



## Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

† Sunday 14th July 2019

In England and Wales

Prayer for those work or sail upon the sea – for seafarers

Keynote: Jesus invites us to wholehearted loving service in his name

### Book of Deuteronomy 30: 10-14

This text from Moses may seem to be addressed to the people of the Old Covenant, but it is also addressed to anyone who seeks God, and wishes to follow the way of God in their lives. So what are we to do? Moses speaking to the people, says, '*Obey the voice of the Lord your God, keeping those commandments, and laws of his... and you shall return to the Lord your God with all your heart and soul.*' This law which he directs us to follow today '*is not beyond your strength or beyond your reach,*' not in heaven, not beyond the seas, '*No, the Word is very near to you, it is in your mouth and in your heart for your observance.*' So it is in our hearts that we are to seek God and his way.

**Responsorial Psalm 68 (69)** – a cry to God for help in time of sorrow

### Letter of Paul to the Colossians 1: 15-20

These verses of the apostle Paul's letter have the character of a primitive Christian hymn probably having an origin in the liturgy of the early Eucharistic community. The theme of the hymn is the role of Christ in creation, '*Christ Jesus is the image of the unseen God and the first-born of all creation.*' But Christ is seen as pre-existing all created things '*before anything was created, he existed, and he holds all things in unity.*' In a similar way, Christ is hailed, as the head of the Church, he who is the Beginning of all things, is also '*the first to be born from the dead, so that he should be first in every way.*' Christ is also the great reconciler, for through his death on the cross, '*he made peace.*' What might the apostle Paul be saying that is so important for us too? To recognise the supremacy of Christ as Lord – to worship and to follow 'the Way' of peace and reconciliation.

### Gospel according to Luke 10: 25-37

The story of the man who fell among thieves, to be rescued by the passing Samaritan stranger – who doesn't hesitate for a moment to stop and offer his help – is so well known that we may actually miss the richness of this teaching. Luke, the evangelist, has a special feeling for the poor, for the outsider, the struggling members of the society. In Luke's eyes the good news of the gospel is especially for such as these. He relates the parable and draws out for us Jesus' teaching. Two people, a temple priest, and a Levite – leading examples of law-observant people – do not come to the aid of the stripped and apparently dead man for fear of becoming ritually unclean. We should not be too quick to condemn them – too often being busy ourselves, or concerned about other 'important' matters, we too may pass by those in need. In the eyes of the Jews of the day, the Samaritan, on the other hand, was the 'outsider,' the outcast, the foreigner. The observant Jew would not even pass the time of the day with such folk. The real message here has a double meaning. Not only Jesus' expectation that we show mercy and compassion to those in need, but maybe, more importantly, that the kingdom of God is open to anyone. For at the start of this gospel today the lawyer, to test Jesus, had asked, '*Master, what must I do to inherit eternal life?*' Well, we now have Jesus' answer, '*Go, and do the same yourself.*' Be merciful, and keep your eyes open for someone in need.