**Morning Praise 1st August 2021 Trinity 9**



**Opening prayer**

Blessed are you, God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, you have blessed us with every spiritual blessing; enable us by your power to be true to our calling and live holy and blameless lives before you all our days, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. **Amen**

**Confession based on Psalm 51:**

**Have mercy on us, O Lord, according to your incomparable, extraordinary love.**

**You know about our wrongs and our mistakes and our brokenness.**

**Cleanse us through and through, renew us, and revive us.**

**Help us to forgive ourselves, for we are aware of our flaws and frailties,**

**and save us from false guilt, and from putting ourselves down.**

**We get things wrong, we know this, and we hurt you and others.**

**We are people with soiled hands and feet of clay.**

**Capable of great things, and of destructive things, capable of healing and harm.**

**And you desire the best for us, you offer us a hope and a future.**

**Help us to face the truth about ourselves, and about you,**

**and as we do this we offer you our failures and successes,**

**our weakness and strengths, our dreams and nightmares.**

**You are not fooled, you see us as we are,**

**and you have the kind of compassion that we can only imagine.**

**So please, refresh us, cleanse us, rebuild our confidence, and renew our faith.**

**Enable us to act honestly, to care deeply, and to walk humbly with you.**

**Today and each day, in the name of your son Jesus, Amen.**

**Absolution** May the Father of all mercies cleanse us from our sins, and restore us in his image

to the praise and glory of his name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.  **Amen.**

### Bible Readings: Psalm 51: 1 - 12 & John 6: 24 - 35

**Reflection** 

King David, the ruler of a wealthy and powerful nation had been caught out, he had arranged the murder of Uriah, a good man and had an affair with his wife. The prophet Nathan bravely called out this gross misuse of power and condemned David’s sin. Psalm 51 is David’s public outpouring of grief and repentance as he acknowledges before God and all his people, the depth of his sin. David’s relationship with God was such that he knew God cannot tolerate sin either great or small; but he also knew God forgives those who are truly repentant. This amazing verse comes from a powerful earthly king who falls before Almighty God, not just asking for forgiveness but that he will be made new, made pure, made steadfast, so he will not fall into such sin again.

I don’t think any of us here have sinned as David did, but the Bible is clear that ‘*all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God ‘* Romans 3: 23

The purpose of confessing our sins to God is so that we may be cleansed, made new and then to nurture and nourish this new heart so that it is steadfast and pure.

This is a process not a one off transaction. Yes, we ***are*** forgiven, we are not then suddenly the complete new, finished perfected person God created us to be, that takes time and a desire to keep digging deeper into God’s resources through his Spirit.

A transaction is a simple purchase of something, if you have Amazon Prime you can complete a transaction in a matter of seconds, we cannot however purchase, or even earn God’s forgiveness. David knew that and we, having the benefit of living this side of the cross know that there was one, complete, eternally significant transaction and that was completed in Jesus. When we ask for God’s forgiveness, in Jesus we are made new and our lives then become more like a spiritual building site. We need to have the ground and messiness cleared, foundations need to be sunk firmly before any real building can begin to take place. Micha Jazz in ‘Every day with Jesus’ says ‘*Salvation is secured in a moment; spiritual formation to become steadfast and pure takes a life time.’*

So how do we make these firm foundations? We turn to another metaphor, the metaphor Jesus uses of bread. Our bodies all have an instinct that calls out for nourishment at regular times, we know the importance of feeding and a good diet. Food is simply a matter of life and death. This makes it an ideal image for describing and emphasising how important Jesus is to us. When he says *‘I am the bread of life’* we understand the life and death nature of this relationship; it implies that with Jesus we have life and without him we die. All we are to do is believe in Jesus and we will be with him, through death, into the fullness of life with God forever. What clearly saddened Jesus in this account in John, was that the people were clinging to his every move, but not always for the right reasons. Their belief was transactional.

