

8<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Trinity. Holy Communion.

In the name of the Father,  
and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

The Lord be with you  
**and also with you.**

**Almighty God,  
to whom all hearts are open,  
all desires known,  
and from whom no secrets are hidden:  
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts  
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,  
that we may perfectly love you,  
and worthily magnify your holy name;  
through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.**

God so loved the world  
that he gave his only Son Jesus Christ  
to save us from our sins,  
to be our advocate in heaven,  
and to bring us to eternal life.  
Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith,  
firmly resolved to keep God's commandments  
and to live in love and peace with all.

**Almighty God, our heavenly Father,  
we have sinned against you  
and against our neighbour  
in thought and word and deed,  
through negligence, through weakness,  
through our own deliberate fault.  
We are truly sorry  
and repent of all our sins.  
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,  
who died for us,  
forgive us all that is past  
and grant that we may serve you in newness of life  
to the glory of your name. Amen.**

Almighty God,  
who forgives all who truly repent,  
have mercy upon *you*,  
pardon and deliver *you* from all *your* sins,  
confirm and strengthen *you* in all goodness,  
and keep *you* in life eternal;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

**Glory to God in the highest,  
and peace to his people on earth.  
Lord God, heavenly King,  
almighty God and Father,  
we worship you, we give you thanks,  
we praise you for your glory.  
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,  
Lord God, Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world:  
have mercy on us;  
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:  
receive our prayer.  
For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father.  
**Amen.****

*Let us pray:*

Almighty Lord and everlasting God,  
we beseech you to direct, sanctify and govern  
both our hearts and bodies  
in the ways of your laws  
and the works of your commandments;  
that through your most mighty protection, both here and ever,  
we may be preserved in body and soul;  
through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

*A reading from the book of Isaiah.*

Ho, everyone who thirsts,  
    come to the waters;  
and you that have no money,  
    come, buy and eat!  
Come, buy wine and milk  
    without money and without price.  
Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread,  
    and your labour for that which does not satisfy?  
Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good,  
    and delight yourselves in rich food.  
Incline your ear, and come to me;  
    listen, so that you may live.  
I will make with you an everlasting covenant,  
    my steadfast, sure love for David.  
See, I made him a witness to the peoples,  
    a leader and commander for the peoples.  
See, you shall call nations that you do not know,  
    and nations that do not know you shall run to you,  
because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel,  
    for he has glorified you.

This is the word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.  
**Glory to you, O Lord.**

Now when Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a deserted place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns. When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them and cured their sick. When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a deserted place, and the hour is now late; send the crowds away so that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves." Jesus said to them, "They need not go away; you give them something to eat." They replied, "We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish." And he said, "Bring them here to me." Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. And all ate and were filled; and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full. And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.  
**Praise to you, O Christ.**

Imagine this scenario: Your cousin, just a few months older than you has been murdered, put to death in prison by a jealous and paranoid ruler. Just imagine that this wasn't only your cousin, but he was the man who'd drawn crowds to himself by announcing that everyone had got to get ready for a new leader and then pointed you out as that new leader.

Maybe imagining that scenario doesn't leave us feeling very safe.

Jesus didn't have to imagine it, that's exactly what happened. His cousin was John the Baptist, who'd called everyone to repent and to get ready for a new start. He had pointed to Jesus to say that he was the one sent by God, he'd criticised King Herod and he'd been thrown into prison and beheaded for his trouble.

According to St Matthew, this happened immediately before today's Gospel account. That's what it refers to when we read *now when Jesus heard this*.

No wonder Jesus wanted to get away to a deserted place, maybe he wanted to hide, plan his strategy or his escape, but it wasn't to be. A crowd had got there before him, desperate for health and soon hungry for food. Would anyone have blamed Jesus for sending them away? Surely he was entitled to some thinking and resting time. Do any of us blame the disciples for wanting to send the crowd away to buy their own food? After all, they were being kind and considerate to hungry bellies weren't they?

And that would probably have been a sensible and practical thing to do.

However, when we encounter Jesus, we encounter the one of whom John the Baptist said *he will baptise you with Holy Spirit and with fire*. We move beyond the merely sensible and practical and we move into the realm of abundance and generosity which marks out the realm of God. We move into the scope of Isaiah's vision which talks of generous and abundant provision of food and drink.

Make no mistake, this story which we call the feeding of the five thousand, places Jesus clearly in the place of God.

That's another scenario for us to imagine. If we are disciples of Jesus, we are disciples of God and we are called to live out of God's abundant generosity.

This is challenging, because it's not about getting everything we want.

Those tired and frightened disciples in that deserted place had to go beyond the immediate and limited possibilities to join in the unlimited generosity of God.

