Sunday 21st June - Second Sunday after Trinity

From Simon

We have been able to reopen St Mary's and welcome individual visitors for prayer and reflection and I know that this has been appreciated. I know that many of you would like to spend a few moments within the church during the week.

The usual access conditions apply with social distancing and the use of sanitising gel is essential on entering and leaving please. Full information about access will be found in the porch. As part of the reopening announcement, the government is also now allowing small scale funerals, marriages and Baptisms to be held in churches under fairly tight conditions. I know that this will be welcomed by bereaved families in particular.

It is likely that we shall be able to hold regular services again in the church in the coming few weeks. There will be a number of logistic problems to overcome, but we will keep you informed.

Hymn: When I needed a neighbour (vv 1,2,4,5)

1 When I needed a neighbour, were you there, were you there?
   When I needed a neighbour, were you there?
   Refrain
   And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter, were you there?

2 I was hungry and thirsty, were you there, were you there?
   I was hungry and thirsty, were you there?
   Refrain

4 When I needed a shelter, were you there, were you there?
   When I needed a shelter, were you there?
   Refrain

5 When I needed a healer, were you there, were you there?
   When I needed a healer, were you there?
   Refrain

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fExR7eOhJO0

Hymn: Lord, for the years (vv 1,2,4,5)

1 Lord, for the years your love has kept and guided,
   Sought us and saved us,
   pardoned and provided:
   Lord of the years, we bring our thanks today.

2 Lord, for that word, the word of life which fires us,
   Speaks to our hearts and
   sets our souls ablaze,
   Teaches and trains, rebukes us and inspires us:
   Lord of the word, receive your people's praise.

4 Lord, for our world; when we disown and doubt you,
   Loveless in strength, and comfortless in pain,
Hunger and helpless, lost indeed without you: Lord of the world, we pray that Christ may reign.

5 Lord for ourselves; in living pow'r remake us-
Self on the cross and Christ upon the throne,
Past put behind us, for the future take us:
Lord of our lives, to live for Christ alone.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MkTrFQLy6js

Collect: Lord, you have taught us that all our doings without love are nothing worth: send your Holy Spirit and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of love, the true bond of peace and of all virtues, without which whoever lives is counted dead before you. Grant this for your only Son Jesus Christ's sake, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen

First Reading: Jeremiah 20. 7 - 13
Jeremiah cried out: O LORD, you have enticed me, and I was enticed; you have overpowered me, and you have prevailed. I have become a laughing-stock all day long; everyone mocks me. For whenever I speak, I must cry out, I must shout, 'Violence and destruction!' For the word of the LORD has become for me a reproach and derision all day long. If I say, 'I will not mention him, or speak any more in his name', then within me there is something like a burning fire shut up in my bones; I am weary with holding it in, and I cannot. For I hear many whispering: 'Terror is all around! Denounce him! Let us denounce him!' All my close friends are watching for me to stumble. 'Perhaps he can be enticed, and we can prevail against him, and take our revenge on him.' But the LORD is with me like a dread warrior; therefore my persecutors will stumble, and they will not prevail. They will be greatly shamed, for they will not succeed. Their eternal dishonour will never be forgotten. O LORD of hosts, you test the righteous, you see the heart and the mind; let me see your retribution upon them, for to you I have committed my cause. Sing to the Lord; praise the LORD! For he has delivered the life of the needy from the hands of evildoers.

Second Reading: Romans 6. 1b - 11
Should we continue in sin in order that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin go on living in it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. For whoever has died is freed from sin. But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. The death he died, he died to sin, once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Gospel: Matthew 10. 24 - 39
Jesus summoned the twelve and sent them out with the following instruction: ‘A disciple is not above the teacher, nor a slave above the master; it is enough for the disciple to be like the teacher, and the slave like the master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzeboul, how much more will they malign those of his household! ‘So have no fear of them; for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered, and nothing secret that will not become known. What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops. Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground unperceived by your Father. And even the hairs of your head are all counted. So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows. ‘Everyone therefore who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven; but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven. ‘Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and one’s foes will be members of one’s own household. Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.

Reflection on this Sunday's readings:-
A friend of mine, from a larger family, recently described how his siblings often fought over the best bits of the
meals they were lucky to get. In the fruit salad they counted how many cherries they each got and his mum had to be careful to make sure no one got more than anyone else. You will have heard the phrase: ‘Cherry picking’ as a criticism of those who select the best bits rather than appreciating the whole. I think we are all guilty of cherry picking the scriptures. We have favourite bits, and we have less liked portions, and we have vast tracts of scripture which we just leave on the side of the plate!

