

Sermon for 2nd Sunday before Lent (Year A)/Racial Justice Sunday 2026

‘Today’s trouble is enough for today.’ How true, of course what Jesus says is right. Always right.

Of course, Jesus did not mean that we should never look ahead. Much of his ministry involved looking ahead, and was devoted to preparing his disciples for the time when he would not be with them on earth. No, it is about using time wisely in righteousness, in partnership with God.

The idea of being in partnership with God, with the Almighty is quite extraordinary, but if we look at the great creation poem in Genesis, we are told that God created humankind in his own image. Whatever we are like, whoever we are, we are made in God’s image. God in all his creative power looks back at us with his loving care when we look in the mirror.

This is as true for each of us here today as it has been for all people all over the world since the beginning of creation and in the years to come. This is such a simple, and yet profound truth. It is uplifting when all is well, but it challenges us when we are hurt or offended by the actions of others, whether they be people we know or people elsewhere whose actions or beliefs impact us in any kind of way.

It challenges anyone who is prejudiced against others. Prejudice arises from fear, often an irrational fear of the unknown or unfamiliar. Today, apart from being the second Sunday before Lent, is also Racial Justice Sunday, and we can see how this reading from the creation story is appropriate for today.

Time, and how it is used is also woven through this morning’s readings. It has long been known that the world and everything in it was not created in just a week, but that does not detract from the wisdom in this poem, the first of the Bible’s creation stories.

Rather than rushing through his work, God took his time, separating it into separate, finite blocks of time. God took time to finish each task, and then reflected on it, finding it was good and delighting in it. In this way, God’s creation was a blessing to him in return, giving him pleasure. Then he moved on to the next task.

Though we live in a fast world, and do not have the luxury of eternity to do the tasks set before us, we can learn to pause, reflect, assess what we have achieved, what is very good, and what may be less so too. This is what Jesus means by encouraging us to live fully in the moment, and not to worry about tomorrow.

This is the approach we might encounter on a retreat, when time is structured with times set aside for personal prayer, communal worship, meals, and study. The focus is

always on the ‘now’. It is like a small slice of the steady rhythm of the religious life. Worrying about what comes next is not life affirming.

Jesus tells us to live in the moment and is concerned with our priorities. We are called to love God and be committed to finding and doing His will.

Jesus tells us that our heavenly Father knows what we need, but we also need to strive for the kingdom of God and his righteousness.

What does this mean? The kingdom of God is mentioned many times in the Bible, especially in the parables, and with different meanings: the mustard seed, yeast, hidden treasure, fish caught in a net, pearls, labourers in the vineyard, the wedding banquet, and so on.

There is another vision of God's kingdom in John's dream in Revelation 7. It is a vision which is pertinent to Racial Justice Sunday. This kingdom is a place filled with a multitude from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages standing before the throne of the Lamb.

These metaphors speak of the importance of generosity, kindness, creativity, and inclusivity of God's kingdom. They point to the invitation for us to be in a good relationship with God, which is what is meant by righteousness. It means being at ease with the glimpse of God when we look in the mirror and when we regard one another.

If we seek God first, and allow Him to bless us and work through us, then, Jesus says, God will take care of the rest. For God is the creator of all, Lord of time and eternity holding all things together: yesterday, today, and tomorrow, and for ever.

Amen.