

**From the Fathers: From a letter of Pope St Clement I to the Corinthians**  
*In his goodness to all, God gives order and harmony to the world*

Let us fix our gaze on the Father and Creator of the whole world, and let us hold on to his peace and blessings, his splendid and surpassing gifts. Let us contemplate him in our thoughts and with our mind's eye reflect upon the peaceful and restrained unfolding of his plan; let us consider the care with which he provides for the whole of his creation.

The seasons, spring, summer, autumn and winter, follow one another in harmony. The quarters from which the winds blow function in due season without the least deviation. And the ever-flowing springs, created for our health as well as our enjoyment, unfailingly offer their breasts to sustain human life. The tiniest of living creatures meet together in harmony and peace. The great Creator and Lord of the universe commanded all these things to be established in peace and harmony, in his goodness to all, and in overflowing measure to us who seek refuge in his mercies through our Lord Jesus Christ; to him be glory and majesty for ever and ever. Amen.

### **O Sing Unto the Lord**

The final Sunday in October is often kept as 'Bible Sunday'. Needless to say, there are numerous hymns based on God's Word! *Lord, thy word abideth* was written by Sir Henry Baker (1821-1877) for the First Edition of *Hymns Ancient and Modern* in 1861, arguably the first true Anglican hymn book. Unlike later books, each hymn was given a title (usually a Biblical quotation) in this case a quote from Psalm 119: 'Thy Word is a lantern unto my feet, and a light unto my path'. The text and verses have generally remained unaltered to the present day, with each verse comprising double rhyming couplets: *abideth, guideth; believeth, receiveth* etc. Baker was not only a prolific hymn writer, also responsible for such great hymns as *Shall we not love thee, Mother dear?* and *Let us with a gladsome mind*, but was one of the driving forces behind the publication of *Hymns Ancient and Modern*. Educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, he was ordained in 1844 and became Vicar of Monkland in Herefordshire, where he stayed for the rest of his earthly life. The hymn is usually sung to *Ravenshaw*, a shortened version of a medieval German tune, the simplicity of which allows the words to shine through.

29<sup>th</sup> October 2023

Last Sunday after Trinity

Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time



In today's Gospel Jesus is asked to say which is the greatest commandment of the Law. With 613 to choose from, this was a frequent question at the time for Jewish chief priests, scribes and leaders to discuss. But Jesus' answer is to give the commandments which summarise the whole of the Law. Firstly, the great command to love God with everything; secondly, to love your neighbour as yourself. In these two are the whole of the Law and Prophets. Jesus in giving this answer is doing something more than just answering the question; his answer shows that God's people must do more than just talk about the law and speculate about it. The very essence of the Law is love of God and others, this is a practical thing and must be lived out in our relationship with Him and our neighbour. Anything less is to fall short of the expectations God has for us.

*Today's Gospel: Matthew 22: 34-40*

*Collect:*

*Almighty ever-living God, increase our faith, hope and charity, and make us love what you command, so that we may merit what you promise. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen.*