

Sunday 27th September Transcript of service

Welcome and Gathering Prayers

Hello and a warm welcome to our service for Sunday 27th September, it is great that you have tuned in today.

We are the four churches that make up the Benefice of Rural East York: Stockton on the Forest, Warthill, Holtby and Dunnington.

My name is Mark Poole and I am particularly excited because by the time you are seeing this service live on You Tube I will have been finally ordained having had to wait since it was postponed at the beginning of July.

So today is the first time I can be officially called the curate of this benefice and wear a dog collar – or maybe it's still technically a puppy collar as I still have a few days to wait when filming this clip! Anyway, I am absolutely delighted and want to thank you all who have been praying for me for this special day and of course for my wife Emma too.

So, as we gather together in this way, and in the presence of God, let us give thanks and praise to the Lord.

In the words of Psalm 95 verses 6-7:

Come, let us bow down and worship him;
Let us kneel before the Lord our Maker!
He is our God; we are the people he cares for,
The flock for which he provides

Gracious God, for your love for us, gentle as a shower healing our pain, binding our wounds, we give you thanks.

For your love for us, sure as the dawn transforming our darkness, revealing your truth, we give you thanks.

For your love for us, mercifully unchanging, calling us to you, we give you thanks.

For your love for us, encouraging questions, open to doubts, making us vulnerable, we give you thanks.

Urge us on O Christ to find wholeness through serving you, by serving others, in the power of your Spirit. **Amen.**

Hymn – And can it be

And can it be that I should gain
An int'rest in the Saviour's blood?
Died He for me, who caused His pain?

For me, who Him to death pursued?
Amazing love! how can it be
That Thou, my God, shouldst die for me?
Amazing love! how can it be
That Thou, my God, shouldst die for me?

'Tis mystery all! The Immortal dies!
Who can explore His strange design?
In vain the firstborn seraph tries
To sound the depths of love Divine!
'Tis mercy all! let earth adore,
Let angel minds inquire no more.
'Tis mercy all! let earth adore,
Let angel minds inquire no more.

Long my imprisoned spirit lay
Fast bound in sin and nature's night;
Thine eye diffused a quickening ray,
I woke, the dungeon flamed with light;
My chains fell off, my heart was free,
I rose, went forth, and followed Thee.
My chains fell off, my heart was free,
I rose, went forth, and followed Thee.

No condemnation now I dread;
Jesus, and all in Him, is mine!
Alive in Him, my living Head,
And clothed in righteousness Divine,
Bold I approach the eternal throne,
And claim the crown, through Christ my own.
Bold I approach the eternal throne,
And claim the crown, through Christ my own.

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.

Homily

Mark Poole, our curate, who welcomed you to this service, and who joined us in these parishes on the 5th July, was ordained deacon in York Minster on Friday evening after a nearly 3 month delay due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Revd. Mark, on behalf of the people of these parishes, and across our deanery, as parish priest and Area Dean, I welcome you and your family on this momentous occasion. You have made your mark already, and we are delighted to have you working and praying amongst us.

When we opened the scriptures this morning, Matthew's gospel took us, appropriately enough for today, to a passage where the old-guard of the religious establishment, the chief priests, the elders and the Pharisees, are trying to work out what to do with this 'new kid on the block' – this popular, freshly minted, arrived-out-of-nowhere teacher and rabbi. His popularity was a threat to their status quo, his teaching was in demand. He came with new ideas, a different angle, and a challenging message that tickled people's ears. This is sounding familiar!

In short, this new person had arrived on their patch and was a threat and a menace! And, yes, that is how training vicars can feel when someone gifted, kind and competent is sent to join them! This is, of course, quickly turned on its head by any wise old hand (“Oh yes, he's brilliant, isn't he. **Trained him myself!**) turning the glory back on themselves!

But, to return to our biblical story. The old boys can't challenge Jesus on the truth that he teaches, or the good that he's doing, so they instead question the authority by which he is doing it. Clever!

However, Jesus is nothing if not wily, and his response is quick and cunning. It is also a masterclass in diffusing conflict, and enacting non-compliance with a religious system based on domination (that's not Judaism as a whole, but the religious culture at the time). Jesus doesn't argue and he doesn't debate. He simply asks his own question (“Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?”), and then he tells them a story, a parable with sting in its tail. When they have worked it through, and realised that the parable is about them (in fact he tells a couple more as we read on through the chapter), the priests and elders and Pharisees are furious, and the chapter concludes with them wanting Jesus to be arrested....for telling a story!

Once again, Jesus turns things on their head. Once again Jesus shows us that the kingdom of which he speaks isn't about 'social acceptability', but the acceptance by God of those who believe over those who wear the mantle of the establishment.

