

Reflections for June 28th – 3rd Sunday after Trinity

Help us to treat you well

Many years ago I went to a meeting at the Church of Christ the Cornerstone, in Central Milton Keynes, to hear the American writer and activist Jim Wallis. I still remember a story that he told that night.

His home church was in a poor neighbourhood of Washington D.C., and one of the projects that they ran was a food programme. Every Saturday morning they would give out bags of food to hundreds of needy people, in a way we have become familiar with through the food banks that have grown up in this country in recent years.

Jim Wallis said that when he was at home he liked to go along and help on Saturdays, and especially he loved to hear Mary Glover pray. She was an elderly woman who sometimes needed help with food herself, but she also volunteered to come along to help, and before they opened the door each week she would pray. She would thank God for all his blessings, and she would end by saying, “Lord, we know that you will be coming through this door today, so, Lord, help us to treat you well.”

In this week’s gospel reading, Jesus explains that anyone who welcomes or helps one of his disciples is at the same time welcoming him. Later in Matthew’s gospel, in chapter 25, verses 31 to 46, Jesus tells a parable about God’s judgement, with the message that if we help anyone who is in need, we are showing our love for him, and if we fail to help those who are in need, then we are turning away from him.

The words of the gospel, and Mary Glover’s prayer, can remind us that it is a good thing to seek to serve God, and it is a good thing to help our neighbour, but it is best when these things work together in harmony, and we show our love for God in the way we help our neighbours, and especially those who are in the greatest need.

Revd John Waller

Loving God,
whose son Jesus came to love and serve all people;
guide and strengthen us to show our love for you
in the way that we love and serve our neighbours.
Amen.

Bible readings: Jeremiah 28. 5-9; Romans 6. 12-23; Matthew 10. 40-42