

CUTTING EDGE CAMELOT, No 31

Sunday 21st June 2020

‘Virtually Church but with some way to go...’

Welcome

Welcome to Cutting Edge Camelot this Sunday. We begin our series on the Lord’s Prayer by looking at the opening address to God, ‘Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.’

Update on reopening churches for private prayer

Following the permission given for the reopening of churches for private prayer I am able to give you the following update.

The permission was coupled with the need to complete a Risk Assessment and to meet some rigorous standards especially in relation to cleaning, hygiene and social distancing. Not all of the Camelot churches have the resources at present to comply with these standards and in particular the need for regular and thorough cleaning.

However, I am pleased to be able to announce that following the completion of Risk Assessments the churches at South Cadbury and at Compton Pauncefoot are now open for private prayer for a limited period on a Sunday morning effective as from today.

South Cadbury is open for prayer from 10.00am to 12 noon and Compton Pauncefoot is open from 9.30am to 10.30am.

The PCC of St Michael’s North Cadbury is actively considering proposals by which the churches at North Cadbury and Galhampton could also open for private prayer at specified times.

The Lord's Prayer

Traditional Version

Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory
for ever and ever.
Amen.

Modern Version

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.

Reflection

‘Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name...’

The Lord’s Prayer opens by focussing on God and our relationship with God. And this opening address gives us two different but complementary insights into the nature of this relationship.

First of all, God is our Father. When we think of fathers what first comes to our mind? This may well be coloured by our own experience either of having or being parents.

As my daughter Ilana grows up, I come increasingly to understand how important the gift of a father’s immediate and available presence is. Now is the time to respond, later is too late. The first need is to listen and to give time. Other duties may indeed be pressing but sometimes these need to be set aside.

And so for Jesus we find that the model of a relationship with God as His Father is one of available and immediate presence in which He confidently seeks His Father in prayer at all times.

And with presence comes generosity and the desire to give. In the passage from Luke’s gospel which we looked at last week we find that, in terms of the gift of the Holy Spirit, the generosity of God is compared to that of an earthly father who wants to give good gifts to his children.

And then God’s name is to be hallowed or to be held in reverence and respect. Probably the first connection that we make here is with the Old Testament commandment not to take the Lord’s name in vain and we think of times when tragically the name of God or Jesus is used as a swear word.

This is indeed true and important but there is more to this aspect of the Lord's Prayer than this. For, in Biblical terms, a name represents a person's character. If God's name is to be hallowed it means that His character is holy and perfect, honourable and upright.

And as Christians we too bear God's name. So Christians are to be Christ like and to remind others of God's presence in the world. Is our behaviour always Christ like? Maybe not and indeed a Christ like character is a gift which develops as the Holy Spirit works within us. So when we pray 'Hallowed be your name' we are also reminded of the quality of our own lives and ask that so far as possible others might through us be able to catch a glimpse of God's character.

In this way the opening of the Lord's Prayer reminds us of two different aspects of God and of our relationship with God. God is our Father and yet His character is also holy and awesome. God is both present with us and also far above and beyond the whole of creation.

As I reflected on this I thought of the heavy burdens we can place on our leaders, perhaps particularly in this coronavirus crisis. What do we look for in our leaders? Often we seem to want to find two very different qualities which are rarely combined within a single individual.

The first is approachability, that we feel that this person is on the same level as us, can enter into and share our experiences, maybe someone we would like to have a drink with.

The second is integrity, the ability to take right decisions even if they are unpopular. This kind of person tends to stand at one remove from our immediate concerns and is not swayed from following their own better judgement in the light of the bigger picture which they see.

Perhaps these two qualities reflect in some way the two different aspects of God which the beginning of the Lord's Prayer reminds us of. Qualities which we rarely find combined within the same person.

And yet in God who is our Father in heaven and whose name is to be hallowed, we do indeed find these two normally incompatible qualities perfectly united. And both qualities matter as we develop a relationship with God.

For the Lord's Prayer reminds us that when we address God in prayer we do indeed need the boldness and openness of a child but, as we hallow God's name, we also need to approach God with respect, reverence and even awe.

