

Readings for the week

Today	Romans 12 v 9 - 21 Matthew 16 v 21 - 28
Monday	Acts 8 v 26 - 40
Tuesday	Acts 9 v 1 - 19a
Wednesday	Acts 9 v 19b - 31
Thursday	Acts 9 v 32 - 43
Friday	Acts 10 v 1 - 16
Saturday	Acts 10 v 17 - 33



Prayer

The Ministry Leadership Team would like you to pray for the following topics:

1. Remember all those still catching and suffering from Covid 19, even if they are no longer in the headlines, pray that through the care and compassion of doctors and nurses they may know the healing touch of God.
2. Pray for the mission of the Church in these difficult times, that God's love may be seen in the lives of his people.

Reminder to please contact the Administrator to reserve a seat at any of the Minster Sunday services.

This Sunday's services

30 August	Trinity 12	Green
Alcester	10.00 am	Minster Holy Communion
Haselor	10.00 am	Minster Holy Communion

Next Week's services

06 September	Trinity 13	Green
Alcester	10.00 am	Minster Holy Communion
Arrow	10.00 am	Minster Holy Communion
Kinwarton	4.00 pm	Holy Communion



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Welcome to the Alcester Minster Group of Churches

Sunday 30 August 2020

Trinity 12 Green

"Then Jesus told his disciples, 'If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.'"

Matthew 16 v 24

Collect

Almighty and everlasting God,
you are always more ready to hear
than we to pray
and to give more than either we
desire *or* deserve:
pour down upon us the abundance of
your mercy,
forgiving us those things of which our
conscience is afraid
and giving us those good things
which we are not worthy to ask
but through the merits and mediation
of 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.

Alternative Collect

God of constant mercy,
who sent your Son to save
us:
remind us of your
goodness,
increase your grace within
us,
that our thankfulness may
grow,
through Jesus Christ our
Lord.

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email: administrator@alcesterminster.org Alcester 3inster Office, Church House,
is currently closed. (Administrator Hours 10.30 - 13.30pm)

Alcester Minster website: www.alcesterminster.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/AlcesterMinster

Reading: extract from Matthew 16:21-28

From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.

And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, "God forbid it, Lord! This must never happen to you."

But he turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

Then Jesus told his disciples, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.

Thought for the Day

It is a natural response to want to keep those we love from harm. Sometimes we think we can see others heading for problems or even something disastrous in their lives and as a friend or family member we try to stop them and shield them from the pain. So, in the gospel reading from Matthew this week, it seems perfectly understandable that Peter would be aghast at the thought of Jesus heading to Jerusalem to suffer and to die. Although, his feelings may not have been completely selfless, his picture of Jesus as Saviour and Lord may not have incorporated the need for such suffering and death. There may have been some tricky moments with the Pharisees for Peter and the other disciples in their time with Jesus, but nothing that suggested the sorrow and suffering that was about to descend upon all of them.

This is a "reality" check for Peter, that to follow and proclaim Jesus as Lord was about more than picnics at the lake side and doing good deeds. It would be about sharing in his sufferings and facing opposition and challenges. Unlike some Christians in the world today, we do not have to risk our lives in proclaiming Jesus, yes, we may be challenged by others about our faith and belief and may even be belittled for it but

overall, we have it relatively easy. We are free to go to church and serve as we do with little or no fear of reprisal.

Someone recently said in my workplace, "if you don't think there is racism here, you are not looking hard enough" and similarly it seems to me if being a Christian disciple seems very easy all the time then we are not always doing the right things – we are certainly not denying ourselves and taking up our cross. We are not reaching out enough and walking where Jesus walked, among those who are in the deepest need of compassion and Christian love in action. This is when it gets hard and uncomfortable, this is when we are vulnerable and open to suffering ourselves.

The great news of course is we are never asked to do this alone. Jesus on turning his eyes upon Jerusalem, knew that God his father was with him and would be every step of the way. The Holy Spirit is ever present with us as we walk where Jesus walked, and helps us to shoulder the burdens of Christian discipleship. We can do nothing on our own, but with God we can do much.

Without Jesus, Peter was a "stumbling block" but with Jesus, he was the rock on which the church was built. We may feel unequal to the challenge of Christian discipleship, especially the bits that don't come easy. However, when we hear ourselves saying "I cannot" we just have to remember with God "we can".

Prayer

Lord, we desire so much to be good disciples and yet so often are tempted to take the easy road in both our own lives and how we act with others. Give us the courage and strength to reach out as you did, in vulnerability and humility but always safe and secure in the knowledge that you are with us and will give us the skills, gifts and confidence to do your work.

Amen