

Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> August 2021

# Ninth Sunday after Trinity



Did you know that 1<sup>st</sup> August is Lammass Day?

The word "Lammass" comes from the Old English hlaf, meaning "loaf" and maesse, "mass". Through the centuries, "loaf-mass" became corrupted in spelling and pronunciation to Lammass.

Lammass Day, traditionally observed on 1 August, marked the beginning of the harvest and especially celebrated the first wheat crop, or that of corn. On Lammass Day, loaves of bread were baked from the first-ripened grain and brought to church to be consecrated. This bread was often used in Holy Communion.

Lammastide is a time of thanksgiving for the first-fruits of the harvest. The practice died out at the time of the Reformation, but the idea of thanksgiving was later developed into what we know as Harvest Festival, held when the harvest has been gathered in. More recently, the keeping of Lammastide at the beginning of harvest time has made something of a comeback.

In today's Gospel reading, we hear Jesus being questioned after he had fed a huge number of people with very little bread and fish. He reminds us that we should be more concerned with the bread of eternal life that he offers us, rather than with filling our tummies!

Our Gospel reading comes from St John's Gospel (John 6. 24-35) :

So when the crowd saw that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they themselves got into the boats and went to Capernaum looking for Jesus.

When they found him on the other side of the lake, they said to him, 'Rabbi, when did you come here?' Jesus answered them, 'Very truly, I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For it is on him that God the Father has set his seal.' Then they said to him, 'What must we do to perform the works of God?' Jesus answered them, 'This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.' So they said to him, 'What sign are you going to give us then, so that we may see it and believe you? What work are you performing? Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, "He gave them bread from heaven to eat." ' Then Jesus said to them, 'Very truly, I tell you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.' They said to him, 'Sir, give us this bread always.'

Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

Today we give thanks for all the gifts that God gives to us, especially the lasting and eternal gifts, which we can use for the benefit of others.

🤔 Can you think of a good way to celebrate Lammastide?

Maybe you could bake some bread this week? Why not have a go at making harvest loaves like these?



🤔 Can you discover the connection between Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet" and Lammastide?



🙏 A prayer for Lammastide:

God of the ripe corn,  
on Lammast Day our ancestors  
brought you bread  
made from the first fruits of the wheat harvest.

Today we bring you  
the fruits of our labours;  
our joys and our achievements,  
our hopes and our disappointments,  
our plans and our dreams.  
We ask you to accept  
the work of our hands,  
and our minds,  
and our hearts.

God of the ripe corn,  
bring us safe home  
to harvest. Amen.

(Ruth Burgess)



# LAMMAS *blessings*

Perhaps you could write your own prayer or poem about Lammastide?