

ST GUTHLAC'S COMMUNITY NEWS



Parish Church of St Guthlac
Knighton, Leicester LE2 3LF

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Sunday 12 April 2020 Easter Day
Sunday 19 April 2020 Second Sunday of Easter

A prayer for the Coronavirus outbreak

Keep us, good Lord,
under the shadow of your mercy,
in this time of uncertainty and distress.
Sustain and support the anxious and fearful,
and lift up all who are brought low;
that we may rejoice in your comfort
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love
in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

Marking Holy Week and Celebrating Easter

You may feel that our Lenten journey has been rather overshadowed, even eclipsed, this year by the Coronavirus epidemic. Good Friday and the feeling of desolation and suffering may come rather more easily than penitence, but it will be difficult to celebrate Easter when we are isolated and anxious.

I am convinced however that "*in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose*" (Romans 8.28). So, somewhere amidst the strange, fearful and unique circumstances that we find ourselves in this Holy Week there are places where God is ready to speak to us, to challenge and change us, to reassure us and to give us life and hope - if we are ready to listen and respond.

Originally the benefice Ministry Team had planned a series of daily services at both our churches to take us all through Holy Week - but obviously we can't meet as we had expected. Instead we have put together a booklet of the weeks Gospel readings together with some short reflections and prayers for you to use at home daily - although we cannot *meet* together we can *pray* together. In addition you will be able to see and hear members of the Ministry Team with their reflection for that day if you check into our website or our Facebook pages. Your booklet will be sent to you by email.

We are also working to embrace technology in order to help us all share together in *worship* and at the same time. All being well, and God willing, we will broadcast a service of Compline (Night Prayer) on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of Holy Week, at 9pm on our Facebook pages, as well as Morning Prayer (9am) and Evening Prayer (5pm) on Easter Eve, Saturday 11th April. On Easter Day morning I shall be celebrating the Eucharist in church on behalf of us all - although sadly without you all gathered with me, so do check the website and join in our worship together.

There are many other websites and television programmes that can help you to mark Holy Week and celebrate Easter Day - whatever you choose to do, can I urge you to take the time each day to mark the final journey of our Lord towards the cross, and then into the new life of the resurrection? Surely this is a journey that we are all being called to make this Lent and Eastertide.

very best wishes for a blessed Easter
Adrian

FORTHCOMING SERVICES AND MEETINGS

All services and meetings are cancelled for the foreseeable future. The church is closed until further notice. Benefice wide plans for spiritual, pastoral and practical support during these difficult times are being put in place. We have set up contact between members of the congregation. **If you would like to keep in touch by telephone with others in the same situation for a chat and support please contact Tina.** Email: churchwardens@stguthlac-knighton.co.uk

FOR YOUR PRAYERS Please remember those whom we have been asked to keep in our prayers. Please remember those who have died recently and keep their families in your prayers. For other prayer requests, please contact a churchwarden.

PRAYERS FOR HEALTH CARE WORKERS

Please pray for all our local doctors, nurses, care workers and support staff, especially **Amy and Dan Barnes, Lesley Meakin, Katherine Swanson.**

PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN MALAWI.

At present there are no confirmed cases of Corona virus in the country but there are cases in all its neighbours. Pray that this will last and that simple medical systems will get the necessary support they need should the pandemic reach the country.

On-line worship

Sundays at 10am. Every Sunday at 10am on the [@DioceseofLeicester Facebook page](#) there will be a short pre-recorded video providing an opportunity to engage with the Gospel reading of the day. There will be simple prayers, a reading, a brief devotional homily and a creative interpretation of the Bible story by an artist, and a closing blessing. Just follow the Diocese of Leicester Facebook page and join with others around our diocese in experiencing God's word in a slightly different way.

The Community of the Tree of Life, our own Diocesan prayer community based near the Cathedral, is praying three times a day at 8am, noon and 9pm with a short and very simple service. You can hear more by going to this page on the internet: www.leicestertreeoflife.org and also their Facebook page: www.facebook.com/LeicTreeofLife/

The Church of England also has a dedicated web page for information about a range of options for praying and worshipping together: www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/church-online 'Pray As You Go' (www.pray-as-you-go.org/) each morning for a simple Bible reflection

Don't forget to visit the St. Guthlac's website!

The links to the You Tube films of the Holy Week Reflections are also available on the St. Guthlac's website for those who prefer not to use Facebook. The link can be found on the home page under 'Church is Changing'. <http://www.stguthlac-knighton.co.uk/>

Staying Connected-Social Media/ Facebook

To engage a congregation and wider community without physical contact relies upon us using social media. Facebook is a helpful 'platform' which can host conversations, images, events and even live services. If you are interested in joining St Guthlac's 'Page'-you will need a Facebook account. Any problems, please do contact Matthew by phone or email who is happy to help. (See front cover)

BBC 2 Saturday 7.00pm Easter from King's. A service from the Chapel of King's College Cambridge.

BBC 1 Sunday Worship 11.25am (time may vary please check TV guide)

These are also available for catch up on BBC iPlayer. The order of service is available at bbc.co.uk/orderofservice.

BBC Radio 4 Sunrise Service 6.35am

BBC Radio 4 Sunday Worship 8.10am

You can listen to the Sunday services on the radio at the given times, or if you have the 'Sounds' App you can listen to them whenever you want.

