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ORDINARY 16B

21st July 2024

A short act of worship and daily devotions

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Call to worship

The Spirit of the Lord says 'come'.
Jesus Christ, the bride of the church, says 'come'.
Let anyone who hears this say 'come'.
Let anyone who is thirsty, thirsty for the water of life, come.

Come, you are welcome,
The Spirit of God is in this place.
Come, now is the time to worship the Lord,
Time to appreciate the world and those I share my life with,
Time to step into the light of the love of God.
Come Lord Jesus, by your Spirit,

Amen.

You may now wish to say the Lord's Prayer in a version or translation

Reading: Mark 6:30-34, 53-56 – [Click for reading](#)

Responding to the reading

In Mark 6, the disciples return from a busy mission, excited yet exhausted. They gather around Jesus, eager to report everything they've done and taught. Jesus, seeing their need, says, "Come away by yourselves to a remote place and rest a while."

But as they seek rest, they find the crowds waiting, hungry for guidance like sheep without a shepherd. Jesus' heart is moved with compassion. He begins to teach them many things.

Think of a time you planned to rest, but an unexpected need arose and you chose to help. As the passage continues, wherever Jesus and the disciples go, the people bring their sick, and all who touch Jesus are healed. This shows the overwhelming power of compassion in action.

Imagine if someone carried around a mat where everyone they met who stepped on it was healed. What would our community look like? You might like to draw it, or write some words that come to mind when you think of a community like this.

We see Jesus modelling unity, peace, and reconciliation. Christ reconciles us not only to God but to each other, creating one new humanity. This is our mission: to be rest-givers, peace-makers, and healers in a world that divides and exhausts.

1. Where can I offer rest and respite to someone in need?
2. How can I extend compassion, even when I'm seeking quiet?
3. What steps can I take to break down walls of hostility and build bridges of peace?

Hymn:

409 STF – Let us build a house where love can dwell – [YouTube](#)

Blessing

God of grace, Spirit of hope, Christ who transforms me, and the whole world, send me out with your courage, your love, your peace to bring into a community and a world in need.

May I go in peace, and serve the Lord, this and every day. Amen.

Prayers and Prayer Pointers

Monday 22nd July

- In July 1799, the Rosetta stone was found in Egypt. This discovery was remarkable because the stone contains the same text in three different languages – Ancient Greek, and two versions of the ancient Egyptian hieroglyphic scripts. The stone therefore allowed major breakthroughs in translating these ancient languages and unlocking the wisdom of previous civilisations.
- Today we pray for the boundaries and borders in our own lives, communities and countries (the barriers of language, culture, belief systems, class, opportunity, prejudice), and pray that you would show us how to cross these borders, and bring down the walls between us.
- Lord God, show us how to build bridges and not dig trenches. Amen.

Tuesday 23rd July

- God of all time and space I notice you here.
I am ready.
Show me. Amen

Wednesday 24th July

- Draw around the shape of your hand. Write on it the things that you're carrying that feel like burdens. Offer them to God in prayer, remembering that God carries your burdens with you.

Thursday 25th July

- By some mystery, the Spirit of God is here,
By the grace of God, I am loved and accepted here,
In some unknown, unknowable way,
I am connected with people all around the world who are praying right now.
Open my heart to your Spirit Lord, today.
Amen.

Friday 26th July

- As the working week ends, take a moment today to offer thanks to God for some sort of blessing you have received, something that you can give thanks for, as a gift.
- You might like to start a gratitude diary, or to write down the things you are grateful for every day. Take time to read them aloud, and to say thank you.

Saturday 27th July

- Note: Trigger warning (suicide)
- On this day in 1890, Vincent Van Gogh shot himself, and died of the wounds two days later.
- On this day, we pray for all who are affected by suicide. For families, for those who are grieving, for people considering ending their own lives.
- Come, God of grace. Come Lord of light. Come, prince of peace. Amen.