

Welcome! Haere mai!

St John's Anglican Church, Ōtūmoetai



Sunday 7th November 2021
OT 32 / 3rd Sunday before Advent

Dear Friends

We have read several passages from the Letter to the Hebrews recently. The Letter challenges us because an oversimplification of its complex message can lead to exalting Christ whilst misinterpreting the nature of the God portrayed in what we call the Old Testament.

A prevailing myth in our culture is that of the independent individual. That there is such thing as a completely independent individual is a fantasy which denies our vulnerability. Each of us exists because of other people; we would not have survived infancy and early childhood without the care of others. We are who we are, physically, psychologically and spiritually in relation to other people. Not only who we are, but everything we have and use is based on the work of other human beings and, of course, all ultimately comes from God.

As Christians, we are who we are because of our Jewish forebears in faith. The first followers of Christ were Jews. One of the challenges which faces us when we read scripture is to interpret it without contempt for either the Jews of Jesus' day or for Jews of today. The Letter to the Hebrews is one example. Today's passage from Mark's Gospel is another. While the woman in these verses has often been interpreted as a model whose commitment is to be emulated, scholars increasingly think that Mark's main intention was to portray the temple in the most negative light. The woman feels compelled to bankrupt herself in order to pay her temple tax.

Mark pictures the scribes as spurning one of the most important dimensions of Jewish life: care for widows and others who are vulnerable. Many prophets of Israel announce that the community will fall when it fails to maintain its covenant with widows. It was doubtless right for Jesus to condemn those scribes who behaved improperly, but let us not read this passage as having a go at all scribes or all Jews, past or present. Let us remember that whenever we come across the phrase 'the Jews' in the New Testament we need to think critically about exactly to whom the passage refers.

Let us, then, read the passage from Mark as a lament for, and an indictment upon, any system – religious or otherwise – that exploits the poor so that the wealthy may continue to live lives of plenty and comfort. If we are honest with ourselves, this is a dilemma in our world today. One topical example is how we care for the environment because – among other factors – how we care for the environment affects how other can live.

Arohanui,

Sue (Vicar)

WORSHIP THIS SUNDAY: 7th NOVEMBER 2021

Sentence

Give and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back. *Luke 6:38*

Collect

**Compassionate God,
you love the widow and the orphan,
the poor and the marginalized,
you provide for us in our hour of need:
make us willing to share what we have received,
giving even the smallest gift with great love,
as an act of generous worship to you.**

**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 17.8-16*

2nd Reading *Hebrews 9.24-28*

Gospel *Mark 12.38-44*

Prayers of the People

Today we pray for education and educators in Papua New Guinea, and for the people of the East Coast Parish.

We pray for those in need, especially those who have asked for our prayers: Sandi H, Zoe, Colin

WORKING BEE SATURDAY 13th NOVEMBER at 9am

It is time for our Spring Working Bee! To indicate how you can help there is a sign-up sheet at the back of the Church or please email the Parish Office. We may not be able to have a shared morning tea so please bring your own.

PARISH MAGAZINE

The theme for the next edition will be **Books and Films**. Please use your imagination! We look forward to your contributions (up to 700 words). Photos welcome! Please send your contributions to Lynda, the Parish Administrator, by **15 November**.

ADVENT

Subject to restrictions being similar to present:

**Advent Service of Reflection with images, music and prayer
Sunday 5th December**

5.00 pm in church – *please register with the Parish Office*

7.00 pm via Zoom

Advent Conversations *The Art of Advent* **Wednesday 8th and Wednesday 15th December**

Discussion group sessions are usually held at 11.00 am and 7.00 pm in church. At present, it is not clear whether this will be possible. It may be that one session is offered in church and one via Zoom. So we can decide whether or not to proceed, please let the Vicar or Parish Administrator know if you are interested in attending and whether you would prefer (a) morning or afternoon (b) in church or via Zoom.

Week Beginning: 8th November

Monday	9.00 am	Walking Group
Tuesday	3.00 pm	Service at Radius Matua
	7.15 pm	AAW AGM
Wednesday	10.00 am	Mid-week Service of the Word
	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 15th November – OT 33 / 2nd Sunday before Advent

8.30 am	Service of the Word	(Church)
10.00 am	Service of the Word	(Zoom)

Contact Us

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