

CUTTING EDGE CAMELOT, No 39

Sunday 19th July 2020

'Virtually Church but with some way to go...'

Welcome

Welcome to this Sunday's edition of Cutting Edge Camelot. Anna continues our series on the Lord's Prayer by reflecting on our need to forgive and be forgiven.

Scripture Passages

Matthew 6.9-13

"Pray then in this way:

Our Father in heaven,

hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come.

Your will be done,

on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts,

as we also have forgiven our debtors.

And do not bring us to the time of trial,

but rescue us from the evil one.

For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

Luke 11.2-4

He said to them, "When you pray, say:

Father, hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come.
Give us each day our daily bread.
And forgive us our sins,
for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us.
And do not bring us to the time of trial.”

Reflection

‘Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us...’

I remember a wedding at which the minister began his sermon by asking, “Who knows the three most important words in a marriage?” I sat there thinking, *Obviously, it’s “I love you”*. But, after a pause, the minister said, “I am sorry”. He went on to talk about the importance of being able to admit to being wrong and asking for forgiveness. Today we are thinking about Jesus’ words about forgiveness within the Lord’s Prayer: *‘Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us...’*

The first phrase – *forgive us our sins* – only makes sense if we start off by acknowledging that we have done things that need forgiving. It is interesting to consider the different words that are used to talk about what it is we are being forgiven for; ‘debts’, ‘trespasses’ and ‘sins’ are all referred to and each conjures up a slightly different idea. When we think of debt, the first thing that may come to mind is owing someone money. Trespasses, by contrast, may make us think of being somewhere we shouldn’t be, perhaps on someone else’s property or behind one of those signs that say ‘Private’. And the word ‘sin’ is used in both religious and non-religious contexts; in religious contexts, it is seen as something that goes against a God-given



command, and in wider culture, it is commonly used to refer to anything immoral, selfish, or harmful.

One of the prayers of penitence, which is sometimes used as part of worship, says the following:

God of mercy,
we acknowledge that we are all sinners.
We turn from the wrong that we have thought and said and done,
and are mindful of all that we have failed to do.
For the sake of Jesus, who died for us,
forgive us for all that is past,
and help us to live each day
in the light of Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Here there is a recognition that we may wish to ask for forgiveness for our thoughts, or speech or our actions, and maybe also for those times when perhaps we weren't quite courageous enough to do the right thing and instead did nothing. But there is also a recognition that through the forgiveness of God, those things are past and we can embrace the freedom of living 'in the light of Christ our Lord'.

As people who have been assured of our own forgiveness, we then pray: '*...as we forgive those who sin against us*'. This is why in Matthew's gospel, the Lord's Prayer is followed with the words: "For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses". Later in Matthew's gospel, Jesus tells the parable of an unmerciful servant, who despite being let off paying a huge debt to his master, then refuses to be merciful to someone who owes him money. The servant's master is unsurprisingly furious and has the servant thrown in jail until he can pay back the original debt he owed (Matthew 28.21-35). As people who have been forgiven, we must become forgiving people. If we are unwilling to

forgive others, have we really understood our own need for forgiveness and accepted the gift of God's forgiveness? We forgive because God first forgave us.

This isn't to say that forgiving others is easy, or that it is always easy to accept God's forgiveness ourselves. We can sometimes find it exceptionally hard to forgive ourselves for something we have done, just as it can be exceptionally hard to forgive someone else for something they have done or have failed to do. When I have found it hard to forgive someone for something, I have found it helpful to pray for that person; it is difficult to remain angry or upset with someone who you regularly pray for! Of course, in some situations, where serious hurt has been caused or harm done, and where the other person has not recognised their wrongdoing, it can be hugely costly to forgive them, and may take considerable time and space to do so.

It may be there is something you want God's forgiveness for. You might find it helpful to sit with your hands closed, as if you are holding that thing, taking time to reflect on it, and then, when you feel ready, open up your hands, as a physical representation of your letting go and receiving God's forgiveness. And if there is someone who you want to be able to forgive, you could spend some time asking God to help you forgive them and praying for that person.

It seems appropriate to end with these words of absolution:

May the God of love
bring us back to himself,
forgive us our sins,
and assure us of his eternal love
in Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Anna

Hymn Suggestion

A well-known hymn which focusses on God's forgiveness is 'Dear Lord and Father of mankind, forgive our foolish ways.'

Points for Prayers

- For our spiritual growth and discipleship as we respond to the good news of Jesus Christ, for our capacity to receive forgiveness from God and to forgive others
- For Camelot churches in responding to the reopening for private prayer and public worship
- 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 and research into and development of a vaccine as soon as this can be achieved
- 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.

Public worship in the Camelot churches following the easing of lockdown

This Sunday we have our first service of public worship following the easing of lockdown. This is a Communion service at 9.30am at St Mary's Compton Pauncefoot. I am afraid, however, that because of the significant limitations on the capacity of the church due to social distancing - these also apply to all the other Camelot churches - this cannot be a benefice service. Rather it will be focussed on those who have regularly attended this service in the

past, mainly those who are resident in Compton Pauncefoot and Blackford. Further details on this service are available from the Church Treasurer Tony Beadles, tonybeadles@me.com.

Various other PCCs across the Camelot Group are actively engaged in planning for reopening for public worship and further details on this will be given as and when such plans become firm and settled. We hope within the next week to provide a schedule of services for August.

Reopening churches for private prayer

Permission was given for the reopening of churches for private prayer. This permission was coupled with the need to complete a Risk Assessment and to meet some fairly rigorous standards for instance in relation to cleaning, hygiene and social distancing. Not all of the Camelot churches have the resources at present to comply with these standards, especially the need for regular and thorough cleaning.

However, a number of churches across the Group are now open for private prayer as follows:-

Sunday morning

Compton Pauncefoot open from 9.30am to 10.30am.

South Cadbury open from 10.00am to 12 noon

North Cadbury open from 10.30 am to 12 noon

Monday afternoon

Galhampton open from 4.00pm to 5.00pm

Wednesday afternoon

North Cadbury, open from 2.30pm to 4.00pm

Friday morning

Galhampton open from 10 am to 11 am

Excalibur and the Parish Office

Because of concerns relating to the hand delivery of parish magazines and also the relative lack of available content an electronic rather than a printed version of Excalibur will be produced during the period of the restrictions. This will be available on the website, www.camelotparishes.co.uk, and will include Camelot People giving details of occasional offices in the benefice (this for the moment is confined to funerals during the suspension of both weddings and baptisms). The July Excalibur is now online and can be downloaded from the homepage of the website.

The Parish Office is now closed. Please contact Rob via email (office@camelotparishes.org.uk) or on 01749 850934.

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, 7am-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)