



# THE MESSENGER

The weekly review of the Parish of

*St Michael and All Angels*

Watford

**TRINITY 10**

**Sunday 16 August 2020**

Welcome back to St Michael's. At 9.30am there is a eucharist with congregation in Church, music but no singing. There will be a limit of 40 people, and hygiene, social distancing, and track and trace will be in place, but most importantly, we are here!

The service will also be live-streamed on the new YouTube channel "**St Michaels Church Watford**" for those who are unable to attend physically.

Following the service, St Michael's will remain open for private prayer until 12.00 noon.

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

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

**The Church:** The Parish of Norton (Hitchin) in our Diocese.  
The Scottish Episcopal Church, Mark Strange its Primus and all its people.

People who attend contemplative prayer groups.

**The World:** Humanitarian crises caused by coronavirus.

Retired people.

People facing unemployment.

**The Community and Parish:** Our Churchwardens, PCC and committee members.

All who help with Sunday morning and other services

Preparations for reopening schools.

**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**

Let your merciful ears, O Lord, be open to the prayers of your humble servants; and that they may obtain their petitions make them to ask such things as shall please you;  
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 45.1–15**

A reading from the book of Genesis.

- <sup>1</sup> Joseph could no longer control himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried out, ‘Send everyone away from me.’ So no one stayed with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers.
- <sup>2</sup> And he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard it.
- <sup>3</sup> Joseph said to his brothers, ‘I am Joseph. Is my father still alive?’ But his brothers could not answer him, so dismayed were they at his presence.
- <sup>4</sup> Then Joseph said to his brothers, ‘Come closer to me.’ And they came closer. He said, ‘I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt.
- <sup>5</sup> And now do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life.
- <sup>6</sup> For the famine has been in the land these two years; and there are five more years in which there will be neither ploughing nor harvest.
- <sup>7</sup> God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors.
- <sup>8</sup> So it was not you who sent me here, but God; he has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt.
- <sup>9</sup> Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, “Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not delay.
- <sup>10</sup> You shall settle in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children’s children, as well as your flocks, your herds, and all that you have.
- <sup>11</sup> I will provide for you there – since there are five more years of famine to come – so that you and your household, and all that you have, will not come to poverty.”
- <sup>12</sup> And now your eyes and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see that it is my own mouth that speaks to you.
- <sup>13</sup> You must tell my father how greatly I am honoured in Egypt, and all that you have seen. Hurry and bring my father down here.’
- <sup>14</sup> Then he fell upon his brother Benjamin’s neck and wept, while Benjamin wept upon his neck.
- <sup>15</sup> And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them; and after that his brothers talked with him.

## SECOND READING Romans 11.1–2a, 29–32

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans.

- <sup>1</sup> I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin.  
<sup>2</sup> God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew.  
<sup>29</sup> For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.  
<sup>30</sup> Just as you were once disobedient to God but have now received mercy because of their disobedience,  
<sup>31</sup> so they have now been disobedient in order that, by the mercy shown to you, they too may now receive mercy.  
<sup>32</sup> For God has imprisoned all in disobedience so that he may be merciful to all.

## GOSPEL Matthew 15.10–28

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

- <sup>10</sup> Then Jesus called the crowd to him and said to them, 'Listen and understand:  
<sup>11</sup> it is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but it is what comes out of the mouth that defiles.'  
<sup>12</sup> Then the disciples approached and said to him, 'Do you know that the Pharisees took offence when they heard what you said?'  
<sup>13</sup> He answered, 'Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted.  
<sup>14</sup> Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind. And if one blind person guides another, both will fall into a pit.'  
<sup>15</sup> But Peter said to him, 'Explain this parable to us.'  
<sup>16</sup> Then he said, 'Are you also still without understanding?  
<sup>17</sup> Do you not see that whatever goes into the mouth enters the stomach, and goes out into the sewer?  
<sup>18</sup> But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this is what defiles.  
<sup>19</sup> For out of the heart come evil intentions, murder, adultery, fornication, theft, false witness, slander.  
<sup>20</sup> These are what defile a person, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile.'  
<sup>21</sup> Jesus went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon.  
<sup>22</sup> A Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, 'Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon.'  
<sup>23</sup> But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, 'Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us.'  
<sup>24</sup> He answered, 'I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.'  
<sup>25</sup> But she came and knelt before him, saying, 'Lord, help me.'  
<sup>26</sup> He answered, 'It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs.'  
<sup>27</sup> She said, 'Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table.'  
<sup>28</sup> Then Jesus answered her, 'Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish.' And her daughter was healed instantly.

## Homily

Jesus is often called “The man for others”, and that is the most obvious characteristic of his ministry – all he did was for others, not for himself. When presented with need, he was able to set aside his theology, as he did with this woman, and reach out to her need. That too should be the characteristic of his followers – people who, when faced with need, are able to set aside their prejudices and fear, and reach out. I think that Jesus was perfectly able to change his mind, and to learn from others. That too should be something we are able to do. In the right circumstances, we need to be able to evaluate what others show us against the Gospel, and, if there is a change we need to make in our own thoughts and behaviour, to be ready.

Love and prayers

Fr Geoff

St Michael’s Church is now open for private prayer on Wednesdays, 10.00am – 12.00 noon, and Sundays 10.45am – 12.15pm. Hygiene and social distancing procedures are in operation for your protection. All very welcome.

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>

**CELEBRATION 2020**, our Multicultural Festival, will be taking place on-line, with contributions from Watford’s Faiths and Cultures. It will be on the Bank Holiday weekend, 29th – 31st August, more details to follow.