

## Reflection Trinity 15

At a recent Tots group, I was put on the spot by a small child who asked me who Jesus was. I'm embarrassed to say that my mind went blank as I realised that I had around 10 seconds in which to answer and should probably use no more than 10 very simple words. I said something rather incoherent about a man who came back to life. It wasn't my finest moment!

Perhaps I could have used Peter's response to Jesus in today's Gospel reading, who simply said, "You are the Messiah!" (although I am not sure how enlightening that would have been!). To Jesus it showed that Peter had received revelation from God about his identity; not simply as a prophet, but as the chosen one of God who would bring salvation through forgiveness of our sins. Yet even Peter failed to understand the route by which these things would be achieved – not by military might or political power, but through suffering, rejection and death.

Jesus then states something even more shocking: that this path of self-denial is

the way that his followers will travel too. It is only by denying ourselves and trusting ourselves to God's mercy that we will receive true fullness of life. St James takes one single aspect of this – the tongue – and challenges us to bring our words under God's control.

Perhaps this needs to be my prayer as I face more challenging questions from the toddlers: how would you have answered?!



**Codes for the Zoom worship at 5pm on the FIRST Sunday of each month**  
(5th September, 3rd October and 7th November)  
**Meeting ID:** 817 4532 4542  
**Passcode:** 574847  
**Telephone numbers:** 0203 481 5237,  
0203 481 5240, 0131 460 1196

**NEXT SUNDAY 19.09.2021 16th Sunday after Trinity**

**SERVICES** 10.30am in Church (NO zoom service)

**READINGS** OT Jeremiah 11: 18-20  
Psalm 54  
NT James 3: 13-4: 3,7-8a  
GOSPEL Mark 9: 30-37



### CONTACT US

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# St Thomas, Exeter

## Sunday 12th September 2021

### 15th Sunday after Trinity

10.30am Mass in Church

Today is the first Sunday when the only service we have is the 10.30 Mass. Please stay for tea or coffee after the service which will be served in the North Transept. There is no Zoom service this evening as we are only having these on the first Sunday of each month from now on. This means we will be free to investigate other options for afternoon/evening worship on the other Sundays of the month. One service we are looking to introduce is the monthly Healing service. Please contact the Staff Team if you have any thoughts on the matter.

Fr David will be back from his holiday on Tuesday and can be contacted in the usual way.

As we enter Autumn and the children have returned to school, let us pray that the raised numbers of covid infections we have been experiencing lately do not rise too high and lead to further restrictions.

*Phil Baker*



## Collect

God, who in generous mercy sent the Holy Spirit upon your Church in the burning fire of your love: grant that your people may be fervent in the fellowship of the gospel that, always abiding in you, they may be found steadfast in faith and active in service; 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**

## Isaiah 50: 4-9a

The Lord God has given me the tongue of a teacher, that I may know how to sustain the weary with a word. Morning by morning he wakens—wakens my ear to listen as those who are taught. The Lord God has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, I did not turn backwards. I gave my back to those who struck me, and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard; I did not hide my face from insult and spitting. The Lord God helps me; therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set my face like flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame; he who vindicates me is near. Who will contend with me? Let us stand up together. Who are my adversaries? Let them confront me. It is the Lord God who helps me; who will declare me guilty? All of them will wear out like a garment; the moth will eat them up.

## James 3: 1-12

Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers and sisters, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. For all of us make many mistakes. Anyone who makes no mistakes in speaking is perfect, able to keep the whole body in check with a bridle. If we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we guide their whole bodies. Or look at ships: though they are so large that it takes strong winds to drive them, yet they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great exploits. How great a forest is set ablaze by

a small fire! And the tongue is a fire. The tongue is placed among our members as a world of iniquity; it stains the whole body, sets on fire the cycle of nature, and is itself set on fire by hell. For every species of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by the human species, but no one can tame the tongue—a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse those who are made in the likeness of God. From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this ought not to be so. Does a spring pour forth from the same opening both fresh and brackish water? Can a fig tree, my brothers and sisters, yield olives, or a grapevine figs? No more can salt water yield fresh.

## Mark 8: 27-38

Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi; and on the way he asked his disciples, 'Who do people say that I am?' And they answered him, 'John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets.' He asked them, 'But who do you say that I am?' Peter answered him, 'You are the Messiah.' And he sternly ordered them not to tell anyone about him. Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.<sup>2</sup> He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, 'Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.' He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, '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, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of

them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.'

## Post Communion

Keep, O Lord, your Church, with your perpetual mercy; and, because without you our human frailty cannot but fall, keep us ever by your help from all things hurtful, and lead us to all things profitable to our salvation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

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## NOTICES

Just to underline the new pattern of Sunday worship: Mass in Church every Sunday at 10.30, and **on the first Sunday of each month** there will be an online Zoom service of Evening Worship at **5pm**, codes overleaf. Mask wearing is still advised by the Church of England for services in church.

**Coffee and tea** will be offered after the 10.30am Mass. It will be served from the Servedy in the North Transept. If the weather is good, there will be seats outside the North Transept to gather for fellowship. If the weather is poor, we will serve in the Nave. **Volunteers required to make the coffee/tea on a rota system.**

**House Group. Tuesdays at 7.30pm.** We are studying the book of Revelation. We will continue meeting on zoom for now, but hope to be able to meet in person soon. Zoom details from Ian Totterdell. Next **meeting on Tues 21st September**, new people very welcome!

**Community Larder** The Community Larder will be collecting on **Tuesdays** 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 September 2021**

Thursday 16th Sept—venue to be announced. Thursdays 23rd and 30th Sept—19 Maple Road. For details ring Jenny on 01392 498725.

**Robert (Bob) Mounce** A service of Thanksgiving for the life of Bob will be held on Friday 17th September at 1pm at St Thomas Parish Church, Exeter. Donations for Hospiscare, Academy for the Deaf and Friends of Mount Pleasant. Please wear a mask.