



THE MESSENGER

The weekly review of the Parish of

St Michael and All Angels

Watford

TRINITY 2

Sunday 21 June 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.

If you would like to donate to St Michael’s during the pandemic, there is a JustGiving page at <https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/stmichaelandallangels>

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

For your prayers this week:

Pupils returning to school

School staff and parents

Pupils and teachers engaged in home learning and teaching

Children receiving free school meals

Businesses reopening

Safety of shoppers and retailers' staff

People suffering severe COVID-19 symptoms

Government ministers and other decision-makers

Her Majesty the Queen and the Royal Family

The Ill and the Housebound: Especially Lorna Balson, 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: Leslie Wright.

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.

FIRST READING Genesis 21.8–21

A reading from the book of Genesis.

⁸ The child Isaac grew, and was weaned; and Abraham made a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned.

⁹ But Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, playing with her son Isaac.

¹⁰ So she said to Abraham, 'Cast out this slave woman with her son; for the son of this slave woman shall not inherit along with my son Isaac.'

¹¹ The matter was very distressing to Abraham on account of his son.

¹² But God said to Abraham, 'Do not be distressed because of the boy and because of your slave woman; whatever Sarah says to you, do as she tells you, for it is through Isaac that offspring shall be named after you.

¹³ As for the son of the slave woman, I will make a nation of him also, because he is your offspring.'

¹⁴ So Abraham rose early in the morning, and took bread and a skin of water, and gave it to Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, along with the child, and sent her away. And she departed, and wandered about in the wilderness of Beer-sheba.

¹⁵ When the water in the skin was gone, she cast the child under one of the bushes.

¹⁶ Then she went and sat down opposite him a good way off, about the distance of a bowshot; for she said, 'Do not let me look on the death of the child.' And as she sat opposite him, she lifted up her voice and wept.

¹⁷ And God heard the voice of the boy; and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven, and said to her, 'What troubles you, Hagar? Do not be afraid; for God has heard the voice of the boy where he is.

¹⁸ Come, lift up the boy and hold him fast with your hand, for I will make a great nation of him.'

¹⁹ Then God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water. She went, and filled the skin with water, and gave the boy a drink.

²⁰ God was with the boy, and he grew up; he lived in the wilderness, and became an expert with the bow.

²¹ He lived in the wilderness of Paran; and his mother got a wife for him from the land of Egypt.

SECOND READING Romans 6.1b–11

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans.

¹ Should we continue in sin in order that grace may abound?

² By no means! How can we who died to sin go on living in it?

3 Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were
baptized into his death?
4 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.
5 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.
6 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.
7 For whoever has died is freed from sin.
8 But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.
9 We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no
longer has dominion over him.
10 The death he died, he died to sin, once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God.
11 So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

GOSPEL Matthew 10.24–39

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

Jesus summoned the twelve and sent them out with the following instruction:
24 'A disciple is not above the teacher, nor a slave above the master;
25 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 Beelzebul, how much more will they
malign those of his household!
26 So have no fear of them; for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered, and
nothing secret that will not become known.
27 What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered,
proclaim from the housetops.
28 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.
29 Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground
unperceived by your Father.
30 And even the hairs of your head are all counted.
31 So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows.
32 Everyone therefore who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge
before my Father in heaven;
33 but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven.
34 Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to
bring peace, but a sword.
35 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;
36 and one's foes will be members of one's own household.
37 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;
38 and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me.
39 Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will
find it.

Homily

Dear Friends, this weekend marks the annual Alban Pilgrimage around the Feast Day of the Patron Saint of our Diocese. There is a special service at the Cathedral, streamed on YouTube which I recommend you join if you can. There will be a service livestreamed from St Michaels at 8.00am, and I will then be joining the service at the Cathedral. It seems odd in these days of very limited travel to speak about pilgrimage, but what has always made a pilgrimage different from any other journey is its quality as a spiritual journey. Perhaps when we are out and about, we can take more notice of the things and the people we see. When we go out for our walks, we can be more “present”, rather than just trying to get to where we are going as quickly as possible. If we are restricted to the house, we can create a routine, a “day journey”, which includes “stops” for Bible reading, prayer, and spiritual reading.

Stay safe

Love and prayers

Fr Geoff

Sunday 21 June

We are encouraging people to join the Alban Pilgrimage Eucharist from the Cathedral at 10.00am on Sunday, with Richard Coles preaching, and that the service from St Michael’s will be live streamed at 8.00am.