



Sunday 14th July 2024
Proper 10 | Ordinary 15
The Revd
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Creator God for the wonder of your world, we praise you,

Compassionate Jesus for your unconditional love, we praise you,

Cajoling Spirit who unsettles and challenges us, we praise you,

With hearts
with hands
with voices

We meet together in your name.

Loving and faithful God,
we come into your presence rejoicing.
To sing your praise,
to hear your words of acceptance
to share your all-inclusive love.

Be present with us in this time together as we come to worship you.
Knowing that we are called to walk the way of Jesus
we come just as we are and experience your welcome here.

Living Jesus, You show us that God is love:
You love with a love which reaches to all people;
with a love which keeps no record of wrong;
with a love that never ends.

Console us where we feel sad;
come close where we are lonely;

display in and around church, to encourage everyone to think carefully about the words we choose.

To encourage mindful communication children might use these five questions:

Is it

useful?

helpful?

important?

necessary?

kind?

Rejection - The story of Herod beheading John the Baptist is preceded by the rejection of Jesus in his hometown. Herod hears about Jesus' fame spreading and believes that he is John come back from the dead - this gives Mark the opportunity to tell the story of John's murder. Jesus' hometown are unable to accept him because of their assumptions about Jesus' family and background, Herod is unable to respond to Jesus because he is caught up in his guilt-ridden past.

The stories of rejection are the stepping blocks towards a confrontation between Jesus and entrenched powers of convention and tradition that cannot or refuse to see the signs of the kingdom among them. Mark's construction builds up to and defends the need of the cross and the seeming failure of Jesus, but this is to miss what God is doing in secret. While Jesus is always being rejected and that this confrontation eventually leads to Jesus' death, along the way, the message of the kingdom is taking root in some and participation in the life of Jesus is the seed that becomes the new life of the resurrection.

Vindication - The affirmation God is love does not make any sense unless someday God sets right all that has gone terribly wrong in our broken world. Too much wickedness is unanswered and overwhelming injustice which seems to carry the day. But Jesus is not only the shape of God's vulnerability and helplessness but also the shape of God's future. John's disciples, confused and broken, bury their master, but this is not the end of the story. Soon, other disciples will fret about the body of their Master. But in Jesus God will be mysteriously present, bringing about resurrection and setting straight and recreating a whole new world.

Setting - the story of John the Baptist is placed between the story of the disciples being sent out on their mission and returning. Such placing of the story is intentional to make a point. It serves as a reminder to Christians - Mark's

We pray for our church communities
that we might shine with kindness and love,
acceptance and welcome,
for all who serve
and discerning your future.

Lord hear us,

We pray for people of peace and good will
to resist and fight against all that divides us,
to see goodness and love
and much to applaud in your world.

Lord hear us,

We pray for our homes and neighbourhoods,
our workplaces and streets,
remembering especially those who are struggling,
experience difficulties and go unnoticed.

Lord hear us,

We pray for our world,
for places of conflict,
for those leading cruel and unjust regimes,
for all who work for peace and fairness.

Lord hear us,

We pray for overflowing hearts, hands and voices,
filled with thankfulness and praise.
Hear our prayers as we join together in saying:

Our Father...

We go into God's world
We go into God's world
We go into God's world
We go into God's world

Now thank we all our God	72	182	81	486
Give thanks with a grateful heart		180	78	170
Ye Holy Angels Bright	125	179	69	783
God is good we sing and shout it		178		185
Inspired by love and anger		253		
O God We Bear the Imprint of Your face		254		