



ST. JOHN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH
TOORAK
EST. 1859



The Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

19th of September, 2021

Welcome

On behalf of everyone at St. John's, Toorak, a very warm welcome to this church and faith community. St. John's welcomes everyone to all services and events, regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, race or background.

This is a wonderful and historic church, founded in 1859, part of the Anglican Church of Australia and a member of the global Anglican Communion, comprised of 80 million people.



QR code for church

Usually services of worship are held each Sunday at 8am and 10am, and Wednesday at 7pm. All are welcome. Services are followed by times of fellowship over food and drinks to which everyone is also welcome.

This church actively follows Jesus' command to love God, love one's neighbour and to care for all people. Our clergy and parishioners regularly visit the sick, home-bound, and the dying. We care for the poor and needy through service and charitable giving, through our Opportunity Shop run in partnership with the local Catholic and Uniting churches, and by supporting the work of Anglicare, The Brotherhood of St. Laurence and The Anglican Board of Mission. Our clergy regularly baptise new members of the church, preside at weddings and care for the grieving through our funeral ministry. If we can be of service to you or your family, please do not hesitate to get in touch. If you would like to give of your time and talents in the service of others, please also contact the church and we will gladly welcome your contribution.

If you're visiting for the first time please introduce yourself to a welcomer or member of the clergy, and fill out the blue 'Welcome' card found at the end of every pew so we can stay in touch with you.



@stjohnstoorak



Cover Image

Domenico Ghirlandaio *Calling of the Apostles* (detail)
1481 Fresco Cappella Sistina, Vatican

INTRODUCTORY RITE

PRELUDE

ACCLAMATION

Blessed be God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ever.

GREETING

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

COLLECT FOR PURITY

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.

KYRIE ELEISON

Lord, have mercy. **Lord have mercy.**
Christ have mercy. **Christ have mercy.**
Lord have mercy. **Lord have mercy.**

CONFESSION

Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith, with a sincere and a true heart. **Merciful God, our maker and our judge, we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, and in what we have failed to do: we have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves; we repent, and are sorry for all our sins. Father, forgive us. Strengthen us to love and obey you in newness of life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

ABSOLUTION *pronounced by the celebrant*

GLORIA IN EXCELSIS

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.

COLLECT FOR THE SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Loving Father, whose Son Jesus Christ has taught us that what we do for the least of our brothers and sisters we do also for him: give us the will to be the servant of others as he was the servant of all, who gave up his life and died for us, and yet lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

THE FIRST READING Proverbs 31.10-31 *Read by Rex Williams*

¹⁰A capable wife who can find? She is far more precious than jewels.
¹¹The heart of her husband trusts in her, and he will have no lack of gain.
¹²She does him good, and not harm, all the days of her life. ¹³She seeks wool and flax, and works with willing hands. ¹⁴She is like the ships of the merchant, she brings her food from far away. ¹⁵She rises while it is still night and provides food for her household and tasks for her servant-girls.
¹⁶She considers a field and buys it; with the fruit of her hands she plants a vineyard. ¹⁷She girds herself with strength, and makes her arms strong.
¹⁸She perceives that her merchandise is profitable. Her lamp does not go out at night. ¹⁹She puts her hands to the distaff, and her hands hold the spindle. ²⁰She opens her hand to the poor, and reaches out her hands to the needy. ²¹She is not afraid for her household when it snows, for all her household are clothed in crimson. ²²She makes herself coverings; her clothing is fine linen and purple. ²³Her husband is known in the city gates, taking his seat among the elders of the land. ²⁴She makes linen garments and sells them; she supplies the merchant with sashes.
²⁵Strength and dignity are her clothing, and she laughs at the time to come. ²⁶She opens her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue. ²⁷She looks well to the ways of her household, and does not eat the bread of idleness. ²⁸Her children rise up and call her happy; her husband too, and he praises her: ²⁹'Many women have done excellently, but you surpass them all.' ³⁰Charm is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised. ³¹Give her a share in the fruit of her hands, and let her works praise her in the city gates.

Hear the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

THE PSALM Psalm 1 *said together*

¹ Blessed are they

who have not walked in the counsel of the ungodly:
nor followed the way of sinners,
nor taken their seat amongst the scornful.

² But their delight is in the law of the Lord:

and on that law will they ponder day and night.

³ They are like trees planted beside streams of water:

that yield their fruit in due season.

