

Sermon 5th July 2020 – Year A – Trinity 4 – Matthew 11:16 – 19, 25 – 30

“Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.”

These words from the Matthew’s Gospel we heard this morning are one of my favourite piece of Scripture. Perhaps it’s your favourite too. But that’s not all that Jesus says in our reading. He also says, *“Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”*

Sometimes a bit difficult to understand these verses. This week it was a case for me when my brain was preoccupied with all the legal wordings related to reopening the churches. So in order to have some sort of understanding, I read another translation of verses 28 to 30 from the Message, it goes like this:

“Are you tired? Worn out? ... Come to me. Get away with me and you’ll recover your life. I’ll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won’t lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you’ll learn to live freely and lightly.”

I find these words a blessing. These words go deep in my soul. These words find the thirst for rest with my Creator, with my Father and with my Brother deep within my soul. – I wonder how these words are for you this morning?

Let me read them for you again.

“Are you tired? Worn out? ... Come to me. Get away with me and you’ll recover your life. I’ll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced

rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly."

This is the promise of Jesus Christ. This is the promise of our Creator God.

When we are tired and worn out, instead of looking for a help or relief from the world, we are called to go to Jesus Christ and the Creator God.

But so often we don't do that, me included. We rather open the TV and watch a movie from the Netflix. Or we eat or drink too much unhealthy stuff. Whatever it is we try to comfort ourselves with, it isn't stuff that feeds our souls. They may offer us a short term relief but when their effect is gone, do we feel nourished? No, we don't. Or we may feel nourished like an hour or two and then we feel that our souls are screaming to be fed again, but instead of going to Jesus Christ and our Creator God, we once again go to our default stuff. Stuff that doesn't offer the real nourishment.

All of this is perhaps even more true at this unsettling time that we live in. We are uncertain about our future. The future of our jobs. The future of our children's education. The security of our finances. The security of our homes. We are worried about health issues. We are worried about our loved ones. We are worried about injustices in our world; the climate change, the racial inequality, the pay rises for our hardworking health and social care workers, the living wage for all, good housing and so on.

Burdens that we carry and worry are heavy, indeed. And for that reason, it feels like God sent to hear our reading from the Matthew's Gospel.

"Are you tired? Worn out? ... Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk

with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace... Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly."

I feel that where we find ourselves and our world today, we need to remember more than ever before that **the unforced rhythms of grace** - the time spent with Jesus Christ and Creator God, whether praying, reading the Bible, walking in the nature or just being in silence, is important for our spiritual lives, for our souls.

Whatever ails us. Whatever worries us. Whatever tires us.

Whatever nourishment our souls need, Jesus says, "*...Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace...Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly."*

Amen.