

THE SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

September 23, 2018

God is love; O come, let us worship!

9:00 a.m. – The Holy Eucharist

Introit: Psalm 119 part 18:	page 494
The Gloria:	page 86
The Collect:	page 244
The Old Testament Reading:	Proverbs 25:6-14
Psalm 119 part 15:	page 492
The Epistle:	page 244
Gradual Psalm 131:	page 503
The Holy Gospel:	page 244
The Creed:	page 71
The Homily	
The Prayers of the People:	L: Lord, in your mercy; C: Hear our prayer
The Consecration:	page 82
Post-Communion Prayer:	page 85

10:30 a.m. – The Holy Eucharist

♪ PROCESSIONAL HYMN:	600 (Terra Beata)
The Gloria:	page 86
The Collect:	page 244
The Old Testament Reading:	Proverbs 25:6-14
Psalm 131:	page 503
The Epistle:	page 244

♪ GRADUAL HYMN:	470 (Hyfrydol)
The Holy Gospel:	page 244
♪ GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:	Alleluia
The Creed:	page 71
The Homily	
♪ OFFERTORY HYMN:	561 (Cruger)
The Prayers of the People:	L: Lord, in your mercy; C: Hear our prayer
The Consecration:	page 82
♪ HYMN DURING COMMUNION:	246 (Song 1)
Post-Communion Prayer:	page 85
♪ RECESSIONAL HYMN:	406 (Cwm Rhonda RB 269)

*Please join us in the Parish Hall
following the 10:30 Celebration for
Coffee & Conversation.*

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From the Rector _____

In a world with lots of big problems, is Jesus missing the point this morning? When you see problems like Syria or Yemen, problems such as global warming and the environment, enough hunger and poverty and abuse to trouble anyone with a conscience, do you not think that He might have been able to find something more important to talk about than just table manners; something more significant than just plain etiquette? Even in His own day, wouldn't people have been more concerned about what to do about the corruption and abuse of the Roman government? Or the leadership of the Temple? Or even, for heaven's sake, about the price of fish?

At first glance it might be easy to think that Jesus' conversation about where to sit when invited to someone's house hardly ranks as the most important priority in our lives. But to draw that conclusion is, I think, to miss how the words of Jesus this morning speak at the most fundamental level of the radical re-ordering of human life that Christ calls us to live out in our lives every day; in fact, this morning's Gospel gets to the heart of the radical re-ordering of all of our relationships that we are called to undertake in Christ.

Now, at first glance, this story in this morning's Gospel appears to be nothing more than a straightforward, practical lesson in the virtues of courtesy and hospitality – virtues which were among the most esteemed in the ancient world:

When you're invited by someone to a wedding banquet," our Lord begins, "don't sit down at the place of honour.

After all, there may well be other, more distinguished, guests who outrank you. Choose instead the lower places at table, he continues, "so that when your host comes, he may say to you, 'Friend, move up higher.'" Common sense, we might rightly say, nodding our heads in agreement; just basic good manners. But Jesus is, of course, no first-century Miss Manners, and he has far more important things on his mind than just table etiquette and protocol.

He knows that our tendency to selfishness is not confined to wedding banquets and the dinner table. In every age and culture, it has been part of human nature for people to act in their own self-interest, sometimes even while seemingly acquiescing to the needs and wants of others. We do it all the time, often without even thinking about it.

Whole economies are based on the principle of individualism and self-reliance, the notion that, without interference from others, we are all better off depending on our own enterprise – acting in our own interests. Some might even tell us that this is an unavoidable part of human evolution. After all, all creatures have a natural propensity to foster and advance their own survival. That all living creatures have to look to their own interest if they are to survive. And humans are no exception. As one bumper sticker puts it, "It's about me;" which pretty much says it all.

Now, at a certain level, of course, some might argue that there's nothing inherently wrong with this. For example, flight attendants always warn us to secure our own oxygen masks first before assisting others – and for fairly obvious reasons. Therapists urge clients to be sure that they're "getting their own needs met" before trying to reach out to others. And we are all learning anew the importance of self-care – taking responsibility for our own health and well-being every day. But what takes place at the wedding banquet in Jesus' parable is emblematic of a different and much deeper truth. "Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled," our Lord concludes, "and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

This is not the practical experience of the kind of world that we know so well. And if we are to believe Jesus, the ordinary rules of human self-absorption and greed and pride suddenly no longer apply: in the upside-down, world of the gospel, everything is turned around: The humble are the exalted ones. The poor are the rich. The crippled and lame are the well. And the blind are the ones who see. Apparently it's not about me after all. The world turns out to be not as solid and real as we had believed. Ultimately, our self-reliance turns out to be an illusion; for we all depend upon one another whether we recognize it or not. And whether we like it or not, we all depend on God. And even more than that, our Lord insists that it is only in emptying ourselves of our selfish impulses and willingly accepting our dependence on God and on each other that we truly come to realize our own worth and value. Only by humbling ourselves can we ever hope to truly know the One who humbled Himself for us on the Cross.

The Anglican Church of Canada
The Diocese of Fredericton
THE PARISH OF ST. MARY, YORK



[Jesus] frequently made claims which would have sounded outrageous and blasphemous to Jewish ears even from the lips of the greatest of prophets. He said that he was in existence before Abraham and that he was "lord" of the sabbath; he claimed to forgive sins; he continually identified himself, in his work, his person and his glory, with the one he termed his heavenly Father; he accepted men's worship; and he said that he was to be the judge of men at the last day, and that their eternal destiny would depend on their attitude to him. Then he died. It seems inescapable, therefore, that his resurrection must be interpreted as God's decisive vindication of these claims, while the alternative—the finality of the cross—would necessarily have implied the repudiation of his presumptuous and even blasphemous assertions.

