

# GOD'S WORD FOR THIS WEEK

THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

*The Kingdom Parables*

## The Collect of the Day

Almighty and everlasting God,  
by whose Spirit the whole body of the Church  
is governed and sanctified:  
Hear our prayer which we offer for all your faithful people,  
that in their vocation and ministry  
they may serve you in holiness and truth  
to the glory of your name;  
through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

## The First Reading - [Genesis 25: 19-34](#)

<sup>21</sup>Isaac prayed to the Lord for his wife, because she was barren; and the Lord granted his prayer, and his wife Rebekah conceived. <sup>22</sup>The children struggled together within her; and she said, 'If it is to be this way, why do I live?\*' So she went to inquire of the Lord. <sup>23</sup>And the Lord said to her,

'Two nations are in your womb,  
and two peoples born of you shall be divided;  
one shall be stronger than the other,  
the elder shall serve the younger.'

<sup>24</sup>When her time to give birth was at hand, there were twins in her womb. <sup>25</sup>The first came out red, all his body like a hairy mantle; so they named him Esau. <sup>26</sup>Afterwards his brother came out, with his hand gripping Esau's heel; so he was named Jacob.\* Isaac was sixty years old when she bore them.



27 When the boys grew up, Esau was a skilful hunter, a man of the field, while Jacob was a quiet man, living in tents. <sup>28</sup>Isaac loved Esau, because he was fond of game; but Rebekah loved Jacob.

29 Once when Jacob was cooking a stew, Esau came in from the field, and he was famished. <sup>30</sup>Esau said to Jacob, 'Let me eat some of that red stuff, for I am famished!' (Therefore he was called Edom.)\* <sup>31</sup>Jacob said, 'First sell me your birthright.' <sup>32</sup>Esau said, 'I am about to die; of what use is a birthright to me?' <sup>33</sup>Jacob said, 'Swear to me first.'\* So he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob. <sup>34</sup>Then Jacob gave Esau bread and lentil stew, and he ate and drank, and rose and went his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright.

The Scriptures are not afraid to highlight human conflict and difference; from the beginning of time they have witnessed division and the struggle to remain on the right course. The continued story of Isaac and Rebekah interestingly reveals that Rebekah too had a relationship with the Divine to the extent that she asks for a child and in return is given twins. From within her womb these children fight between themselves as two nations divided and this is to dictate the course of their relationship. Our journey on this earth and our relationship with God doesn't guarantee an easy road, but it does guarantee guidance and help along the way. What are the areas in your life in which you struggle? Ask for God's guidance today.

## The Second Reading - Romans 8: 1-11

8 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. <sup>2</sup>For the law of the Spirit\* of life in Christ Jesus has set you\* free from the law of sin and of death. <sup>3</sup>For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and to deal with sin,\* he condemned sin in the flesh, <sup>4</sup>so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.\* <sup>5</sup>For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit\* set their minds on the things of the Spirit.\* <sup>6</sup>To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit\* is life and peace. <sup>7</sup>For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law—indeed it cannot, <sup>8</sup>and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

9 But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit,\* since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. <sup>10</sup>But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit\* is life because of righteousness. <sup>11</sup>If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ\* from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through\* his Spirit that dwells in you.

What a remarkable and comforting reading this is. It has the honesty to recognise the challenges discussed last week between the likes of dualistic thinking (Right or Wrong, Black or White) by which the world tends to operate and the spiritual ways of the Kingdom in comparison. Some people work from a tangible worldly place and some from a more

spiritual one. Having the presence of Christ within us is such a comfort in a world where not everyone will understand the ways of God. Perhaps you could take a moment today to reflect on the ways Christ's presence within yourself has changed your perspective on certain situations. Give thanks to God for his guidance and presence in your life.

### The Third Reading - Matthew 13: 1-9, 18-23



That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the lake.<sup>2</sup>Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. <sup>3</sup>And he told them many things in parables, saying: 'Listen! A sower went out to sow.<sup>4</sup>And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. <sup>5</sup>Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil.<sup>6</sup>But when the sun rose, they

were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. <sup>7</sup>Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. <sup>8</sup>Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. <sup>9</sup>Let anyone with ears\* listen!'

18 'Hear then the parable of the sower. <sup>19</sup>When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. <sup>20</sup>As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; <sup>21</sup>yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away.\* <sup>22</sup>As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. <sup>23</sup>But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.'

Jesus' concern is that the people he is trying to reach and teach understand the wisdom he is passing on to them. He is clever in his use of everything around them that is familiar and these are farming people! The parable of the seeds falling on different types of ground has often be interpreted as representative of different people and their understanding and receptivity of God and his word. What if each different seed was to represent different times in our spiritual journey through life? Is it possible that there were times when we were snatched away by other negative influences or, having initially received the knowledge

and belief of the kingdom of God, doubted his presence and power at times in our lives when tragedy or challenges have happened? Or perhaps times when we have chosen the tangible and worldly possession or achievement over the quiet voice of God within us. Surely if this is the case, our desire is to reach the fallow ground in our lives when our connection with the Divine is deep rooted and sure and will produce fruit in abundance. But perhaps it would be realistic to say that part of our journey towards this fallow ground is the struggle to find that good land by moving through different wildernesses.

## The Psalm 119

Psalm 119 is one of the most beautiful gifts in the Book of Psalms. This portion of the psalm today. In keeping with our theme this week, the writer is not afraid to speak clearly about challenges in life but actively decides to hold fast to God and his word as a 'lantern' in the darkest of times. The effort we put in for God is the peace and comfort we receive in return because every effort and every word of commitment is heard by the Almighty and more deeply roots our connection with him.

- 105 Your word is a lantern to my feet  
and a light upon my path.
- 106 I have sworn and will fulfil it,  
to keep your righteous judgements.
- 107 I am troubled above measure;  
give me life, O Lord, according to your word.
- 108 Accept the freewill offering of my mouth,  
O Lord,  
and teach me your judgements.
- 109 My soul is ever in my hand,  
yet I do not forget your law.
- 110 The wicked have laid a snare for me,  
but I have not strayed from your commandments.
- 111 Your testimonies have I claimed as my heritage for ever;  
for they are the very joy of my heart.
- 112 I have applied my heart to fulfil your statutes:  
always, even to the end.





Embracing all Forms  
of Church

Our Sunday Services

Beneath the Eaves (in-Church)  
St. Brigid's Kilbride - 10am  
St. Patrick's Powerscourt - 11:30am

Beneath the Boughs (Online)

 **The Grouped Parishes of  
Powerscourt with Kilbride**

**Our Parish Website**  
 <http://www.powerscourt.glendalough.anglican.org/parishgroups.html>



Please join us for our online worship every Sunday which will be available on our YouTube channel at the link below. Services are posted from 7am every Sunday morning.

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0XYER9cLb4mj3tuNcYdExQ?view\\_as=subscriber](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0XYER9cLb4mj3tuNcYdExQ?view_as=subscriber)