⁴ Their leaves also shall not wither:

and look, whatever they do, it shall prosper.

⁵ As for the ungodly, it is not so with them:

they are like the chaff which the wind scatters.

⁶ Therefore the ungodly shall not stand up

at the judgement:

nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

⁷ For the Lord cares for the way of the righteous:

but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

THE SECOND READING James 3.1-12 *Read by Stella Jongebreur*

¹Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers and sisters, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. ²For all of us make many mistakes. Anyone who makes no mistakes in speaking is perfect, able to keep the whole body in check with a bridle. ³If we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we guide their whole bodies. ⁴Or look at ships: though they are so large that it takes strong winds to drive them, yet they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. ⁵So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great exploits. How great a forest is set ablaze by a small fire! ⁶And the tongue is a fire. The tongue is placed among our members as a world of iniquity; it stains the whole body, sets on fire the cycle of nature, and is itself set on fire by hell. ⁷For every species of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by the human species, ⁸but no one can tame the tongue – a restless evil, full of deadly poison. ⁹With it we bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse those who are made in the likeness of God. ¹⁰From the same mouth

come blessing and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this ought not to be so. ¹¹Does a spring pour forth from the same opening both fresh and brackish water? ¹²Can a fig tree, my brothers and sisters, yield olives, or a grapevine figs? No more can salt water yield fresh.

Hear the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

THE GOSPEL Mark 9.30-37

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to St. Mark.
Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

³⁰They went on from there and passed through Galilee. He did not want anyone to know it; ³¹for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, 'The Son of Man is to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill him, and three days after being killed, he will rise again.' ³²But they did not understand what he was saying and were afraid to ask him. ³³Then they came to Capernaum; and when he was in the house he asked them, 'What were you arguing about on the way?' ³⁴But they were silent, for on the way they had argued with one another about who was the greatest. ³⁵He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, 'Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all.' ³⁶Then he took a little child and put it among them; and taking it in his arms, he said to them, ³⁷'Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

SERMON The Assistant Curate, The Revd Keiron Jones

THE NICENE CREED

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and

became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through the Prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE *prayers prepared by John Horan*

The Prayers end with the following

Almighty God, you have promised to hear our prayers.

Grant that what we have asked in faith we may by your grace receive, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE GREETING OF PEACE *standing*

We are the body of Christ. **His Spirit is with us.**

The peace of the Lord be always with you. **And also with you.**

PARISH NOTICES *given by the Vicar*

OFFERTORY *Please do ensure you maintain your financial support of the church, especially during this period of lockdown. Donations can be made through our website www.saintjohnstoorak.org/support/*

THE LORD'S PRAYER

As our Saviour Christ 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 forever. Amen.

BLESSING

The peace of God which passes all understanding keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son, Jesus Christ our

Lord; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

DISMISSAL

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

POSTLUDE

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PARISH NOTICES

Continued Worship via Zoom

Services on Sunday and Wednesday continue to be streamed via Zoom. If you haven't joined one of these services, and you are able to, please do. They are a wonderful opportunity to be together (at least virtually), to pray, hear Scripture and even enjoy morning tea together afterward. Members of the congregation read the lessons and sometimes pray the intercessions. If you would like to help out with these contributions please advise the office via email. Our Director of Music plays a beautiful prelude and postlude and the clergy preach. This Sunday Keiron is our preacher. Join the Zoom Service of Worship here:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81812816178?pwd=Ujh5TUgxa0V4Y1BlcjI1d2szRDJGdz09> Meeting ID: 818 1281 6178 Passcode: 630730

Please note: This Zoom link is the link for *each Sunday Service* throughout all of September.

Regarding Vaccinations

The following is a message from our Archbishop, The Most Revd Dr Philip Freier, about vaccinations, which was sent to all clergy on 1 September.

"We have no hesitation in urging everyone who is eligible to get vaccinated as soon as possible. The evidence is mounting that vaccination is highly effective. Getting vaccinated is an act of love for your neighbour, and to provide safety in our community, churches and society. There is no credible argument against vaccination, and the risks of serious side effects from any of the vaccines available are extremely low. The Archbishop and bishops have all had a second dose, or have the second dose booked within the next few days." +Philip.

Our Vicar Peter and Assistant Curate Keiron are fully vaccinated and encourage everyone who feasibly can to be vaccinated as well. We are so looking forward to

opening the church and seeing you all again when we can. Our prayers continue for your safety and wellbeing, and if there is anything we can do to support you, please do let us know.

