



Sunday 23rd August 2020

11th Sunday after Trinity

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

COLLECT

O God, you declare your almighty power most chiefly in showing mercy and pity: mercifully grant to us such a measure of your grace, that we, running the way of your commandments, may receive your gracious promises, and be made partakers of your heavenly treasure; 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.

FIRST READING

Exodus 1.8-2.10

The Israelites Are Oppressed

Now a new king arose over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. He said to his people, 'Look, the Israelite people are more numerous and more powerful than we. Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, or they will increase and, in the event of war, join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land.' Therefore they set taskmasters over them to oppress them with forced labour. They built supply cities, Pithom and Rameses, for Pharaoh. But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread, so that the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites. The Egyptians became ruthless in imposing tasks on the Israelites, and made their lives bitter with hard service in mortar and brick and in every kind of field labour. They were ruthless in all the tasks that they imposed on them.

The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other Puah, 'When you act as midwives to the Hebrew women, and see them on the birthstool, if it is a boy, kill him; but if it is a girl, she shall live.' But the midwives feared God; they did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but they let the boys live. So the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and said to them, 'Why have you done this, and allowed the boys to live?' The midwives said to Pharaoh, 'Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women; for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife comes to them.' So God dealt well with the midwives; and the people multiplied and became very strong. And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families. Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, 'Every boy that is born to the Hebrews you shall throw into the Nile, but you shall let every girl live.'

Birth and Youth of Moses

Now a man from the house of Levi went and married a Levite woman. The woman conceived and bore a son; and when she saw that he was a fine baby, she hid him for three months. When she could hide him no longer she got a papyrus basket for him, and plastered it with bitumen and pitch; she put the child in it and placed it among the reeds on the bank of the river. His sister stood at a distance, to see what would happen to him.

The daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, while her attendants walked beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her maid to bring it. When she opened it, she saw the child. He was crying, and she took pity on him. 'This must be one of the Hebrews' children,' she said. Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, 'Shall I go and get you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?' Pharaoh's daughter said to her, 'Yes.' So the girl went and called the child's mother. Pharaoh's daughter said to her, 'Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will give you your wages.' So the woman took the child and nursed it. When the child grew up, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and she took him as her son. She named him Moses, 'because', she said, 'I drew him out of the water.'

PSALM

Psalm 124

Thanksgiving for Israel's Deliverance

A Song of Ascents. Of David.

If it had not been the LORD who was on our side
—let Israel now say—

if it had not been the LORD who was on our side,
when our enemies attacked us,
then they would have swallowed us up alive,
when their anger was kindled against us;
then the flood would have swept us away,
the torrent would have gone over us;
then over us would have gone
the raging waters.

Blessed be the LORD,
who has not given us
as prey to their teeth.

We have escaped like a bird
from the snare of the fowlers;
the snare is broken,
and we have escaped.

Our help is in the name of the LORD,
who made heaven and earth.

SECOND READING

Romans 12.1-8

The New Life in Christ

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.

For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgement, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

GOSPEL

Matthew 16.13-20

Peter's Declaration about Jesus

Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, 'Who do people say that the Son of Man is?' And they said, 'Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.' He said to them, 'But who do you say that I am?' Simon Peter answered, 'You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.' And Jesus answered him, 'Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.' Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

REFLECTION BY REVEREND ANDREW DOWN

Called to be Christ's church?

One of the gifts of not being able to worship and gather over these last few months is that many of us have been asking what is church all about? We have asked this question out of places of missing, longing and absence of our normal patterns. We have asked it out of a place of freedom and being released from old ways of doing things. We have asked this question out of places of bewilderment as well as out of places of new found purpose and joy. We are still asking this question as we begin to explore what it means to gather again.

In this week's gospel Jesus asks 'who do you say I am?' and the disciples, like us, still have much to learn. They first respond with a list of prophets - those who guided, warned, encouraged, rebuked the people of God. Indeed, Jesus does these things but not just these things. As Peter answers, he is the Christ, the son of the living God. He has the power to save. Nothing could have prepared the disciples for the new relationship they were being drawn into.

Like those disciples, the invitation to us is to participate in the very life of God and his saving, loving mission to all. Our lives are to be focused on Christ and in doing so we make Christ visible.

Church isn't something we go to once a week but is an identity we share as members of the body of Christ into which we were initiated at our baptism.

The disciples were ordered not to tell anyone that Jesus was the Christ. We likewise are first and foremost not asked to talk about Christ but to be the presence of Christ in the way we live - in reaching out to another in need, in gathering in church to give God thanks and praise, in forgiving, in encouraging, in showing compassion and mercy.

*Christ has no body but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks compassion on this world,
Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good,
Yours are the hands with which he blesses the whole world.
Yours are the hands, yours are the feet, yours are the eyes,
You are his body
Christ has no body but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks compassion on this world.
Christ has no body now on earth but yours.*

St. Teresa of Avila

POST COMMUNION

Lord of all mercy,
we your faithful people have celebrated that one true sacrifice
 which takes away our sins and brings pardon and peace:
by our communion
keep us firm on the foundation of the gospel
and preserve us from all sin;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.