

Sunday 16th January 2022 Plough Sunday

The Blessing of the Plough

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation:

for in your abundant care you have given us fertile land, rich soil, the seasons in their courses.

You provide seed for sowing, water, light and warmth to bring forth the miracle of growth.

You give us skill to work the land,

to prepare and nourish it, that it may be fruitful.

By your blessing,

let this plough be a sign of all that you promise to us.

Prosper the work of our hands, and provide abundant crops for your people to share.

Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Blessed be God for ever.

First Reading

Isaiah 55:6–11

[6] “Seek the LORD while he may be found; call upon him while he is near;

[7] let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

[8] For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD.

[9] For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

[10] “For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it

bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,

[11] so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it. (ESV)

Second Reading

1 Corinthians 9:6–14

[6] Or is it only Barnabas and I who have no right to refrain from working for a living? [7] Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard without eating any of its fruit? Or who tends a flock without getting some of the milk?

[8] Do I say these things on human authority? Does not the Law say the same? [9] For it is written in the Law of Moses, “You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain.” Is it for oxen that God is concerned? [10] Does he not certainly speak for our sake? It was written for our sake, because the ploughman should plough in hope and the thresher thresh in hope of sharing in the crop. [11] If we have sown spiritual things among you, is it too much if we reap material things from you? [12] If others share this rightful claim on you, do not we even more?

Nevertheless, we have not made use of this right, but we endure anything rather than put an obstacle in the way of the gospel of Christ. [13] Do you not know that those who are employed in the temple service get their food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar share in the sacrificial offerings? [14] In the same way, the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the

gospel should get their living by the gospel. (ESV)

Gospel Reading

Matthew 6:25–34

[25] “Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? [26] Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? [27] And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? [28] And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, [29] yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. [30] But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? [31] Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ [32] For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. [33] But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

[34] “Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble. (ESV)

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