

NEWSLETTER

Sunday 14 June - Trinity 1

Exodus 19.2-8a; Romans 5.1-8; Matthew 9.35-10.8



Online Benefice Service this Sunday

A service of worship for will be shared on the **St Nicks YouTube channel** www.youtube.com/channel/UC_10sXmB7N5CKsD60_eRXjg.

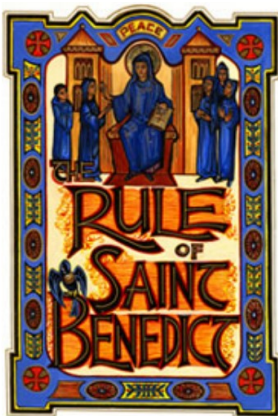
Find other worship resources at stnicholasdunnington.org.uk/covid19/worship/



Prayer - a reflection from Revd Canon Terry Joyce

You've got to laugh! Last Sunday's gospel reading was Matthew 28:16-20, where Jesus was commissioning his disciples "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations...." to which my naughty 'lockdown' mind then thought, "...as long as you stay at home or keep 2m distance!" We're currently living with the irony that the best way to love our neighbour is by keeping away from them!

I'm grateful that, especially in the early days of the lockdown, great humour was shared to help keep us going, especially through social media. We needed that. But as time has gone on, frustration and irritation have built up for us about all manner of issues or situations, especially what some of us are having to go through. For us all, this time has brought great challenges and will continue to do so for some time. So we're grateful for any wisdom that can be gleaned about how best to get through this; and for me, this week, a contribution has come from an unexpected source, the monastic tradition; especially St Benedict and St Gregory.

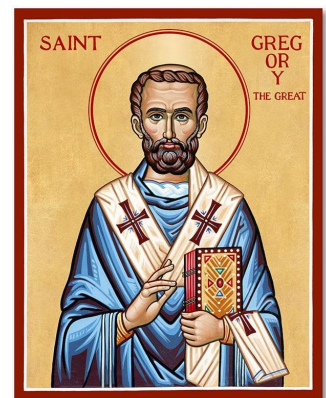


Through their writings (which of course I'm reading all the time!) and their legacy, we're reminded that this isn't the first time in human history that widespread disease has occurred. But one tangible spin-off was that it led them to more prayer.

"...prayer... leads to visions of the goodness of God."

The sixth century was a long, horrible time in Rome. The city had been defeated in battle several times. The economy was in shambles, and then mid-century, an eight year plague ravaged the city. People were frightened for so many reasons. But this was also St Benedict's time. He was the one who wrote the rule that still guides many Benedictine religious houses to this day. This rule included a daily rhythm of prayer, work, and the singing of the Psalms - including the Psalms of lament. Down through the centuries, and the succession of plagues to follow, people took comfort in knowing that monks were voicing their laments and petitions to God.

The 6th Century also gave us St. Gregory, who reluctantly left one of those monastic houses to become the Pope. He also sold church property in order to feed the people of Rome. He called himself "a contemplative condemned to action." But his "action" involved a careful balance of caring for the poor and developing prayer in the monasteries. He saw cloistered prayer as an active way of caring for the world. The monastic tradition grew.



"...a contemplative condemned to action."

The monks weren't trying to escape the problems of the world. They ensured the woes of society were known in the monasteries in order to devote themselves to a life of prayer for the world's salvation. Gregory wrote that prayers begin with humility over the "agitation of the world" we cannot resolve. Staying in prayer, he claimed, leads us into contemplation, which then leads to visions of the goodness of God. And this vision of Jesus walking with us leaves us with humility in gratitude. So the journey of prayer is from humility in agitation to humility in gratitude, which then becomes a means of activism. A perfect progression.

But it also means that through our prayer at home, even in lockdown, we can still transmit God's love to the ends of the earth. But remember, the monks engaged in this journey through prayer as a daily uncompromising routine – perhaps lessons there for us!



Do you need practical support or a friendly chat?

If you need help/support but don't know who your local Community Support Group volunteers are, please email covid19east york@gmail.com, or call Rev Nick Bird on 01904 489349 and we will link you up.

Churches reopening?

You may have heard on the news that, from Monday 15 June, places of worship will be permitted to open. At first, this will only be for individual prayer, with appropriate hygiene and social distancing. No public worship is yet permitted.

However, not all churches will manage to open straight away, and it is unlikely that those which do open will do so all day, or even every day. There is no compulsion for all churches to open. Risk assessments will be undertaken, and plans put in place, so that we can reopen our church buildings as soon and as safely as possible.

