

### **The Gospel Reading: Matthew 21.23-32**

When Jesus entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, 'By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?' Jesus said to them, 'I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?' And they argued with one another, 'If we say, "From heaven," he will say to us, "Why then did you not believe him?" But if we say, "Of human origin," we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet.' So they answered Jesus, 'We do not know.' And he said to them, 'Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, "Son, go and work in the vineyard today." He answered, "I will not"; but later he changed his mind and went. The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, "I go, sir"; but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?' They said, 'The first.' Jesus said to them, 'Truly I tell you, the tax-collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax-collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.'

### **This is the Gospel of the Lord**

Alleluia, alleluia! Blessed are you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for revealing the mysteries of the kingdom to mere children. Alleluia!!

Lord of creation,  
whose glory is around and within us:  
open our eyes to your wonders,  
that we may serve you with reverence  
and know your peace at our lives' end,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

As a corporal act of mercy, please offer the following topics for prayer this week:

- Diocese of Southern Philippines, Swansea & Brecon (Wales), Leicester and all their Archbishops, Bishops and clergy.
- Justin our Archbishop, John our Bishop, Graham the Bishop of Dudley, for Nikki our Archdeacon, Andrew our Rural Dean, for the Clergy, Readers and Lay-minsters of the Stourbridge Deanery, our ALM Team and visiting Clergy, our Musical Directors, Organists and Choir, and our Administrators Christine & Chrissy.
- The homes and families of:  
Galtons Lane, Belbroughton; Vine Lane, Clent; Third Road, Wildmoor;  
CBB: Hackmans Gate Lane, Broome; Sandy Lane, Blakedown & Churchill;
- The Women's Institute
- The Three Roses Home at Clent

**We pray for those suffering** in body, mind or spirit; may they know your presence alongside them in their time of need. Locally we ask for healing and strength for

- BFC: Betty Tarbuck; Jean Grove; Len Hollyhead; Mary Chapman; Freser Nesbitt; Kim Jenkins; Christine Brettle; Ann Hiron; and Jamie
- CBB: Brenda Beausoleil; Katie's mom; Pat; Ian Lindley; Sheila Gordon; Gloria Lanham; for Nicola; Hazel Smith; John Smith; for Heather; Geoffrey Skelding, and Tom Lowe.

**We continue to pray** for the progressive recovery of Carol Hines and Phillip Ash

**We pray, for those mourning** the death of loved ones especially for the family and friends of Horace Ward, Dorothy (Joan) Ledington, John Painter, Winifred Barber, Janet Richards, Margaret Church, Joy Longmore, Wendy Packwood.

**Lord in your mercy Hear our prayer**

## COLLECT FOR THE WEEK

O Lord, we beseech you mercifully to hear the prayers  
of your people who call upon you;  
and grant that they may both perceive and know  
what things they ought to do,  
and also may have grace and power faithfully to fulfil them;  
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.

**Amen**

### First Reading: Ezekiel 18.1-4,25-32

What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, 'The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge'? As I live, says the Lord GOD, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. Know that all lives are mine; the life of the parent as well as the life of the child is mine: it is only the person who sins that shall die.

Yet you say, 'The way of the Lord is unfair.' Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair? When the righteous turn away from their righteousness and commit iniquity, they shall die for it; for the iniquity that they have committed they shall die. Again, when the wicked turn away from the wickedness they have committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their life. Because they considered and turned away from all the transgressions that they had committed, they shall surely live; they shall not die. Yet the house of Israel says, 'The way of the Lord is unfair.' O house of Israel, are my ways unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair?

Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, all of you according to your ways, says the Lord GOD. Repent and turn from all your transgressions; otherwise iniquity will be your ruin. Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed against me, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord GOD. Turn, then, and live.

## Psalm: 25.1-8

### Second Reading: Philippians 2.1-13

If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,

who, though he was in the form of God,  
did not regard equality with God  
as something to be exploited,  
but emptied himself,  
taking the form of a slave,  
being born in human likeness.  
And being found in human form,  
he humbled himself  
and became obedient to the point of death –  
even death on a cross.  
Therefore God also highly exalted him  
and gave him the name  
that is above every name,  
so that at the name of Jesus  
every knee should bend,  
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,  
and every tongue should confess  
that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father.

Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.