EASTER DAY

The collect and gospel readings for Easter Day can be found in the 'Marking Holy Week and Celebrating Easter 2020' booklet.

Easter Day Reflection by the Revd Adrian Jones

‘Things will never be the same again.’

One of the many things I learnt from Bishop Tim Stevens, whilst his Chaplain, was to hold to a favourite phrase of his : “The *future* is God’s *specialist subject*”

It was particularly poignant as he faced the terminal illness of his daughter, but even then he would say with confidence, “The *future* is God’s specialist subject.”

Whilst the past can be comforting, the future can feel frightening, unfamiliar, unpredictable, and perhaps uncontrollable.

By the morning of the third day since the death of Jesus, his friends must have been exhausted with emotion, constantly watching their backs, lost in despair, their hopes drained away - could they even think beyond the present day and how to get through it?

But John describes for us how that all changed.

As the church that bears her name, let’s focus on the experience of Mary Magdalen.

In the first light of dawn Mary saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb of Jesus – shocked and confused she ran back to safety to tell Peter and John.

At the tomb they had the first stirrings of a new faith and a sense that a new future was possiblebut again, it was retreat for the two men, back home to think it through, to try to make some sense out it.

“But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb....”

Consumed by sorrow, she didn’t know what to do.

In her confusion Mary failed to recognise the significance of the two angels.

When she says ‘They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him’ then her fear that ‘they’ are plotting, scheming evil, to attack or hurt Jesus, keeps her mind closed to what might be.

Even when she saw Jesus standing there, her *sorrow*, her *confusion*, her *fear*, all stopped her from truly seeing Jesus, the hope of the future.

And then in verse 16 comes the turning point, the moment of changethe moment of *Mary’s* resurrection.

“Jesus said to her ‘Mary!’ and she moved to embrace him ...her *fear* having been transformed into *courage*., and her *confusion* into *faith*.

And when Jesus said to her ‘Go to my brothers....’ her *sorrow* was transformed into *purpose* ...

So, let me encourage you on this strangest of Easter Days, as sorrow, fear and confusion surround us:

the future is God’s specialist subject.

Our current experience is hard, and there is much yet to endure but, along with Mary and through the resurrection of Jesus, we can be profoundly changed and prepared for *a new future*..... a future of hope and expectation and of renewed life and growth together.

Our future will be very different from the past but equally special in God’s hands. As a Church and as individuals and families, God holds out to us a renewed resurrection life, *shaped* by our present experience but not *limited* by it.

Jesus calls our name ... he calls us to step forward towards him with courage, faith and purpose.

The future is God’s specialist subject - in Christ a new day has dawned and the way to life stands open.

Amen

Collect & Gospel Reading for the Second Sunday of Easter

The Collect

Almighty Father,
you have given your only Son to die for our sins
and to rise again for our justification:
grant us so to put away the leaven of malice and wickedness
that we may always serve you
in pureness of living and truth;
through the merits of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Amen

Gospel Reading: John 20.19-31

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

Now Thomas (called Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!"

But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it."

A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe."

Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!"

Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

'Thought for the Day' ... Easter 2.

Of all the people of the resurrection narratives, 'Doubting Thomas' is the one for whom I have the most sympathy. And in two ways.

Firstly, and most obviously, I have sympathy FOR him, because tradition has dubbed him as 'doubting', although, actually, the Greek word for Doubting... 'distazo'... doesn't appear in the Johannine text at all...sadly, only in the mistranslations of the NRSV and the NIV!

Secondly, I have sympathy WITH him, as he is the one most like me amongst a compendium of responses to the resurrection which John furnishes us with in this chapter. Mary Magdalen, Peter, the Beloved

Disciple, and now Thomas offer different reactions to the truth of Jesus' rising, each of which is a possible one given the circumstances surrounding the event and how this event was prefigured.

Why I have great sympathy especially here WITH Thomas, is that he is not afraid to ask 'in your face' questions surrounding 'truth' and continues to do so until he is entirely satisfied in head and heart. He is the 'Yes... but' person who gives credibility to those who would rather live with difficult questions rather than be satisfied with 'easy answers', the latter which don't seem to fit too well to mind and/or heart. So, for me at least, and I hope for others, I would want to say 'three cheers' for Thomas the Apostle who in his questioning is honest, forthright, and 'faithful' in his quest of exploring this glorious wonder we call the Resurrection of our Lord and our God.

SAF

JIGSAW LOAN

Are you desperate for a different jigsaw puzzle to do? Do you have a complete puzzle that you could lend out? If you do, please contact Matthew 07754 961997 or his [email revgough@gmail.com](mailto:revgough@gmail.com). We have been donated a range of landscapes, city-scapes and iconic images-500-1000 piece. Matthew can deliver or you can collect from his house. The puzzles are left in his garage for 5 days for any potential hazardous bacteria to die off, then bagged up for delivery or collection.

ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING: this has been postponed. Three PCC members and two Deanery Synod representatives will be elected when the meeting eventually takes place and new people are encouraged to get involved. If you would like to stand for election to the PCC or Deanery Synod, or would like to find out what is involved, please speak to Lesley Meakin .

WELLBEING TIPS

MIND have produced a range of really helpful tips and factsheets to support us during the Coronavirus situation.

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/#collapse80ef2>

FOR THE NEWSLETTER there will be **no newsletter next week**. Please send material to be included in the next newsletter by **Thursday 23rd April 10pm** to administrator@stguthlac-knighton.co.uk