



Sunday 1st November

All Saints day/Shoe box Sunday

Leader Welcome in the name of Christ.
God's grace, mercy and peace be with you
All and also with you

Welcome

Hymn **148 For all the Saints**

For all the saints
who from their labours rest,
who thee by faith
before the world confessed,
thy name, O Jesus,
be for ever blest.

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Thou wast their rock,
their fortress, and their might;
thou, Lord, their captain
in the well-fought fight; thou,
in the darkness drear,
their one true light.

Alleluia! Alleluia!

O blest communion,
fellowship divine,
we feebly struggle,
they in glory shine;
yet all are one in thee,
for all are thine.

Alleluia! Alleluia!

The golden evening
brightens in the west;
soon, soon to faithful warriors
cometh rest;
sweet is the calm of paradise the
blest.

Alleluia! Alleluia!

But lo! there breaks
a yet more glorious day;
the saints triumphant
rise in bright array;
the King of glory passes on his
way.

Alleluia! Alleluia!

From earth's wide bounds,
from ocean's farthest coast,
through gates of pearl
streams in the countless host,
singing to Father, Son,
and Holy Ghost,
Alleluia! Alleluia!

Operation Christmas Child (video)

Confession

Leader God our Father, we come to you in sorrow for our sins.
For turning away from you, and ignoring your will for
our lives;

Father, forgive us:

All: save us and help us.

Leader For behaving just as we wish,
without thinking of you;

Father, forgive us:

All: save us and help us.

Leader For failing you by what we do,
and think and say;

Father, forgive us:

All: save us and help us.

Leader For letting ourselves be drawn away from you
by temptations in the world about us;

Father, forgive us:

All: save us and help us.

Leader For living as if we were ashamed to belong to your Son;
Father, forgive us:

All: save us and help us.

Absolution (*we are reminded that God forgives all who repent*)

This or another absolution may be said

Leader May the Father of all mercies cleanse *us* from *our* sins,
and restore *us* in his image to the praise and glory of his
name,

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

Collect (*Prayer for the day*)

God of holiness, your glory is proclaimed in every age, as we
rejoice in the faith of your saints, inspire us to follow their
example with boldness and joy, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Opening activity

Hymn **921 Purify my heart**

Purify my heart, let me be as gold and precious silver
Purify my heart, let me be as gold, pure gold

Re-finer's fire

My heart's one desire is to be holy

Set apart for You Lord

I choose to be holy

Set apart for you my master,

Ready to do your will

Purify my heart, cleanse me from within and make me holy.

Purify my heart, cleanse me from my sin, deep within

Bible readings

Colossians 3.1-4 – Geoff Pugh, St Peter's

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Matthew 5.1-12 – Brenda Cox, St Peter's

Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, and he began to teach them.

The Beatitudes

He said:

“Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled.

Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. 12 Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Sermon (*We explore God's word together*) – Jonathan Thomas

Clothed with compassion – Colossians 3:1-14

Last year, when on a poor run of form, Manchester United lost 4-0 to Everton. Their manager, Ole Gunnar Solskjaer told reporters afterwards



"We just didn't perform. That was not worthy of a Manchester United team...I just want to apologise to the fans. They're the only people with the badge on today who can hold their head high, because we can't." Big football clubs with a strong reputation have high standards and expect their talented and extremely well-paid team to work hard, give 100% and perform well, to be worthy of the badge they wear on their shirts, which their manager clearly didn't think happened that day.

The apostle Paul felt similarly about followers of Jesus. He was passionate that those who were part of the church of Christ lived lives worthy of being God's children, part of his family. Over last month and this one we are exploring they key aspects of the gospel that Paul wrote about in his letters and today as we explore Colossians 3 we are considering this idea of living lives worthy of the badge of being a Christian.

Here Paul is writing to the church in Colossae, consisting mainly of those who have converted to following Christ, who have changed from living for their selfish desires to living for God. That required the difficult process of getting rid of past ways, actions and habits that were not in keeping with their new status as God's children.

He talks about putting to them to death – a very strong phrase. But it indicates the seriousness of the effects these behaviours have. He doesn't just ask them to try a little harder, to do their best not to do these things, but to kill them, to expunge them. Because when something is dead it cannot come back to life and ridding themselves of these behaviours permanently is the only way they won't come back to do damage.

These behaviours Paul lists in v5-9, which are not exhaustive, range from those we would all agree are very wrong and maybe not common in most people (such as slander and fornication – we won't debate exactly what that means here), to that which many struggle with (greed, evil desire, malice) to that which we all do (anger, lying to each other etc).

Paul doesn't tell us exactly how to put these things to death, rather he tells us two positive things we should do that will effectively expunge these behaviours. The first is to set our hearts and minds on things above, i.e. heavenly things, not on earthly things. In v1-3 he reminds us that our old, self-centred life has been put to death, and we have been raised to a new life with Christ, focused on heavenly qualities. This means rather than seeking all our satisfaction on the things of this world (which is not to say they are not good and to be enjoyed), our focus is on the things of heaven, the qualities and values of God's kingdom which he then lists in v12-14.

