

CUTTING EDGE CAMELOT, No 67

Remembrance Sunday 8th November 2020

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

Welcome

Welcome to this Remembrance Sunday edition of Cutting Edge Camelot. Anna reflects below on what it means to abide in Jesus’ love.

Scripture Passage

John 15.9-17

“As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.”

Reflection

“As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love.” I find these words from Jesus deeply comforting, especially the phrase “abide in my love”. We don’t use the word ‘abide’ that often in daily life, but it means

to remain, to continue, to stay, to dwell... How amazing to be invited to dwell in the love of Jesus.

This Remembrance Sunday, the only services possible are small, short and simple Acts of Remembrance, taking place all over the country, to remember the sacrifice of those who have lost their lives in wars and conflicts. Many of these Acts of Remembrance might include the following Prayer of Commemoration:

Almighty and eternal God,
from whose love in Christ we cannot be parted,
either by death or life:
hear our prayers and thanksgivings
for all whom we remember this day;
fulfil in them the purpose of your love;
and bring us all, with them, to your eternal joy;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

This prayer is a reminder that the love of Jesus is a love from which even death cannot separate us; those who we remember this day continue to abide in the love of Jesus. But equally, those who do the remembering, who have lost loved ones, are also invited to abide in the love of Jesus.

We are not just invited to experience this love ourselves, but to share this love with others: "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends." Jesus laid down his life for us – his friends – and challenges us to do the same. For most of us, this probably doesn't mean signing up to fight for our country; I believe it's more about the daily sacrifices we make as we learn to put others first, as we try to love others as Jesus loves us.

This year, many, many people have made huge sacrifices in order to 'Save Lives', as the Government slogan put it. Grandparents have missed out on seeing or even meeting their grandchildren. Business owners have lost their income. People haven't been able to attend the funeral of a loved one. And at the same time, those who work in supermarkets, schools, hospitals and care homes have continued in their work, despite the risks to themselves and their families, so that we can have food, children can be educated, and health and social care can be provided. Of course, the restrictions have been imposed upon us, so we may not consider these sacrifices a choice, but nevertheless, many have made sacrifices in order to protect others. Might we consider this an example of seeking to love others as Jesus loves us?

As I was reflecting on this passage, and Jesus' words, "abide in my love", I was reminded of the words of the hymn 'Abide with me', which is often sung at Remembrance Sunday services. The words of the first verse are:

Abide with me; fast falls the eventide;
the darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide.
When other helpers fail, and comforts flee,
help of the helpless, O abide with me.

This hymn, written by Henry Francis Lyte, reflects a deep desire to know the loving, comforting presence of Jesus, especially in times of darkness when we feel helpless and don't know where to turn. No doubt many soldiers have experienced this feeling, as have millions of others over these last months. But we can find reassurance in Jesus' words: "As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love."

So as we remember the ultimate sacrifice made by so many in the tragic wars and conflicts of previous years, we also remember and give thanks for the lesser sacrifices made by so many during this difficult time. And as we enter a second lockdown, may we know that whatever circumstances we find ourselves in, we continue to abide in the love of Jesus. Perhaps you

might like to pray the Prayer of Commemoration as your own Act of Remembrance, and as a reminder of Jesus' abiding love for you.

Almighty and eternal God,
from whose love in Christ we cannot be parted,
either by death or life:
hear our prayers and thanksgivings
for all whom we remember this day;
fulfil in them the purpose of your love;
and bring us all, with them, to your eternal joy;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Anna

Hymn Suggestion

Anna has mentioned 'Abide with me' in her reflection above. Another hymn which is very often sung on Remembrance Sunday is 'O God our help in ages past'.

Points for Prayers

- For the different ways in which we will mark Remembrance Sunday across the Camelot Group and across the nation
- Thanksgiving for the sacrifices made by so many during the Second World War and other conflicts
- For all those serving in the armed forces, their families and friends
- For peacemakers and peacekeepers
- 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
- Minimising the second wave of coronavirus through the new lockdown
- Communications within the Camelot Group and its churches during the new lockdown (please see notice below)
- 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.

Guidance on new lockdown

The basic guidance is contained on the government website which states that places of worship must close during the new lockdown ‘apart from for the purposes of independent prayer, for funerals or funeral commemorative events, to broadcast an act of worship, to provide essential voluntary services or urgent public support services, for registered childcare, and to host permitted gatherings.’

Remembrance Sunday

Specific guidance concerning Remembrance Sunday has been given by both the church and the government. Although no services inside churches are possible, it is possible to hold services outdoors subject to social distancing and a risk assessment. Such services are to be short and focussed on wreath laying. So far as possible numbers are to be kept to a minimum with members and veterans of the armed forces being the principal participants.

As stated above individual prayer in church is also possible. If you wish to know more about arrangements in your own village please contact the relevant churchwardens. For more detail on the guidance follow the weblinks below:-

<https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-churches#na>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-authority-preparations-for-remembrance-sunday/local-authority-preparations-for-remembrance-sunday>

Communications during lockdown

Many thanks to everyone who responded with positive and helpful comments to my notice about broadcasting of acts of worship from the church and the separate note prepared by Anna. This helped me to gather my thoughts together on the general subject of communications during lockdown. These are now shared by video available on Vimeo, a video sharing platform. Please click on the link given in the covering email in order to be able to watch the video.

The strategy outlined is (a) to explore further the possibilities of sharing videos through Vimeo (b) to encourage locally facilitated Zoom groups where there is a willing co-ordinator (c) to encourage use of the permission for private prayer in churches on a risk assessed basis during the new lockdown (d) to continue with the distribution of Cutting Edge Camelot on a biweekly basis.

An inclusive Communion celebrated on behalf of the benefice

During the second lockdown as in the first Ron and Pam will be celebrating Communion regularly in their home each Sunday at 10.00 am. 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.

Private prayer

North Cadbury church continues to be open for private prayer on Wednesday afternoons from 2.30 pm to 4.00 pm.

The Parish Office

The Parish Office is closed although Rob does come in regularly. In his absence please contact Rob via email (office@camelotparishes.org.uk) or on 01749 850934.

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.

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)