

The Fifth Sunday after Trinity YEAR C June 26, 2016

It is not enough to resist evil. It is not enough to not do what is destructive or harmful. It is not enough to avoid what we consider to be sin. For our world to change, for real transformation to happen, for life to be the abundant, beautiful, joyful experience that God created it to be, we must embrace, proclaim and live what is good, what is creative and what is healing. This is a central and persistent call of the Gospel, and it is the heart of this week's readings in the Revised Common Lectionary.

May your worship lead you into paths of life, freedom and the sharing of goodness.

INTRODUCTIONS

For use by lectors, in order of service, parish bulletins and magazines

2 Kings 2:1-2, 6-14: Elijah is taken up to heaven and Elisha receives his cloak and his spirit.

OR **1 Kings 19:15-16, 19-21:** Elijah anoints Elisha as prophet to succeed him. Elisha offers his oxen as sacrifice, and feeds his community with the meat, then leaves his home to follow Elijah.

Psalms 77:1-2, 11-20: The Psalmist cries out to God, remembering God's miraculous work in saving Israel through Moses and Aaron.

OR **Psalms 16:** Praise for the God who is a refuge to those who seek God, who provides good companions and a beautiful inheritance, and who makes known the path of life.

Galatians 5:1, 13-25: Christ gives us freedom, but not as an excuse to engage in destructive behaviour. Rather, through Christ we receive the life-giving fruit of God's Spirit.

Luke 9:51-62: Jesus calls many people, who all have reasons to delay or decline. Jesus proclaims that God's Reign calls us to choose now – to live it and proclaim it.

[Click here to view the readings](#)

http://bible.oremus.org/?show_adj=no&passages=2%20Kings%202:1-2,%206-14%20Acw%20Psalm%2077:1-2,%2011-20%20AGalatians%205:1,%2013-25%20ALuke%209:51-62

COLLECTS OF THE DAY

Grant, O Lord, we beseech thee,
that the course of this world
may be so peaceably ordered by thy governance,
that thy Church may joyfully serve thee
in all godly quietness;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Collect Two

Almighty and everlasting God,
by whose Spirit the whole body of the Church
is governed and sanctified:
Hear our prayer which we offer for all your faithful people,
that in their vocation and ministry
they may serve you in holiness and truth

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to the glory of your name;
through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE 1

"Lord hear our Prayer"

Lord, hear our prayer....

Lord, listen to your children praying,
Lord, send your Spirit in this place;
Lord, listen to your children praying,
Send us love, send us power, send us grace!

Lord our God, we Your people come to You this day fully aware that we need your presence and your help in our lives - yet aware as well that we often fail to stop and to turn to you for that help. We get caught up in the troubles and the turmoils of daily living - we become busy with the goals that we have set for ourselves and those that come to us from our work and our families and our friends. We strive to be loving, we seek joy and peace, we desire to be gentle and patient and kind, to show goodness, and to have self-control - and yet these things all too often elude us. Help us Lord to root ourselves more deeply in you - to seek your will for our lives - to stop and to listen for your voice when we are troubled - to fully rely on you when we strive to do what is right - to remember you and trust in you when we are assaulted - to meditate on your goodness and your gracious will when we begin each day - so that like trees by a stream which send down their roots to the water - we may produce by your power the fruit of your Spirit..... Lord, hear our prayer....

Lord, listen to your children praying.
Lord, send your Spirit in this place;
Lord, listen to your children praying,
send us love, send us power, send us grace!

Compassionate Lord, today our children have ministered to us and shared with us your word through skits and songs - and by their laughter and their energy. We thank you for the wondrous gift each child represents and pray that each one might have the love and the care they need. We ask that you bless them over this summer and help them to grow in faith and love. Restore too the energies of those who have worked with them to encourage them in the love of Christ Jesus. Gracious God - grant that all children may know the fulness of your blessings in this world. May all the little ones of the world who hunger be fed - those who thirst be satisfied - and those who have no home or family be embraced and sheltered and cared for. Empower us to do what you would have us do - so that the sound of laughter and the sight of joyful faces may bless the world..... Lord, hear our prayer....

Lord, listen to your children praying.

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Lord, send your Spirit in this place;
Lord, listen to your children praying,
send us love, send us power, send us grace!

Gracious God - we remember the concerns and prayers that have been lifted up this past week by members of this congregation and our community, concerns and prayers that we now pray for with them...

