

# Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity

Prayers, Readings, Reflection

“Welcome to another short act of worship for the Parish Church of St Martin. For those who are able to follow it as written, I hope it offers some comfort, encouragement and a sense of being together despite the distance between us.”

Rev Jonny



*Be still, and draw yourself closer to the God who rests beside you, before you and within you.*

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

*All* **Amen.**

The Lord be with you

*All* **And also with you**

Every week, as we worship together, we have the opportunity to admit to ourselves, to each other, and to God that we do not always live as we are called. In this time of confession, this time of opening our hearts, let us remember that God is merciful and just, eager to offer grace and love. Let us pray, first in silence.

May your loving mercy come to me, O Lord,  
and your salvation according to your word:  
Lord, have mercy.  
**Lord, have mercy.**

Your word is a lantern to my feet and a light to my path:  
Christ, have mercy.  
**Christ, have mercy.**

O let your mercy come to me that I may live,  
for your law is my delight:  
Lord, have mercy.  
**Lord, have mercy.**

May almighty God have mercy on us,  
forgive us our sins,  
and bring us to everlasting life.  
**Amen.**

*The Collect for the day*

Almighty God,  
whose only Son has opened for us  
a new and living way into your presence:  
give us pure hearts and steadfast wills  
to worship you in spirit and in truth;  
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.

*All*    **Amen.**

## **THE LITURGY OF THE WORD**

*First Reading, from James 2*

My brothers and sisters, do you with your acts of favouritism really believe in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ? For if a person with gold rings and in fine clothes comes into your assembly, and if a poor person in dirty clothes also comes in, and if you take notice of the one wearing the fine clothes and say, "Have a seat here, please," while to the one who is poor you say, "Stand there," or, "Sit at my feet," have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts? Listen, my beloved brothers and sisters. Has not God chosen the poor in the world to be rich in faith and to be heirs of the kingdom that he has promised to those who love him? But you have dishonoured the poor. Is it not the rich who oppress you? Is it not they who drag you into court? Is it not they who blaspheme the excellent name that was invoked over you?

You do well if you really fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." But if you show partiality, you commit sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it.

What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill," and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.

This is the word of the Lord  
All **Thanks be to God**

### *Gospel Reading, Mark 7: 24-end*

From there he set out and went away to the region of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know he was there. Yet he could not escape notice, but a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately heard about him, and she came and bowed down at his feet. Now the woman was a Gentile, of Syrophenician origin. She begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. He said to her, "Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." But she answered him, "Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs." Then he said to her, "For saying that, you may go—the demon has left your daughter." So she went home, found the child lying on the bed, and the demon gone.

Then he returned from the region of Tyre, and went by way of Sidon towards the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. They brought to him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they begged him to lay his hand on him. He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat and touched his tongue. Then looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, "Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened." And immediately his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. Then Jesus ordered them to tell no one; but the more he ordered them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. They were astounded beyond

measure, saying, "He has done everything well; he even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak."

This is the Gospel of the Lord.  
**All Praise to you, O Christ**

### *Reflection*

Where is home for you?

Is it the house where you live? Maybe it's the house where you grew up; or the house where you raised a family? It might be the first place you owned – where you could finally create the home you wanted.

Or maybe it's more than a property – maybe it's a neighbourhood, a Parish, a church, an island.

Where is home for you?

I find that a hard question to answer. As I wrote this sermon I calculated on the back of an envelope that I've lived in 20 different houses in the last 36 years - 11 of those in the last 13 years – and none of them have I ever owned. I've never been homeless, but equally, I've always struggled to call anywhere home.

Home is where the heart is – so they say. I'd like to think my heart is with me, wherever I go. So here is where home is, for now.

But maybe we need to think again about what we mean by home.

We find ourselves ever more inter-dependent and inter-connected – our fruit and veg are brought from other continents; we read news of events on the other side of the world at the

touch of a button; we facetime with family in New Zealand from the comfort of our armchairs. Our neighbourhoods have become global as the world bustles into our living rooms.

And of course, alongside these incredible advances, we also see, close at hand, the suffering of the once distant corners of our world. The COVID Pandemic has shown us our common vulnerability. The chaos in Afghanistan reminds us of our global responsibility. The Climate Crisis – most of all – demands that we confront the perilous state of our shared ecosystems.

When our home is as wide as the ends of the earth, there is no drawbridge that we can raise – no walls can keep out the impending catastrophe that we are all facing. Our one home – our shared home – is the only home we have in this universe. Wherever you may call home, it shares the one true postcode of planet earth, and there's no getting away from that.

This Creation Season, the church has chosen as its theme – Oikos – The Greek word for home. From Oikos we get 'economy' – which in essence means housekeeping – making a home.

How many times over the last few decades have we heard 'economic arguments' trotted out to defend self-interest and greed? How often are 'economic' reasons given for rejecting refugees, funding fossil fuels and failing to take our climate responsibilities seriously, because it's cheaper, more expedient, more *economical* to ignore the reality of the world's suffering and protect the status quo?

How far have we come from Oikos? How far from making a home for all?

In the Letter of James we hear so clearly that God cares about economic injustice. If we discriminate against our neighbours and serve only our own needs, we have fallen into sin. God has

already chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the Kingdom.

Love your neighbour as yourself. This is the royal law – James calls it.

And in our shared home, our neighbours don't just live on our green lane, or in our Parish – they are fleeing from floods in Southern Asia, and wildfires in Australia and Hurricanes in the Americas.

We cannot follow the royal law - not truly follow it – if our homes are so small and walls are so high.

Even Jesus had to learn this lesson.

The Syrophenician woman set him right. The woman, the foreigner, the outcast – asked Jesus for healing for her daughter. At first Jesus's eyes were closed. He looked at the surface and failed to see a neighbour. But look again. Look deeply into the eyes of the one who is suffering and you will see the eyes of God.

God's creation – our home – is crying out for healing. Socially, environmentally, economically. Our shared home is at risk of collapse.

In eight weeks' time the leaders of the world will meet in Glasgow for the COP 26 Climate Summit. It may just be another summit, another talking shop, another photo-op. But it doesn't have to be.

Let's use this season of creation to come together in prayer and solidarity, and give witness to what we know to be true. The world is our home. All people are our neighbours. The time for action is now.

Amen.

*Prayers of Intercession*

*Pray for one another – those in our church community*

*Pray for the Parish, the Island and the World*

*Pray for Creation, our climate, and our shared home.*

*Pray for the dying, and those who mourn*

*Pray for yourselves, and for your own needs*

Lord in your mercy

**All Hear our prayer**

*The Intercessions may end as follows*

Merciful Father

**All Accept these prayers**

**for the sake of your son,**

**our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen**

*The Peace*

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts,  
since as members of one body you are called to peace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

**All and also with you.**

Let us pray with confidence, as our Saviour taught us

**All Our Father**

**who art in heaven,**

**hallowed be thy name,**

**thy kingdom come,**

**thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread;**

**and forgive us our trespasses**

**as we forgive those who trespass against us.**

**And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from**



**evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory  
For ever and ever. Amen.**

*The Blessing.*

The God of all grace,  
who called you to his eternal glory in Christ Jesus,  
establish, strengthen and settle you in the faith;  
and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and  
the Holy Spirit, be with you and remain with you always.

*All* **Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

*All* **In the name of Christ. Amen.**