Tristram

A note on translations of the Lord's Prayer

In this edition of Cutting Edge Camelot you will find the Lord's Prayer reproduced in both its traditional and its modern form. There are some differences of wording between them. And if you look at the two versions of the Lord's Prayer which can be found in the Bible at Matthew 6: 9-13 and Luke 11: 2-4 (a condensed version) and especially if you read these in different versions of the Bible you will find yet further variations in wording.

So why all these variations? Are we simply free to adapt this prayer according to the concerns of our age?

The first point to make is that the original language of the prayer is not English. The gospels are written in the Greek of the day and the spoken language which Jesus used is likely to have been Aramaic.

So immediately this faces us with issues of translation. And although translators of the Bible try of course to be accurate they are nevertheless faced with responding to the nuances of words both in the original language

and in the language into which they translate. So there is in translation inevitably an element of interpretation.

And over time knowledge of the original language can also develop. Take, for instance, the Greek word *peirasmos*. Older translations tend to use the word 'temptation' as a translation. More modern ones often use the phrase 'time of trial'. There is a distinct difference in meaning between the two but both translations can be justified from specialist dictionaries and examination of parallel texts.

Other differences can more simply be explained by the development of the English language itself. For instance, 'thy' is no longer in everyday use as a singular personal possessive pronoun and so 'your' is a more natural contemporary translation.

But interesting though all this may be perhaps in the final analysis we should not worry too much about these differences. The powerful essence of the Lord's Prayer will emerge whatever version we use while the differences in wording of the various English versions are, by comparison, relatively unimportant.

Tristram

Hymn Suggestion

A hymn which celebrates the fatherhood of God is 'Eternal Father, strong to save'. A modern chorus on the same theme is 'Father God I wonder how I managed to exist.'

Points for Prayers

- For our spiritual growth and discipleship as we respond to the good news of Jesus Christ

- For Camelot churches in responding to the reopening for private prayer and especially for South Cadbury and Compton Pauncefoot in their time of private prayer today
- Thanksgiving for care, skill and courage of NHS workers and those in care homes
- Those suffering from coronavirus in hospitals, care homes and at home
- Need for further largescale testing
- Prayers for parents, teachers, governors and children of North Cadbury Church of England Primary School as the school is partially reopened, for the school to be a place of both joy and safety
- Funerals needing to take place under new restrictions with only family mourners
- Prayers for those affected economically by the lockdown, for businesses and those who have become unemployed
- Prayers and thanksgiving for contributions to the foodbanks and for those helping to take these to the foodbanks.

Diocesan weekly livestreamed services and reflections

Bishop Peter and Bishop Ruth will be livestreaming a mid-week Eucharist each week and offering recorded reflections each Sunday.

For further details please see the Diocesan website.

Church of England Daily Hopeline

The Archbishop of Canterbury has launched a new telephone service, 'Daily Hopeline'. If you ring the free number 0800 804 8044 you can hear a

recorded message and can also listen to well-known hymns along with prayers and a reflection based on a hymn.

Premier Radio

Available from Premier Radio (DAB radio and channel 725 via Freeview TV) Sunday morning of sacred music, songs and teaching etc, 7.00am-12.00 noon. Includes 'Hearts and Hymns' by Pam Rhodes, 8.00 to 10.00am with great variety of hymns and accompanying information.

Bible studies on weekday mornings.

Some other streamed resources

Here are a selection of some streamed resources available online which you may find helpful:-

- The Royal School of Church Music website provides a Hymn of the Day and Sunday Self-Service with music, readings and prayers.
- The Prayer Book Society has details of online streaming of BCP services.

An inclusive Communion celebrated on behalf of the benefice

Ron and Pam will be celebrating Communion regularly in their home each Sunday at 10.00am. Please be aware of this because even though no-one can join them they are praying for us all and hope that you will feel included in this act of Communion.

Growing as a worshipper, a servant and a family

*We pray that 'we might live in love,
as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us'*

(Ephesians 5:2)