



# THE MESSENGER

The weekly review of the Parish of

*St Michael and All Angels*

Watford

TRINITY 3

Sunday 28 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.

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### **For your prayers this week:**

Victims of terrorism, their families and communities

School pupils, staff and families

People facing the loss of their jobs

People with learning disabilities

People with dementia

People with mental health issues

People of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Communities

Churches planning for or introducing reopening

Business owners and employees

**The Ill and the Housebound:** Especially Lorna Barson, 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, Catherine Stone, Adelaide Tonkin, Peter White; and all who care for them.

**The Departed:**

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**Collect**

Almighty God, you have broken the tyranny of sin and have sent the Spirit of your Son into our hearts whereby we call you Father:  
give us grace to dedicate our freedom to your service, that we and all creation may be brought to the glorious liberty of the children of God;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

**FIRST READING Genesis 22.1–14**

A reading from the book of Genesis.

- <sup>1</sup> God tested Abraham. He said to him, 'Abraham!' And Abraham said, 'Here I am.'
- <sup>2</sup> God said, 'Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt-offering on one of the mountains that I shall show you.'
- <sup>3</sup> So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and his son Isaac; he cut the wood for the burnt-offering, and set out and went to the place in the distance that God had shown him.
- <sup>4</sup> On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place far away.
- <sup>5</sup> Then Abraham said to his young men, 'Stay here with the donkey; the boy and I will go over there; we will worship, and then we will come back to you.'
- <sup>6</sup> Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on his son Isaac, and he himself carried the fire and the knife. So the two of them walked on together.
- <sup>7</sup> Isaac said to his father Abraham, 'Father!' And Abraham said, 'Here I am, my son.' Isaac said, 'The fire and the wood are here, but where is the lamb for a burnt-offering?'
- <sup>8</sup> Abraham said, 'God himself will provide the lamb for a burnt-offering, my son.' So the two of them walked on together.
- <sup>9</sup> When they came to the place that God had shown him, Abraham built an altar there and laid the wood in order. He bound his son Isaac, and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood.
- <sup>10</sup> Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to kill his son.
- <sup>11</sup> But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven, and said, 'Abraham, Abraham!' And he said, 'Here I am.'
- <sup>12</sup> The angel said, 'Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me.'
- <sup>13</sup> And Abraham looked up and saw a ram, caught in a thicket by its horns. Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt-offering instead of his son.
- <sup>14</sup> So Abraham called that place 'The LORD will provide'; as it is said to this day, 'On the mount of the LORD it shall be provided.'

## **SECOND READING Romans 6.12–23**

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans.

- <sup>12</sup> Do not let sin exercise dominion in your mortal bodies, to make you obey their passions.
- <sup>13</sup> No longer present your members to sin as instruments of wickedness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and present your members to God as instruments of righteousness.
- <sup>14</sup> For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.
- <sup>15</sup> What then? Should we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means!
- <sup>16</sup> Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness?
- <sup>17</sup> But thanks be to God that you, having once been slaves of sin, have become obedient from the heart to the form of teaching to which you were entrusted,
- <sup>18</sup> and that you, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness.
- <sup>19</sup> I am speaking in human terms because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to greater and greater iniquity, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness for sanctification.
- <sup>20</sup> When you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness.
- <sup>21</sup> So what advantage did you then get from the things of which you now are ashamed? The end of those things is death.
- <sup>22</sup> But now that you have been freed from sin and enslaved to God, the advantage you get is sanctification. The end is eternal life.
- <sup>23</sup> For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

## **GOSPEL Matthew 10.40–42**

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

Jesus said to the twelve:

- <sup>40</sup> ‘Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me.
- <sup>41</sup> Whoever welcomes a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward; and whoever welcomes a righteous person in the name of a righteous person will receive the reward of the righteous;
- <sup>42</sup> and whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple – truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward.’

## Homily

Today's Gospel shows us one of the most important principles of Christian ethics – what we do for the weakest and most vulnerable in our society, we do for Jesus. When Jesus refers to the “little ones”, I don't think he is just referring to children. The phrase encompasses all those who are little in the sense of being powerless, downtrodden or simply ignored. As you know, I have a great devotion to St Francis, the Poverello, the Little Poor Man, who changed so much in the Church by being poor alongside the poor. Recently, we have said goodbye to Leslie Wright, who was undoubtedly “one of these little ones”, but who was one of the most faithful, reliable and regular members of our Church Family.

Stay safe

Love and prayers

Fr Geoff