* For all those who are lonely, fearful or in pain
* for those who struggling with addictions and dependancies that cripple their living and harm the world about them...

Lord, hear our prayer...

Lord, listen to your children praying.
Lord, send your Spirit in this place;
Lord, listen to your children praying,
send us love, send us power, send us grace!

We pray too, O Lord for those who come fresh to our minds and hearts this day - perhaps a father or a sister we have prayed for over many weeks, even years, or a friend who is struggling to find meaning in his life - an acquaintance who needs healing, a stranger who needs the comfort of your Spirit as they grieve.... Lord hear now your people as they pray and name those names, those concerns, before you....

Lord, hear our prayer...

Lord, listen to your children praying.
Lord, send your Spirit in this place;
Lord, listen to your children praying,
send us love, send us power, send us grace!

Thank you Lord, thank you Lord, thank you Lord. Thank you for being our God and making us your people. Thank you for growing in us and for helping us to grow. Thank you for the ministry you entrust to us. May your will be done in us and by us - both now and forevermore. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE 2

Our gracious God, we thank you today for the land in which we live. We thank you for the freedoms which are ours, for the multitude of opportunities presented to each of us, for a land of abundance. Forgive us for our lack of creativity in sharing the nation's bounties inequitably, for tarnishing our political process with greed, for failing the needy. Save us from that litany of destructive behaviours which St. Paul outlined: enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissension, factions, envy, and all that would undo us. Lead us instead to strive for the fruits of the spirit.

- Help us to develop loving behaviours which demonstrate care and compassion for others.
- Help us in an over-serious and gloomy world to know real joy because you help us overcome the world.

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- Help us to work for peace in a world which seems to prefer violence.
- Help us, in our hurry up world, to develop patience and to learn that all does not have to be completed in our hurry up time.
- Help us to demonstrate kindness to all and especially to those with whom we find it especially difficult to be kind.
- Help us to learn generosity with our resources but help us especially to learn how to be generous in our attitudes and behaviours toward people.
- And help us to be faithful, gentle, and self-controlled.

O God, raise our national vision. Give us tolerance and understanding for all peoples. May we hold dear for all people the freedoms we cherish. Amen

POST COMMUNION

Holy and blessed God,
as you give us the body and blood of your Son,
guide us with your Holy Spirit,
that we may honour you not only with our lips
but also with our lives;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

PRAYERS

Beckoning God,
as you moved in the lives of Elijah and Elisha,
move in our lives,
inviting us to journey to unknown territory,
to listen for your voice,
and to speak your prophetic word
in a world that does not want to hear.
empowered by your Spirit,
grant us the courage we need
to journey, trust, listen, speak,
and accept your commission
to be your faithful servant people. Amen.

Friends in Christ,
God invites us to hold the needs of our sisters and brothers
as dear to us as our own needs.
Loving our neighbors as ourselves,
we offer our thanksgivings and our petitions
on behalf of the church and the world.
Hear our prayers, God of power,
and through the ministry of your Son
free us from the grip of the tomb,
that we may desire you as the fullness of life
and proclaim your saving deeds to all the world. Amen.

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As you heard the prayer of Isaac and Rebekah, O God,
and guided them in the way of your love,
so listen now to those who call upon you.
Move us to praise your gracious will,
for in Christ Jesus you have saved us from the deeds of death
and opened for us the hidden ways of your love.
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Lord God, friend of those in need,
your Son Jesus has untied our burdens
and healed our spirits.
We lift up the prayers of our hearts for those still burdened,
those seeking healing,
those in need within the church and the world.
Hear our prayers
that we may love you with our whole being
and willingly share the concerns of our neighbors. Amen.

Creator God,
you call us to love and serve you
with body, mind, and spirit
through loving your creation
and our sisters and brothers.
Open our hearts in compassion
and receive these petitions
on behalf of the needs of the church and the world.
Holy One,
hear our prayers and make us faithful stewards
of the fragile bounty of this earth
so that we may be entrusted with the riches of heaven. Amen.

