

Trinity 4: Taking the Yoke 5th July 2020

Matthew 11 vv. 16-19, 25-end

Bishop of Selby

Today is a special day for our ordinands. Normally they would be ordained Deacon today but since we can't do this yet, they are to be licensed as Lay Workers until this is possible.

So today they are Taking the Yoke ... yoked to Jesus Christ in order to work with him to plough the field of faith.

To Take the Yoke for Jews was to be yoked to the Torah... the revelation of God expressed in what we call the Old or First Testament.

In our Gospel Reading Jesus invites his followers to Take his Yoke as the new Torah or revelation of God to the world.

Yet to Take the Yoke in a culture of freedom and choice seems a bad move.

We believe that the only Yoke that matters is the solo Yoke of Me. Life is about my way as the highway. If others get in the way then they need to get on side or shift out the way including God. So we talk about autonomy and control as key to the good life.

Yet Covid19 has exposed the poverty and inadequacy of this solo yoke.

We have re-discovered that we need We and for many Thee: each other and God. Bob Jackson's stats suggest that 50% more people are engaging in online worship than did onsite and according to Tear Fund Com Res survey 20% of the population have engaged in such worship.

Jesus says that his Yoke is easy and his burden light. This is what Christ yoked ministry is to cultivate.. ploughing up the soil of our lives so that the seed of the Gospel can grow in this divine habitat.

In Christ-yoked ministry we point people to Thee, to God, and thereby discover our We, the Good Company of the Church, within which our Me, the disciple and minister, can grow and flourish.

So the challenge today is to 'Take the Yoke', the Yoke of Christ and work with Christ to share the Gospel in this world. Amen.