

RENDEZVOUS

CORONA-VIRUS ISOLATION

Special Edition June 2020

Vol 47 No 6

As we can't get our Rendezvous printed or use the usual distribution method in the current situation I have created this simpler edition. If you have an email address, please let me know by emailing me at andrew_plested@yahoo.co.uk. For those who do not have email, we will endeavour to get this simpler version printed and circulated.

My apologies for the lateness of the last two editions - teething troubles with a different way of producing and printing this. Hopefully we should soon be back to normal.

Take care

Andrew

CALENDAR May 2020

Mon	1	The Visit of the Blessed Virgin Mary to Elizabeth
Fri	5	Boniface [Wynfrith] of Crediton, Bishop, Apostle of Germany, Martyr
Sun	7	Trinity Sunday
Mon	8	Thomas Ken, Bishop of Bath and Wells, Nonjuror, Hymn Writer
Tues	9	Columba, Abbot of Iona, Missionary
Thurs	11	Day of Thanksgiving for Holy Communion [Corpus Christi]
Fri	12	Barnabas the Apostle
Sun	14	The First Sunday after Trinity
Tues	16	Richard, Bishop of Chichester
Sun	21	The Second Sunday after Trinity
Mon	22	Alban, first Martyr of Britain
Tues	23	Etheldreda, Abbess of Ely
Wed	24	The Birth of John the Baptist
Sun	28	The Third Sunday after Trinity
Mon	29	Peter and Paul Apostles
Fri	3	Thomas the Apostle
Sun	5	The Fourth Sunday after Trinity

Supporting our Church Financially

During this time when our usual supporters are not able to make cash donations or use the planned giving scheme, I would like to ask if donations could be made instead by bank transfer so that we can keep paying our bills! All donations would be gratefully received. Our bank details are:

Account Name: Vicar and Churchwardens of the Parish Church of St Mary & St Eanswythe
Sort Code: 52-41-42
Account Number: 08627290

Dear Friends

It's June, the sun is shining, and people are becoming very impatient with the lockdown. Some, like me, who are living alone have cabin fever – we desperately want people's company.

Others, who have been with others during lockdown, often feel the tension of not having their own space.

All of us are missing the things we love to do.

And yet now is the time to be cautious, despite our government's understandable desire to open up the economy. The truth is that the age profile of our congregation is significantly higher than that of the general population. The virus is still out there, and still dangerous.

And so, very wisely, our Bishop is not yet allowing us to open our church for public worship. She says that won't happen until the beginning of July **at the earliest**.

And so I will continue to record daily and Sunday service and publish them on YouTube, with the help of those members of our congregation who are able to assist in this way. Do please access them if you can. If you search for 'St Eanswythe' on YouTube you'll find them. You can watch them on a computer, laptop, smartphone or smart TV.

And I want to thank everyone who is keeping in touch with others by email, messaging or phone during this time. I get the sense that our congregation is very good at giving the mutual care that is the hallmark of a Christian community.

And let's keep praying: for our world, nation, town, neighbours, family, friends and church family.

May you continue to keep safe, and may God's peace be with you.

John

Living Stones

'Like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house' I Peter 2.5

Our church building has real significance in Folkestone: history (especially its connection with St Eanswythe), location, architecture, function within the town but, above all, a place where the deepest truths about the nature of reality, and of ourselves, are to be discovered. A place to encounter the living God. Our building symbolises all these things.

But the Apostle Peter takes this symbolism and opens it up to reveal a new layer. He says that those of us who have encountered the living God are ourselves living stones and that, together, we form something even more powerful than this building. That's why 'church' is a double entendre. The building is the church because we are the church. It's not so much the House of God – the *Domus Dei* – as the House of the People of God – the *Domus Ecclesiae* – all down the ages.

Now this says something very important about you as an individual. You do not just go to church, you are part of the church. Christ needs you; your gifts; your unique character, and you will only find your true significance in relation to this calling to a particular church community. And that is why one of my early priorities was to build up our common life and help anyone who comes to find their significance and calling within it.

This symbolism also says something very important about us *together*. Each individual stone has its own unique shape and beauty. But only together do we fulfil our purpose. Together, we form something even more beautiful and powerful; together, we can have an immense impact on our local community, our town, and beyond. And that's why another priority of

mine will be to help us consider together how we use our time, talents, money and resources to do just that.

That will involve using our building. But it will also involve coming out of the building. We have not stopped being the church during this period in time when our building is closed. And I know some of you have been thinking about this.

In one of our online daily reflections, Elaine showed us the Presbyterian Church in Christchurch New Zealand after the earthquake: tables and chairs in the open air; and it caused her to wonder, 'what is church?'. Another member of our church has suggested that we fling our doors wide during worship this summer. And another that we have our refreshments after the service outside. Or what about a midsummer Eucharist in the open air?