Sometimes we get things immediately, or are given a clear early chance in life, like the first son in the story, but then don't live out the promise. And then there are those who come late to the game, those who at first said 'no', either with voice or actions, and they are ushered into the glory of the kingdom where welcome arms are open wide when their no turns to yes.

Mark, you come to us later in life, but your heart has always said 'yes' to God. I pray that you will be a good example to us all of asking good (even difficult) questions, and helping us to challenge that which is unfair or untrue. We look forward to continuing to hear your story as you journey alongside us for the next few years. And we welcome your ministry of helping to usher those who feel excluded or on the edge, into the very heart of the love of God as we all share the work of gospel together.

Intercessions

Thy Kingdom Come
Lord teach us how to pray
For all to know your joy, your peace and love
And know your friendship each and every day

CCLI Song No 7150052

We invite you to respond to the words **“Lord, in your mercy”**
with **“Hear our prayer”**

A verse from Psalm 91: ²I will say of the Lord, “He is my refuge and my
fortress, my God, in whom I trust.”

Loving Father, We praise and thank you because:

In your presence, there is comfort
In your presence, there is peace

So, as we gather in your faithful presence,
We rejoice with all those who have been ordained this week, giving thanks for their willing
response to YOUR calling. In this benefice family, we remember, our curate Mark. Thank
you for all that he brings to us in his generous sharing of your Good News. We ask that
you will continue to enrich and to bless his ministry and faithfulness to your calling.

Guide your Church as it continues its vital role to bring HOPE, comfort and an eternal
perspective to the pressing trials we face. In the words of the hymn: “Let us ponder anew,
what the Almighty can do.”

Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

Heavenly Father, our hearts are saddened with the knowledge of suffering and injustice
that we see on our screens every day. Hear us as we pray for a broken world:

For those without homes;
For those without food;
For those without love.

Lord, raise up men and women of integrity; give them a vision of your Kingdom of Love,
Justice and Truth. Let your light flood even into the darkest places and make us bearers of
your generous love and healing.

Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer

God of all HOPE, we call on you today.
We pray for all those who are living in fear, for all refugees, for those whose livelihoods
are being destroyed by climate change and destruction of habitat.

Those who live in fear of illness, fear for loved ones, fear of financial insecurity,

Fear of loneliness and isolation.

Strengthen us ALL in our resolve to share the Good News of your gospel by acts of compassion and generosity . Show us **new** ways to encourage and care for one another. Help us to see your face in the eyes of the stranger. Refresh us and guide us when we feel weak and weary and help us know our constant need of your grace.

And Lord, Thank you for your promise that in Jesus, nothing will separate us from your love.

Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer

We pray for all who are sick in body mind or spirit. Surround the frightened with your tenderness, give strength to those in pain, hold the weak in your arms of love and give stamina and patience to all those who care for them.

...and in the silence of our hearts we name anyone known especially to us and also to you.

Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer

Merciful and loving Lord, be with all those who mourn the loss of a loved ones. All our stories, all our memories, those we remember, those who we love, safe now in God's hands.

Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer

Grant us the vision Lord,
To reach beyond ourselves,
To share our lives with others
To be aware of where we can help
To be sensitive to your presence
And to give heed to your constant call.

Amen

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in Heaven
Hallowed be your name
Your Kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in Heaven
Give us today our daily bread
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and for ever
Amen

Hymn – Christ triumphant

1 Christ triumphant, ever reigning,
Saviour, Master, King!
Lord of heaven, our lives sustaining,
hear us as we sing:
Yours the glory and the crown,
the high renown, the eternal name.

2 Word incarnate, truth revealing,
Son of Man on earth!
power and majesty concealing
by your humble birth:
Yours the glory...

3 Suffering servant, scorned, ill - treated,
victim crucified!
death is through the cross defeated,
sinners justified:
Yours the glory...

4 Priestly king, enthroned for ever
high in heaven above!
sin and death and hell shall never
stifle hymns of love:
Yours the glory...

5 So, our hearts and voices raising
through the ages long,
ceaselessly upon you gazing,
this shall be our song:
Yours the glory...

The ending and blessing

Thank you for tuning in with us today and I am sure you join with me in thanking all those who have prepared and taken part in producing this virtual service.

And so to our blessing.....

Lord Jesus,
Take our minds and think through us,
Take our hands and bless through us,
Take our mouths and speak through us;
Above all, Lord Jesus, take our spirits and live through each one of us.

May the peace of God which passes all understanding keep our hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ our Lord;
And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit be upon us and remain with us and all those who we love.

Amen