

ST GUTHLAC'S COMMUNITY NEWS



Parish Church of St Guthlac
Knighton, Leicester LE2 3LF

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Sunday 10 May 2020 Fifth 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.

Peace in Tough Times

“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.” (John 14.27)

As the weeks of our lockdown drag on, and the challenges of this very different way of life begin to weigh heavily on us all, even if we are not directly touched by the coronavirus and its fallout, we may find that we feel distinctly ‘out of sorts’ and restless. Concentration may be more difficult, we may be tired all the time, we may be generally anxious even though safe, we may be moody, or just plain frustrated and annoyed. What we lack is peace.

Jesus promises to give us peace, and one important way in which we can take hold of that peace is to put aside 10-15 minutes as the day ends.

We have a natural tendency to play back the day and its events, and the short prayer exercise called the Examen builds on this. Most importantly though, instead of making our own analysis and judgements, we ask *God* to *show us* how he has been at work in the details, the moods and the feelings of the day.

There are six simple steps to this version of the Examen, once you have found a quiet place where you won’t be disturbed.

- 1. Be relaxed and ask God for light;** *I want to look at my day with God’s eyes, not merely my own.*
- 2. Give thanks for the good things of the day;** *I remember one or two events that I enjoyed, reflect that the day I have just lived is a gift from God and I am grateful.*
- 3. Let go of things bothering you:** *I notice what’s on my mind at the moment, what’s making me feel awkward or anxious. I ask God for the freedom and peace that comes with the presence of his Holy Spirit.*
- 4. Review the day:** *I carefully look back over the other events today, noticing how I feel about each and trusting God to show me what’s important and what to learn from.*

5. **Face your shortcomings:** *I talk to God about the things I can see are wrong in my life and in me. I ask for his forgiveness and remember his promise of a new start.*
6. **Pray for tomorrow:** *I look forward to the day to come, asking for his guidance and entrusting myself and my loved ones to his care.*

Finally, you might like to end with simple prayer that asks for blessing:

*May the love of Jesus enfold us,
his joy fill our lives,
his peace be in our hearts;
and the blessing of God be with us
this night and always.*

Keep safe and stay well.

Adrian

(with thanks to Rev Janet Gasper)

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 family and friends in your prayers. For other prayer requests, please contact a churchwarden.

PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN MALAWI.

As of 29 April, the World Health Organisation reported sporadic cases in Malawi with a total of 36 confirmed cases and 3 deaths. Please continue to prayer for our sisters and brothers in Northern Malawi and across the world as the nations of the world deal with the pandemic. Let us pray that the remoteness of many of these rural communities will provide an effective shield to the spread of the disease in areas where medical facilities would struggle to cope.

PRAYERS FOR USE DURING THE CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK

Please remember the booklet of prayers from the Church of England which you may find helpful.

PRAYERS FOR HEALTH CARE WORKERS

Please pray for all our local doctors, nurses, care workers and support staff, especially those who worship with us.

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@stguthlaln-knighton.co.uk

ON-LINE WORSHIP

Virtual Sunday Service for the Knighton Benefice. Please look out for the email giving the link to this week's Sunday Service which will be available on YouTube from Sunday.

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. www.leicestertreeoflife.org or 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!

'Church is Changing' on the home page includes copies of reflections and links to the You Tube recordings of virtual services. Newsletters can found on the news page.

<http://www.stguthlac-knighton.co.uk/>

Each week we are meeting virtually for Compline/ Night Prayer at 8pm on a Wednesday.

It has proven a meaningful way to have fellowship and prayer together as well as being quite good fun, especially as we find our feet with the technology and more people join us each week.

You can join by just **phoning up** and inputting the code **or** using '**Zoom**' online. It has been democratic with several voices joining in with a line of liturgy each. If you would like to participate with a speaking part, please do contact Matthew by 4pm each Wednesday (revgough@gmail.com).

For Phone only: telephone this number **0131 460 1196**

When promoted input Meeting ID: **746 767 4408**

For internet using Zoom:

Join Zoom Meeting <https://leccofe.zoom.us/j/7467674408>

Input Meeting ID: 746 767 4408

BBC 1 Sunday Worship 10.45am (time may vary please check TV guide). This is also available for catch up on BBC iPlayer. The order of service is available at bbc.co.uk/orderofservice.