It is also possible that small funerals and weddings will also be permitted in the near future, and, as above, these will need to be carefully managed for the safety of all. Guidelines are being drawn up by the national churches, and updates are being published regularly.

We will let you know in due course when the Benefice churches will reopen, and how this will be managed.

Generous Giving

Thank you so much to all of you who support your church with regular giving. Even without being able to gather together for worship, there are many costs to running our churches that stay the **same**.

If you arrange your giving via a standing order, then this is the best way of all. It means that the treasurer can predict what is coming in, and your church council can budget accordingly. Thank you. If your giving is usually via the envelope scheme that comes via the plate, then you may wish to continue your practice of setting aside an amount each week and then bringing your envelopes when our churches reopen. However, that might be some time yet, depending on the course of the pandemic. You may wish to consider at this point changing to a standing order. If this is not possible, then perhaps you might think about writing a cheque and passing this on to your church's treasurer or steward.

If your usual practice is to put cash in the plate when you do attend worship, perhaps we might encourage you to start giving in a more planned and structured way. The church is always there, and its ministry and costs are fairly consistent. Committed giving is a spiritual response to the constant love of God.

The church locally and nationally has been hit hard by coronavirus, in a similar way to the rest of the country. There is a concern that the repercussions of this will be very significant, unless we can meet the issue with generosity and steadfast commitment. You are invited to be part of our response.

For further information, advice or assistance, please contact your church's treasurer or churchwarden, and they will be pleased to help you.

A note for those at St Nicholas Church - If you decide to give by standing order then please set up the mandate directly through the church rather than through Golden Giving. That way the church receives the full amount (Golden Giving would charge a fee, and is best for one-off donations). The forms are available from <http://stnicholasdunnington.org.uk/outreach/giving/>

Dunnington Methodist Church

Our buildings are still closed and we do not anticipate them being open for worship or prayer until at least July. All stewards are around for a chat or you need help or advice. Diane on 01904 489495, Anne on 01904 481656 or Chris on 01904 481191. Rev Keith Albans can be contacted on 01904 491761 or Circuit office 07984019995 who will take a message.

Bible Month study group for June is on line, but we also have a paper copy for anyone wanting to study Ruth at home without internet. Also, we have a service from the Methodist Church for 14th June. If you would like a paper copy of either of these please ring Diane 01904 489495.

The Church on the Circuit prayer rota for 14th June is Stamford Bridge. Let us thank God for his work in that place and pray for the church as they consider how best to respond to God's call in this time.

Lectionary Corner

16 June: Richard, Bishop of Chichester, 1253

Richard, Bishop of Chichester

Most merciful redeemer who gave to your Bishop Richard, a love of learning, a zeal for souls and a devotion to the poor: grant that, encouraged by his example, we may know you more clearly, love you more dearly, and follow you more nearly, day by day, who with the Father and Holy Spirit are alive and reign, one God, now and for ever. Amen.



© The Archbishops' Council of the Church of England

Richard de Wych, or of Droitwich as it is now known, was born there in 1197 and worked hard for his yeoman father to restore the family fortunes. Later he studied at Oxford and Paris and then in Bologna as an ecclesiastical lawyer. When he returned to England in 1235, he was made Chancellor of Oxford University and eventually Chancellor to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Edmund of Abingdon. When Richard became Bishop of Chichester, he was seen as a model diocesan Bishop: progressing around his diocese on foot visiting and caring for his clergy and people, generally being accessible to all who needed his ministry. He insisted that the sacraments be administered without payment and with a proper dignity. Whilst on a recruitment campaign for the Crusades, he fell ill at Dover and died there on 3 April 1253. His mortal remains were translated to Chichester on this day in the year 1276.

Sourced from 'Exciting Holiness'

Pray for those you love the most;

Those you struggle to love;

Those in leadership - in the church, community, nation, world;

Those sustaining our lives - key workers, NHS, shop-workers;

Those suffering the most in these days.

Ever present God, be with us in our isolation, inhabit our communities and share your loving goodness in your world. For Jesus' sake. Amen

Would you like to receive this newsletter by email? Contact Victoria on grapevine.rey@gmail.com. It is also available to download from the St Nicholas Church website at www.stnicholasdunnington.org.uk/news/

Next newsletter on **Sunday 21 June**. Items to grapevine.rey@gmail.com by **9.00 am on Thursday 18 June**