

Sermon
Saint Peter's
Pentecost 3
The Word of God

The Church's mission is to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ

Or, as we say it here in our Diocese, To Make the Word of God fully known.

That is our mission.

So what do we mean when we say that Jesus Christ is the Word of God.

In the book of Colossians, where our mission statement, To Make the Word of God fully known comes from, we are told that Jesus is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation, in whom, through whom and for whom, all things are made.

We read that 'He is before all things', that 'in him all things hold together', and that 'he is the head of the body, the Church. We are told that 'in Him all the fulness of God was pleased to dwell: and that through him God was pleased to reconcile all things to God'.

Into a fallen human world, into a world of Adam, Jesus was sent by God to begin creation again. To begin humanity again. The Word of God, Jesus is the new Adam, the inaugurator of a new humanity.

In a world of disobedience, Jesus in his earthly life was the one true human being, the beginning, the foretaste, the advance guard, of the future of the human race, redeemed, reconciled, renewed, in the kingdom of God.

In this world of what we may call Adamic humanity, in which humanity, although a mere creature, is not content to accept its God given place in the world, as a creature, humble, finite, in many ways, inglorious. Instead, under the influence of the cosmic, spiritual temptation, it desires for itself the glory of God. It wants to be God.

But God, as the Creator of the world, cannot share his glory with his human creatures, even with this whole world of human, creaturely existence. God

cannot cross that line, that is there, already in creation, and will be there, eternally, between himself as Creator, and everything else, as creature.

By his radical refusal of the original temptation to want to be God, by his earthly life as a human creature, lived purely in service of the glory of God, even to the point of death, in sheer agony, on a cross, Jesus proved himself to be the Son of God, giving all glory to God the Father, ushering in a new humanity, the worldwide Christian church, to be the sign of the future of humanity, restored, redeemed, renewed in the kingdom of God. Calling humanity, that is, all people, everywhere, to turn away from wanting to be God, and turn toward God. Their sins forgiven, by the death of Christ, once for all, the Word of God, the Christian church is there to follow Jesus, in a life as a human creature, lived purely in service of the glory of God, from the cradle to the grave, even to death. There to receive its own resurrection from the dead, as Jesus has been raised from the dead.

Jesus is the Word of God. By his hidden reign from heaven now, with the authority of God himself, God is reconciling this world to himself, not counting their sins against them, summing up all things in heaven and on earth in him, making peace with humanity, and creation, through the blood of the cross.

Of the One through whom, in whom, and for whom, God created this world. So that when he came into the world he came, not to an alien place, but to his own home, to his own possession, as we read in John.

By his life on earth he revealed his life in heaven. His life as the eternal Son of God, there in eternity, in heaven, giving all glory to God, the Father, the Creator of heaven and earth. And giving us who are reconciled to God share in his sonship, in his eternal relation to the Father. The world that was made, and will one day be made perfect in Him, at his return, the Word of God.

He is the Lord and Head of a new humanity, in the Church. By our new life in him, we now live in relation to God. By our life in him, we now live in humble obedience to God, we now exist as human creatures, to glorify God, the Creator of the world. By our life in Jesus Christ, the Word of God, we are, already now, the children of God. A present sign, of the future destiny of the human race, in the future of God's kingdom, at Christ's return.

In Him, and through his Church, God has called the human race to give God the glory that is due to him as the one God.

By our new human being, we are a present sign of the future of the human race redeemed, restored and renewed in the kingdom of God, at Christ's return.

By our proclamation we are a faithful witness to the good news of the Kingdom of God now dawned in the world in Jesus Christ.

We humbly accept our finite, creaturely human being, we summon the finite nature of all creaturely existence, before the Infinite God, to do the same.

We humbly submit the whole of our lives, and the whole of our common life, in the service of glorifying God.

In the power of His cross.

And in the power of the Holy Spirit, who is here, shed abroad throughout all the earth, renewing the face of the earth.

Bringing all people to come to honour God as Father and Creator, and as the Father and Creator of all things, through Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, the Word of God.

What is the chief end of man?

But to glorify God, and enjoy him forever.

May that be the truth of our life together here at Saint Peter's in Brighton Beach.

Amen.