

Reflection for the Blessed Virgin Mary

There were two options for the Gospel readings this morning; one was the story of the Canaanite woman who challenges Jesus' apparent reluctance to heal her child. They engage in an exchange of declaration, defiance and counter-challenge. This woman is not holding back! In response, we see that Jesus restores her child to full health.

The other is Mary, the mother of Jesus and, therefore in a mysterious way, also the mother of God.

We hear her words at the very start of Luke's Gospel as she cries out in praise and recognition and expectation. As she receives the astonishing news which will transform her life, she draws upon the earlier words of Hannah, the mother of the prophet and king-maker, Samuel.

Mary will carry the unborn Messiah within her body, hear his first cry, watch him learn and grow before setting out on a way which will lead to the cross.

There she will stand in solidarity with other women as she endures unimaginable loss. Later she will see the explosive impact of the Holy Spirit descending on the followers of her son, at Pentecost.

Which reading would you have chosen for today?

Rev Sarah



NEXT SUNDAY 23.08.26 Trinity 12
10.30am in the Church



OT Isaiah 51: 1-6
NT Romans 12: 1-8
GOSPEL Matthew 16: 13-20

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St Thomas, Exeter

16th August 2026

The Blessed Virgin Mary

10.30am in the Church

Today

Sung Eucharist

Hymn Numbers

426 *Praise to the holiest in the height*

501 *There's a wilderness in God's mercy*

467 *Tell out my soul*

30 *And can it be*

Wednesday 19th August

10am Holy Communion (BCP)

Thursday 20th August

No St Thomas Tots

10.30-12noon Knit & Natter at Jenny
Tuckett's house



Collect

Almighty God, who looked upon the lowliness of the Blessed Virgin Mary and chose her to be the mother of your only Son: grant that we who are redeemed by his blood may share with her in the glory of your eternal kingdom; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

Isaiah 61: 10-end

I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

Psalms 45: 10-end

Hear, O daughter; consider and incline your ear; ♦
forget your own people and your father's house.
So shall the king have pleasure in your beauty; ♦
he is your lord, so do him honour.
The people of Tyre shall bring you gifts; ♦
the richest of the people shall seek your favour.
The king's daughter is all glorious within; ♦
her clothing is embroidered cloth of gold.
She shall be brought to the king in raiment of needlework; ♦
after her the virgins that are her companions.
With joy and gladness shall they be brought ♦
and enter into the palace of the king.
'Instead of your fathers you shall have sons, ♦
whom you shall make princes over all the land.
'I will make your name to be remembered through all generations; ♦
therefore shall the peoples praise you for ever and ever.'

Galatians 4: 4-7

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!' So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

Luke 1: 46-55

And Mary said,
'My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,
for he has looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant.
Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;
for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name.
His mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.
He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.
He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,
and lifted up the lowly;
he has filled the hungry with good things,
and sent the rich away empty.
He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants for ever.'

Notices

Today we welcome Rev Sarah Cumming to preside and preach at our service

During the current heatwave our church building is staying open until the early evening as a cool space.

Rev Hannah Alderson, our new Rector, will be licensed to our parish at 7.30pm on **Monday 7th September**. Please continue to pray for Hannah and her family as they prepare to move into our community.

We will be serving refreshments in the hall after the Licensing service and if you would like to help serve the refreshments on that evening, please speak to Mary.

Ian is away until Tuesday 25th August

The Gospel reading for the Eleventh Sunday after Trinity

Matthew 15: 21-28

Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, 'Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon.' But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, 'Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us.' He answered, 'I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.' But she came and knelt before him, saying, 'Lord, help me.' He answered, 'It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs.' She said, 'Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table.' Then Jesus answered her, 'Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish.' And her daughter was healed instantly.