BBC Radio 4 Sunday Worship 8.10am

You can listen to the Sunday service on the radio at the given time, or if you have the 'Sounds' App you can listen to it whenever you want.

Christian Aid services

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic we are unable to gather at Christchurch on Sunday to pray for the success of Christian Aid Week 2020. However, the work of Christian Aid is important to our churches. This is so beautifully described by Christian Aid on their website: 'Love never fails. Coronavirus impacts all of us. But love unites us all.'

This year, **Christian Aid Week has gone online**. Information about prayer, events and fundraising can be found at:

<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals/key-appeals/christian-aid-week>

Christian Aid Week starts on Sunday 10th May with a live-streamed Christian Aid Week service with Dr Rowan Williams - at 1pm with daily reflections at 11am the following week, all on the Christian Aid Facebook page.

Film for Christian Aid Week 2020: [Link to Florence's story](#) (YouTube)

E-envelope: [Link to e-Envelope](#)

Although we are having to 'physically distance' this year, we can still join together in prayer and support for Christian Aid Week 2020.

Prayer from the virtual service to mark the beginning of Christian Aid Week

This year we are unable to join together
May the presence of the Creator refresh us,
may the comfort of the Son renew us,
may the inspiration of the Spirit restore us
to be love in action, even from a distance, in our neighbourhoods,
near and far, this day and for evermore. Amen
<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/sites/default/files/2020-04/Christian-Aid-Week-2020-Order-of-Service.pdf>

Best wishes, Annette SLCP

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK 2020: 10th-16th May

Although there can be no house to house collection this year, Christian Aid Week is going ahead as usual and starts **today!** Now more than ever our gifts, prayers and action are desperately needed . “We invite you to join us in prayer for all those affected by this new virus, both in Britain and overseas, for all those working on the frontline and for wisdom for our leaders. Coronavirus impacts all of us. But love unites us all. The world's poorest countries have the weakest health systems, and many of the most vulnerable people will be exposed to this deadly virus. They will struggle to cope with any costs of healthcare, and the costs of being unable to earn a living while ill or quarantined. We have launched a Coronavirus Appeal to help us limit the impact on the communities we work with”.

You can donate to Christian Aid either via the Christian Aid website (<http://www.christianaid.org.uk/givemoney/make-donation>) or by phone on 020 7523 2269. If possible please quote the Leicester committee reference number OR182430 when donating. Thank you!



Lesley Meakin, Christian Aid organiser St Guthlac's

Collect & Readings for the Fifth Sunday of Easter

The Collect

Almighty God,
who through your only-begotten Son Jesus Christ
have overcome death and opened to us the gate of everlasting life:
grant that, as by your grace going before us
you put into our minds good desires,
so by your continual help
we may bring them to good effect;
through Jesus Christ our risen Lord.
Amen

Acts 7: 55-60

Standing before the high priest and the council, ⁵⁵Stephen, filled with the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. ⁵⁶'Look,' he said, 'I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!' ⁵⁷But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him. ⁵⁸Then they dragged him out of the city and began to stone him; and the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. ⁵⁹While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.' ⁶⁰Then he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, 'Lord, do not hold this sin against them.' When he had said this, he died.

Gospel Reading: John 14: 1-14

Jesus said: "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going."

Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?"

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No-one comes to the Father except through me. If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him."

Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us."

Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves. I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it."

'Thought for the Day' ...

Having commented on the Acts reading last week, it is back to the Gospels and to one of the best loved texts from Johannine text. John 14 is often used at funerals, and for good reason. The discussion centering on the connections between life and afterlife, earth and heaven for the Christian is both comforting and encouraging... and in its own way as a Greek text, it is very beautiful.

It is, of course, not without its challenges and it is one of these I would like us to think about this week. 'Believe in God and believe also in me' is meant to be to be understood as a grammatical imperative, a command, which is to challenge us in the troublesome situations we find ourselves in in this life, in the here and now. To trust God at every moment of life, rather than, only when all other helps fail, is in my experience an art to be learnt.

