

Resources on the Sunday Readings – Trinity 6

Picture Reflection (p1), Bible Reading & Study Questions (p2)

See separate families' sheet.

Picture Reflection



Practice of power Mark 6: 14-29

The story in our gospel reading today raises questions about who influences us, who we listen to, and what governs our actions.

- Spend a few minutes with the image... we have all had fun standing dominoes up in a pattern and then knocking the first one to see what happens...it is fascinating to see them fall in sequence...
- Take some time to reflect on occasions when you have observed this happening in history and in people's lives....something causes a change with impacts that spread far beyond the initial event...
- What or whom influences, or perhaps rules, our thoughts and actions? Who do you listen to?
- How much thought do you give to the consequences of your decisions?
- How can we make sure that God has a say in our key decisions?

Bible Reading & Study Questions

Ephesians 1:3-14 - The God of Glory

³⁻⁶ How blessed is God! And what a blessing he is! He's the Father of our Master, Jesus Christ, and takes us to the high places of blessing in him. Long before he laid down earth's foundations, he had us in mind, had settled on us as the focus of his love, to be made whole and holy by his love. Long, long ago he decided to adopt us into his family through Jesus Christ. (What pleasure he took in planning this!) He wanted us to enter into the celebration of his lavish gift-giving by the hand of his beloved Son.

⁷⁻¹⁰ Because of the sacrifice of the Messiah, his blood poured out on the altar of the Cross, we're a free people—free of penalties and punishments chalked up by all our misdeeds. And not just barely free, either. *Abundantly* free! He thought of everything, provided for everything we could possibly need, letting us in on the plans he took such delight in making. He set it all out before us in Christ, a long-range plan in which everything would be brought together and summed up in him, everything in deepest heaven, everything on planet earth.

¹¹⁻¹² It's in Christ that we find out who we are and what we are living for. Long before we first heard of Christ and got our hopes up, he had his eye on us, had designs on us for glorious living, part of the overall purpose he is working out in everything and everyone.

¹³⁻¹⁴ It's in Christ that you, once you heard the truth and believed it (this Message of your salvation), found yourselves home free—signed, sealed, and delivered by the Holy Spirit. This down payment from God is the first instalment on what's coming, a reminder that we'll get everything God has planned for us, a praising and glorious life.

This version is from 'The Message', and explains to us in every-day language what Paul was saying to new Christians in Ephesus. He speaks about freedom, about God 'cutting us in' on the story of redemption, about a future that God offers us now, not just with empty words but with the symbol of his greatest gift -the life of his Son Jesus Christ.

So, as you read and re-read this passage, how would you answer these questions from your own perspective?

- What does it feel like knowing that you are part of God's long-range planning – does this make you feel important, humble, unworthy??
- Does 'knowing God' liberate your life?
- How does God's promise free you from daily worries?
- How has God blessed you this week?
- What does 'a praising and glorious life' (v.14) mean for you?