Study Series on the Christian Understanding of God 21, 28 September, and 5 October, 7pm, via Zoom

Our very own Ordinand and Lecturer in Theology at Trinity College Theological School, Dr. Scott Kirkland, will lead a three week course on the Christian understanding of God. "The doctrine of the Trinity is the way Christians talk about God, but it is simultaneously perhaps one of the most difficult puzzles in Christian theology. Over three sessions we will chart several paths through the history of the development of the doctrine, some of the controversies that have surrounded the doctrine, and, most importantly, the significance of the Trinity for thinking about the shape of Christian life in the contemporary world. More than just a confusing abstraction, the Trinity is the grammar of Christian existence."

Join here: <https://zoom.us/j/93842405443> Zoom ID: 938 4240 5443.

Everyone is very welcome and there is no need to RSVP - just hit the Zoom link and join in. As this is on Zoom, members of our neighbouring Anglican churches have also been invited - the more the merrier! So do join in for what promises to be a stimulating course - even while still in lockdown!

Wednesday Evening Prayer Service via Zoom

Until the church can reopen again and we can celebrate eucharist on Wednesday evenings, the clergy will lead a service of prayer (compline) each Wednesday evening at 7pm via Zoom. Following the service you are welcome to stay around for a time of fellowship. We will be using the Compline Service from the Church of England which can be found here: [Night Prayer](#).

This Zoom link will be used for each Wednesday throughout September:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83240468688?pwd=akM0UzllMDRlTGozcDZjUmVEd2Rpdz09> Meeting ID: 832 4046 8688 Passcode: 954020

Church Office Remains Closed

As per the Victorian Government's direction, the church office remains closed, with Sally, Milton and the clergy all working from home. Only Peter is allowed into the office, by virtue of living onsite. However, the office is still contactable via email enquiries@saintjohnstoorak.org or by phone 0477 091 492. The office is open Monday to Thursday.

Prayers for Christian Unity

If eased restrictions permit, Prayers for Christian Unity will be held on Thursday 30 September, 10am at the Swedish Church. All welcome.

Please note that the Archbishop's Annual Dinner, 7 October, 2021 is Cancelled

The Annual Archbishop's Dinner, in support of Trinity College Theological School 'Building our Future' appeal has, unfortunately, been cancelled for 2021 due to the current lockdown and uncertainty about holding large events in the next couple of months. If you have purchased a ticket, you should have received an email inviting ticket-holders to donate the cost of the ticket to Trinity College Theological School; otherwise a refund will be made.

Can you help at our Annual Blessing of the Pets Service, Sunday October 17?

Each year many people attend this service on the south lawn, giving thanks and having a happy number of pets blessed. To make this year's service another happy occasion we need the following volunteers: 2 people to cook the BBQ; 6 people to set up chairs and tables, and 6 people to pack up the former. Can you help? If so, contact the office on 0477 091 492 or enquiries@saintjohnstoorak.org. Thank you!

A Request from the Diocese of Melbourne

The Professional Standards Review Panel is conducting a review of professional standards on behalf of the Archbishop in Council and is seeking your input on the following processes:

- Clearance for Ministry
- Clearance for Service
- Complaints handling and resolution

If you have recently applied for such clearances or made a complaint and would like to give feedback, please do so here:

www.melbourneanglican.org.au/governance/professional-standards

Be part of our Sunday Services

All our ministries are supported by volunteers. The Rosters for September and October are now available. If you are able to assist with any gaps please contact the parish office enquiries@saintjohnstoorak.org

Prayer apps to help us pray

Along with prayer books and the Bible, a number of apps are available, which can help us maintain an active and engaged prayer life. Here are a few for you to consider: [epray](#) [Daily Prayer app and podcast](#) [Pray as you go](#)

The Melbourne Anglican (TMA)

The link to the latest edition of TMA is [here](#). The link to this week's Newstand is [here](#). The link to the September Prayer Diary and prayer resources is [here](#).

Children's Ministry

Your children may enjoy activities offered on-line. 'Sermon4kids' offers weekly activities - [here](#). The Church of England has also produced a number of resources for families and children called 'Cheeky Pandas.' <https://cheekypandas.com/>

Prayer Requests

Prayer requests can be sent to prayers@saintjohnstoorak.org. The clergy check emails for prayer requests daily, and pray in solidarity with anyone who would like prayers said for them.

