

## DIOCESAN STRATEGY PRAYER

Living God, Jesus calls his followers to seek first your Kingdom.

**Renew** us as we make your love known;

**Release** us to share freely together in mission;

**Rejuvenate** us to be fruitful in your service.

Give us courage, wisdom and compassion,

That strengthened with the grace of the Holy Spirit,

We may, as the Diocese of Sheffield,

Both flourish and grow through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Anyone wishing to book weddings and baptisms, please contact the Vicar.

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We have a hearing loop; please switch your hearing aid to the 'T' setting

If you would like to speak to someone or for someone to pray with you, please speak to the Clergy.

All are welcome to share bread and wine at Communion or a blessing at the altar rail.

For the toilets, go through the Lady Chapel, across the vestry and into the St James' Room corridor

Please join us for refreshments after the 10.30a.m. service.

### **COLLECT for Trinity 3**

God our saviour,

look on this wounded world

in pity and in power;

hold us fast to your promises of peace

won for us by your Son,

our Saviour Jesus Christ.

*Amen*

### **New Testament Reading Ephesians 2 v 19 – end**

Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, <sup>20</sup> built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. <sup>21</sup> In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. <sup>22</sup> And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

## Gospel Reading John 20 v 24 - 29

Now Thomas (also known as Didymus<sup>[a]</sup>), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. <sup>25</sup> So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord!”

But he said to them, “Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.”

<sup>26</sup> A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!” <sup>27</sup> Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.”

<sup>28</sup> Thomas said to him, “My Lord and my God!”

<sup>29</sup> Then Jesus told him, “Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

**Luke Ch 16 verse 31** *But he said to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead.’”*

This verse comes at the end of the story that Jesus told about a rich man and the poor man Lazarus, who both die and find themselves in different places, Hades, and in the arms of Abraham. Upon the rich man’s request to send word to his 5 brothers to warn them, Abraham responds with the words of this verse, which as we all know became a reality.

The books of Moses [the first 5 books of the Bible] and the Prophets formed a large and important part of the Old Testament, and it is to these that Jesus is alluding to in this story. He is making the point that if those who read and studied these books were not persuaded by them, then nothing would convince them, not even if someone rose from the dead, as he ultimately did.

That last fact means that there is a certain irony to this verse, because don’t forget Luke’s Gospel was written some years after the resurrection, and he was writing to other believers who knew of the event.

We should also be reminded that if there were those who knew the Old Testament, and were around at the time of the resurrection, and yet still did not believe, then we should not be surprised at the apathy that we often receive in telling the same story.

As I said in a recent sermon, it was not information that transformed the lives of those 1<sup>st</sup> century disciples, but revelation, as the risen Christ revealed himself to them. It is our personal experiences of the risen Christ that will ultimately prove to be the more powerful witness to those who do not believe, than any information.

Dear Lord Jesus, reveal yourself to those around us as our lives witness to the powerful transforming impact you continue to have on us, even today.

Amen