They wanted proof, despite having already witnessed some incredible signs and when Jesus offered bread that would last for ever…naturally they wanted it. They didn’t realise Jesus was talking about something more than physical bread but nothing less than the fullness of life of God. Just as he promised the Samaritan woman at the well that those who drink the living water will never thirst again, now the bread of life will provide all those who believe in him, life everlasting. God offers each of us through Jesus, spiritual food which will keep us alive and growing in maturity, not just through this life, but into the next.

Think of the last really good meal you had and how satisfying that felt……that’s how our spirits should feel when we have spent time with Jesus, contented, satisfied, happy, full of energy and health. And just as we need to keep on eating every day, so we need to feed spiritually every day, to keep healthy, to grow strong and that even when our physical bodies become old and weak, spiritually we maintain that strength.

But what if we don’t experience or know that when we’ve been with Jesus? Like some of those people in the crowd, do we need to examine our motives for being there? Is it to worship him, to believe and follow him, or is it more about our own satisfaction, duty and curiosity? Worshipping Jesus is not like going to a restaurant where we enjoy the meal and then roll home to bed. ***He is the bread of life,*** who supplies us with every spiritual blessing. This is the food that will create within us the pure heart, the steadfast spirit which copes with the knocks of everyday life because it is secure in Jesus.

Do we really acknowledge that Jesus is all we need to have fullness of life, do we know Jesus as our daily living bread…or is he more of a side order? We will never grow strong on side orders!

King David never knew Jesus, but he knew the loving forgiveness of Almighty God; which despite having to live with the consequences of his sinful actions, David was able to strive to become more of the godly King God had called him to be, a king with a pure heart and steadfast, willing spirit who continued to bless the people of God.

**Affirmation of faith**

Do you believe and trust in God the Father, source of all being and life, the one for whom we exist?

**We believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Son, who took our human nature, died for us and rose again?

**We believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit, who gives life to the people of God and makes Christ

known in the world? **We believe and trust in him. This is the faith of the Church.**

**This is our faith. We believe and trust in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.**

**Prayers of intercession**

Jesus said,*'I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.'*

This is the promise of God to whom we now pray.

Heavenly Father: thank you for sending your Son to be the Bread of Life for the world.  Help us not to put earthly appetites above devotion to you.  Feed us with your spirit so that we can grow closer to you and more aware of your presence.

We pray for those whose daily need for healthy food, clean water and proper shelter goes un-met, we pray that as a society we would become more caring and recognize our responsibility towards them. We pray for all those who work in food banks, the homeless and those in debt.

We pray for those whose lives have been broken by violence and crime.  Feed them with hope and your comfort. We pray for those who have known nothing but violence and injustice in their home country and risk their lives trying to flee.

Help our government to find compassionate solutions to the situation of migrants crossing the channel. We recognize there are no easy answers but we pray for those people who are so desperate that they woukd risk their children’s lives in an unsafe boat.

We pray for the brave people in the RNLI, and pray for your safety for them as they go to help.

 Lord, when we pray we ask you to give us our daily bread. Help us not to take more than we need, to be ever more aware of squandering the earths’ resources. We pray for all those globally who are suffering with the extreme weather, the recent floods in Europe. Help us to realize that it is our responsibility to find ways to live more lightly on the earth.

Feed those who are sick or sorrowing with healing and consolation through Christ.  We pray particularly for…*.*And meet the needs of others we know personally to be in want and whom we now name silently in our hearts...

Merciful Father, you heard the prayers of your people in the wilderness and fed them bread from heaven despite their sin.  Graciously hear us today and feed us too with the Bread of Life from heaven, even our Lord Jesus Christ, for he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen**

**The Lord’s Prayer** As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

***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 today our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen***

**Closing prayer:**

God give you grace to become the people He has called you to be,

that you may live and work to his praise and glory, and the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with us and remain with us always. **Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. **In the name of Christ. Amen**