Among the favourite pieces will no doubt be Psalm 23, The Sermon on the Mount, God so loved the world... The Christmas, Easter and Harvest passages, 1 Corinthians 13 – Love is... etc. Among the less liked bits will be the readings set for today: ‘Jeremiah’s complaint’ it is not a disease but a prophet moaning to God for the way he has been treated. Psalm 69, Romans 11, 'Dying with Christ', and our Gospel Reading Matthew 10v24 'The Cost of Discipleship'. They all sound a bit negative and you are probably already thinking; 'Not something I can engage with at present.'

These are not the cherries, these are the bread or potatoes, but although you don't like them very much, you need them! In case you hadn't realised, following Christ is not a bowl of cherries. Following Christ is following Christ! Think what he went through. To make that point he likens us to his disciples, his servants and his family, saying in Matthew 10 v24-5 'The disciple is not above the teacher, nor a slave above his master. It is enough for disciples to be like their teacher, and slave like their master. If the master of the house has been called Beelzebul, how much more the members of his household! (Be-el-ze-bul is not a compliment!)

I hope you are not suffering too much at present, and you don't have the family problems Jesus predicted in v35: 'I have come to set “a man against his father a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law – a man’s enemies will be the members of his own household.” Which was inspired by the words of Micah who also suffered for his Lord.

Most of us don't suffer that sort of scour but many many Christians do. And we might well if we were more faithful! Those who hold to their faith in places where there is persecution, and there are a lot of those places in the world, do experience family antipathy. We should never forget our millions of suffering brothers and sisters all over the world.

I heard recently of a young student in Cambridge who, when he came to faith in Jesus, was reluctant to be baptised because his Muslim father would immediately cut him off. He hadn't threatened to kill him, but he would certainly not allow him in the house and definitely not fund him through University! People like that young man find passages like today's encouraging because they show that the pain and hardship they go through are not a sign of God's abandoning of them but a sign that they are truly following their teacher, master and head.

So what does Jesus say to those people and to us? Firstly: Prioritise heaven over earth! ‘Whoever acknowledges me before others, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven. But whoever disowns me before others, I will disown before my Father in heaven. Suffering here is worth it because the final destination is heaven with Jesus forever. Second he says: Prioritise Jesus, ‘Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves their son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. Whoever does not take up their cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Nothing is more important than your relationship to Christ. He went to the cross for you.

Thirdly he says: Prioritise eternal Life over this mortal life. Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it. It is one or the other!

The only question left for all of us is: Can we trust him to look after us through this suffering? He answers that with this: Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father’s care. And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.

God knows about us and cares for us, in detail!

My prayer is that we will be bold in putting our lives into God's hands and following Christ wherever he may lead us, knowing that even suffering with him is better than an easy life without him, and remembering that many of our brothers and sisters now and in the past have stayed faithful through great suffering and will receive the crown of life in heaven.

May we all prove worthy of our loving, suffering, saving Lord.
Hello Children  Mary Mouse has gone to ground until we can all meet together again, but she will be sending regular letters.

Sunday Club will not meet until further notice. We will be offering a regular Mary Mouse letter. For details contact Gillian, gillian.pett29@gmail.com

INTERCESSIONS
Please refer any pastoral concerns for members of the congregation or members of the local community to any member of the Ministry team including our Co-ordinator for Pastoral Services, Mrs Frances Simms. Please pray for the sick, frail, housebound and those in care. Please let the Vicar know about all cases of sickness and others for whom we should pray.

PLANNED GIVING:  If you would like to give by direct debit through the Parish Giving Scheme (our preferred option) please contact Pat Brown on - Mobile: 07811 563597  Email: patbrown2591@yahoo.co.uk. To give by other means please contact Mrs. Ann Seaman, mobile no. 07710 452647; email juliet.a.seaman@outlook.com. We are shortly going to provide a Giving Page on the parish website, which will enable you to donate directly.

Giving during the 'Lock-down:  We all deeply miss the opportunity to gather together for Sunday worship and the fellowship that this provides. One of the elements of our weekly coming together is the chance to making our regular offerings of money to support the work of the parish church. For some, donations will be continuing by arrangements with our banks, but a number of you give regularly by weekly envelope or open cash donation and no longer have this opportunity. We still have all our weekly costs to meet and your valuable and regular help is essential in seeing that this is funded. Please consider if you could continue to forward your envelopes and cash by asking a friend or neighbour to put them through the Vicarage letter box. Thank you in anticipation.

