

St James' Church, Weybridge

Trinity 8 (Proper 14) Yr C – Sunday 10th August 2025

Introduction and Call to Worship

We are precious in God's sight and all are included in His Kingdom of love. God calls us by name and knows us. And so we gather to worship God our Creator; united by his love for us.

Today's Readings

First Reading Genesis 15:1-6

Abram believes God's improbable promise of a son, and God credits his faith to him as the equivalent of being righteous.

Gospel Luke 12:32-40

Worry is a distraction from recognizing the kingdom which God has given us. Jesus tells his disciples to avoid worry caused by possessions by giving them away.

HOMILY *"It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."* (Luke 12:32)

Do you have your lamps lit, ready for action? Soon our Christmas Lights team will meet to plan this year's display... and yes, our lamps will be lit once more! By planning now, we can avoid some of the worry later.

Straight out of university a graduate applied for work in a small business, to become their new accountant. At the interview he was asked if he had any questions. He asked, 'So what is the principle reason you have for wanting a new accountant?' The manager replied, "well the truth is that I am so full of worries. I worry about everything. But most of all, I worry about money. What if we don't have the finance to fulfil our orders. What if someone doesn't pay. Your job is to take all that worry away." The young upstart smiled and said, "that would be my pleasure, and how much do you pay." The manager grimaced and whispered,

“about £50,000”. “50,000” shrieked the young accountant, “how on earth can you afford that?” “Well,” replied the manager, “that is your first worry!”

Mohandas Gandhi once said *“there is nothing that wastes the body like worry, and one who has any faith in God should be ashamed to worry about anything whatsoever!”* Do we find ourselves filled with worry or are we willing to place all our problems before the Lord and trust God? If we are to answer this question we need to look to the Lord’s Kingdom values. So what is the kingdom? Can we go there? Can we experience this kingdom on earth, as it is in heaven? Today’s Gospel takes up the theme Jesus began last week - setting store on our treasure in heaven rather than being bound to our material treasures here on earth.

Nothing that Jesus says in the Gospels to describe the kingdom suggests that it is too complex to understand, or too much for ordinary humans like you and I to experience. Our Lord uses everything that is commonplace in first-century Palestine to explain the kingdom – light, weddings, harvest, the land and sea, the behaviour of ordinary farmers, fishermen, businessmen, judges, widows, tax collectors and generally sinners who repent - all very ordinary people, but in Jesus’ parables they highlight gateways to a different order of life – the kingdom of God. Jesus demonstrates that because the kingdom is of a

different order, we can glimpse it in far greater detail and clarity than the eye of reason might suspect. And we can start here as we gather around the altar, the table on which Jesus himself is present among us in the Holy sacrifice of the Eucharistic feast.

The meal we participate in offers a glimpse of God's Kingdom and it connects us to god who made us in his own image and allows the creator to reach into our lives and open the door to his Kingdom within us. Today's Gospel tells us how we can maximise these occasions when we answer the knock on the door of our soul and Christ ushers in the breath of the kingdom, bringing clam, dealing with our fears and worries.

The trouble is that we are so busy amassing the treasures of earth, not least by our exploitation of the material world – just look at what we have been doing as human being with plastics, so small they are carried in rain clouds no less. Our lack of diligent care for our own home, the world, is a marker of our collective foolishness, our inability to allow our light to shine brightly to the glory of God the Father. For no matter how much we might aspire to the wholeness of the kingdom and the inclusive values of the Gospel, we are fragmented by countless distractions, human failure and selfishness. It is tragic beyond measure that we possess this eternal treasure and yet we

constantly exchange it for a mess of transitory goods and exploitation.

The answer to the worrying, says Jesus, is simple: give away wealth and possessions and we won't need to worry about losing them, for worry destroys us. We have the kingdom already in our midst – that is right here among us at St James' - but to recognise its goodness, wholeness, essential character and value we need to be whole ourselves; we need to be “in sync” with the kingdom's wholeness. We need to be open to what God wants for us, not just what we want for ourselves. And that is tough.

Jesus says we must wait, because waiting on God is a holy act, a way of restoring wholeness and this may seem to us to be the height of passivity, yet it's the most spiritually active thing we can do. Wait, in prayer upon God. And proper waiting is about being ready, about being fit for purpose, like servants waiting for their master to return, like athletes preparing to run a race at the Olympics in Rio – they must wait and be prepared. People who wait for a person or an event they know is coming always know where they are and who they are.

Waiting on God can involve nothing more than resting and being still. We can also learn more about the kingdom that we are waiting for by reading the Gospels, and the writings of the saints for study can

help us to search for the Kingdom. Of course, being Christ like is the essential character, loving all, just as he loves us. Do we find ourselves filled with worry or are we willing to place all our problems before the Lord and trust God?

Father Damian Harrison-Miles, August 2025