**Reflection for 26th July 2020**

Treasure to many means something a pirate might steal or a hidden gem. When treasure is mentioned by Jesus, he is using it as a metaphor for heaven and the kingdom of God. Treasure is something valuable and revered, treasure is a powerful thing.

We might only share our treasure with those we love and trust to respect its importance to us. If our treasure is lessened, whether stolen, shared or worse still rejected or derided, then our value is affected too.

Jesus’ talking about heaven and the kingdom in this way is challenging. He is sharing with us treasure, and in the many parables told by him often this treasure is misused. Think of the lost pearl or the seed without a chance to grow, the treasure hidden in the field – forgotten perhaps?

This is one of the challenging parts of the reading today. The treasure hidden in the field, and found, and the finder goes and sells all their possessions and so can buy the field.

Humm – this smack of some bad behaviour! First who did the treasure belong to? The owner of the field or someone else? Why was the treasure hidden? It was left unused and apparently unwanted too. What do you feel about the dishonesty about the person buying the field who obviously did not let anyone know about the treasure prior to buying the field, and what were they doing trespassing in the field anyway? All valid and interesting questions. All of them move us away from one of the messages of this reading.

If we hoard the treasure God gives us, if we lock it away to keep for ourselves, then we shall lose it.

The kingdom of God is not limited to a certain number of people. The kingdom is available to all. However often we act as if there was only enough space for a few folks, and we want to be part of those who get in. The kingdom is not like getting into a prestigious school, no entry tests, or affordability criteria. Or like a cake that can only feed 8 people!

We will not have less of God’s love, God’s grace, God’s welcome if we share this good news with others. In fact, the more we speak and live in the grace and love and peace of God, the more aware we are of God’s presence around us always. So take the treasure we have been given, and use it! Live with it on show in your lives, and so become a treasure beacon for the lost. Amen.