**Prayers, Reading and Hymns for 20th September – 15th Sunday after Trinity**

**PRAYERS**

**The Collect / Prayer of the Day**

God, who in generous mercy sent the Holy Spirit  
 upon your Church in the burning fire of your love:  
grant that your people may be fervent  
in the fellowship of the gospel  
that, always abiding in you,  
they may be found steadfast in faith and active in service;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Or

Lord God,  
defend your Church from all false teaching  
and give to your people knowledge of your truth,  
that we may enjoy eternal life  
in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Post-Communion Prayer**

Keep, O Lord, your Church, with your perpetual mercy;  
and, because without you our human frailty cannot but fall,  
keep us ever by your help from all things hurtful,  
and lead us to all things profitable to our salvation;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**READINGS**

**Reading 1: Philippians 1:21-end**

*A reading from Paul’s letter to the Philippians*

For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labour for me; and I do not know which I prefer. I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better; but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, so that I may share abundantly in your boasting in Christ Jesus when I come to you again. Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel, and are in no way intimidated by your opponents. For them this is evidence of their destruction, but of your salvation.

And this is God’s doing. For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ, but of suffering for him as well—since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

This is the word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God**

**Gospel Reading Matthew 20:1-16**

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew

**Glory to you, O Lord**

‘For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire labourers for his vineyard. After agreeing with the labourers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. When he went out about nine o’clock, he saw others standing idle in the market-place; and he said to them, “You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.” So they went. When he went out again about noon and about three o’clock, he did the same. And about five o’clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, “Why are you standing here idle all day?” They said to him, “Because no one has hired us.” He said to them, “You also go into the vineyard.” When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, “Call the labourers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.” When those hired about five o’clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, saying, “These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.” But he replied to one of them, “Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?” So the last will be first, and the first will be last.’

This is the gospel of the Lord

**Praise to you, O Christ**

**HYMNS**

**Lord, we thank you for the promise**

seen at every human birth.

You have planned each new beginning,

who could hope for greater worth?

Hear our prayer for those we cherish,

claim our children as your own.

In the fertile ground of childhood

may eternal seed be sown.

Lord, we thank you for the vigour

burning in the years of youth,

strength to face tomorrow’s challenge

zest for life and zeal for truth.

In the choice of friends and partners

when ideas and values form,

may the message of your kingdom

be the guide, the goal, the norm.

Lord, we thank you for the harvest

of the settled, middle years,

times when work and home can prosper,

when life’s richest fruit appears.

But when illness, stress and hardship

fill so many days with dread,

may your love renew the vision

of a clearer road ahead.

Lord, we thank you for the beauty

of a heart at last mature,

crowned in peace and rich in wisdom,

well-respected and secure.

But to those who face the twilight

frail, bewildered, lacking friends,

Lord, confirm your gracious offer

perfect life which never ends.

**A Touching Place Iona Community**

Christ’s is the world in which we move,

Christ’s are the folk we’re summoned to love,

Christ’s is the voice which calls us to care

And Christ is the one who calls us here.

*Chorus:*

*To the lost, Christ shows his face,*

*To the unloved, he gives his embrace*

*To those who cry in pain or despair,*

*Christ makes for his friends a touching place.*

Feel for the people we most avoid,

Strange or bereaved or never employed;

Feel for the women and feel for the men

Who fear that their living is all in vain.

*Chorus*

Feel for the parents who’ve lost their child,

Feel for the women whom men have defiled,

Feel for the baby for whom there’s no breast,

And feel for the weary who find no rest.

*Chorus*

Feel for the lives by life confused,

Riddled with doubt, in loving abused;

Feel for the lonely heart, conscious of sin,

Which longs to be pure but fears to begin.

*Chorus*

**Here in this place** by Marty Haugen

Here in this place, new light is streaming,  
now is the darkness vanished away.  
See in this space our fears and our dreamings  
brought here to you in the light of this day.  
Gather us in, the lost and forsaken  
Gather us in, the blind and the lame,  
call to us now and we shall awaken,  
we shall arise at the sound of our name.

We are the young, our lives are a mystery,  
we are the old who yearn for your face,  
we have been sung throughout all of history,  
called to be light to the whole human race.  
Gather us in, the rich and the haughty,  
gather us in, the proud and the strong,  
give us a heart so meek and so lowly,  
give us the courage to enter the song.

Here we will take the wine and the water,  
here we will take the bread of new birth,  
here you shall call your sons and your daughters,  
call us anew to be salt for the earth.  
Give us to drink the wine of compassion,  
give us to eat the bread that is you,  
nourish us well and teach us to fashion  
lives that are holy and hearts that are true.

Not in the dark of buildings confining,  
not in some heaven light years away  
but here in this place, the new light is shining  
now is the kingdom, now is the day.  
Gather us in and hold us forever,  
gather us in and make us your own  
Gather us in, all peoples together,  
fire of love in our flesh and our bones,  
fire of love in our flesh and our bones.