



Anglican Diocese of Wangaratta
Wangaratta West and The Warbys
The Seventh Sunday after Epiphany
23rd February 2025
9.30 a.m. Eucharist

GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

The Acclamation

Blessed be God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ever.

The Greeting

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

The Sentence

Love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. You will be children of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked.

Luke 6. 35

The Prayer of Preparation

Let us pray

**Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleans 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.**

The Two Great Commandments

'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' Jesus said: 'This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: you shall love your neighbour as yourself.'

The Hymn of Praise, Gloria in excelsis (said or sung)

**Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to God's 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.**

The Collect

Let us pray

God of compassion,
keep before us the love you have revealed in your Son,
who prayed even for his enemies.

In our words and deeds
help us to be like him, through whom we pray,
Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. **Amen.**

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

A reading from the Book Genesis [45. 3-11, 15]

Joseph said to his brothers, 'I am Joseph. Is my father still alive?'
But his brothers could not answer him, so dismayed were they at
his presence.

Then Joseph said to his brothers, 'Come closer to me.' And they
came closer. He said, 'I am your brother Joseph, whom you sold
into Egypt. And now do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves,
because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve
life. For the famine has been in the land these two years; and there
are five more years in which there will be neither ploughing nor
harvest. God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on
earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. So it was not you
who sent me here, but God; he has made me a father to Pharaoh,

and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt. Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, “Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not delay. You shall settle in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children’s children, as well as your flocks, your herds, and all that you have. I will provide for you there—since there are five more years of famine to come—so that you and your household, and all that you have, will not come to poverty.”

And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them; and after that his brothers talked with him.

Hear the Word of the Lord,
thanks be to God.

Psalm 37. 1-11

**Do not vie with the wicked:
or envy those that do wrong;**

**For they will soon wither like the grass:
and fade away like the green leaf.**

**Trust in the Lord and do good:
and you shall dwell in the land
and feed in safe pastures.**

**Let the Lord be your delight:
and he will grant you your heart’s desire.**

**Commit your way to the Lord:
trust him, and he will act.**

**He will make your righteousness shine as clear as the light:
and your innocence as the noonday.**

**Be still before the Lord, and wait patiently for him:
do not be vexed when someone prospers,
when they put their evil purposes to work.**

**Let go of anger and abandon wrath:
let not envy move you to do evil.**

**For the wicked shall be cut down:
but those who wait for the Lord shall possess the land.**

**In a little while the ungodly shall be no more:
you will look for them in their place,
but they will not be found.**

**But the meek shall possess the land:
and enjoy the abundance of peace.**

A Reading from the First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians [15. 35-50]

But someone will ask, 'How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?' Fool! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. And as for what you sow, you do not sow the body that is to be, but a bare seed, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body. Not all flesh is alike, but there is one flesh for human beings, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish. There are both heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is one thing, and that of the earthly is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; indeed, star differs from star in glory.

So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a physical body, there is also a spiritual body. Thus it is written, 'The first man, Adam, became a living being'; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. But it is not the spiritual that is first, but the physical, and then the spiritual. The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. As was the man of dust, so are those who are of the dust; and as is the man of heaven, so are those who are of heaven. Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we will also bear the image of the man of heaven.

What I am saying, brothers and sisters, is this: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.

Hear the Word of the Lord,
thanks be to God.

The Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ According to Luke [6. 27-38]
Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ

‘But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again. Do to others as you would have them do to you.

‘If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. If you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

‘Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; 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.’

For the Gospel of the Lord,
praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

The Sermon

A time of silent reflection may follow the sermon

Affirmation of Faith

Let us declare our faith in God.

**We believe in God the Father,
from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.**

**We believe in God the Son,
who lives in our hearts through faith,
and fills us with his love.**

**We believe in God the Holy Spirit,
who strengthens us with power from on high.**

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

cf Ephesians 3

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

The priest says

Almighty God, you have promised to hear
when we pray in the name of your Son.
Therefore in confidence and trust
we pray for the church.

Particular intercessions/thanksgivings may be offered.

O God, enliven the church for its mission
that we may be salt of the earth and light to the world.

Breathe fresh life into your people.

Give us power to reveal Christ in word and action.

We pray for the world.

Particular intercessions/thanksgivings may be offered.

Creator of all, lead us and every people
into ways of justice and peace,

that we may respect one another in freedom and truth.

Awaken in us a sense of wonder for the earth and all that is in it.

Teach us to care creatively for its resources.

We pray for the community.

Particular intercessions/thanksgivings may be offered.

God of truth, inspire with your wisdom
those whose decisions affect the lives of others,
that all may act with integrity and courage.

Give grace to all whose lives are linked with ours.

**May we serve Christ in one another,
and love as he loves us.**

We pray for those in need.

Particular intercessions/thanksgivings may be offered.

God of hope,
comfort and restore all who suffer in body, mind, or spirit.

May they know the power of your healing love.

Make us willing agents of your compassion.

Strengthen us as we share in making people whole.

We remember those who have died and those who mourn.

Particular intercessions/thanksgivings may be offered.

