

Welcome! Haere mai!

St John's Anglican Church, Ōtūmoetai



Sunday 26th June 2022
13th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Dear Friends

Luke 9.62 No one who puts his hand to the plough and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God. What Jesus says is discouraging for any disciple, isn't it? No one who looks back...is fit for the Kingdom of God.

Let's start somewhere else. If we are honest, our faith is often fragile, touch and go. This doesn't really matter. God reaches us as easily through our failures as through our successes. We *are* fit for the Kingdom of God; we are *made* for the Kingdom. We all yearn for the Kingdom of God wherever or whatever it might be. Jesus shows the way to that Kingdom with three proverbs which help show us a spiritual path that anyone can take. We do not take his stories literally; if we do, we rob them of their power to inspire us.

Foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head. Christians believe in Jesus' wakefulness, his constant presence. When we sleep, we believe he watches over us, our life in his hands. God is close to us.

Jesus' reply to the man who says to him 'let me bury my father' sounds mean: 'let the dead bury their own dead'. Jesus often uses shock tactics to try to stop his followers settling into the world of compromise and 'me first'. His point is that the call of the Kingdom is absolute. Nothing else matters, nothing comes close to our life with God. Jesus offers life; Christianity is about living a life with God. Jesus offers a proverb which warns that spiritual death in life is like a physical death. Let the dead bury the dead. So, we are called to reflect upon what really matters for us, what is the path of life.

Then there's the disciple who wants to say goodbye to those at home. Sounds reasonable. In Biblical days, home and family was all there was for most people. Jesus says, no one who puts his hand to the plough and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God. I suggest this means we are to start where we are in taking the next step on the spiritual path. If we leave the field unploughed, the harvest never comes.

There is always a next step for each of us. We don't have to be clever about this. We try to lay aside our usual reactions, our prejudices, our excuses. We become open to the truth about ourselves, rather than a pretence of any kind. Jesus's words in Sunday's Gospel need not make us feel guilty about our failure as disciples. Rather they take us there, they draw us into a world where life is not limited by what we know, by our opinions, but is eternal.

When Jesus said 'Let the dead bury their own dead', he did not stop there. He went on to say, 'as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God'. Our faith might be fragile but it is infinitely precious. The way we live our faith is the way we proclaim the Kingdom, living a life where the inside and outside are in harmony. It takes courage to live well, but with the Spirit's guidance we are on the right path. We recall Paul's description of the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Arohanui,

Sue (Vicar)

WORSHIP THIS SUNDAY: 26th June 2022

Sentence

Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for Jesus' sake will find it.

Matthew 10:39

Collect

**Sovereign God,
we have no good apart from you;
gladden our hearts in following your radical call
so that in your presence we may find the fullness of joy;
through Jesus Christ our Liberator,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen.**

1st Reading *1 Kings 19.15-16,19-21*

2nd Reading *Galatians 5.1,13-25*

Gospel *Luke 9.51-62*

Prayers of the People

We pray for New Zealand Church Missionary Society Mission Partners working in Central and South Asia and for our Hospital Chaplains: Matiu Best, Shelley Gilmore, Leanne Brooks, Graham Silkstone.

We pray for those in need especially those who ask for our prayers: Colin, Shirley, Joan.

AAW Soup and Rolls Lunch

The annual AAW Soup and Rolls Lunch will be held on Tuesday 12th July from 12 noon. The fee for lunch is \$10. All parishioners are welcome. Please put your name on the sign-up sheet at the back of the church.

Word and Light OUR PARISH MAGAZINE

The theme for the next edition will be **Stars**. Articles on other topics are also welcome. Photos add interest. Please send your contributions to Lynda, the Parish Administrator, by **4th July 2022**.

This Week Beginning: 27th June

Tuesday	7.00 pm	Vestry meeting via Zoom
Wednesday	10.00 am	Mid-week Eucharist
	2.00 pm	SAYGo in the hall
Op Shop	10.00 am - 4.00 pm	Monday to Friday (ph. 576 2422)
Playgroup	9.30 - 11.30 am	Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday
Toy Library	9.30 - 11.30 am	Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday

Services for Sunday 3rd July – OT 14 (St Thomas)

8.30 am	Holy Eucharist
10.00 am	Holy Eucharist

Contact Us

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