

Readings and Prayers for 19 September 2021: TRINITY 16

Jeremiah 11:18-20

The image of Jesus as the innocent lamb led to the slaughter has been a frequent and powerful one throughout Christian history.

¹⁸It was the Lord who made it known to me, and I knew; then you showed me their evil deeds. ¹⁹But I was like a gentle lamb led to the slaughter. And I did not know it was against me that they devised schemes, saying, "Let us destroy the tree with its fruit, let us cut him off from the land of the living, so that his name will no longer be remembered."
²⁰But you, O Lord of hosts, who judge righteously, who try the heart and the mind, let me see your retribution upon them, for to you I have committed my cause.

Psalm 54

¹Save me, O God, by your name, and vindicate me by your might.

²Hear my prayer, O God; give ear to the words of my mouth.

³For the insolent have risen against me, the ruthless seek my life; they do not set God before them. Selah

⁴But surely, God is my helper; the Lord is the upholder of my life.

⁵He will repay my enemies for their evil. In your faithfulness, put an end to them.

⁶With a freewill offering I will sacrifice to you; I will give thanks to your name, O Lord, for it is good.

⁷For he has delivered me from every trouble, and my eye has looked in triumph on my enemies.

James 3:13-4:3,7-8a

After criticising those with loose tongues, James turns his attention to those who are argumentative and selfish.

¹³Who is wise and understanding among you? Show by your good life that your works are done with gentleness born of wisdom. ¹⁴But if you have bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not be boastful and false to the truth. ¹⁵Such wisdom does not come down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, devilish. ¹⁶For where there is envy and selfish ambition, there will also be disorder and wickedness of every kind. ¹⁷But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy. ¹⁸And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace for those who make peace.

¹Those conflicts and disputes among you, where do they come from? Do they not come from your cravings that are at war within you? ²You want something and do not have it; so you commit murder. And you covet something and cannot obtain it; so you engage in disputes and conflicts. You do not have, because you do not ask. ³You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, in order to spend what you get on your pleasures. ⁷Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. ^{8a}Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you.

Mark 9:30-37

Even after Peter's confession of faith in Jesus as Messiah, and Jesus' transfiguration on the mountain, the disciples have still failed to grasp the nature of God's kingdom, and their own role in it.

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 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."

Collect

Lord of creation, whose glory is around and within us: open our eyes to your wonders, that we may serve you with reverence and know your peace at our lives' end, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Post Communion

Almighty God, you have taught us through your Son that love is the fulfilling of the law: grant that we may love you with our whole heart and our neighbours as ourselves; through Jesus Christ our Lord.