

Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> July 2020

TRINITY 4 – Matthew 11: 16-19, 25-end

**Preacher: Reverend Jane Quinton**

**Curate**

Well I have to confess that since lockdown Graham and I have found ourselves a new family! They're not actually in our bubble, there are more than 6 of them, and we always meet inside our house! But I don't care. Because nearly every night for the past few weeks Graham and I have thoroughly enjoyed their company ..... in fact we've also met and got to know their staff and many of their acquaintances .....

I suspect many of you also know this family..... and may have already twigged that I'm talking about the Crawleys– from the television series 'Downton Abbey'!

I don't know how we managed to miss this series the first time round, but I'm quite glad that we did now, because it's given us something to look forward to during the lock-down evenings. Although goodness, our emotions have been up and down with the different storylines!

But, what prompts me to share my television watching habits with you today? Well, it's Jesus's words.... *His promise*..... at the end of our gospel reading.....

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

You see, I was reminded of a particular story line in Downton involving Anna, one of the maids, and a very unscrupulous valet .... I don't want to spoil anything for those of you who may still not have seen the series, but as this particular plot unfolded I remember Graham and I both sitting there saying 'why doesn't she just tell Bates?' ..... 'for goodness sake just tell Mary' ... Although this was only fiction, we knew Anna needed to do – and that was to share what had happened to her with people who cared.

Which is why I want us to really hear and truly grasp today, what Jesus is inviting us all to do when He says:

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

Because life is not perfect, and it never will be – not while we're still here on earth at least. (*Heaven and eternal life a totally different matter!*)

*Here though* We are always going to encounter problems and have worries and concerns and fears..... and at this point in time, because of the global pandemic of the C-19 virus, those problems and subsequent anxieties have increased greatly. We have never experienced anything like this before. And although every one will have a different story, **we will all have been effected** by what is happening around us at the moment.

And firstly, it's important to acknowledge that! And not to try and hide or suppress what are natural feelings and emotions for us all.....

But.... we are reminded today, that Jesus gives us this wonderful promise ..... this invitation... to take all those troubles, all those fears, all those concerns – literally anything and everything that prevents us from feeling at peace..... and to give them all to Him..... because when we do, it will be like having a weight lifted from our shoulders ..... It will be like taking from us those 4 heavy bags that we've been struggling on our own to carry for the last 2 miles!  
We will "find rest for our souls" .....

Which is not to say that everything will be fixed instantly, or will necessarily transpire as we want it to..... but that, when we do give Him all our worries, we will be given an inner peace, and an assurance that, even though we may continue to live with a particular problem, we are not alone... Because there is someone who walks with us, who carries us when we need it, and who will never leave us..... who loves us more than we will ever know..... and is able to do far more than we can imagine..... who knows and wants what is best for us..... and who, when we ask, will start opening doors that no-one else can ....

**"Come to me.....all of you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest."**

Jesus, who cares for us more than we will ever realise, and who wants to relieve us of all that weighs us down ..... offers every single one of us that open invitation today.....

AMEN