All this is about taking the boundaries of our life-force as the community of Christ in this place and expanding them! It will still be centred in our building, but our influence will range wider and wider.

And that leads me to ponder the relationship between a symbol and the underlying reality it represents. Symbols can be more than merely representative. They can *mediate* the reality they represent – they can impart new life. That's when they become a kind of sacrament.

Christians know all about this because it was made most perfect in the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. He did not just 'represent' God's character, values, priorities and presence in the world. He embodied them; brought them into being in place and time; in physical, social and spiritual reality.

Bread, wine and the waters of baptism do more than remember and represent the new life Christ has given – they mediate it; they impart it through the faith with which we receive them in that moment; in the physicality of them.

Our church building, and our church community – the living temple of Christ in this place and time – are also more than representations. This building and our community mediate – impart – a profound encounter with the living Christ. And that is one reason why we are feeling so disoriented at present. Because we can't be there. We can't gather.

But we will. And when we do, we've got to make it count.



A New Normal?



This month's Commemoration
Alban, First Martyr of Britain
22 June

Alban was a soldier in the Roman city of Verulamium (now St Albans) and is venerated as the first-recorded British Christian martyr. He gave shelter to a Christian priest fleeing from persecution, hiding him in his house for several days. Greatly influenced by his devotion to prayer, Alban received instruction from the priest and was converted. When the priest's hiding-place was discovered, Alban dressed himself in the priest's cloak and was arrested in his place. Tortured by the Roman authorities, Alban refused to renounce his faith. He was beheaded on this day, probably in the year 250. His shrine stands today as a place of pilgrimage in the Cathedral and Abbey Church of St Alban.

Collect

Eternal Father,
when the gospel of Christ first came to our land
you gloriously confirmed the faith of Alban
by making him the first to win a martyr's crown:
grant that, following his example,
in the fellowship of the saints
we may worship you, the living God,
and give true witness to 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.

Readings *2 Timothy 2. 3-13; Gospel John 12. 24-26*



The shrine of St Alban in St Albans Cathedral

Sunday Eucharist Gospels – June 2020

Sunday 7 June - **TRINITY SUNDAY** Matthew 28. 16-20

*Go then and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them
in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.*

Wherever the gospel has been proclaimed, believers have been taught to acknowledge the power of the Holy Trinity in whose name they were baptized.

Sunday 14 June - **1st Sunday after Trinity** Matthew 9. 35-10.8

'You received without payment; give without payment'.

The mercy of God is not allocated by merit or achievement. It is absolute and unconditional, but those who are called to be his people are called also to share with others what they have been given.

Sunday 21 June - **2nd Sunday after Trinity** Matthew 10. 24-39

'Whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me'.

No one can be a true follower of Christ without giving up the self-will that desires only comfort and pleasure. He has shown that the way to life is through death and that every death-point in our lives brings us closer to him.

Sunday 28 June- **3rd Sunday after Trinity** Matthew 10. 40-42

*'Whoever welcomes you welcomes me
and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me.'*

God has spoken through many people: the Old Testament prophets, supremely in Jesus Christ and for centuries through those who proclaimed the gospel. His word is open and never fails; whether to accept or reject it is left to human choice.

WEEKDAY RED LETTER FESTIVALS – June 2020

Thursday 11 June - **Corpus Christi – Day of Thanksgiving for the Holy Communion** John 6. 51-58

Wednesday 21 June - **The Birth of John the Baptist** Luke 1.57-66

*They began motioning to his father to find out what name he wanted to give him.
He asked for a writing tablet and wrote 'His name is John'.*

John the Baptist can be seen as the last of the Prophets and as the first to proclaim Christ in the flesh. God's purpose is still being worked out through the agency of those he calls to his service.

Monday 29 May – **St Peter** Matthew 16.13-19

*Simon Peter answered, 'You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God'.
And Jesus answered him. 'Blessed are you Simon son of Jonah!
For flesh and blood have not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven.'*

God does not always choose those who have already proved their ability and leadership. He does not see with our limited vision but knows the hidden gifts that can be drawn into his service.

Coronavirus Quadrille

Walking The Leas,
Walking for health,
Fresh air, clear sky
And the shimmering sea.

People all round,
Children on bikes,
Joggers and walkers
Cyclists and 'boarders.

Step to the left,
Swerve to the right,
Maintain a safe distance
Eyes straight ahead
Avoiding all contact.

Who would believe
Death stalks the town?
How can it be?
What we can't see?

Walking The Leas
Walking for Life.
Walking
Just to keep going.

IG

Composed after several day's walks on The Leas following 'lockdown'.

Bowing

We will all be familiar with signs of reverence and respect in every-day, non-church life. If you have ever been to a courtroom or seen one in a film or TV programme, you will know how the officials have to nod or bow to the Judge or Magistrate when they pass in front of him or her. The same is true if people are introduced to the Queen; they curtsy or bow. This is a way of showing that what that person stands for, or represents, is worthy of our respect.