And it is in these verses and the previous ones v9-11, that Paul tells us the second positive thing we should do which follows on from setting our hearts and minds on things above. And he uses an analogy of clothing to explain this.

In our opening video we saw some of our young people transitioning from their ordinary clothes into fabulous outfits and that's exactly what Paul encourages us to do metaphorically. To remove our old rags, our old self with those sinful behaviours he lists which are unbecoming of followers of Jesus and instead put on our glad rags, our best outfits, those positive behaviours of compassion, kindness, humility, patience, forgiveness etc that are worthy of our calling as God's children.

Think of Cinderella where her tatty clothes (reflecting what she was – an unloved housemaid) are replaced by her fairy godmother with a beautiful ball gown, tiara and glass slippers (representing what she is to become – a much-loved princess).



Who would go back to wearing their old rags when you have a wonderful new outfit? Yet many do. We feel comfortable in them, they are familiar, it's how people know us and let's face it it's more effort getting really dressed up into something good and we're all a bit lazy.

One of the specific qualities Paul encourages us to put is particularly appropriate for today and that is compassion. Shoebox Sunday is all about

showing compassion to those in need, enhanced by love that puts thought into what is being bought.

One enduring memory of my theological studies was when studying New Testament Greek, a subject I really enjoyed. It concerned learning about the Greek word for “to have compassion”, which is *σπλαγχνίζομαι* (*splanchnizomai*)

Firstly, it’s really hard to pronounce, and it’s been over 10 years since I studied, and I have forgotten exactly how to pronounce it, so apologies to any Greek scholars out there. Secondly, whilst it is translated compassion its literal meaning is to have feelings in the bowels. And I don’t mean the sort of feelings after having a bad curry! Rather the ancient Greeks thought of the bowels as being the seat of human emotions, just as we would say they come from the heart. So compassion to the ancient Greeks was about being moved deeply in the innermost part of our being.

Being compassionate therefore doesn’t just mean you feel a bit guilty about someone in need and give a bit of money or time or help to them to make you and them feel a little better. Being truly compassionate is about feeling someone else’s pain or suffering yourself and being so deeply affected that you have to act for them. It will mean you put yourself out for them, because you care so much for their suffering that you will sacrifice something of yourself, your time, money or effort for them. But being truly compassionate is hard. Most people think of compassion as feeling sorry for someone and doing a little bit to help them. Dare I say that’s what many media stars do when they “do their bit for charity”. But *splanchnizomai* is so much deeper and costlier. It requires the stripping away of our old self that wants to give a little to make ourselves feel better, but not too much that it hurts us, or wants to be seen and thanked for our kindness, to receive acknowledgment and a little glory for our effort.

The gospels speak of Jesus’ *splanchnizomai* when he heals the sick, sees the people without a shepherd and feeds the hungry crowds. He felt their need deeply and acted with the spiritual and practical resources he had to remove it.

We see this kind of compassion in someone like Mother Teresa and also in many of the saints that we celebrate today on All Saints’ day who gave their lives because they cared deeply that people would know Christ.

Today we see it in many of those working in our hospitals treating those with COVID, especially as numbers are on the increase. Yet they are so moved by the suffering of COVID patients, so dedicated to their work of

alleviating pain that they will keep going even when they are exhausted and concerned about catching the infection themselves.

And we see compassion in these lovingly packed shoeboxes that, let's face it, take quite a bit of time effort to put together.



Describing compassion like this can make us feel a bit guilty, because it is hard to care deeply for every person in need, we just don't have the emotional and physical resources to respond to every person's need. But God knows that and doesn't judge us harshly.

However, what some people call compassion fatigue can be an excuse to show no, or just half-hearted, compassion to a situation.

Paul was passionate about encouraging followers of Jesus to live differently from how much of the world lives, just as the beatitudes Jesus gave on the sermon the mount were a radically different manifesto for living and being blessed. Paul encourages us to throw off those old rags of self-absorbed living and to put on those beautiful garments of compassion, kindness etc and above all love which is at the heart of all these fruits of the Holy Spirit.

So to conclude can I encourage you to reflect on what state of dress or undress you are in with regards to clothing yourself in these qualities, especially compassion, and what compassion looks like for you during these dark and difficult times of the COVID-19 pandemic. And can I encourage you then to look to Christ and the things above as you live worthy of the badge of Christ. AMEN

Hymn **Everyone needs compassion**

Everyone needs compassion
A love that's never failing
Let mercy fall on me
Everyone needs forgiveness
The kindness of a Saviour
The hope of nations

*Saviour, he can move the mountains
My God is mighty to save
He is mighty to save
Forever Author of Salvation
He rose and conquered the grave
Jesus conquered the grave*

So take me as you find me
All my fears and failures
Fill my life again
I give my life to follow
Everything that I believe in
Now I surrender

Saviour...

Shine your light
and let the whole world see
We're singing for the glory of the
risen king Jesus

Creed *(We stand to declare our faith)*

Leader Do you believe and trust in God the Father,
 source of all being and life,
 the one for whom we exist?

