



Sunday 28th June 2020

3rd Sunday after Trinity

**The Beacon Parishes Mission Community of Ipplepen with Torbryan,
Denbury, Broadhempston and Woodland**

FIRST READING

Genesis 22.1-14

The Command to Sacrifice Isaac

After these things God tested Abraham. He said to him, 'Abraham!' And he said, 'Here I am.' He said, 'Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt-offering on one of the mountains that I shall show you.' So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and his son Isaac; he cut the wood for the burnt-offering, and set out and went to the place in the distance that God had shown him. On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place far away. Then Abraham said to his young men, 'Stay here with the donkey; the boy and I will go over there; we will worship, and then we will come back to you.' Abraham took the wood of the burnt-offering and laid it on his son Isaac, and he himself carried the fire and the knife. So the two of them walked on together. Isaac said to his father Abraham, 'Father!' And he said, 'Here I am, my son.' He said, 'The fire and the wood are here, but where is the lamb for a burnt-offering?' Abraham said, 'God himself will provide the lamb for a burnt-offering, my son.' So the two of them walked on together.

When they came to the place that God had shown him, Abraham built an altar there and laid the wood in order. He bound his son Isaac, and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to kill his son. But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven, and said, 'Abraham, Abraham!' And he said, 'Here I am.' He said, 'Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me.' And Abraham looked up and saw a ram, caught in a thicket by its horns. Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt-offering instead of his son. So Abraham called that place 'The LORD will provide'; as it is said to this day, 'On the mount of the LORD it shall be provided.'

PSALM

Psalm 13

Prayer for Deliverance from Enemies

To the leader. A Psalm of David.

How long, O LORD? Will you forget me for ever?

How long will you hide your face from me?

How long must I bear pain in my soul,

and have sorrow in my heart all day long?

How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?

Consider and answer me, O LORD my God!

Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep the sleep of death,

and my enemy will say, 'I have prevailed';

my foes will rejoice because I am shaken.

But I trusted in your steadfast love;

my heart shall rejoice in your salvation.

I will sing to the LORD,

because he has dealt bountifully with me.

SECOND READING

Romans 6.12-End

Therefore, do not let sin exercise dominion in your mortal bodies, to make you obey their passions. No longer present your members to sin as instruments of wickedness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and present your members to God as instruments of righteousness. For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

Slaves of Righteousness

What then? Should we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? But thanks be to God that you, having once been slaves of sin, have become obedient from the heart to the form of teaching to which you were entrusted, and that you, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness. I am speaking in human terms because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to greater and greater iniquity, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness for sanctification.

When you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. So what advantage did you then get from the things of which you now are ashamed? The end of those things is death. But now that you have been freed from sin and enslaved to God, the advantage you get is sanctification. The end is eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

GOSPEL

Matthew 10.40-End

Rewards

'Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. Whoever welcomes a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet's reward; and whoever welcomes a righteous person in the name of a righteous person will receive the reward of the righteous; and whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple—truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward.'

Reflection on Matthew 10.40-42 by Reader Hillarie Griggs

One of the many things I have missed during the last few months is being with friends and family. I have missed the sharing of meals and even that very British custom of putting the kettle on, then sitting down with a friend sharing a cup of tea or coffee whilst enjoying a good "catch up". Looking back many of my closest friendships have started with either issuing or accepting an invitation to come and have a drink. Those small acts of hospitality have given me a community to celebrate good times with but also one that provides mutual support and comfort when life is tough.

In our gospel reading Jesus is talking to the disciples before he sends them out on their mission to spread the good news. The few verses we read today are about welcoming and offering hospitality. In biblical times people's identity was linked to family and community, not so much to the individual as in our own time, so welcoming a person was also a sign of welcoming the community they belonged to. He is telling them that people who welcomed them would also be welcoming Jesus himself and the one who sent him, God the Father.

We are reminded that as followers of Jesus we represent him before others but also that the reverse is also true that others represent him before us. This is a privilege and also a tremendous responsibility. But we don't have to be afraid because Jesus assures us that he himself is present in our lives when we welcome others into our midst or when we have to rely on others for a welcome as we carry on this mission of spreading the gospel.

Most of us probably don't find it too difficult to offer a welcome or hospitality to our family and friends, but what about the stranger? Think back to when you offered that first invitation to your home to someone who then became a good friend. It probably took some courage to welcome them when you didn't really know much about them. Hospitality can be a risky business. An open heart and an open home can be a target for unpleasant experiences but it can also be the recipient of unexpected surprises.

As the body of Christ, how easy do we find it to welcome those who are different from us into our spiritual home, the church? Jesus talks about welcoming the "little one in the name of the disciple". In Matthew this is probably referring to a disciple either who was new to faith, or was particularly vulnerable and may have lived on the margin of society. How comfortable do we feel about welcoming these and similar people who may disturb our well-ordered church life? Are we at some level subconsciously saying to ourselves they will have to fit into the way we do things? Do we give them the gift of Christ's presence?