We praise your abiding guidance, O God,
for you sent us Jesus, our Teacher and Messiah,
to model for us the way of love for the whole universe.
We offer these prayers of love
on behalf of ourselves and our neighbours,
on behalf of your creation and our fellow creatures.
Loving God,
open our ears to hear your word
and draw us closer to you,
that the whole world may be one with you
as you are one with us in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

God of mercy and healing,
you who hear the cries of those in need,
receive these petitions of your people
that all who are troubled
may know peace, comfort, and courage.
Life-giving God,
heal our lives,
that we may acknowledge your wonderful deeds

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and offer you thanks from generation to generation
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

God of salvation,
who sent your Son to seek out and save what is lost,
hear our prayers
on behalf of those who are lost in our day,
receiving these petitions and thanksgivings
with your unending compassion.
Redeeming Sustainer,
visit your people
and pour out your strength and courage upon us,
that we may hurry to make you welcome
not only in our concern for others,
but by serving them
generously and faithfully in your name. Amen.

O God, you set us free in Jesus Christ
with a power greater than all that would keep us captive.
Grant that we might live gracefully in our freedom
without selfishness or arrogance,
and through love become slaves
to the freedom of the gospel
for the sake of your reign. Amen.

God, you call us to go where Christ leads.
Turn us from the ways of the world;
guide us to fullness of joy in the Spirit,
where bodies and souls rest secure;
and grant us strength
to follow the way of the cross,
which frees us to love one another
for the sake of all creation. Amen.

LECTIONARY NOTES

REFLECTIONS ON THEME:

The journey into living the values of God's Reign continues. In the last few weeks we have recognised our need for forgiveness and God's resources, and we have confronted the ways that evil works in our world. This week the focus shifts to God's call for us to embrace the positive power of God's reign, and the difference it makes in the world. Elisha is called to be a prophet and follow Elijah's ministry. The Psalmist recognises God's saving work, and the way God leads God's people into the ways of life and life-bringing. In Galatians, Paul contrasts the destructive ways of evil and sin with the life-giving fruit of God's Spirit. And in Luke's Gospel, Jesus urgently calls all people to follow him and to live and proclaim God's reign immediately – not as some after-death hope, but as a world changing reality that we can experience and share now, right where we are.

CONNECTING WITH LIFE:

GLOBAL APPLICATION: The work of justice, of standing against evil (the *via negativa*) can sometimes leave us feeling cynical and can cause us to embrace expediency as we work for goodness – believing that in the face of evil, we sometimes need to use evil

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means to achieve good ends. This week, we are called to a higher standard, to the *via positiva* of affirming God's goodness, grace, salvation and reign in our world, even in the midst of evil and suffering. This means that on a global scale, there is a need for voices that will call us all to appreciation and protection of goodness. In the corridors of power, good people need to stand for what is good – not partisan, expedient or “not bad”. In every community and every situation good people need to work to protect and proclaim what is good – natural wonders, our environment, places of hard work and great contribution to the world, places of healing and of caring for the marginalised. It is not just money that these people and organisations need. It is affirmation, support and recognition. It is a celebration of the good that is being done. And it is partnerships with others who will stand together to raise up goodness and demonstrate its life-giving power.

LOCAL APPLICATION: As Christians we are too often known for what we stand against, for the way we label all sorts of things as sin, just because we're afraid or we don't understand. Too often we rage against the darkness, instead of responding to God's call to simply shine a light where we can. In what ways have you and your community fallen into this trap? How can you begin to be those who search out goodness wherever you may find, whoever may be doing it, and celebrate it, acknowledge it, support and partner with it? How can you begin to be known for the goodness you stand for, rather than the badness you stand against? How can you hear God's call to be light, to live and proclaim God's life-giving reign (the paths of life), and to raise up the power of goodness in your church and community?

SERMON OUTLINE

Gospel - Learning from the Master: Dealing with Resistance to the Call to Discipleship

In this week's reading from **Luke**, we see consistent resistance to the teaching and call of Jesus. The people of Samaria want little to do with him when they hear he's headed for Jerusalem. His own disciples seem to have ignored his teaching about how to treat enemies and ask about calling down fire on them. One person seems eager to follow Jesus, but apparently backs away when Jesus indicates there's no place one can call home in his ministry. Jesus calls another, but he wants to wait until his father is dead before he joins Jesus. A third wants to go home for a while to say his farewells first, but Jesus concludes: “No one is fit for the kingdom who puts hand to the plow and then turns back.”

This may sound like a rather stern, absolutist standard. But remember what the call is. It is a call to discipleship. And to be a disciple of a master is nothing less than to agree to devote one's whole life to following and learning from the master from that time forward. It's not a call to join a club or a group. It's a call to have your life directed by someone else.

