

Message from Pastor John

June 7, 2020

“Trust”

Matthew 6:25-34 New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

Do Not Worry

25 “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? 26 Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? 27 And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life?[b] 28 And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, 29 yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. 30 But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? 31 Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear?’ 32 For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. 33 But strive first for the kingdom of God[c] and his[d] righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. 34 “So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today’s trouble is enough for today.

TRUST

It is a tradition in almost all educational establishments to send off their freshly qualified and newly-minted graduates with a flourish: a ceremony that marks their achievement but also that commissions them for the journey still to come.

Often a keynote speaker will offer some sage advice, some seriousness and lots of encouragement.

Today's reading from Matthew seem to fulfill a similar objective. Jesus takes on the authority of God to himself and then offers his keynote address by way of commissioning his graduates.

It is short and sweet but also vast in scope, ambition and challenge. It is hard to fully comprehend that this was to a mere handful of people and yet here we are centuries later, having benefitted from their rising to the task of spreading the Good news

From the unlikely starting point of rural Galilee Jesus launched a new worldwide movement that embraces all peoples. He launched a set of priorities and actions which radically challenged the values and goals of the society he lived in.

It worked, albeit with all kinds of fits and starts, wrong turns, misguided paths, and times when the church seemed to be completely lost.

It worked then as now because Jesus, with his usual skill for unexpected illuminating images, spoke directly to the core of our human experience and obsessions.

“do not worry..... Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? “

This is indispensable advice for all of us .Perhaps particularly applicable to graduates about to set off on the next stage of their journey.

“Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them.”

Spending more time at home I know my family have become more aware and taken delight in seeing the Orioles, Cardinals, Golden Wrens, Hummingbirds and so many others. Clothed by God in glorious color and splendor.

Jesus continues:

“Are you not of more value than they? And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life?”

Worrying is never positive, it is always a negative. It brings stress, not solutions.

“Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow.”

Every day I marvel more and more at the sheer beauty of nature. I cannot believe that all that complexity, beauty and life is accidental. The Bible starts with the act of Creation by God and the wonder and variety of the world witnesses daily to the existence of God.

Jesus then advises us, commands us, promises us that we are loved and that we should trust in that love.

He is telling us that though life has its good and its bad, its rewards and losses, healings and hurts ...life is good...life is a gift...life is to be enjoyed.

Those who heard Jesus that day sought the assurance that He was with them through every challenge to the end of the age.

And in a fast changing and very uncertain time: we seek that same affirmation today: that Jesus is with us through all of this, encouraging us, accompanying us, guiding us, protecting us, loving us and forgiving us when we stray.

“ indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you “

Jesus’s keynote message to all of us. Amen.

Prayer:

As we think back over the years and all the sermons we may have heard about you, Lord, being a Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we conclude we still have much to learn.

Father? Mother? Heavenly Parent? Creator?

Son? Of God? Of Man? Christ? Messiah?

Holy Spirit? Sacred? Empowerer? Challenger?

So many words so much to learn so much mystery.

God of all wisdom, revealed in scripture and sacrament, nature and learning, we are your pupils today and every day; disciples like those who followed Christ in the early days of ministry. Though we live in completely different times, in a world that would be unrecognizable to bible-era people, still your teachings speak in this century too, and still, if we learn from you, we learn to be better versions of ourselves. And so we ask for your wisdom to be our wisdom, your teachings to teach us your ways, your example to be seen in the example we set in our daily living. Of course, Father and Mother of us all, we have much to learn. Forgive our falling and lift us up ready to learn from our mistakes. Of course, Rabbi Christ, we have still not comprehended all that you taught. We confess our slowness to hear and heed. Of course, guiding Spirit, we too often mistake your voice for our own. Have mercy and help us to really listen more intently for you. God of Trinity, aid us in our learning this Trinity Sunday, every Sunday, every day. Amen.