

CUTTING EDGE CAMELOT, No 62

Wednesday 21st October 2020

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

Welcome

Welcome to this midweek edition of Cutting Edge Camelot. Continuing our midweek series on James, George reflects below on our need for perseverance.

Scripture Passage

James 5: 7-11

Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near.

Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

Indeed we call blessed those who showed endurance. You have heard of the endurance of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.

Reflection

Jesus' followers expected him to return, in glory and in judgment, very soon - almost 'any day now'. When James wrote his epistle, more than 30 years had elapsed. Nero was emperor. The Church was being persecuted. And

still Jesus had not returned in glory. James encourages them to be patient and to persevere. 'Think of the farmer', he says, 'who has to wait patiently for his crops to grow. Think of Job, who in all his suffering persevered in his loyalty to God.'

Christians in many parts of our world are suffering persecution today. Many persevere in their loyalty to God at risk to their lives. We in this country are spared persecution of that kind, but there is plenty to discourage us. Many have largely given up on their Christian faith. Many have never known much, if anything, about it. Militant atheists insist that mankind has come of age and has no need of religion. The Church can look as though it is fighting a losing battle, an institution that has had its day and is slowly dying.

If the Church was just another human institution, it might indeed seem that its days must be numbered. But the Church is not a human institution. It is Christ's body on earth. The icon or logo that symbolises it shows a naked man nailed helpless to a cross, his body broken, his life ebbing away. We should not be surprised if the Church sometimes looks a bit like that. We should be uneasy when it looks a bit too prosperous, too triumphant.

So James tells us, as he told the Christians of his own day, to be patient. Don't give up. Persevere. And if we were to say, "OK. But persevere in what?" here are four things of which he might approve.

Persevere in believing and trusting in God. God is much more than our limited human minds can take in. His thoughts and ways are far above ours. There is much in our faith, as there is in our world, that we don't fully understand. But God has shown himself to us, in the person of Jesus, as a God who loves each one of us with a limitless, unconditional love, who does things we would never have thought of, and who brings good out of evil. So, in faith, we can believe and trust with a joyful confidence.

Persevere in the good works that show the reality of our faith. Love our neighbour, and especially those in need. In our country today, they include the hungry who rely on food banks (support them), and increasingly the lonely who long for the company of other people (visit them, ring them up, have a chat).

Persevere in the life and witness of the Church. Join in Church services and other activities. Among all the many reasons for doing so, in that way we bear witness to the Gospel and support and encourage others to a far greater extent than we may ever know.

Persevere in prayer: not just in saying prayers, although that is part of it, but in prayer as an attending to God in a silence that leads to a conversation without words. This is not easy, but is the most important of the four. For prayer is the principal way in which we come to know God as the person closest to us. Through prayer we gain the strength and guidance we need if we are to persevere in all the other ways.

George

Points for Prayers

- For our spiritual growth and discipleship as we respond to the good news of Jesus Christ and for perseverance in prayer and other ways
- For further services in the Group this month and particularly for Harvest services
- For Anna's ordination as priest (please see below)
- 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
- Preparations to avert or minimise a second wave of coronavirus
- Our Bishops (please see notice below)
- For North Cadbury Church Primary School and Marchant Holliday school in our benefice remembering also Horsington school as they proceed with their new school year
- 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.

Forthcoming services of public worship

Please see the following schedule of forthcoming services of public worship. This does not include all of the monthly services across the Group held pre-lockdown. So if a service in the Group which you regularly attended is not included in the schedule you are of course most welcome to attend any other service within the Group. However, because of the limitations on capacity in the various churches through the need for social distancing it would be appreciated if you could in these circumstances let the relevant churchwarden know in advance of your intention to do this.

Any further additions to this schedule will be notified as and when they arise.

Sunday 25th October (clocks go back)

8.00 am, St Michael's Blackford, Communion (Anna will preside)

9.30 am, St John the Baptist North Cheriton, Communion

9.30 am, St Mary's Compton Pauncefoot, Matins

11.00 am, St Michael's North Cadbury, Communion (Anna will preside)

11.00 am, St Mary's Yarlington, Sunday Worship

11.00 am, St Thomas a Becket South Cadbury, Harvest Service

3.00 pm, St Nicholas Bratton Seymour, Harvest Service

4.00 pm, Galhampton, Evening Service

Sunday 1st November

9.00 am, St Mary's Yarlington, Communion (Anna will preside)

9.30 am, St John the Baptist North Cheriton, Camelot Morning Worship

11.00 am, St Michael's North Cadbury, Group Communion

4.00 pm, St Michael's North Cadbury, All Souls Service (see below)

All Saints and All Souls Service

This year our Benefice All Saints and All Souls Service will be held at 4.00 pm at St Michael's, North Cadbury on Sunday 1st November. The service is a chance to remember and to give thanks for those people whom we have loved who have passed away.

During the service, there will be an opportunity to light a candle and place it on the altar as an act of remembrance. If you are unable to attend the service, but would like a loved one remembered at the service, please let Anna know the name(s) of the individual(s) you would like remembered, so that a candle can be lit and their name placed on the altar. Anna can be contacted at curate@camelotparishes.org.uk or on 441160, please let her know by Sunday 25th October.

St Nicholas Bratton Seymour

A Risk Assessment for St Nicholas Bratton Seymour has now been completed and the first service to be held there following lockdown will be the Harvest Service on 25th October at 3 pm. This means that all the Camelot churches will then have returned to public worship following lockdown.

Reopening churches for private prayer

North Cadbury and Galhampton churches are normally open for private prayer on Wednesday afternoons. North Cadbury is open from 2.30 pm to 4.00 pm and Galhampton from 4.00 pm to 5.00 pm followed by Celtic Worship led by Alison at 7.00 pm.

Please note that Galhampton church will not be available for private prayer after the clocks change so Wednesday 21st October will be the last session.

Update on Bishop Peter

Bishop Peter thanks everyone for all the cards and other expressions of support which he has received. A card was sent to him on behalf of the Camelot Parishes as a whole. He says that he has been lifted on 'eagle's wings' through the love and prayers of others and he thinks that the treatment for leukaemia is going well. He is grateful that potential donors for a bone marrow transplant have been identified and he is preparing for such a transplant later this year. Please continue to pray for him and his family in this challenging time. Please pray also for Bishop Ruth and the rest of the Bishop's Staff as they take on the oversight of the diocese in his absence.

Anna's ordination as priest

Congratulations to our curate Anna who was ordained as priest on Tuesday 29th September at St Cuthbert's Wells by Bishop Ruth.

Anna presided at Communion for the first time at 11.00 am on Sunday 4th October at St Michael's North Cadbury. We know that there will be others of you who will wish to support Anna in her new role. So, the rota will enable Anna to preside at Communions in as many of the Camelot churches as possible in the month following her priesting.

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)