



THE MESSENGER

The weekly review of the Parish of

St Michael and All Angels

Watford

TRINITY 12

Sunday 30 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.

For your prayers this week:

The Church: The Parish of Luton in our Diocese.
The United Church of South India, Dharmaraj Rasalam its Moderator, and all its people.
Our Bishops, Archdeacons, Clergy, Lay Ministers, and all people in our Diocese.

The World: People suffering from Dementia and their carers.
Children, teachers and staff beginning a new school term.
Charities facing difficult decision as a result of COVID-19.

The Community and Parish: All those attending and taking part in Celebration 2020.
Our Social Committee.
The schools with which we are connected, those in our parish, and also as staff, parents and students.

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, Catherine Stone, Adelaide Tonkin, Peter White; and all who care for them.

The Departed:

Collect

Almighty and everlasting God, you are always more ready to hear than we to pray and to give more than either we desire or deserve:
pour down upon us the abundance of your mercy, forgiving us those things of which our conscience is afraid and giving us those good things which we are not worthy to ask but through the merits and mediation of 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 Exodus 3.1-15

A reading from the book of Exodus.

- ¹ Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led his flock beyond the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God.
- ² There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed.
- ³ Then Moses said, 'I must turn aside and look at this great sight, and see why the bush is not burned up.'
- ⁴ When the LORD saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, 'Moses, Moses!' And he said, 'Here I am.'
- ⁵ Then he said, 'Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.'
- ⁶ He said further, 'I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.
- ⁷ Then the LORD said, 'I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings,
- ⁸ and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the country of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites.
- ⁹ The cry of the Israelites has now come to me; I have also seen how the Egyptians oppress them.
- ¹⁰ So come, I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt.'
- ¹¹ But Moses said to God, 'Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?'
- ¹² He said, 'I will be with you; and this shall be the sign for you that it is I who sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God on this mountain.'
- ¹³ But Moses said to God, 'If I come to the Israelites and say to them, "The God of your ancestors has sent me to you," and they ask me, "What is his name?" what shall I say to them?'

- ¹⁴ God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM.' He said further, 'Thus you shall say to the Israelites, "I AM has sent me to you."'
- ¹⁵ God also said to Moses, 'Thus you shall say to the Israelites, "The LORD, the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you": This is my name for ever, and this my title for all generations.'

SECOND READING Romans 12.9-21

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans.

- ⁹ Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good;
- ¹⁰ love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honour.
- ¹¹ Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord.
- ¹² Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer.
- ¹³ Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.
- ¹⁴ Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them.
- ¹⁵ Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.
- ¹⁶ Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are.
- ¹⁷ Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all.
- ¹⁸ If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.
- ¹⁹ Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.'
- ²⁰ No, 'if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads.'
- ²¹ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

GOSPEL Matthew 16.21-28

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

- ²¹ From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.
- ²² And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, 'God forbid it, Lord! This must never happen to you.'
- ²³ But he turned and said to Peter, 'Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling-block to me; for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.'
- ²⁴ Then Jesus told his disciples, 'If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.
- ²⁵ For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.
- ²⁶ For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life? Or what will they give in return for their life?
- ²⁷ For the Son of Man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay everyone for what has been done.
- ²⁸ Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.'

Homily

In Luke's version of Jesus' instruction to those who would follow him to "take up their cross", the word in English "daily" is used. This translates the Greek καθ' ἡμέραν (kath hemeran), which means "according to the day". The meaning appears to be that the cross we are to take up is particular to that day. We cannot plan which crosses we are to bear – they are given to us. Our task is not to think up our own crosses to bear, it is to recognise them when we see them, and take them up. This is the stuff of which the work of the Church is made, those who recognise the challenges God gives them each day, and take them up.

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.

PLEASE PRAY FOR BRIDGET RUSSELL, who will be licensed as a Reader on Sunday 6th September, and will be exercising her reader ministry with us here at St Michael's. I am very pleased and excited by this, and I am sure the loving family of St Michael's will enfold her as she begins lay ministry here.

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>

BIKE & HIKE 2020

In view of the peculiar circumstances this year with the possibility of the Open Day 12 September being cancelled if the Government so decides, I propose that I be sponsored as Church representative for the work I am doing anyway in processing this year's appeal.

If you wish to sponsor me, you can see me in church or telephone me on 01923 227276. In either situation, I will take particulars and add them to the sponsorship form to be retained at home for safety reasons.

If anyone comes forward to cycle or hike, I will pass on the appropriate documentation. Thanks. Robert Bilson

THIS WEEKEND SEES WATFORD CELEBRATION 2020 ONLINE. Full details are on the Watford Celebration website – www.watfordcelebration.com where there is a trailer, and the programme for the three days. On Monday 31st, the programme kicks off with a photo-tour of St Michael's. Each day's programme is at 3.00pm, on Saturday and Monday on the Watford Celebration YouTube channel, and on Sunday "Sacred Space" on Zoom. Register for Zoom on the website. Highly recommended! If you miss the 3.00pm sessions, they can be viewed later.

Website: <http://www.stmichaels-watford.org.uk>
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