All We believe and trust in him.

Leader Do you believe and trust in God the Son,
 who took our human nature,
 died for us and rose again?

All We believe and trust in him.

Leader Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit,
 who gives life to the people of God
 and makes Christ known in the world?

All We believe and trust in him.

Leader This is the faith of the Church

All This is our faith.

**We believe and trust in one God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Amen.**

Prayers – *Sue Harvey St Peter's*

Almighty God and Father, help us to be still in your presence, that we may
know ourselves to be your people, and you to be our God;
through Jesus Christ our Lord
Amen.

*We are again in the midst of an increase in the numbers affected by Coronavirus.
In the following prayer, after I have said "Lord hear us", please join with me in
the response "Lord, graciously hear us".*

Let us pray to God,

For all who are affected by coronavirus,
through illness or isolation or anxiety,
that they may find relief and recovery:

 Lord, hear us,

Lord, graciously hear us.

For those who are guiding our nation at this time,
and shaping national policies,
that they may make wise decisions:

Lord, hear us,
Lord, graciously hear us.

For doctors, nurses and medical researchers,
that through their skill and insights
many will be restored to health:

Lord, hear us,
Lord, graciously hear us.

For the vulnerable and the fearful,
for the gravely ill and the dying,
that they may know your comfort and peace:

Lord, hear us,
Lord, graciously hear us.

We commend ourselves, and all for whom we pray,
to the mercy and protection of God.

Amen

*On this Shoebox Sunday, we pray for the children across the world for whom
these boxes may contain their only Christmas gifts*

Loving God, we pray for your blessing on these shoeboxes for the mission
of Operation Christmas Child.

We pray for the children and their families whose lives will be impacted
by these boxes and the contents we've packed with love. We pray for
children and families who are suffering in the desperate circumstances of
poverty, sickness or war that you will meet their physical need and we
pray especially that through these gifts the hearts of the children and
their families will be opened to your love and the message of your grace
through Jesus Christ, our saviour.

Amen

*We remember those who are unwell or unhappy, and especially anyone who is
known to us personally*

Father God, we pray for those for whom this day will seem long and hard,
for those in hospital or ill at home, those struggling with despair or
depression, those waiting for a job, or important news, or a friend to call.

We pray especially for the friends and family of Barbara Young and also
for Eileen and Peter Bliss, John Hunter, Catherine McCormack, Olive Park
and Joy Storkey and we name in our hearts any others we know personally
who are in special need.

Comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind, or spirit; give them courage and hope in their troubles; and bring them the joy of your salvation.

For the sake of your Son, our saviour, Jesus Christ

Amen

We are grateful for Jonathan, Sam, Rachel and all those others who make their contribution, whether visibly, in the services, or behind the scenes, quietly and without expecting to be noticed. We ask the Holy Spirit to be with them, especially in these difficult times when they are undertaking some unusual tasks.

Almighty God, we pray for your blessing on all who share in the life and work of this parish:

- in the ministry of word and sacrament
- in teaching and pastoral care,
- in service to the diocese, the community, and those in need,

We pray for all those in our parish today, that wherever they live or work they may bear witness to your love, shown in your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

And finally we pray for ourselves,

O Father, give us the humility which

Realises its ignorance,

admits its mistakes,

Recognises its need,

Welcomes advice,

Accepts rebuke.

Help us always

To praise rather than to criticise

To sympathise rather than to condemn

To encourage rather than to discourage,

To build rather than to destroy,

And to think of people at their best rather than at their worst.

This we ask for your name's sake.

Amen

Thank you, Lord, for prayer, which is our lifeline in every situation; for we know that you are always present with us as we pray, even when our prayers are not made of words.

In prayer help us to receive your love, your forgiveness, your healing, your peace, your guidance and your grace.

Then we shall praise you with joy in our hearts, rejoicing in Christ's name. **Amen**

The Lord's prayer

Leader Gathering our prayers and praises into one,
As our Saviour has taught us so we pray.

All **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.**

Notices

Hymn **327 Immortal, invisible**

Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
In light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
Most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,
Almighty, victorious, Thy great name we praise.

Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light,
Nor wanting, nor wasting, Thou rulest in might;
Thy justice like mountains high soaring above
Thy clouds which are fountains of goodness and love.

To all life Thou givest, to both great and small;
In all life Thou livest, the true life of all;
We blossom and flourish as leaves on the tree,
And wither and perish, but nought changeth Thee.

Great Father of Glory, pure Father of Light
Thine angels adore Thee, all veiling their sight;
All laud we would render, O help us to see:
'Tis only the splendour of light hideth Thee.

Blessing

Leader The love of the Lord Jesus draw you to himself,
the power of the Lord Jesus strengthen you in his
service,
the joy of the Lord Jesus fill your hearts;
and the blessing of God Almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

All **Amen.**

The Grace

All The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
And the love of God,
And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
Be with us all evermore. Amen.

Worshipping ▶ Loving ▶ Sharing ▶ Growing

