



The Gospel passage suggested for this first Sunday after Trinity is Matthew's account first of Jesus travelling around many places, first to teach and proclaim the good news and then, because of his great compassion for them, healing many.

Seeing how great was the need for this ministry Jesus then commissions his twelve disciples themselves to go out and share the good news of God's kingdom and to offer healing. We can read the names of those twelve and also the very detailed instructions Jesus gives them which make it clear that they are to minister only to their fellow Israelites and to equip themselves solely with trust in the God who sends them.

We believe that Jesus still heals today, and that he has called the Church, today's disciples, to continue to bring His healing ministry to those in need. This is a ministry that we are glad to offer one another, especially in this time of separation and distance.

Healing is a process and those who receive prayer can find an improvement in their condition, a lessening of pain, or a greater inner healing and peace which gives the ability to live better within their situation; sometimes the greater miracles we ask God for do happen. We do not claim any healing power for ourselves. Our role is purely to bring the need to God for His healing touch.

As we look out on the world, and indeed into ourselves, we can see so much that needs that healing touch and so our prayers at this time. The violent conflicts, social injustices and divisions and individual needs are all still there. We are also of course praying for all those affected by Covid19, the sick, the bereaved, the isolated, (and some can be all of those), all those carrying the

extra burdens of key workers in so many contexts and as carers in their homes for the young, the old and the vulnerable.

These are heavy burdens to bear so we need to attend to our own healing as well. There may be the sense of loss that important life and transition moments have not been able to be marked, exemplified clearly by the experience of our young people whose formal education just ended, grief carried for those we have not been able to mourn in the usual way, the stress caused by lock down, all leaving us without that sense of closure that comes from a good ending.

If we are to bring these experiences to God for healing we must first acknowledge, name, our feelings of sadness, loss, anger. We need to take time to reflect on our loss, to live with the pain of it, to patiently wait for God's peace to come; you cannot hurry grief. We will each need to do this in our own way; in stillness, through a task, or as we walk.

Hard though this is we do it in the hope and trust, however fragile that is, that God will bring us to a new place of healing and strength, where the fragments of our lives begin to come together and we can move forward. Then we can re-engage with, and pray for, the needs of others with a fresh understanding.

Let us continue to pray for one another as we do this work.

A Prayer for Healing

O God of peace and Lord of love, help us to be quiet, relaxed and receptive today, accepting the inpouring of yourself, so that in the depths of our nature and being, your healing grace may take from us the pain of loss, any anxious cares, any unworthy thoughts, and all ingratitude:

Forgive us, cleanse us, renew us, that our hearts may be at rest in you, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen

SL.11.6.20