Amongst fellow singers in operas at ENO and beyond, some singers had huge 'good luck routines' they simply had to go through before they ever set foot on stage... a tenor in the chorus with me just had to drink six pints of lager before he ever got near the theatre...a wonderful contralto had to be the first chorus member to arrive

backstage and turn the lights on in the girls changing room... or she was convinced that disaster loomed!

But like in life, in opera, things however well rehearsed or however well prepared simply do and have and will go wrong. In every performance I have ever been in, something small and 'repairable' or huge and 'disastrous' has happened and the 'way out' of it was, mostly, to have the wit to put it right.

To prepare, I commended the performance and my part in it into the hands of God, and then simply got on with it and largely enjoyed it immensely. . Through the practice of trust in every facet of life, I have learnt by grace not to do worry or stress at all, but consciously to put myself into the orbit of the Almighty through disciplined prayer... and simply 'trust'.

A wonderful story emanates from the blitz in WW2. An elderly lady astonished her neighbours in Central London by refusing to go to the air raid shelters during endless nights of bombing. In total trust (and indeed simplicity) she said that she got ready for bed as she had always done, knelt by her bed and said her prayers as she always had done, put her earplugs in as she had always done and then went to sleep, After all, she said, 'there is One who is always awake' , and that is quite sufficient.

Wow!

SAF

A Reflection: Many Rooms, One Way-Rev. Matthew Gough

I am writing this on the edge of the Benefice in the vast expanse of Leicestershire Golf Course towards Evington. It is the first time I have been here. It is a massive place to explore which in normal times one cannot do because of flying golf balls. Thankfully today, the golfers have been grounded. This place helps me to think of Jesus talking about the generosity of His Father's House, ie eternal life having unlimited space for all.

In today's Gospel reading, Jesus words are incredibly comforting to his followers as he talks off his own death. We recall them in Easter because they remind us of the eternal life Jesus promised for his followers after his death. Jesus promises to go ahead of us and

though it is unknown to us, he promises that all we need do is to know and trust Him.

The encouraging words are often used at funerals. We emphasise them because we say there is room for everyone! Many mansions, many rooms, or the greek-many dwellings. A place for all in 'My Father's House'.

However, these are not sentimental words. Later, Jesus says the only way to the Father, the only way to be assured of being in the House of the Father is through Jesus.

Jesus's inclusive offer is open to all but space for all is only through Him.

The reading follows on from last week where we heard about Jesus being both shepherd and gate.

Jesus establishes himself as the Way. This is all Truth and very Life itself. Big claims. He says the way is a person, the truth is a person, life in all its fullness is found in a person.

The person of Christ calls to each of us-to know the Father and that we know the Father if we know Jesus. If we know Jesus then we know the way to the Father's House. We have the assurance of eternal life.

The only other time in John's gospel we hear Jesus use the term, is when Jesus cleanses the temple 'My Father's House' of the merchants getting in the way of worship. 'Turning my Father's house into a market place'. Jesus is physical and angrily makes room for the Father to be worshipped in His house. The way of Jesus is worship of the Father which requires a cleansing and removal the ungodly to make room for the Father.

What do you need to remove? What takes up space preventing you worshipping the Father? What stops us knowing Jesus.

We find room in our Father's house if we are willing to follow the Way, and the Truth that is Christ. The way to life by his truth.

Eternal life has meaning and hope that is not sentimental. Rather it is a hope built on the scars and wounds of a risen Christ. Amen

MINISTRY TEAM NEWS During the coronavirus pandemic the Benefice Ministry Team have met regularly online using Zoom to talk and to pray. Much of our time is taken checking that everyone in the two churches is well and safe, and thinking about the best ways to help us all stay connected and worshipping together in some way. We would love to hear from everyone else directly too:

- if you feel isolated or would just like a chat then do please let us know;
- if you are concerned about someone else then again please let us know;
- please give us feedback about the 'virtual services' and the Reflections in the newsletters;
- please let us know if there is something else you would find helpful- we are particularly interested to know if you would like a recorded Eucharist to follow at home;
- and please pray for us! Leading is a strange and unfamiliar task in these strange days.

Thank you - *Adrian*

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.

FOR THE NEWSLETTER Please send material to be included in the next newsletter by **Thursday 10pm** to administrator@stguthlac-knighton.co.uk