This was risky – they couldn't see how it was going to work out.

They were called, as disciples are always called, to learn from Jesus, to step out of their comfort zones, to act as servants to the world and live in the light of God's abundance.

This is what we are called to, even in the midst of the tiredness and fear which a pandemic brings.

The Apostle's Creed.

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.  
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting.  
Amen.**

In the power of the Spirit and in union with Christ,  
let us pray to the Father.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father,  
you promised through your Son Jesus Christ  
to hear us when we pray in faith.

Strengthen Paul our bishop and all your Church in the service of Christ,  
that those who confess your name may be united in your truth,  
live together in your love, and reveal your glory in the world.

Bless and guide Elizabeth our Queen; give wisdom to all in authority;  
and direct this and every nation in the ways of justice and of peace;  
that we may honour one another, and seek the common good.

Give grace to us, our families and friends, and to all our neighbours,  
that we may serve Christ in one another, and love as he loves us.  
Comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind, or spirit,  
give them courage and hope in their troubles;  
and bring them the joy of your salvation.

Hear us as we remember those who have died in the faith of Christ ...;  
according to your promises,  
grant us with them a share in your eternal kingdom.  
Rejoicing in the fellowship of all your saints,  
we commend ourselves and the whole creation to your unfailing love.

Almighty God,  
you have promised to hear the prayers  
of those who ask in your Son's name;  
we pray that what we have asked faithfully  
we may obtain effectually;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

*Sharing the Peace.*

The peace of the Lord be always with you  
**and also with you.**

Wise and gracious God,  
you spread a table before us;  
nourish your people with the word of life  
and the bread of heaven.

**Amen.**

The Lord be with you  
**and also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right,  
it is our duty and our joy,  
at all times and in all places  
to give you thanks and praise,  
holy Father, heavenly King,  
almighty and eternal God,  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.

For he is your living Word;  
through him you have created all things from the beginning,  
and formed us in your own image.

Through him you have freed us from the slavery of sin,  
giving him to be born of a woman and to die upon the cross;  
you raised him from the dead  
and exalted him to your right hand on high.

Through him you have sent upon us  
your holy and life-giving Spirit,  
and made us a people for your own possession.

Therefore with angels and archangels,  
and with all the company of heaven,  
we proclaim your great and glorious name,  
for ever praising you and *saying*:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,  
God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

Accept our praises, heavenly Father,  
through your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ,  
and as we follow his example and obey his command,  
grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit  
these gifts of bread and wine  
may be to us his body and his blood;  
who, in the same night that he was betrayed,  
took bread and gave you thanks;  
he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:  
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;  
do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way, after supper  
he took the cup and gave you thanks;  
he gave it to them, saying:  
Drink this, all of you;  
this is my blood of the new covenant,  
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.  
Do this, as often as you drink it,  
in remembrance of me.

Therefore, heavenly Father,  
we remember his offering of himself  
made once for all upon the cross;  
we proclaim his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension;  
we look for the coming of your kingdom,  
and with this bread and this cup  
we make the memorial of Christ your Son our Lord.  
Great is the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died:  
Christ is risen:  
Christ will come again.**



Accept through him, our great high priest,  
this our sacrifice of thanks and praise,  
and as we eat and drink these holy gifts  
in the presence of your divine majesty,  
renew us by your Spirit,  
inspire us with your love  
and unite us in the body of your Son,  
Jesus Christ our Lord.

Through him, and with him, and in him,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
with all who stand before you in earth and heaven,  
we worship you, Father almighty,  
in songs of everlasting praise:

**Blessing and honour and glory and power  
be yours for ever and ever.  
Amen.**

Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us

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

We break this bread  
to share in the body of Christ.

**Though we are many, we are one body,  
because we all share in one bread.**

**Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world,  
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world,  
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world,  
grant us peace.**

God's holy gifts  
for God's holy people.

**Jesus Christ is holy,  
Jesus Christ is Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father.**

Strengthen for service, Lord,  
the hands that have taken holy things;  
may the ears which have heard your word  
be deaf to clamour and dispute;  
may the tongues which have sung your praise be free from deceit;  
may the eyes which have seen the tokens of your love  
shine with the light of hope;  
and may the bodies which have been fed with your body  
be refreshed with the fullness of your life;  
glory to you for ever. Amen.

**Almighty God,  
we thank you for feeding us  
with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.  
Through him we offer you our souls and bodies  
to be a living sacrifice.  
Send us out  
in the power of your Spirit  
to live and work  
to your praise and glory.  
Amen.**

The peace of God,  
which passes all understanding,  
keep your hearts and minds  
in the knowledge and love of God,  
and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord;  
and the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you always.  
**Amen.**

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

Stay safe, stay well and God bless you.