

Service for Week 9<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> Feb 2026 By  
Chaplain Andy

### **Our Opening Prayer**

Lord Jesus Christ, we profess to follow your way, yet we have failed you in so many ways: our faith is weak, our love poor and our commitment unpredictable.

Forgive us and help us to follow you not just in name but also in truth.

**Amen**

### **Say to yourself - The Lord's Prayer**

Our Father who art in heaven,  
hallowed be Thy name,  
Thy kingdom come,  
Thy will be done,  
on earth, as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses  
as we forgive them who trespass  
against us.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
But deliver us from evil.  
For Thine is the kingdom,  
the power and the glory  
for ever and ever.

**Amen**

### **Bible Reading Matt 5:21-37**

"You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'Do not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.' But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment.

Again, anyone who says to his brother, 'Raca,' is answerable to the Sanhedrin.

But anyone who says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of the fire of hell.

"Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.

"Settle matters quickly with your adversary who is taking you to court. Do it while you are still with him on the way, or he may hand you over to the judge, and the judge may hand you over to the officer, and you may be thrown into prison. I tell you the truth, you will not get out until you have paid the last penny.

"You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.'

*Holy words, Holy Wisdom,*

**Thanks be to God.**

### **Reflection**

Our reading is part of what we call Jesus's 'sermon on the mount' because Matthew describes how 'Jesus went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him'. It follows on from the beatitudes we looked at the other week. Jesus's 'sermon on the mount' is of great importance because it taught the disciples and us how God wants us to live. It is about holding certain values and living in a particular way which, if we follow this way has been described as being part of God's kingdom. This 'kingdom' is not a

physical place but a present spiritual reality in our hearts and minds.

There is a part of our reading from Matthew's gospel which requires a bit of explaining. Jesus said "anyone who says to his brother, 'Raca,' is answerable to the Sanhedrin." Raca is not a word we use today but it was, in the Aramaic language that Jesus spoke, a term of severe disrespect. Calling someone 'Raca' implied that you thought they were really stupid and that you had a deep contempt for them. Calling them this name was a serious offence and you could be reported to the Sanhedrin council responsible for Jewish law and religious matters, for judgement and punishment.

What Jesus was saying was if you have any ill feeling towards another person go and make peace with that person and be reconciled with them before giving thanks to God. If we commit murder then rightly will be judged for that but we will also be judged if we keep anger in our hearts. Jesus also says settle the matter quickly if you are in dispute with anyone.

These guides that Jesus gives us for living well in community with others are throughout the 'sermon on the mount'. They follow on from the previous ten commandments given by God to the prophet Moses that we read about in the Old Testament in the book

of Exodus. But Jesus did not come to change those commandments as he said later in Matthew's gospel "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them." The guides for life that Jesus sets out follow on and complement the ten commandments which form the basis for our laws and legal system today.

The concept of living your life according to the commands of ancient laws and guidance may seem to some not to be relevant in modern times. But we can see crime and the breakdown in our society as being the result of when people reject the guidance for living well given to us by God through Moses and Jesus Christ.

It is God's love for us and will, that we should live a fulfilled life which is in peace and harmony with others. As Jesus tells his disciples and us all, in John's gospel "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."

**Amen**

### **Our Closing Prayer**

Loving God, there are things I can do by myself and things that only you can do when I utterly depend on you for help.

Teach me Lord to know the difference and help me to remember that although I may fail you never will.

**Amen.**

Prayer inspired by Prayerfully Yours by Nick Fawcett