

Third 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**

‘How often have I longed to gather your children, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings,’ says the Lord, ‘but you would not come to me.’

Let us as wayward children return to God and confess our sins.

Father, you come to meet us when we return to you:

Lord, have mercy.

All **Lord, have mercy.**

Jesus, you died on the cross for our sins:

Christ, have mercy.

All **Christ, have mercy.**

Spirit, you give us life and peace:

Lord, have mercy.

All **Lord, have mercy.**

May the Father forgive *you* by the death of his Son and strengthen you to live in the power of the Spirit all *your* days.

All **Amen**

The Collect for the day

Almighty God,
you have broken the tyranny of sin
and have sent the Spirit of your Son into our hearts
whereby we call you Father:
give us grace to dedicate our freedom to your service,
that we and all creation may be brought
to the glorious liberty of the children of God;
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

A reading from Job 38:1-11

Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind:
“Who is this that darkens counsel by words without
knowledge?
Gird up your loins like a man,
 I will question you, and you shall declare to me.
“Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?
 Tell me, if you have understanding.
Who determined its measurements—surely you know!
 Or who stretched the line upon it?
On what were its bases sunk,
 or who laid its cornerstone
when the morning stars sang together
 and all the heavenly beings shouted for joy?
“Or who shut in the sea with doors
 when it burst out from the womb?—
when I made the clouds its garment,

and thick darkness its swaddling band,
and prescribed bounds for it,
and set bars and doors,
and said, 'Thus far shall you come, and no farther,
and here shall your proud waves be stopped'?

Reading, Mark 4:35-41

On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side." And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. Other boats were with him. A great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him up and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm. He said to them, "Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?" And they were filled with great awe and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All Praise to you, O Christ

Reflection

Since the earliest days, man has tried to tame the sea. And despite our best efforts, we have never really been successful.

We think of King Canute, commanding the tide to turn – knee deep in the wash, shouting at the waves. I'm never really sure what he was trying to prove.

I have in my mind the image of those cliff-top homes and hotels in the East of England, that centuries ago were built some distance from the shore, but how teeter perilously close to the eroding edge.

We can build piers and barriers, harbour walls and great breakwaters like St Catherine's, but we know, that they will not last. The sea will always win. One day they will all lie in ruins as the relentless power of the water claims another mad-made victim.

Taming the seas is really a byword for human futility. 'Tide and Time wait for no man.'

Throughout the scriptures, therefore, actual power over the sea is a recurring metaphor of the power of God.

In the beginning God brought the seas into being. He formed them, fenced them, filled them.

As the Lord said to Job, "who shut in the sea with doors when it burst out from the womb?"

In the theological imagination, the seas belong to God, they are not ours to control.

And when God was angered, as he often was in the understanding of the Old Testament writers, the sea was often the tool of retribution. The floods that rose around Noah's Ark; the parted seas that closed in on the Egyptian Army when they pursued Moses and the escaping Hebrews. The seas were deadly; God's means of judgement; the last word to a rebellious world.

And yet those same waters were the source of life and prosperity. The rivers irrigated the crops, the lakes were sailed for fish, the oceans were the surest means of travel, commerce and communication. Without them there could be nothing. Essential, foundational, the source of being and life. A gift, indeed, from God.

God made the waters, commanded the waters, and gave them as a gift to the earth.

So, when Jesus slept, curled up in the bow of the boat, bobbing adrift on the

Sea of Galilee – little did the disciples know that here was God, ready to engage with his mighty waters, once again.

The storm rose up and the boat was tossed. The disciples cried and feared for their lives. But the God of the universe quietly slumbered, on a cushion, as the Gospel reminds us.

Then, with a word, ‘Peace’, the storm was stilled. Just as God had spoken the waters into being in the beginning, so now a word was all it took from the Son of God to bring them peace.

Here was the sign – the direct identification of the power of God with this man, Jesus. A sign of miraculous wonder for all who saw it. Only God has power over the wind and waves – this man can only, therefore, be one with God.

‘Believe in God, believe also in me’, says Jesus. Have faith, and do not be afraid.

We are still afraid. The oceans still confront us a threat. We know that our world is heating, that ice-caps are melting, that sea levels are rising, that whole communities lie at risk from the very real consequences of our climate crisis.

More, much more, must be done. But we must not be afraid. Fear will drive us in all the wrong directions.

At the extremes, there are two options. On the one hand panic, on the other hand, hubris.

We can panic, like the disciples did, and loose our minds with stress and worry. But that’s not a good idea.

Or we can ignore it through pride. Deny the crisis altogether and wade out like King Canute and command the rising tide to turn.

But Jesus invites us to respond a different way. Jesus bids us to be calm, and invites us to respond with 'Peace', 'peace – that word again.

It is through finding peace, that we can address our needs. It is through peace with ourselves and between one another that we will find ways forward in this climate crisis. So long as we are scrabbling for resources, and trying to out compete one another, we will never find lasting solutions that lead to sustainable change.

Peace is not just the absence of anxiety and conflict; it is the active pursuit of shared goals. We cannot hold back the sea. But we can find peace with our neighbours, by working together for the common good. We cannot stem the tide, but we can share resources, science, technology and compassion with those most at risk in the world.

The sea is still a metaphor in our consciousness today. It is beautiful, bountiful, life-giving and threatening. We alone cannot overcome it. But we can follow the pattern of Jesus and seek the peace we need to calm the waves in our society, and work together as disciples to meet the challenges of tomorrow.

Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

Pray for one another – those in our church community

Pray for the Parish, the Island and the World

Pray for the sick, the isolated, the anxious and depressed

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

Peace to you from God our heavenly Father.

Peace from his Son Jesus Christ who is our peace.

Peace from the Holy Spirit, the life-giver.

The peace of the triune God 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.

God the Holy Trinity make you strong in faith and love,

defend you on every side,

and guide you in truth and peace;

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.**