How much more worthy is God of our respect!

In St. Paul's letter to the Philippians (2.9) he writes:

'Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth'.

For the person who wishes to worship the Lord with all his heart, with all his soul and with all his strength, worship with the body is both right and natural.

God the three in one

Trinity Sunday June 7



This month we celebrate Trinity Sunday. The doctrine of the trinity is one of the most important of the Christian faith, for it goes to the very heart of what God is like. The Bible is quite clear: there is one God, but he is revealed in three ‘persons’ – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Have you ever wondered at what point in the Bible God is revealed as being more than one person? Well, you don’t have to read very far: only to Genesis 1:26, where God (Hebrew word *Elohim* – a plural noun) says: Let US make man in OUR image. (Gen. 1:26)

The Bible reveals a pattern: God the Father lives in heaven and has never been seen. God the Son became the incarnate Jesus Christ, who made known to us the Father, and God the Holy Spirit, who is unseen, has been sent to live within and to equip his people, the Church.

The Trinity is basic to our salvation – for these three persons in the one Godhead have combined to save us from our sins: it is the WILL of the Father, the saving WORK of the Son, and the indwelling WITNESS of the Holy Spirit. (John 14:16, 23-26).

Worried that your life is changing beyond recall?

A wise farmer rotates his crops: no one thing should always be grown in the same place. Change and diversity are the key to long-term health. It is the same for us: for us to be at our most productive, we must not be surprised if God suddenly rests us from ‘growing corn’, and gives us something else to do. Often it is something we would never have imagined!

Life is lived in seasons: in each of our lives, there is a time to do this, a time to do that. Too many of us lose our sense of self-worth and direction because we don’t understand when we’re leaving one season and entering another in life. We struggle and want to hang on to what we had. But sometimes God wants to give us something new, to make us productive at every stage of our life.

God will never put us in a place too small to grow. We may be asked to grow in ways that seem uncomfortable at first, but he is out to develop us fully, in every aspect of our being – not just the ones at which we are already good!

BOOKWORM: BOOKS TO READ DURING LOCKDOWN

My reading preferences have changed as Lockdown has progressed. At first, I felt that I had to read very comforting, familiar books but now I'm back to reading thrillers again. Here are a few of the books I've been reading.

A Silent Death – Peter May (2020)

A truly wonderful book that I would have read in one (long) sitting if I could have. It's set mostly in Andalucia and features a seemingly indestructible Scottish police officer who finds himself unexpectedly seconded to the Spanish police force. The main baddie is another Scot who is seeking to take revenge against a Spanish policewoman and her deaf-blind aunt. It is also a very good advert for the iPhone, but to say more about that would spoil the story.

An exciting and compelling read, with quite a few twists in the plot, only some of which I saw coming. Great cover too.

Coffin Road – Peter May (2016)

An excellent thriller that more than lives up to the claims on the cover. It really is “a riveting atmospheric read” and “a chilling standalone mystery”.

Set mostly on the Isle of Harris in the Outer Hebrides, it starts off as a moderately straightforward story where the central character has lost his memory following an accident at sea. As he starts to piece together his life and find out who he is the mystery develops and the reader realises that everything is not as it seems. There are more exciting twists in the plot than in a corkscrew, and no one is who they seem to be.

I don't know why I've allowed this book to lurk in my 'to be read' pile for so long.

Red Joan – Jennie Rooney (2013)

An exceedingly good book - I read all of the second half in one day. I loved the film and the book is even better. Such a good thing in life when the film actually sticks closely to the book.

If you don't know the story, it's based on the real life Soviet spy from the Cold War era, Melita Norwood, who was not discovered until 1999 when she was aged 87.

In this fictional account there are two parallel stories: Joan as a young woman in the 1930s and 1940s, when she is persuaded into spying by her Russian boyfriend and his cousin, and a week in 2005 when Joan has finally been found out and is being interviewed (interrogated) by MI5, to the horror of her son, an eminent QC.

It's extremely well written and makes a gripping story in which you understand completely why Joan did what she did, even if you don't agree with it. There are lots of twists in the plot, which I only saw coming because I'd already seen the film twice.

Read the book and see the film. You'll love them both.

Catriona

For the present, we have to keep the church shut until the Government and Archbishop allows us to open again.

However, that doesn't mean nothing is happening!

For those of you with a computer or smartphone Fr John has been providing the following:

- Daily Reflection - if you aren't getting this, email rev.dr.john.walker@gmail.com to be put on the mailing list
- Recorded Services on Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/pg/sainteanswythe/videos/> you will get a facebook sign in panel but just click *not now* at the bottom of the panel.

See also the church website <https://stmaryandsteanswythe.org/>