

## Pew Reflections

Ordinary Sunday 13 [Pentecost 5] – Sunday 2 July 2023

- Genesis 22.1-14; Psalm 13; Romans 6.12-23; Matthew 10.40-42.

The story of God commanding Abraham to sacrifice Isaac is troubling. How could God condone child sacrifice? Such things were horrific, banned later in the law of Moses, because that's what the Canaanites did. Jewish scholars look at this passage and contrast Abraham's blind obedience to God telling him to sacrifice Isaac with his passionate arguing on behalf of Sodom and Gomorrah earlier in Genesis. While at the end God blesses Abraham's faithfulness, they argue, ultimately Abraham failed - precisely because he chose not to argue with God; this is the last time God speaks to Abraham in Genesis. God expects us not to be slaves who blindly obey God, but friends who will converse, and debate; not passive recipients of mercy, but active partners in bringing about of the realm of God.

- Offer to God your deepest thoughts and struggles – even the struggles you might have with faith. Strive to listen for God's response in your heart.
- Pray for the safety and integrity of children everywhere, that they may have loving and supportive environments in which to flourish and grow.
- Give thanks for the work and witness of the Episcopal Church in South Sudan.

**Text: The Very Rev Keren, Dean St Paul's Cathedral, Sale © Anglican Board of Mission, 2023**

## Reflections

As a young person, I thought what could I do, or how could I help other people, as a Christian. I was fortunate to be surrounded by amazing Christian people. They were living out faith in so many ways and making incredible positive changes in their local church, and also in the wider society. I wondered, "Who am I? What have I to offer in my everyday living and Christian 'mission'?" As a 15 year old, I felt quite daunted. Until I read this teaching of Jesus - it sang deeply in my soul. A cup of cold water? I could do that. Wherever I was, with whomever I met, I could show welcome and hospitality, extending kindness and compassion. In this simplicity, we can practically share the love of God, our understanding of faith, and know that the living water of the Spirit will ripple beyond our simple act.

Our office is situated at Salvation Army Arndale. Each day, Christian volunteers extend simple hospitality, a welcoming presence, warming grace with practical assistance, either at the front desk, Food Bank, Shop or through accessing wider assistance. Offering the 'least' of God's people the 'most' of God's hospitality, wherever they are, with whomever they meet. We live within the diversity of God's people. We are connected through faith. May we learn the 'language' of the people wherever we are. May we offer the simple act of recognition and respect for the other, listening to them and sharing faith with them. May we understand that there is always more to learn, and God will always teach us, as we journey together. Let's start with the simplicity of loving hospitality, *wherever we are and with whomever we meet.* © Rev Anne Hewitt

28/06/2023



# HOLY INNOCENTS ANGLICAN CHURCH BELAIR

## Readings - Sunday 28 June – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost

### Sentence

The wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. *Romans 6.23*

### Collect

O God,  
your Son has taught us that those who give a cup of water in his name will not lose their reward:  
open our hearts to the needs of your children,  
and in all things make us obedient to your will,  
so that in faith we may receive your gracious gift,  
eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### First Reading: Genesis 22.1-14

<sup>1</sup> After these things God tested Abraham. He said to him, 'Abraham!' And he said, 'Here I am.' <sup>2</sup> He said, 'Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt-offering on one of the mountains that I shall show you.' <sup>3</sup> So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and his son Isaac; he cut the wood for the burnt-offering, and set out and went to the place in the distance that God had shown him. <sup>4</sup> On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place far away. <sup>5</sup> Then Abraham said to his young men, 'Stay here with the donkey; the boy and I will go over there; we will worship, and then we will come back to you.' <sup>6</sup> Abraham took the wood of the burnt-offering and laid it on his son Isaac, and he himself carried the fire and the knife. So the two of them walked on together. <sup>7</sup> Isaac said to his father Abraham, 'Father!' And he said, 'Here I am, my son.' He said, 'The fire and the wood are here, but where is the lamb for a burnt-offering?' <sup>8</sup> Abraham said, 'God himself will provide the lamb for a burnt-offering, my son.' So the two of them walked on together. <sup>9</sup> When they came to the place that God had shown him, Abraham built an altar there and laid the wood in order. He bound his son Isaac, and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. <sup>10</sup> Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to kill his son. <sup>11</sup> But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven, and

said, 'Abraham, Abraham!' And he said, 'Here I am.' <sup>12</sup> He said, 'Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me.' <sup>13</sup> And Abraham looked up and saw a ram, caught in a thicket by its horns. Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt-offering instead of his son. <sup>14</sup> So Abraham called that place 'The Lord will provide'; as it is said to this day, 'On the mount of the Lord it shall be provided.'

For the word of the Lord, *Thanks be to God.*

### Psalm 13

- <sup>1</sup> How long, O Lord, will you so utterly forget me:  
**how long will you hide your face from me?**
- <sup>2</sup> How long must I suffer anguish in my soul,  
and be so grieved in my heart day and night:  
**how long shall my enemy triumph over me?**
- <sup>3</sup> Look upon me, O Lord my God, and answer me:  
**lighten my eyes, lest I sleep in death;**
- <sup>4</sup> Lest my enemy say 'I have prevailed':  
**lest my foes exult at my overthrow.**
- <sup>5</sup> Yet I put my trust in your unfailing love:  
**O let my heart rejoice in your salvation.**
- <sup>6</sup> And I will make my song to the Lord:  
**because he deals so bountifully with me.**

### 2nd Reading: Romans 6. 12-23

<sup>12</sup> Therefore, do not let sin exercise dominion in your mortal bodies, to make you obey their passions. <sup>13</sup> No longer present your members to sin as instruments of wickedness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and present your members to God as instruments of righteousness. <sup>14</sup> For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace. <sup>15</sup> What then? Should we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! <sup>16</sup> Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? <sup>17</sup> But thanks be to God that you, having once been slaves of sin, have become obedient from the heart to the form of teaching to which you were entrusted, <sup>18</sup> and that you, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness. <sup>19</sup> I am speaking in human terms because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to greater and greater iniquity, so now present your members as slaves

to righteousness for sanctification. <sup>20</sup> When you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. <sup>21</sup> So what advantage did you then get from the things of which you now are ashamed? The end of those things is death. <sup>22</sup> But now that you have been freed from sin and enslaved to God, the advantage you get is sanctification. The end is eternal life. <sup>23</sup> For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

For the word of the Lord, *Thanks be to God.*

### Gospel Reading: Matthew 10.40-42

<sup>40</sup> 'Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. <sup>41</sup> Whoever welcomes a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet's reward; and whoever welcomes a righteous person in the name of a righteous person will receive the reward of the righteous; <sup>42</sup> and whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple—truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward.'

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