

## Sunday Readings for 24 August 2008

Trinity 14 - Proper 16 - Year A

Isaiah 51.1-6

Romans 12.1-8

Matthew 16.13-20

### OLD TESTAMENT READING Isaiah 51.1–6

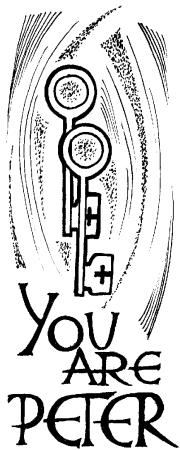
*A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah*

<sup>1</sup> Listen to me, you that pursue righteousness, you that seek the LORD. Look to the rock from which you were hewn, and to the quarry from which you were dug. <sup>2</sup> Look to Abraham your father and to Sarah who bore you; for he was but one when I called him, but I blessed him and made him many. <sup>3</sup> For the LORD will comfort Zion; he will comfort all her waste places, and will make her wilderness like Eden, her desert like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the voice of song. <sup>4</sup> Listen to me, my people, and give heed to me, my nation; for a teaching will go out from me, and my justice for a light to the peoples. <sup>5</sup> I will bring near my deliverance swiftly, my salvation has gone out and my arms will rule the peoples; the coastlands wait for me, and for my arm they hope. <sup>6</sup> Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look at the earth beneath; for the heavens will vanish like smoke, the earth will wear out like a garment, and those who live on it will die like gnats; but my salvation will be for ever, and my deliverance will never be ended.

### NEW TESTAMENT READING Romans 12.1–8

*A reading from the letter of Saint Paul to the Romans*

<sup>1</sup> I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. <sup>2</sup> Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God – what is good and acceptable and perfect. <sup>3</sup> For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgement, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. <sup>4</sup> For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, <sup>5</sup> so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. <sup>6</sup> We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; <sup>7</sup> ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; <sup>8</sup> the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.



### GOSPEL Matthew 16.13–20

*A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew*

<sup>13</sup> Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, 'Who do people say that the Son of Man is?' <sup>14</sup> And they said, 'Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.' <sup>15</sup> He said to them, 'But who do you say that I am?' <sup>16</sup> Simon Peter answered, 'You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.' <sup>17</sup> And Jesus answered him, 'Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. <sup>18</sup> And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. <sup>19</sup> I will give you

the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.' <sup>20</sup> Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.



### ***Today's Readings***

However great our ambitions for ourselves and for the world, they are as nothing when seen from the perspective of the Lord who created us. Who would have imagined that Abraham and Sarah would be blessed with a son in their old age? But Abraham's faithfulness was blessed and rewarded beyond all measure, as the father of a great nation. Have the people of God fallen on hard times? The Lord will not only restore their fortunes, but bring about a new order in the world in which they will flourish as never before, bearing witness to the power of God whose word is justice and prosperity for all his children, at it once was in the garden of Eden and will be again when the Lord commands it, not only for a season but for all eternity.

Since we live in hope of something better than this present world, we should seek to prepare ourselves spiritually for the kingdom of God, rather than model our lives on the world around us. This is not for the sake of pietism or spiritual pride, but rather so that we may live as God's people, according to his will for us which is expressed in scripture and discerned in prayer. Thus we may recognise the spiritual gifts which we have been allotted as gifts to be exercised for the whole Body, not as personal attributes causing us false pride. Whatever gifts we have received are a gift of grace, so that together we may build up the Body of Christ, sharing all that we have in collaboration rather than in competition with one another. Whatever successes or achievements result, they belong to all and are rightly the cause of rejoicing for all.

We all have much to learn in our discipleship as followers of Jesus Christ. Those who became his disciples and were taught by him, day by day, were not ready at first to know everything that was to take place, or to know who Jesus was. We too must acknowledge humbly that we are beginners in the school of God's service, and that there will always be more to learn as we are equipped by God for the abundant and various ministries to which all are called in his Church. When we are ready he will make known to us what we need to know, and what our calling is. We may rightly think ourselves to be unworthy and incapable of serving the Lord, but through the power of his Spirit at work among us he opens our eyes and gives us grace to do so, for he has power to change us and make of us witnesses to his love, ambassadors to the world and even foundation stones for his Church.

**Rev Stephen Trott**

## **PARISH NOTICES**

[www.pitsford.org.uk](http://www.pitsford.org.uk)

**SUNDAY 24 AUGUST - Trinity 14 - at Boughton**

10am Sung Eucharist

**SUNDAY 31 AUGUST - Trinity 15 - FIFTH SUNDAY at Boughton**

10am Sung Eucharist

**SUNDAY 7 SEPTEMBER - Trinity 16 - at Pitsford**

8AM Holy Communion (BCP)

10am Sung Eucharist

**The Funeral Service for Bill York RIP will take place at All Saints' Pitsford on Friday 29 August at 12.30pm.**

**The Funeral Service for Ron Tarry RIP will take place at Boughton Parish Church on Monday 1 September at 2.30pm.**

ADVANCE NOTICE - **Back to Church Sunday** is on 28 September this year.

Family Services at 10am in Boughton, and at 4pm in All Saints' Church, Pitsford. More details to follow.