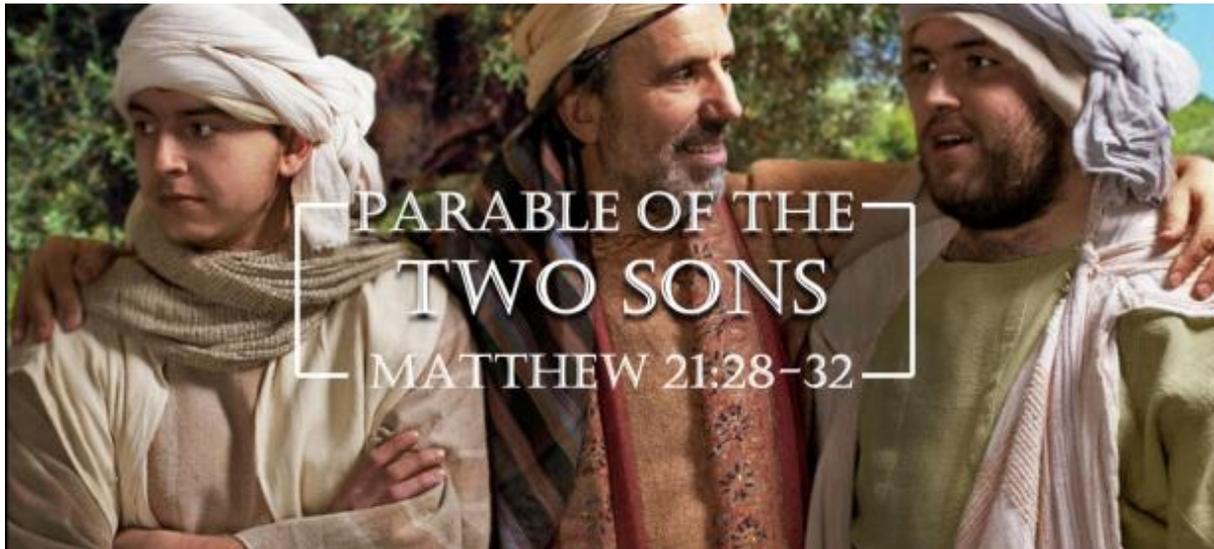




WEEKLY LETTER FROM THE CHAPLAINCY

Sunday September 27th 2020 – 16th Sunday after Trinity

WELCOME to the latest weekly letter on this Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity, as the Church continues its journey through 'Ordinary Time'.



In our Gospel Reading for this Sunday, we hear Jesus' Parable of the Two Sons (as distinct from the more famous parable we know as the Prodigal Son). One of the sons promised to do as his father asked but then didn't, and the other refused but then changed his mind and obeyed his father after all. Which one of those sons do each of us think we resemble? Which of them do you think was the best son to his father? And what has all this to do with God? As ever I'll be trying to make sense of it all in my sermon both at our Morning Worship via Zoom and our Epilogue in the Parish Church. The Gospel Reading (Matthew 21.23-32) containing the parable is quite a complicated passage to understand, and I recommend that you read it through before the service, either from the Sunday sheet that I have attached or in your own Bibles.

Don't forget as ever that I am here for you if there is any way in which I can help you – chaplain@scilly.church / 423911.

SUNDAY WORSHIP



Our Parish Morning Service via Zoom on Sunday at 11.00 a.m. As for every Sunday, the code is

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/477892334?pwd=aWVpWXVidksralpVZm1yUjN6VDg0dz09>. You will be able to join from 10.30 a.m. and

chat to others before we start properly at 11.00 a.m. **It is also possible to join our Zoom service by telephone**, and there are also instructions on how to use the telephone access attached to the email message sent with this weekly letter. If you know of anyone who might like to join in this way, please pass on the relevant information or ask them to contact me.

Please note that shortly after 11.00 a.m. I will be 'locking' the service, which means that latecomers will be unable to join our worship. Apologies in advance if you try to join late or if you lose your coverage and try to rejoin – I'll happily share what you have missed at a later date, but you will find yourselves locked out of the live broadcast. Sorry!!

