

## The Gathering – first video

### **Welcome - [HELENA]**

Welcome to our Sunday Eucharist from St Mary's Cathedral online. I am Sister Helena and this is Sister Alison Joy from the Companions of Our Lady & Saint Mungo. We will be assisted by other members of the congregation from their own homes. We give thanks this morning for you all, and for our wider community.

We meet Christ's name. **Let us share his peace.**

**Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

### **Confession**

[ALISON JOY] God is love and we are God's children.  
There is no room for fear in love.  
We love because God loved us first.

Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith.

[Silence]

God our Father, we confess to you and to our fellow members in the Body of Christ that we have sinned in thought, word and deed, and in what we have failed to do. We are truly sorry. Forgive us our sins, and deliver us from the power of evil, for the sake of your Son who died for us, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

[HELENA] God, who is both power and love, forgive you and free you from your sins, heal and strengthen you by the Holy Spirit, and raise you to new life in Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Gloria** - [Rosamond Thomas]

Glory to God in the highest,  
and peace to his people on earth.

Lord God, heavenly King,  
almighty God and Father,  
we worship you, we give you thanks,  
we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,  
Lord God, Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world:  
have mercy on us;  
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:  
receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High,  
Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

**Collect** - [HELENA]

In Christ you draw near to us, God of mercy and compassion, lifting us out of death, binding up our wounds, and nursing our spirits back to health. Let such a tenderness as yours compel us to go and do likewise. Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## The Ministry of the Word – second video

**Reading: Matthew 13:1-9,18-23 – [HELEN & BOB]**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mathew.  
**Glory to Christ our Saviour.**

Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the lake. Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. And he told them many things in parables, saying: 'Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Let anyone with ears listen!'

'Hear then the parable of the sower. When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.'

Give thanks to the Lord for his glorious Gospel.  
**Praise to Christ our Lord.**

## Sermon [OLIVER]

I remember growing up putting together projects for the school's annual Science Fair. My aunt Ama generously helped me produce several of these. One year I tested water quality; another I examined coal samples. These projects were enormous, time-consuming affairs. If you ask my mom, she'll tell you it's what she hated most about being a parent of a school-aged child. Science Fair projects were the bane of her existence. They were complicated, often took up a lot of space in the house, and, in the end, asked a lot of a family. 'Hey, Mom, have you seen my water fleas?'

As disrupting to life as those experiments were, our teachers were trying to demonstrate something important. They were trying to teach us how to be good thinkers—how to use reason and logic to construct opinions and theories about things that would help us navigate life. They were trying to help us learn how to think critically.

Critical thinking is an essential skill. (And one might say that it's one of the most important things school can teach.) Anyone can come up with a theory about something; anyone can make a claim. But hypotheses must be tested, and not just in any old willy-nilly way. Experiments have guidelines to obtain reliable outcomes.

One of the lessons I learned in my Science Fair days was about the different types of variables. Our teachers advised us as young scientists to define these clearly from the outset. Testing one variable at a time would be key. More than one independent variable would prevent us from seeing what was responsible for the results we got.

In a way, the parable we read today describes a type of experiment founded on this principle. Jesus tells of a harvest with varied outcomes. Now, there are lots of things that could've influenced the deviations—the amount of light or water, the type of

plant species used, or perhaps different atmospheric temperatures. However, what's being tested in this experiment is soil. It is the independent variable, the one manipulated by the experimenter. What remains constant—or at least what experiences the same factors—is the seed (what Jesus tells us later is 'the word of the kingdom').

In this experiment, the quality (or type) of substrate used to house the seeds appears to have affected growth. The outcomes demonstrate that it matters where one plants stuff. The performances of seeds vary, according to soil types; and Jesus tells us what kinds of soil were snuffing out green growth. He says an inability to cognise (v. 19), an unwillingness to conduct wide-ranging examinations (v. 21) with focus and attention (v. 22) is dangerous. Jesus warned his disciples about this, and so did my science teachers. These are the enemies of good analysis.

So, what is good soil? Jesus tells his disciples: 'this is the one who hears the word and understands it.' And, in this story, he gives a clue as to what type of understanding he might be talking about. This parable's construction is a framework of disciplined thinking that's clear, rational and informed by evidence—something any science teacher would be proud of. The parable doesn't just evaluate soil quality. Its coherent, reasoned structure points to what good soil is.

In an age where many are cut off from others—from interaction and challenge—might we need to be reminded of the importance of having fertile, active minds? The soils of the twenty-first century in which seeds are planted are sometimes numb and apathetic to the needs of others, with a blind nostalgia for the way things used to be (but, in reality, never really were). It is soil littered with erroneous, misguided conspiracy theories, an injurious substratum of false claims—unsubstantiated out of sheer laziness, stubbornness or impropriety. In this perverse fecundity, misinformation spreads; history is rewritten to suit one's own

requirements. A ground like this doesn't nurture coherent, sound outcomes. 'It', says Jesus, 'yields nothing.'

The ability to be active in learning, questioning ideas, arguments and findings, to create structured, reasoned arguments, to use logic ... these are the makings of the good soil laid out in this parable. The one who hears and understands bears fruit, producing a harvest beyond one's wildest dreams. If we want that to be us, let us strive by testing and trying. Let us receive 'the word of the kingdom' with minds ready to think well.

### **Intercessions [KELVIN]**

Let us pray.

I ask your prayers for peace; for goodwill among nations; and for the well-being of all people. At this time we pray for all working globally to tackle the coronavirus pandemic, we give thanks for the NHS and pray for a just sharing of healthcare resources.

Let us pray for justice and for healing.

*Silence*

I ask your prayers for the poor, the sick, the hungry, the oppressed, and those in prison.