We remember with thanksgiving those who have died in the faith of Christ, and those whose faith is known to you alone.

Loving God, into your hands we commend them.

Give comfort to those who mourn.

**Fill the emptiness of their loss
with your never-ending peace.**

We praise you for all your saints
who have entered your eternal glory.

May their example inspire and encourage us.

We pray for ourselves and our ministries.

Particular intercessions/thanksgivings may be offered.

Lord, you have called us to serve you.

**Grant that we may minister in your name,
with your love in our hearts,
your truth in our minds,
your strength in our wills;
until, at the end of our journey,
we know the joy of our homecoming
and the welcome of your embrace;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

THE GREETING OF PEACE

We are the body of Christ.

His Spirit is with us.

The peace of the Lord be always with you
and also with you.

*You are invited to share a Greeting of Peace,
with your neighbours.*

Offertory prayers

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation:
through your goodness we have this bread to set before you,
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 set before you,
fruit of the vine and work of human hands.
It will become for us the cup of salvation.

Blessed be God for ever.

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation.
Through your goodness we have these gifts to share.
Accept and use our offerings for your glory
and for the service of your kingdom.

Blessed be God for ever.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING PRAYER

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 our 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 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. ✠

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

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 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 baptized 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.

Through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit
we worship you, Father eternal, in songs of never-ending praise:

**Blessing and honour and glory and power
are yours for ever and ever. Amen.**

As our Saviour has taught us, we are confident to 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.
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and for ever. Amen.**

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD AND THE COMMUNION

As this broken bread was once many grains,
which have been gathered together and made one bread:
**so may your Church be gathered
from the ends of the earth into your kingdom.**

Agnus Dei is said or sung

Jesus, Lamb of God, have mercy on us.

Jesus, bearer of our sins, have mercy on us.

Jesus, redeemer of the world, grant us your peace.

The priest says

The gifts of God for the people of God.

Come let us take this holy sacrament of the body and blood of Christ
in remembrance that he died for us,
and feed on him in our hearts by faith with thanksgiving.

THE SENDING OUT OF GOD'S PEOPLE

Let us pray.

God our creator,
by your gift
the tree of life was set at the heart of the earthly paradise,
and the bread of life at the heart of your Church:
may we who have been nourished at your table on earth
be transformed by the glory of the Saviour's cross
and enjoy the delights of eternity;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**We thank you, Lord,
that you have fed us in this Sacrament,
united us with Christ,
and given us a foretaste of the heavenly banquet
prepared for all peoples. Amen.**

Notices

The Blessing & Dismissal

May Christ the Son of God be manifest to you,
that your lives may be a light to the world;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Go in the peace of Christ.

Thanks be to God.

The resurrection is central to Christianity, not just as a dogma but as a driving principle. Unfortunately, Paul's writing in this, the earliest discussion of it, is dense and difficult, and some of the regular translations don't help.

The key is Paul's contrast between perishable and imperishable. The seed and the plant are not an exact analogy for the old body and the new, but rather a way of demonstrating radical change within basic continuity.

The all-important claim is that 'God gives it a body' (v. 38). It is irrelevant to worry (as did some of the early Fathers) about how God will reassemble the exact atoms and molecules of our present bodies. They are in any case in a constant state of flux, through which matter is shared, not hoarded. Resurrection will be an act of new creation, taking up the old within it, like an architect and builder taking stones from a tumbledown old building and reusing them, enhancing their beauty thereby, within a great cathedral.

The new body, then, will be imperishable, not subject to decay or death. It will be animated, not by the 'soul' that will depart from the present body at death, but by the Spirit; that is the meaning of the 'natural body' and the 'spiritual body' in verse 44. (The common translations 'physical body' and 'spiritual body' give completely the wrong impression, implying a kind of Platonism in which physicality itself is regarded as a second-rate form of existence.)

Thus, when Paul declares (v. 50) that 'flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom', he is not suggesting that the resurrection body is what we would call 'non-physical'. As the rest of the passage makes clear, the present physicality, subject to decay and death, has to be transformed. In God's new creation, death is not merely to be redescribed in somewhat more optimistic language (death 'seen as' resurrection, as some have put it), but defeated and reversed. If this were not so, Paul could have answered his initial question ('what sort of body will the resurrected dead possess?') a lot more briefly.

Celebrating God's goodness in redemptive re-creation is the underlying motif of Jesus' charge to love enemies, to be merciful and generous beyond measure, and thereby to reflect the compassionate heart of the heavenly Father. To see all this as a hard challenge, towards which one struggles, is already not only to misunderstand but to disobey. Jesus envisages a life based on God's future, on the lavish and exuberant love of the Creator let loose upon the world once more in healing and grace; he urges us to let the life and love of this God flow through our lives already. We are to be resurrection people, those in whom God's future transforms the present.

That was Joseph's secret. Looking to God's future, he was able to see the present with forgiveness instead of revenge. Instead of the anger we might have expected, we find healing generosity.

Wright, N. T. (2000). *Twelve Months of Sundays: Reflections on Bible Readings, Year C* (pp. 32–33). Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.