

Elements of the Mass

Confession

'If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness' (I John 1.9). The need to confess sin is clear in scripture. How we go about it has caused controversy among Christians, especially at the Reformation. Many consider it enough to confess their sins privately to God, during their personal prayer or using the formularies at the start of Mass. However, given Jesus' assurance to the apostles in John 20 that 'whoever's sins you forgive they are forgiven' the Church has always recommended sacramental confession as a way of taking sin and forgiveness seriously: sin is, after all, a habit which needs every possible tool to be rooted out. Unlike the Roman Catholic or Orthodox churches, the churches of the Anglican Communion have never insisted on sacramental confession, but in the *Book of Common Prayer* an order for confession is found in the Visitation of the Sick, recommended for anyone who needs to 'quiet his conscience'. Those who practise Confession in this way find it a helpful discipline to have to remember their sins and name them in front of a fellow sinner (the priest!), to receive advice and reassurance from the priest. Above all, they value hearing the absolution: the absolute assurance that God forgives them and has 'put away all their sins' because of what Jesus has done on the cross.

Prayers to Remember

A Collect for Saints Simon and Jude, Apostles, whose Feast falls on 28th October:

O Almighty God, who hast built thy Church upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the head corner-stone: grant us so to be joined together in unity of spirit by their doctrine; that we may be made an holy temple acceptable unto thee; through the same Jesus Christ thy Son our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, ever on God, world without end. Amen.

24th October 2021

Last Sunday after Trinity/
Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Crying Out



Jesus responds to the crying out of Bartimaeus. He cries out to the 'Son of David,' in that cry is all the desperate hope for the Messiah: the redeemer and saviour. Bartimaeus is a person of faith: he knows the Scripture, he remembers the prophecies, he recognises who Jesus is. Bartimaeus may know the prophecy of Isaiah that the Messiah will make the blind see. In the cry of Bartimaeus the desperate need for healing and wholeness meets the promise and hope of God's saving love. These two realities are the two pillars of effective and faithful prayer of intercession. We come trusting in God who has revealed his purposes in the Old and New Testament, and we open our need to Him trusting that the prayers we offer will fulfil his will and purpose. The healing of Bartimaeus confirmed that Jesus is truly the Messiah, the Lord responds to our prayers to fulfil his own purpose even if sometimes we do not perceive it in the present. His answered cry and his renewed sight enabled Bartimaeus to follow Jesus: may our prayer give us grace to be more faithful friends and disciples of the Lord.

Today's Gospel: St Mark 10:46-end