Clergy Days Off

Our clergy have one regular day off per week. Our Vicar Peter has Friday and our Assistant Curate Keiron Monday. Please respect their time away from work and unless in an emergency, please refrain from telephoning, texting, visiting the Vicarage, or emailing them on these days. Thank you.

Stewardship of St. John's

Each September we must each prayerfully and generously make our pledges of financial support to our parish. We do this now so the clergy, Wardens and Parish Council can, with the Treasurer, prepare the church budget for the coming year, which is passed at our Annual Meeting, held each year in November.

Our budget funds everything we do as a church: our worship, our care of the sick and the poor, the upkeep of this marvellous church, the hall and vicarage, the payment of our priests Peter and Keiron, our staff Sally and Christopher, and our provision of education and social events, alongside our commitment to the community. *Absolutely essential* to the creation of the budget, and the ability to pay for these things, is knowing how much financial support the church can expect in the coming year.

*And key to that is **pledging***, that is, how much money each of us pledges to give to the church over the course of the year.

So this September, *please do commit to pledging to St. John's* by completing a pledge form [here](#) and help the church continue its ministry and mission. The more you pledge, the more we can do! If you are new to St. John's please do make a pledge: it is fundamental to our life together and your pledge, big or small, is an essential part of being a member of this parish and, more broadly, your commitment as a Christian. If you already pledge to St. John's, you don't need to renew your pledge, but if you haven't increased it in a while please do give this prayerful consideration.

Please also consider giving on a regular basis using the Anglican Development Fund, details of which can be found in the foyer. 95% of parishioners use this method and all those using it are most comfortable with its convenience. The Parish Giving via ADF form is [here](#) and any queries may be directed to our Recorder, Anne Bottomley at annebottomley@bigpond.com

Support St. John's

Your support of St. John's is greatly appreciated. The church often gets requests from members and friends about how best to support the church financially. With this in mind, donations can always be made directly to: St. John's Anglican Church General Account, Westpac, 509 Toorak Road, Toorak, Victoria, 3142, Australia. Account Name is St. John's Anglican Church. BSB is 033 086. Account No. is 871931. For international transfers please include SWIFT code WPACAU2S.

What's Happening at St. John's?

For the latest details on what is planned in the parish this year, go to <https://www.saintjohnstoorak.org/community-events/>

17 October, 4pm Our Annual Pet Blessing Service, *hopefully outside on the lawns!*

28 October, 7pm All Souls' Day Service

31 October, 8am & 10am Dr. Scott Kirkland's Last Sunday at St. John's

7 November, 10am All Saints' Day and Remembrance Day Service

21 November, 11.30am Annual Meeting

28 November - 5 December 'Food for Friends,' our annual food drive for those in need in our community, alongside our friends of the Toorak Ecumenical Movement.

Sunday, 5 December A Service of Nine Lessons and Carols, sung by The Choir of Trinity College, the University of Melbourne

Sunday 12 Monday or 13 December, 8pm Hosting The Swedish Church's annual St. Lucia service

Friday, 24 December, Christmas Eve, 6pm Children's Pageant

Friday, 24 December, Christmas Eve, 11pm Midnight Mass with Melbourne University Choral Society under the direction of Andrew Wailes and with the Majestic Brass Ensemble.

Saturday, 25 December, Christmas Day Services at 8am and 10am

2022

Sundays 26 December, 2021 - 30 January, 2022 Summer Sundays! One Service at 10am.

Sunday 2 January, 2021 The Revd Keiron Jones' Last Sunday at St. John's. Keiron will preach and preside and the 10am service will be followed by a farewell.

FOR YOUR PRAYERS

From the Anglican Cycle of Prayer: The Church of the Province of Uganda (Abp Stephen Kaziimba); The Diocese of Newcastle (Bp Peter Stuart, Asst Bps Charlie Murry, Sonia Roulston, Clergy & People); Defence Force Chaplains; St Paul's Anglican Church Frankston (Claudia Mauracher); St Andrew's Brighton (Pastoral Visit, Bp Paul Barker).

For all those who lead us in the Anglican Church, especially: Our Primate The Most Revd Geoffrey Smith, Our Archbishop The Most Revd Philip Freier, and our Bishop, The Right Revd Genieve Blackwell.

