communication is key. Admitting our shortcomings to God can just be simple heartfelt prayer.

Doing this reminds us of our need for God. Doing things in our own strength may take us to a certain point. If we commend things to God asking to be filled with his Spirit – things that may seem insurmountable, things that we can't imagine we'd have the strength or capacity to do – can become possible.

Rev. Alison



Codes for the Zoom worship at 10.30
These are codes for Sundays from 04.07.21 until the end of August
Meeting ID: 859 7288 7300
Passcode: 605760
Telephone numbers (unchanged) 0203 051 2874, 0203 481 5237, 0203 481 5240, 0131 460 1196

NEXT SUNDAY 18.07.2021 Trinity 7

SERVICES 10.30am by Zoom, 12 noon in Church

READINGS



OT Jeremiah 23: 1-6
NT Ephesians 2: 11-22
GOSPEL Mark 6: 30-34, 53-56

CONTACT US

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St Thomas, Exeter

Sunday 11th July 2021

6th Sunday after Trinity

10.30am by Zoom (phone-in available)

12 noon Mass in Church

It was wonderful last Sunday to have our first church wedding since the start of the pandemic, as Su and Ted finally were able to make their vows in a joyful service led by Rev. Eliza. The sun even came out as they processed down the aisle at the end!

It has also been great to see so many of you in church in recent weeks, even though we still have to wear masks and be socially distanced and still cannot sing. We are all waiting to see what changes and relaxations to restrictions will be allowed from Monday 19th July when the Government confirms them next Monday (12th). There are even suggestions that singing will be allowed, but we will have to follow the guidance, including that from the Church of England.

Even if legal requirements to wear masks, etc., are removed, there will still be many situations in which it is advisable, and advised, to remain cautious. We should also be kind in spirit towards those who are nervous and unsure about increased contact with others while the virus is still present.

Ian Totterdell, Churchwarden (Fr David is away)



Collect

Merciful God, you have prepared for those who love you such good things as pass our understanding: pour into our hearts such love toward you that we, loving you in all things and above all things, may obtain your promises, which exceed all that we can desire; 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**

Amos 7: 7-15

This is what he showed me: the Lord was standing beside a wall built with a plumb-line, with a plumb-line in his hand. and the Lord said to me, 'Amos, what do you see?' And I said, 'A plumb-line.' Then the Lord said, 'See, I am setting a plumb-line in the midst of my people Israel; I will never again pass them by; the high places of Isaac shall be made desolate, and the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste, and I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword.' Then Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, sent to King Jeroboam of Israel, saying, 'Amos has conspired against you in the very centre of the house of Israel; the land is not able to bear all his words. For thus Amos has said, "Jeroboam shall die by the sword, and Israel must go into exile away from his land." 'And Amaziah said to Amos, 'O seer, go, flee away to the land of Judah, earn your bread there, and prophesy there; but never again prophesy at Bethel, for it is the king's sanctuary, and it is a temple of the kingdom.' Then Amos answered Amaziah, 'I am no prophet, nor a prophet's son; but I am a herdsman, and a dresser of sycamore trees, and the Lord took me from following the flock, and the Lord said to me, "Go, prophesy to my people Israel."

Ephesians 1: 3-14

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of his glori-

ous grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; this is the pledge of our inheritance towards redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

Mark 6: 14-29

King Herod heard of it, for Jesus' name had become known. Some were saying, 'John the baptiser has been raised from the dead; and for this reason these powers are at work in him.' But others said, 'It is Elijah.' And others said, 'It is a prophet, like one of the prophets of old.' But when Herod heard of it, he said, 'John, whom I beheaded, has been raised.' For Herod himself had sent men who arrested John, bound him, and put him in prison on account of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, because Herod had married her. For John had been telling Herod, 'It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife.' And Herodias had a grudge against him, and wanted to kill him. But she could not, for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he protected him. When he heard him, he was greatly perplexed; and yet he liked to listen to him. But an opportunity came when Herod on his birthday gave a banquet for his courtiers and officers and for the leaders of Galilee. When his daughter Herodias came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his guests; and the king said to the girl, 'Ask me for whatever you wish, and I will give it.' And he solemnly swore to her, 'Whatever you ask me, I will give

you, even half of my kingdom.' She went out and said to her mother, 'What should I ask for?' She replied, 'The head of John the baptiser.' Immediately she rushed back to the king and requested, 'I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter.' The king was deeply grieved; yet out of regard for his oaths and for the guests, he did not want to refuse her. Immediately the king sent a soldier of the guard with orders to bring John's head. He went and beheaded him in the prison, brought his head on a platter, and gave it to the girl. Then the girl gave it to her mother. When his disciples heard about it, they came and took his body, and laid it in a tomb.

Post Communion

God of our pilgrimage, you have led us to the living water: refresh and sustain us as we go forward on our journey, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

NOTICES

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.

Knit and Natter Update for July 2021

We shall continue meeting either in person at 10.30am at 19 Maple Road or via Zoom at 11.15am on Thursdays up to 19th July. All details from Jenny on 01392 498715.

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

Ladies Lunch 24th July at 12.30pm at the Royal Oak. Contact Pat Metford.