For those who seek asylum in this country. For those who fear the end of lockdown. For those who are isolated, alone, angry or sad.

Let us pray for those in any need or trouble.

*Silence*

I ask your prayers for all who seek God, or to deepen their faith.

For all who have been longing to be baptised that their wait may soon be over. For all who wonder who God is and whether they are loved.

Let us pray for all seeking God.

*Silence*

I ask your prayers for God's people throughout the world; for Bishop Kevin as he gets to know this Diocese, which particularly remembers our churches in Bishopbriggs and Lenzie today. For the ministry of St Mary's Cathedral, online, offline and spread throughout the city and the world and for all ministers and people.

Let us pray for the Church.

*Silence*

I ask that we may remember one another as we pray, giving thanks for the gifts and skills of others and praying that as we encounter other people we may uphold, encourage and sustain those whom we encounter.

Let us pray that we may be a blessing to the world.

*Silence*

Eternal God, hear all our prayers for we pray in the company of Mary and all the saints, in the power of the Spirit and in the name of Jesus Christ your son. **Amen.**

## Communion – third video

### **Offertory - [HELENA]**

We share Christ's love in many ways, offering our prayers, time, talents, and money to aid the work of the Church. We can't pass the offering basket now, but if you would like to make an offering by means of a bank transfer, please look on the Cathedral website for details. If you are joining us from another parish, I am sure they also have a way to support them in their service to God's children.

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation; through your goodness we have this bread to offer, which earth has given and human hands have made: it will become for us the bread of life.

**Blessed be God for ever.**

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation; through your goodness we have this wine to offer, fruit of the vine and work of human hands; it will become the cup of our salvation.

**Blessed be God for ever.**

Though we cannot share the bread and wine together physically as we would like to do, we know that they become the Body and Blood of Christ which we will receive here, but this sacrifice is offered for all who are watching this service, for you are indeed the Body of Christ and individually members of it.

May this offering feed you that you may in turn feed others with Christ, our Saviour and our Lord.

### **Eucharistic Prayer - [HELENA]**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**



Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

Worship and praise belong to you, Father,  
in every place and at all times.

All power is yours. You created the heavens and established the  
earth; you sustain in being all that is.

In Christ your Son our life and yours  
are brought together in a wonderful exchange.

He made his home among us that we might for ever dwell in you.

Through your Holy Spirit you call us to new birth  
in a creation restored by love.

As children of your redeeming purpose  
we offer you our praise,  
with angels and archangels  
and the whole company of heaven,  
singing the hymn of your unending glory:

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord,**

**God of power and might.**

**Heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

Glory and thanksgiving be to you,  
most loving Father,  
for the gift of your Son born in human flesh

He is the Word existing beyond time,  
both source and final purpose,  
bringing to wholeness all that is made.

Obedient to your will he died upon the Cross.

By your power you raised him from the dead.

He broke the bonds of evil  
and set your people free to be his Body in the world

On the night when he was given up to death,  
knowing that his hour had come,  
having loved his own,  
he loved them to the end.

At supper with his disciples  
he took bread and offered you thanks.  
He broke the bread,  
and gave it to them, saying:  
"Take, eat.

This is my Body: it is broken for you."

After supper, he took the cup,  
he offered you thanks,  
and gave it to them saying:

"Drink this, all of you.

This is my Blood of the new covenant;  
it is poured out for you, and for all,  
that sins may be forgiven.

Do this in remembrance of me."

**We now obey your Son's command.  
We recall his blessed passion and death,  
his glorious resurrection and ascension;  
and we look for the coming of his Kingdom.  
Made one with him, we offer you these gifts  
and with them ourselves,  
a single, holy, living sacrifice.**

Hear us, most merciful Father,  
and send your Holy Spirit upon us  
and upon this bread and this wine,  
that, overshadowed by his life-giving power,  
they may be the Body and Blood of your Son,  
and we may be kindled with the fire of your love  
and renewed for the service of your Kingdom.

**Help us, who are baptised into the fellowship of Christ's Body  
to live and work to your praise and glory;  
may we grow together in unity and love  
until at last, in your new creation,  
we enter into our heritage  
in the company of the Virgin Mary,  
the apostles, and prophets,  
and of all our brothers and sisters living and departed.**

Through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
with whom, and in whom,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
all honour and glory be to you,  
Lord of all ages,  
world without end.

**Amen.**

### **Breaking of the Bread**

The living bread is broken for the life of the world.  
**Lord, unite us in this sign.**

### **Lord's Prayer - [AJ]**

As our Saviour has taught us,  
so we pray:

**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.  
Do not bring us  
to the time of trial  
but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power  
and the glory are yours,  
now and for ever.  
Amen.**

### **Music at Communion - [MAGNUS]**

We know that Christ is raised and dies no more,  
Embraced by death he broke its fearful hold;  
And our despair he turned to blazing joy.  
Alleluia!

A new creation comes to life and grows  
As Christ's new body takes on flesh and blood.  
The universe restored and whole will sing:  
Alleluia!

(John Brownlow Geyer, b. 1932)

### **Blessing & Dismissal - [HELENA]**

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is gracious.  
**And his mercy endures forever.**

**O God, may we who have shared in holy things never fail to  
serve you in your world, and so come to the fullness of joy, in  
the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Deep peace of the running wave to you,  
deep peace of the flowing air to you,  
deep peace of the quiet earth to you,  
deep peace of the shining stars to you,  
deep peace of the infinite peace to you,  
and the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

We would like to thank all who made this celebration possible, and all of you who have been with us. May you stay safe and well.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.  
**In the name of Christ. Amen.**

*Materials for Young Church are available on the online worship page at [www.thecathedral.org.uk/worship](http://www.thecathedral.org.uk/worship).*