We may be reading a lot of frustration into Jesus's response as, again and again, his call to discipleship is rebuffed. Certainly, it doesn't help that his own disciples barely seem to “get it” and need so much instruction, and in this case, flat out rebuke (verse 55) about their suggestion of calling down fire to consume the Samaritans!

In fact, Luke never reports Jesus is frustrated by this. Not once. Instead we see Jesus putting hand to plow and plowing on toward Jerusalem, continuing to call some to discipleship along the way.

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Jesus keeps plowing, and keeps leading those who *will* answer his call.

So part of what we learn from the master this week is that his call to discipleship is not negotiable and he will go and call others if we don't respond. Our resistance doesn't stop him. Neither should it stop us when we call others into discipleship to Jesus with us and they offer their "excuses."

Such persistence despite excuses, resistance or rejection is not easy to maintain. Who shows such persistence and resilience in living as disciples and calling others to discipleship where you are? What has enabled them to do this? How might their stories be shared to give encouragement to others, or even create new processes or ministries of training and encouragement where you are?

We may also learn from Jesus what kinds of resistances his call stirs up in us. Where we ourselves resist him says much about what we consider more important. It identifies our allegiances. And it gives us a basis to confess, repent and learn to grow, if we will.

So, what causes resistance to Jesus's call to discipleship in your particular worshipping community? Have worship planning team members ask the question to folks they know and listen for responses.

Scripture names several. Is it that Jesus seems too strange and foreign, that his concerns don't match that of your own (the Samaritans)? Is it that you find your desire for control and revenge out in front of Jesus' own call to follow him (disciples)? Is it about security (man who turns away when Jesus says "foxes have holes, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head)? Parental obligations? Connections to family and friends? All or none of those may apply among your congregation and people. Luke isn't trying to be exhaustive here. Talk with folks in the congregation and community, talk among your own leadership team in the church, about where they find themselves wanting to tell Jesus to go away, or they want to ignore his ethic of loving enemies, or they want to tell him to wait. Think about your own points of resistance as well in your worship planning team. Then draw from all of these for images and perhaps soundscapes to support the reading and preaching of this text today.

Which of these two, or what combination of both of these learnings, may be most beneficial for your worshipping community to draw on for today?

ONLINE SERMON SOURCES

Getting past the distractions - the Rev. Nils Chittenden, Sermons that Work, Episcopal Digital Network

<http://episcopaldigitalnetwork.com/stw/2013/06/12/6-pentecost-proper-8-c-2013/>

The Cranky Jesus - the Right Rev. Stacy Sauls (TEC), Day 1

http://day1.org/4897-the_cranky_jesus

The Predicament of freedom - the Rev. Dr. Joanna Adams, Day 1

http://day1.org/1049-the_predicament_of_freedom

Luke 9:51-62 - Two Sermons

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<http://www.rockies.net/~spirit/sermons/c-or13-twosermons.php>

"The Fruit of The Spirit" - scroll down

<http://www.rockies.net/~spirit/sermons/c-or13su.php>

CHILDREN

Rockies net

<http://www.rockies.net/~spirit/sermons/c-or13su.php>

["When the Going Gets Rough,"](http://www.sermons4kids.com/roughing-it.html) Children's Sermon from Sermons4kids.com.

<http://www.sermons4kids.com/roughing-it.html>

Worshiping with Children, Proper 8, Including children in the congregation's worship, using the Revised Common Lectionary, Carolyn C. Brown, 2013.

Children's Sermon - Faith Formation Journeys

<http://worshipingwithchildren.blogspot.co.uk/2013/06/year-c-proper-8-13th-sunday-in-ordinary.html>

Facing Forward - On the Chancel Steps, children's resources by Frances Woodruff

<https://onthechancelsteps.wordpress.com/2013/06/17/face/>

Story for Children's Worship and Family Activity - Ordinary 13, at word-sunday.com: A Catholic Resource for the Lectionary by Larry Broking

<http://www.word-sunday.com/index.html>

HYMN SUGGESTIONS

There's A Light Upon The Mountains

Be Thou My Vision

For The Beauty Of The Earth

Jesus Calls Us O'er The Tumult

We Shall Go Out With Hope Of Resurrection

Creation's King (YouTube Video)

Pass It On (It Only Takes A Spark -YouTube Video)

Shout To The North And The South (YouTube Video)

God Of Wonders (YouTube Video)

Shine Jesus Shine (YouTube Video)

Your Word

Let Me Shine