For those who lead us in Government: Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II; Governor General David Hurley AC; Prime Minister Scott Morrison; Federal Member of Parliament for Division of Higgins, Dr. Katie Allen; Premier of Victoria, Daniel Andrews; Leader of the Opposition, Matthew Guy.

For Reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians: For Aboriginal Anglican clergy and lay-leaders around Australia, their spiritual health and physical well-being, and the people they care for. For Aboriginal and Government leaders and their work together.

For The Toorak Ecumenical Movement: Our partner churches, St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church, Toorak Uniting Church, and The Swedish Church.

For The Anglican Board of Mission, The Brotherhood of St. Laurence, and Anglicare.

For those who have died, and the families who mourn them: Wilma Tucker, Darcy Smith.

For schools in our parish: Geelong Grammar School Toorak Campus, Head of Campus Rachel George; St Catherine's School, Principal Michelle Carroll; and Toorak Primary School, Principal Julie Manallack.

For the sick and all in need: Rosemary Griffith; Maggie Perkins; Rosie Creswell; Gwen; Audrey Leeton; Jean James; Lachie Sullivan; Mary; Delta; Sue; Adrian Hall; Debra Moore; Samantha; Patricia Williams, and Anthea.

For those in aged care and those who are housebound: Teri Lawrence; Beverley Joyce; Val Hurst; Marcia Larsson; Gordon Kennett; Anne Myers; Billee Edwards; Elizabeth Johnson.

Give thanks for those whose Anniversary of Death is this week: Irene McDonald; Ron Richards; Anne Faulkner; Peter Whitehead; James Menoudakis.

SCRIPTURE COMMENTARY

This commentary presents one interpretation; others may be possible. Comments are best read with the readings. Text from New Revised Standard Version of the Bible (NRSV).

Proverbs 31:10-31

The book ends with this poem, a detailed description of the roles and qualities of “a capable wife”. This appears to be part of “the words of King Lemuel. An oracle that his mother taught him” (v. 1). Lemuel was of a tribe descended from Abraham’s son Ishmael. Similar advice to a ruler is found in Egyptian and Babylonian texts. The poem serves as a summary of Proverbs.

Finding a good wife is also mentioned in 18:22: “He who finds a good wife finds a good thing, and obtains favour from the LORD”. Several of the wife’s qualities are also those of Lady Wisdom – so is the wife wisdom? In four places in Proverbs, wisdom is said to be “more precious [or better] than jewels” (v. 10). The wife’s values to her husband are reminiscent of those of wisdom to her followers. Vv. 13-27 speak of the woman’s extraordinary and ceaseless activity, and her good relationship with her family (vv. 11, 27-28). She and her husband are wealthy (vv. 21-23); he is a leader of the community (v. 23). She manages the household (v. 15b), is a business woman (vv. 14, 16, 18, 24) and does strenuous tasks (v. 17). She also does household activities (vv. 15a, 19). Both a “distaff” (v. 19) and a “spindle” are used in spinning. She makes fine clothes for her family, and is generous to “the needy” (v. 20). She is godly, so she “laughs” (v. 25) as she looks forward to Judgement Day; she is wise (v. 26) and teaches “kindness”. In v. 27, “she looks well to” is *sophiyyah* in the Hebrew text – so perhaps there is a word play on *sophia*, Greek for *wisdom*. The book begins with awe for the Lord (1:7) and it ends on the same theme (v. 30). Perhaps v. 31 is a prayer: may she share in her own productivity; may her deeds be praised by all.

Psalm 1

This psalm is an introduction to the book of Psalms; it contrasts the fate of the godly and the ungodly. Vv. 1-3 speak of the happiness of the godly. They do not live as the ungodly do; rather they constantly (“day and night”, v. 2) and joyfully study and observe Mosaic law; their well-being is like trees which bear fruit. They are prosperous. But, on the other hand, the ungodly are “like chaff” (v. 4) in manual threshing: the crushed sheaves were tossed into the air, where the wind blew the chaff away. So, say vv. 5-6, their fate will be disaster: they will be excluded from the fellowship enjoyed by those who follow God’s ways, and will suffer – unlike the godly, over whom God keeps watch.