ST. MARY'S GREAT SHELFORD - WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

Praying together as a community
At a time when we are all missing meeting to worship together perhaps there are things that we can do to help us feel that we are still a worshipping community, and that we are all thinking of one another. Here are three simple things that we could all do to pray together for each other and our community.

1. At noon each day we could say the Lord’s Prayer. You might like to go to the front door and stand in the doorway because we are praying not just for ourselves but for the whole community.

2. If you have a candle, light it at 7pm on Sunday evenings and put it in your front window. Pray for all those who are ill, all those who are alone, and all those who are caring for others. This looks beautiful and is a sign to other people that we are keeping the light of hope for them.

3. In the evenings before bed we could pray for each other, perhaps by saying the wonderful collect for aid against all perils from the Book of Common Prayer.

Lighten our darkness, we beseech thee, O Lord, and by thy great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night, for the love of thy only Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Services on video:
I am continuing to celebrate Holy Communion and other services for the whole community on Sundays. The videos and recordings are on our web site.  http://www.stmarysgreatshelford.org/

In addition you can see them on our Youtube channel (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCTxJ8yVmoDeV0r4KAYY5UYw) or on our Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/Stmarysgreatshelford/) - you don’t need to use facebook to see our posts).

As you watch you can make a Spiritual Communion. The term ‘Spiritual Communion’ has been used
historically to describe the means of grace by which a person, prevented for some serious reason from sharing in a celebration of the Eucharist, nonetheless shares in the communion of Jesus Christ. The form of prayer below offers Christians an opportunity to give thanks for their communion with him, particularly at times when they would ordinarily be present at the Eucharist.

The Book of Common Prayer instructs us that if we offer ourselves in penitence and faith, giving thanks for the redemption won by Christ crucified, we may truly ‘eat and drink the Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ’, although we cannot receive the sacrament physically in ourselves. Making a Spiritual Communion is particularly fitting for those who cannot receive the sacrament at the great feasts of the Church, and it fulfils the duty of receiving Holy Communion ‘regularly, and especially at the festivals of Christmas, Easter and Whitsun or Pentecost’ (Canon B 15).

The Church of which we are members is not defined by the walls of a building but by the Body of Christ of which we are members. In making our communion spiritually, we are joining with Christians everywhere to be nourished by the one who tells us, ‘I am the Bread of Life’.

Daily HOPE: This is a excellent new national Church of England initiative for those who are especially isolated and do not have access to the internet. Launched last Sunday, Daily HOPE is freephone line, available 24 hours a day on 0800 804 8044. Callers will hear a special greeting from the Archbishop of Canterbury before being able to choose from a range of options, including Prayer During the Day and Night Prayer updated daily, from Common Worship, and a recording of the Church of England’s weekly national online service. A section called Hymn Line will also offer callers a small selection of hymns, updated daily. An option entitled ‘Hymns We Love’, provides a hymn and reflection.

Great Shelford Parochial Charities: Delighted to report that the Parochial Charities this week received full planning permission for their proposals to build 21 new properties on their land adjacent to Mores Meadow. Full details of the scheme can be found here:-
https://gspc.org.uk/planning-approval-granted/

It is hoped that construction will begin in the autumn and that the first residents will occupy their new homes in Spring 2022. The Trustees are delighted that their long quest to gain planning permission for these genuinely low rental almshouses is about to come to fruition. The project will also deliver a park space and new allotments.

Cambridge City Foodbank: The Foodbank still very much needs our support at this difficult time. As Great Shelford Free Church are offering a collection point outside their front door, please can food donations be left there for the time being. You can also donate money directly to the Foodbank; the details of how to do so are on the Cambridge City Foodbank website. https://cambridgecity.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-food/

We are delighted to welcome visitors to St Mary’s for private prayer and reflection.

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The Rev’d Simon Talbott

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07710 518220
Pastoral Services Co-ordinator: Mrs. Frances Simms

Children’s work contact: Gillian Pett

Applications for baptisms, marriages and the calling of Banns of marriage should be made please to the Parish Administrator.

Small scale marriages and Baptisms are now permitted under quite strict conditions. Please make contact with the Parish Administrator in the first instance.

21/06/20