

Clive Whitaker

Clive's funeral is at 2pm on
Tuesday 22nd September.

Due to the current restrictions, there are no places left in church.
Please pray for Lynne, and all relatives and friends at this sad time.

Road closure

Leeds Road between Scholes and Smeaton Approach
will be closed from 7am next Saturday 26th
for the weekend.
This is to do with the East Leeds Orbital Road.

Questionnaire

Have you filled yours in?

Services in All Saints'

There will be a short Holy Communion service on Wednesday
23rd September at 11 am and
30th September at 11 am

There will be a (non-communion) service for

HARVEST FESTIVAL

on Sunday 4th October at 11 am
where we will be collecting
coffee and tins of meat, fish, fruit and vegetables
for St George's Crypt.

Please take notice of the news.

Leeds is heading for lockdown again,
and we may have to stop services at short notice.



All Saints'
at the heart of the
community

SUNDAY 20th SEPTEMBER

TRINITY 15

Creation3



Collect for Trinity 15

Lord God,
defend your Church from all false
teaching
and give to your people
knowledge of your truth,
that we may enjoy eternal life
in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Post Communion

Keep, O Lord, your Church, with your
perpetual mercy;
and, because without you our human
frailty cannot but fall,
keep us ever by your help from all
things hurtful,
and lead us to all things profitable to
our salvation;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Readings for 29th September

Philippians 1:21-30

²¹ For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. ²² If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labour for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! ²³ I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; ²⁴ but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body. ²⁵ Convinced of this, I know that I will remain, and I will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith, ²⁶ so that through my being with you again your boasting in Christ Jesus will abound on account of me.

Life Worthy of the Gospel

²⁷ Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in the one Spirit, ²⁸ striving together as one for the faith of the gospel ²⁸ without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you. This is a sign to them that they will be destroyed, but that you will be saved—and that by God. ²⁹ For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him, ³⁰ since you are going through the same struggle you saw I had, and now hear that I still have.

Matthew 20:1-16

The Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard

20 "For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire workers for his vineyard. ² He agreed to pay them a denarius^[a] for the day and sent them into his vineyard.

³ "About nine in the morning he went out and saw others standing in the marketplace doing nothing. ⁴ He told them, 'You also go and work in my vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' ⁵ So they went.

"He went out again about noon and about three in the afternoon and did the same thing. ⁶ About five in the afternoon he went out and found still others standing around. He asked them, 'Why have you been standing here all day long doing nothing?'

⁷ "'Because no one has hired us,' they answered.

"He said to them, 'You also go and work in my vineyard.'

⁸ "When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Call the workers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last ones hired and going on to the first.'

⁹ "The workers who were hired about five in the afternoon came and each received a denarius. ¹⁰ So when those came who were hired first, they expected to receive more. But each one of them also received a denarius. ¹¹ When they received it, they began to grumble against the landowner. ¹² 'These who were hired last worked only one hour,' they said, 'and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the work and the heat of the day.'

¹³ "But he answered one of them, 'I am not being unfair to you, friend. Didn't you agree to work for a denarius?' ¹⁴ Take your pay and go. I want to give the one who was hired last the same as I gave you. ¹⁵ Don't I have the right to do what I want with my own money? Or are you envious because I am generous?'

¹⁶ "So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

Dear all

19 September 2020

Tomorrow's Gospel is one of those passages that show Christianity to be deeply counter-cultural. It ends with the phrase 'the last will be first, and the first will be last' and before that has the parable of the workers in the vineyard, where those who do virtually no work get as much reward as those who work the whole day.

This parable reminds me of a story from early in Chinese Communism, when Mao stated that all workers would get the same wage no matter what work they did. Millions of workers took that to mean that they would be paid whether they turned up to work or not, so they just stopped working. Industry ground to a halt, crops rotted in the fields, and by the time the government reversed its policy over a million Chinese had died of starvation.

The difference between the Christian story and the Communist history is that the ideal that Jesus speaks of is one that is both ruled over by God and expected to fully become reality only in the heavenly kingdom.

But the meaning behind the story is worth unpacking.

The story of the workers in the vineyard is a parable about the Christian journey and makes clear that to God it makes little difference whether you have been on the journey, working hard for God, for many decades or whether you have only just started that journey. All are equally valued by God. The only thing that matters is that you are on the journey, that you turn up and make your contribution, no matter how small or mean it may be. It is as valued as the greatest sacrifice any saint has ever made.

That makes me think.

I read about these amazing saints, like Saint Francis renewing the church or Francis Xavier spreading the gospel across continents, and I stand in awe and trepidation. I am so rubbish at what I do in comparison. And yet I, and you, are just as much a saint as these great men!

More than that, even.

The final sentence of the passage inverts the normal run of things. In saying that the last will be first and the first will be last, Jesus is not just saying that we mere mortals are equal to the greatest saint, but that we come in ahead of them.

The message is plain. We should celebrate the ones who do the menial jobs, the cleaners and the grass mowers. We should celebrate the ones who have just started on their path of faith or whose faith is but a flickering light. They are as precious to God, more so, even, than all the saints and heroes of history.

Blessings,

Andy