THIS SUNDAY'S READINGS

You can find the Sunday readings and prayers on one of the other attachments or enclosures that I have sent to you. In our Zoom service and Epilogue we will be thinking about Jesus's Parable of the Two Sons from **Matthew 21.23-32**. For the Old Testament reading we turn to a very interesting passage from the prophet Ezekiel – **Ezekiel 18.1-4, 25-32**. In it the prophet starts by reminding his readers of a pithy saying or proverb that was often quoted in his day: 'The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge.' It is a very telling way of expressing the generally held view in Ezekiel's time that children were rewarded or punished depending on the actions of their parents: if a parent lived an upright life, the

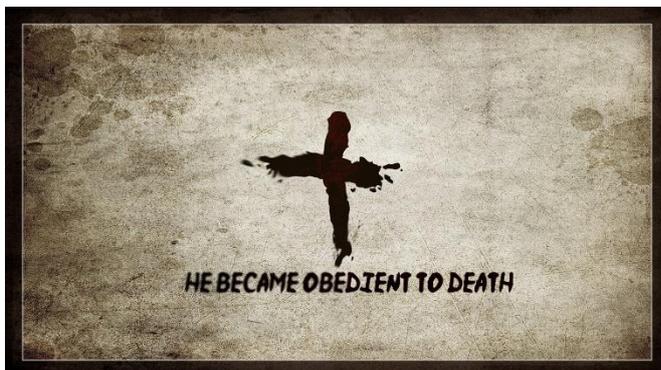


child would be rewarded by God, but if a parent sinned, then the children might well be punished as a result. If that seems strange concept at first reading, remember that in giving the Ten Commandments God is described as 'visiting the sins of the parents on the children for three or four generations' while showing mercy to countless generations. That's a powerful way of saying that God's mercy goes far beyond his desire

to punish. But taken literally, it does sound as though children are to be punished because of some sin that their parents have committed. That sounds unfair to us, and it sounded unfair to Ezekiel too, because in this week's reading he sets out the principle of individual responsibility – that rewards and punishment have to do with the actions of each individual person, rather than being handed down the generations. It is up to each of us to turn to God with a new heart so that we may live.



In our reading from Philippians, **Philippians 2.1-13**, we read one of Paul's most profound statements about the significance of Christ. At its heart (vv.6-11) he makes use of what was probably an older hymn or liturgical chant describing how Christ did not snatch at equality with God but emptied himself taking the form of a servant, and



became obedient to the point of death on a cross, as a result of which God has given him the name above every name so that all creation might come to see him as Lord.

FUTURE EVENTS

Please note that our **Annual Parochial Church Meetin**, this coming Tuesday 29th September at 9.30 a.m. by Zoom. If you haven't received joining codes and information for this and would like to come to this virtual meeting, please get in touch with Gill Lowen or with me.

Just to confirm our **worship plans** for the next few Sundays:

October 4th – Zoom at 11.00 a.m. and Epilogue at 8.15 p.m. – this will be the last evening service for the time being

October 11th and 18th – simple services via Zoom at 11.00 a.m. led by Canon Lynda Barley – no evening service

October 25th – Service of the Word at 11.00 a.m. in the Parish Church

November 1st – Holy Communion at 11.00 a.m. in the Parish Church

We are still living in uncertain times and all of these arrangements are subject to change depending on national and local developments. I plan to cease sending this weekly letter after next Sunday (at least for a while), but will keep in touch via a regular email distribution and by phone with those not on email.

A PRAYER DURING THE PRESENT PANDEMIC

Keep us, good Lord,
under the shadow of your mercy
in this time of uncertainty and distress.
Sustain and support
the anxious and fearful,
and lift up all who are brought low;
that we may rejoice in your comfort
knowing that nothing can separate us
from your love in Christ Jesus our Lord. **Amen.**