James 3:1-12

The author is a teacher (“we who teach”) and so has written this book, a treatise on Christian conduct. The *code of ethics* for teachers is stricter than for others. V. 2 says: he or she “who makes no mistakes” lives a “perfect” Christian moral life, but none of us achieve this. The tongue is small, as are the horse’s bit (v. 3) and the ship’s “rudder” (v. 4), but through this small part of the whole, the teacher, rider and pilot guide – and exercise will. Teachers are tempted to boast (v. 5b). Any deviation

from the truth taught by a teacher can have horrific consequences! The meaning of v. 6 is obscure; perhaps it is saying: the tongue can be used evilly; when it is, it adds to the evil in an already corrupt world, affecting all humankind. An Old Testament wisdom book says that, were it not for sin, we would not die.

The “cycle of nature” is successive generations: a person is born and later dies. The devil is the agent of evil; hence the “tongue ... is ... set on fire by hell”. During creation, animals were given to us to tame (v. 7), but the tongue cannot be tamed: it is capable of continually spreading evil, perhaps like a poisonous snake (v. 8). It can be used for good and for evil: we honour God with it, but we also curse fellow humans (“made in the likeness of God”, v. 9). It should only be used for good. In nature, any one “spring” (v. 11) only produces good or bad water. Fig trees and grapevines only yield what God has intended – so we should only speak good. The devil (“salt water”, v. 12) only yields evil.

Mark 9:30-37

The disciples have failed to cure an epileptic boy of an unclean spirit (vv. 14-29); this has led to them being puzzled. After Jesus cures him, they ask: how could you cure him but we could not? Jesus tells them: that kind of healing requires the power of prayer; it can't be done by earthly means.

Now, as they travel from Caesarea Philippi to Jerusalem, they re-enter Jewish territory (“Galilee”, v. 30). Jesus again wishes to avoid partial understanding of him and his mission. He again teaches that he, the “Son of Man is to be” (v. 31) killed, but adds one new idea: he is to be “betrayed” or *handed over* to people; this is part of God's plan. Both his suffering and betrayal are so beyond the understanding of the disciples that they dare not reveal their ignorance.

Jesus now teaches more about being his followers. (Presumably “the house”, v. 33, is Peter's – see 1:29.) The disciples have been arguing over rank. Jesus says, in effect: *to be my disciple, you must abandon seeking position and prestige*. He takes an example (vv. 36-37): to welcome a child “in my name” (because of regard for who and what I am) is to welcome me, and indeed God. In Aramaic and Greek the word for “child” is the same as for *servant*, so v. 36 may also speak of welcoming a servant, one sent by his master. If so, Jesus is saying: whoever receives the servant receives the master. Whoever receives a child receives Jesus, and whoever receives Jesus receives God, who sent him. Both child and servant are without status. They are unable to repay a kindness, in earthly terms.

THIS SUNDAY

10am Service

First Reading: Proverbs 31.10-31, read by Rex Williams

Second reading: James 3.1-12, read by Stella Jongebreur

Gospel Reading: Mark 9.30-37

Intercessor: John Horan

Celebrant: The Revd Dr. Peter French

Preacher: The Revd Keiron Jones



Vicar The Reverend Dr Peter French
vicar@saintjohnstoorak.org

Wardens Mrs Amanda Bagot,
Mrs Stella Jongebreur,
Mr Anthony Mannering

NEXT SUNDAY, 26th September

10am Service

First Reading: Esther 7.1-6, 9-10; 9.20-22, read by Brenda Mouritz

Second reading: James 5.12-20, read by Ted Mouritz/Barbara Brown

Gospel Reading: Mark 9.38-50

Intercessor: Keith Beecher

Celebrant: The Revd Keiron Jones

Preacher: The Revd Dr. Peter French

Morning tea: Gail and Andrew Ankers, Maureen List

Parish Council

Mr Dougal Colhoun, Mr Craig Cooper,
Mrs Vivienne Brown, Ms Diana Dunlop,
Dr Jessica Hall, Mrs Claire Morgan,
Mr Harrison Young

Assistant Curate The Revd Keiron Jones
curate@saintjohnstoorak.org

Director of Music/Organist
Mr Christopher Cook
accook2001@yahoo.com.au

Ordinand

Dr. Scott Kirkland

Parish Administrator/Child Safe Compliance Mrs Sally Robertson
enquiries@saintjohnstoorak.org

Child Safe Officer Mrs Vivienne Brown

Family Safety Officer
The Revd Keiron Jones

Sunday School Teachers Mr Clive Wright,
Ms Shierly & Miss Jo-Jo Patterson

Archivist Professor Geoff Quail OAM
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