



NEWSLETTER 60

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This week Sunday May 30th

Diary:

The Week ahead.

Monday - BANK HOLIDAY

Its half term so school is on holiday and Fr J is on leave for the week.

Wednesday 10.30am Mass (This service is not livestreamed)

Thursday 7.00pm Mass in parish room in person and livestream

Sunday 6th June Parish Mass 10am

Prayer Intentions:

For all those on holiday this week, those travelling or visiting family and friends.

For those who cannot get a break or cannot afford to get a break, especially for families under pressure of any kind. For those whose work is stressful.

For St Philip's and St Osmund PCCs

For all those across the world continuing to deal with the Pandemic, for the world's poorest and for those affected by new lockdowns in Australia and for the people of Glasgow remaining under strict lockdown conditions.

By name we are asked to pray for: Janine Clegg, Ann Evans, John Morris, Tina and Michael, Jean and Barry, Andrew, and his mum Jean, for Sander, for Doris Blurton and her sister Ann Raisin.

RIP: Christine Bagguley, Edna Mary Cotton.

Sunday Readings

Isaiah 6.1-8

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lofty; and the hem of his robe filled the temple. Seraphs were in attendance above him; each had six wings: with two they covered their faces, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. And one called to another and said: 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.'

The pivots on the thresholds shook at the voices of those who called, and the house filled with smoke. And I said: 'Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; yet my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!' Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding a live coal that had been taken from the altar with a pair of tongs.

The seraph touched my mouth with it and said: 'Now that this has touched your lips, your guilt has departed, and your sin is blotted out.' Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?' And I said, 'Here am I; send me!'

John 3.1-17

Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, 'Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God.' Jesus answered him, 'Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.' Nicodemus said to him, 'How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?' Jesus answered, 'Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, "You must be born from above." The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So, it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.' Nicodemus said to him, 'How can these things be?' Jesus answered him, 'Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things? 'Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. 'For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. 'Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

Fr. J's Reflection on the Readings

And so, it is we meet up with Nicodemus today. Rich, comfortable Nicodemus... I've said to you before he was a kind of like a Richard Branson figure, the Steve Jobs of his day. He's an identifiable person, unlike nearly everybody else in our story who get close to Jesus, history remembers him. He left his mark... he had paid for the aqueduct that had finally brought water to Jerusalem, so he is one of the world's powerful and yet here he is, sneaking around in the dark trying to get to Jesus without anyone else seeing him.

How like us he is, my faith is a private thing, no-one else's business, it's about my fix, my way of doing things, I want reassurance, I know what I like and I like what I know. I think we often come to Jesus under the cover of darkness to get our needs met.

Nicodemus is however curious. He's not so young perhaps and as a man of means was used to getting what he wanted when he wanted it. He's not a bad bloke and I hear his unwillingness to change in his response to what Jesus saying, "How can anyone be born again when he has grown old?"

Nicodemus' question was entirely logical. Indeed, what Jesus speaks of here doesn't begin to fit with much of what you and I know in our very bones and many of us just are not interested in Jesus' answer because it isn't really an answer at all, but an offer... a challenge even to some perhaps.

And so it is that Jesus' promise today is impossible for us to comprehend if part of us hasn't already begun to come to terms with the truth and the irony that the answer does not lie with our needs, that this is not about us, our own doing, but God.

For being born again, whether it be that first physical birth we all experience but can't remember, or the small and large re-births that happen along the way in minds and hearts and spirits, this 'being born' is not something we do, but is something that must be done to us and for us and we have to decide if we're going to join in. It is always, ever, the gift of God, though it normally doesn't feel much like a gift.

We know something of this in the easing of the pain and frustration we all feel after lockdown....

Anyone who has known serious illness, those with long COVID especially, know we can do all we can to heal, but in the end, we know it is a gift from beyond our own doing.

And this movement to be born again forces us to do three things and some of us resist these three things deeply:

To be born again we have to let go of what was.

To be born again we have to be ready for change.

To be born again we have look beyond our needs to those of others.

The gift of these long months is that we have been forced to understand that we are all bound up with one another in ways both simple and profound. Our life in God here is never going to be the same as it was. And we have to let go of used to be before 23rd March 2020. That is a matter of simple economics if nothing else.

If we are followers of Jesus in this place then we have to be ready for change and we must primarily look beyond our own needs to those of others. Hopefulness is never 'born again' simply by me getting my needs met, my fix. That is called addiction.

Hopefulness is born again between us, it is not a burden we carry alone, however challenging, and unexpected the way ahead looks. Its fruit is born out of kindness shared, for the journey may be long and whatever lies ahead is beyond our own doing and our own resources in this moment in time.

So how do I begin? How do you see the blessing of rebirth Christ offers you? How do we respond to this being born again in Christ that Nicodemus finds so intriguing... our answer lies in those glorious words from Isaiah... nobody else can say them for you ...? And they will mean something different for each of us ... and simple as they are most of us never have the courage to really pray them. So, this week each new day I encourage you when you look in the mirror and brush your teeth, or when you make your morning coffee, or take the dog for a walk, or get in the car to drive to work pause for a moment and say to yourself and to God those simple, awesome, life changing words:

“Here am I, Lord, send me.”