J. N. D. Anderson (1908-1994), *Christianity: the Witness of History*

Priest and Rector

The Revd. Canon Kevin M. Stockall, B.A. (Hons), M.Div.

Rectory: 770 McEvoy Street, Fredericton NB E3A 3B7

454.0245 (rectory) | 472.4661 (office) | 461.7685 (cell) | kevin.stockall@bellaliant.net

Visit us at: <http://www.stmarysfredericton.ca/>

Parish Notices and Updates _____

OUR CHRISTIAN EDUCATION PROGRAMME is cancelled this morning, but everyone is warmly invited to join us next week when regular classes for both young people and adults resume on September 30th.

THE RECTOR PLANS TO BE AWAY until this coming Thursday. If you require the ministry of a priest during this time please contact Canon Ross Hebb at St. Peter's: 454-8752 (office); 450-9687 (home); or ross.n.hebb@gmail.com. Other parish matters should be directed to the Parish Wardens: James McElman (jamesdmelman@gmail.com or 472-2649), Thomas Geburt (geburtster@gmail.com or 357-5894). It should also be possible to reach the Rector using his cell phone number: 506-461-7685.

THE RECTOR IS VERY GRATEFUL to those priests are celebrating the Holy Eucharist during his absence from the Parish: Canon Jon Lownds on Saturday; Fr. Wilfred Langmaid on Sunday morning; and Canon Tom Smith on this coming Wednesday. The gracious sharing of their time and talents is very much appreciated.

A NEW LIST OF ITEMS NEEDED FOR THIS YEAR'S HOT LUNCH PROGRAMME for elementary-aged children from the Boys and Girls Club, which runs each Wednesday at noon, has been posted on the bulletin board in the Narthex. Please have a look and see if there is anything that you might be able to donate to help reduce the costs for this important outreach ministry.

ST. MARY'S WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY will be starting up after our summer break on *Friday, September 28th at 10:00 a.m.* at the Rectory. We plan to resume our study of the Gospel according to St. Luke. Everyone is warmly invited to join us; and if your schedule only permits you to attend occasionally, please plan to join us when you can.

HAVE ANY FRESH PRODUCE? FALL DECORATIONS? Members of St. Mary's are warmly encouraged to assist with the decorating of our Church for our annual celebration of Harvest Thanksgiving by donating items that will help to fill our hearts and our vision with gratitude. *We will be celebrating Harvest Thanksgiving at all three Celebrations of the Holy Eucharist on the holiday weekend: October 6th & 7th.* If you have any produce, flowers, leaves or other seasonal decorations that you can share with us we ask that you drop it off at the Church (or Rectory) by Friday, October 5th. *And everyone is reminded that donations of non-perishable food items are always welcome;* at Harvest Thanksgiving as part of our decorations; and all the time to help with our outreach ministry. All donations of food will be shared with the Fredericton Food Bank following our Thanksgiving celebrations.

THE RECTOR, ORGANIST AND PARISH CHOIR OF ST. MARY'S are scheduled to conduct Evening Prayer at St. Mark's Chapel at Kings Landing on *Sunday, October 7th*, at 3:00 p.m. Members of St. Mary's are invited to join us that day as we gather to worship God and engage the visitor community. There is no cost to enter Kings Landing for Evening Prayer as long as you use one of the Visitor Passes which will be made available to the Parish. Please speak to the Rector if you'd like to attend or if you have any questions: transportation can be arranged. *And a small reminder to choir and congregation:* give yourself a little extra time to make the walk from the Service entrance to the Chapel!

THE DIOCESAN MISSION AND OUTREACH TEAM is hosting a Christian Forum On Wednesday, October 10th, at 12:10 p.m. at Christ Church (Parish) Church, and at 7:00 p.m. at UNB Fredericton (Room 261 Marshall D'Avary Hall) with Q & A and light reception to follow. Dr. Alan Sears, Professor of Social Studies Education at the University of New Brunswick, will present *Having Faith in Citizenship: The Place of Religion in the Canadian Public Square*. Everyone is welcome

THE A.C.W. BRANCH AT OUR SISTER PARISH, THE PARISH OF ST. PETER, will be holding its annual Bazaar and Chicken Casserole Luncheon on *Saturday, November 3rd*, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in their Church Hall, 2385 Woodstock Road. You may pay at the door for luncheon; only \$10.00. Sale tables will include: Candy, Jams, Jelly, Pickles, Crafts, New-to-You, Knitting, and Sewing. They hope to see you there!



SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

SEPTEMBER 26: TRINITY FERIA

7:00 p.m. – Holy Eucharist

SEPTEMBER 29: THE COMMEMORATION OF

ST. MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS

4:30 p.m. – Evening Prayer

5:00 p.m. – Holy Eucharist

SEPTEMBER 30: THE COMMEMORATION OF

ST. MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS

8:30 a.m. – Morning Prayer

9:00 a.m. – Holy Eucharist

10:30 a.m. – Holy Eucharist

Followed by St. Mary's 2nd Annual Fall Fair