



THE MESSENGER

The weekly review of the Parish of

St Michael and All Angels

Watford

EASTER 5

Sunday 10 May 2020

“The Church building is closed, but the Church family continues”

As you are now all aware, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York have announced the suspension of public worship in all Churches. The Government has also announced that all Places of Worship must close.

This means that there will be no more public worship at St Michael’s until further notice.

There is a message from Fr Geoff on the back page.

For your prayers this week:

International cooperation for the peace and wellbeing of all people

All those seeking to develop a vaccine for the coronavirus

Vulnerable people in poor and developing countries

Wisdom in measures to safely lift aspects of lockdown

People whose businesses are struggling

People whose jobs are at risk

NHS, Care Home and other healthcare workers

All whose jobs bring them in direct contact with the public

Police and other emergency workers

The Ill and the Housebound: Especially Christopher Bilson, Janet Chandler, Audrey Dixon, Cynthia Dixon, Claire Dunning, Fr Robert Featherstone, Jemima Hill, Peter Hinchey, Mary Kearns, Keith Levinson, Craig McKay, Lisa Mills, Sylvia Obeng, Dorcas Ochola, Brian Rees, Christina Simon, Adelaide Tonkin, Peter White; and all who care for them

The Departed:

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, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

FIRST READING Acts 7.55–60

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

Standing before the high priest and the council,
55 Stephen, 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!'
57 But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him.
58 Then 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.
59 While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.'
60 Then 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.

SECOND READING I Peter 2.2–10

A reading from the first letter of Peter.

2 Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation –
3 if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.
4 Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight.
5 Like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.
6 For it stands in scripture: 'See, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.'
7 To you then who believe, he is precious; but for those who do not believe, 'The stone that the builders rejected has become the very head of the corner,' and

- 8 'A stone that makes them stumble, and a rock that makes them fall.' They
stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.
- 9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people,
in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of
darkness into his marvellous light.
- 10 Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had
not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

GOSPEL John 14.1-14

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

Jesus said to his disciples:

- 1 'Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me.
- 2 In my Father's house there are many dwelling-places. If it were not so, would I
have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?
- 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to
myself, so that where I am, there you may be also.
- 4 And you know the way to the place where I am going.'
- 5 Thomas said to him, 'Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we
know the way?'
- 6 Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to
the Father except through me.
- 7 If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him
and have seen him.'
- 8 Philip said to him, 'Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.'
- 9 Jesus said to him, 'Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not
know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say,
"Show us the Father"?'
- 10 Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words
that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me
does his works.
- 11 Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not,
then believe me because of the works themselves.
- 12 Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I
do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the
Father.
- 13 I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in
the Son.
- 14 If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.'

Homily

Dear friends,

Friday saw the 75th Anniversary of VE Day, a bitter-sweet commemoration. World War II devastated Europe and caused untold suffering and huge numbers of deaths. The ending of the war in Europe involved the peoples and economies of the Allied Nations in a supreme effort which involved the losing of many lives and the allocation of huge amounts of materials and money from their economies. The size of the effort, however, reflected the size of the evil that needed to be overcome. It was a moment when Europe could begin to be rebuilt in a form that enabled differences to be thrashed out in the debating chambers of its countries and not through armed conflict. It made the Europe of today, in which we may not agree with our neighbours, but we don't have to face them with armies at the ready. Thank God.

Stay safe,

Love and prayers

Fr Geoff

NOTICES

SUNDAY BEGINS CHRISTIAN AID WEEK and although we are coping with very complicated circumstances, I wonder if St Michael's can still try to help them with their excellent work? I would be happy to receive cheques here (and would acknowledge receipt). Alternatively, to save posting cheques, if you would like to phone or email to let me know how much you would like to send, I will include the amount and am happy to be paid back later. I hope we shall be able to make a contribution as we have in past years.. With best wishes

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WE ARE ASKED to put a lighted candle in our window at 7.00pm on Sundays as part of the National Call to Prayer