And see what happens...

The Newsletter is changing from now on.....

As we come out of lockdown, the time has come for us to change how we communicate and over the next few weeks and months you'll see those changes on the website, through our social media and most immediately with the newsletter.

In its current format it is not sustainable, and I want to thank everybody involved over the last fifteen months.

The changes are as follows:

- The emailed weekly newsletter will cease from 13th June.
- From Sunday 13th June a weekly diary and prayer list will be available on the homepage of the website and through our Facebook page.
- From Sunday 13th June a YouTube video and printed sermon will be available on the website.
- The diary, prayer list and sermon will **still** be delivered to those who cannot access the internet.
- The Sunday Liturgy Booklet will continue be available each week on the website for those worshipping online.
- A monthly newsletter with photos, articles and information will be available on the website and through a subscription email you will be able to easily access from the First Sunday each month commencing 4th July.

The newsletter has been appreciated by so many individuals. We've celebrated birthdays, heard each other's news and it's been a really important resource. However, it is hugely labour intensive and as our churches and Fellowship communities open up, we just don't have the capacity to continue providing the current format.

Any change will take time to settle, and we may well need to adapt and try different formats out. Once again, I want to say a huge thankyou to the Newsletter Crew for all the input they made and to Sue Clewes who will coordinate the way forward.

Great love to you all Fr J. X

Welcome Fr Dwayne

Fr Dwayne is a new arrival at St Werburgh's, he is joining the Diocesan staff and will be with us a couple of Sundays a month at Parish Mass.



Dwayne will be looking after curate training and CMD (continuing ministerial development) for all clergy in the diocese.

I was born in Vancouver but raised mostly in Calgary (Canada) – and have been blessed with a wide range of opportunities/previous careers as a composer, conductor, percussionist, and educator (both secondary and post-secondary in Calgary, Shanghai, and London).

I have been in the UK since 2009 and was ordained in 2015 in the Church of England, having trained to be a priest at Westcott House.

My previous dwelling place was in the Diocese of Coventry, where I was vicar of St Mary Magdalen Church, Chapelfields.

Within the wider diocese, I was on Bishop's Council and Diocesan Synod.

Additionally, I was an Assistant Diocesan Director of Ordinands and the Ministerial Development Associate, supporting clergy training in that diocese.

I also love being a Spiritual Director and accompanying people on their journey with God.

My last service in Coventry was Easter Sunday and I'm already missing presiding/preaching.

I'd love to get to know the diocese better and offer myself as cover (up to twice a month at most) if anyone needs to take time off or people are in vacancy. Please feel free to contact me if you might be interested in that! I appreciate the warm welcome I've already received since I've moved into Derby and look forward to serving the people of this diocese with you!

Its hard to even say help to someone new with COVID regulations in place but do say hello or you can contact him by email:

dwayne.engh@derby.anglican.org



While the doors of our buildings have had to be closed, the Church has of course been open, serving our communities in all sorts of wonderful and creative ways - from running foodbanks and caring for isolated and vulnerable people, to praying for the needs of the parish and livestreaming worship. At some point, when it is safe to do so, the doors of our buildings will open again, and when that time comes, we will continue to serve, giving people space to reflect, to grieve, to say thank you, to renew hope. The Church of England is the Church for England and we are utterly committed to serving our communities with the physical resources we have.

The Archbishop of Canterbury

*Paul's second letter to Timothy urges, "Preach the word: be ready in season and out of season." We are in a season that none of us would have chosen, but we are called to share the Good News about Jesus Christ in this season just as any other. And that's why I welcome *Opening the Doors*, a set of flexible resources to help us invite the people of our parishes to join us physically in worship when the time is right to do so. Some will have been engaging with worship online, or praying for the first time, or asking big questions about life. Our task is to resource them in that faith journey so that they might know God's love in Christ for themselves.*

The Archbishop of York

A prayer for my family and friends

Loving God,
bless my family, my friends and all in my heart today.
May they be safe and well
and kept close to your peace and love.
Help me to know that you are with me
as I show love and care to others.
Amen.

A prayer for those I know who are sad

Dear God,
you walk with us in the valley of the shadow of death.
Draw close with your comfort to all who are sad today.
Thank you for all the people who have shaped our lives,
but who we see no longer.
Help us to remember them well,
and trust that they are at peace with you.
Amen

A prayer in my grief

Loving God,
help me to know that the person I miss so much
is now with you.
Help me to know your comfort when I am sad,
your presence when I am lonely,
your peace when I am angry or afraid.
Give me courage to face each day
and help me to see signs of hope.
Amen.

Remember this week to try each day to pray that prayer from
Isaiah we hear in today's reading: **"Here am I, Lord, send me."**