

CUTTING EDGE CAMELOT, No 104

Sunday 11th April 2021

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

Welcome

Welcome to this edition of Cutting Edge Camelot. As well as our normal Sunday reading and reflection we include notices and information relating to the death of HRH Prince Philip.

Death of HRH Prince Philip

We are saddened to hear of the death of HRH Prince Philip and our thoughts and prayers are with the Queen and the Royal Family especially at this time. Bishop Peter has given the following public announcement on behalf of the Diocese:-

'On behalf of the Diocese of Bath and Wells and the people of Somerset, Bishop Ruth and I would like to express our sorrow at the news of the death of HRH the Duke of Edinburgh.

Prince Philip was greatly respected, and well known and loved for his wide range of interests. He had an immense dedication to public service and he approached everyone he met and every duty he engaged in with cheerfulness and good humour.

On the few occasions I have been fortunate to meet him I was impressed by his depth and breadth of knowledge on a huge range of subjects, and his commitment to duty. We thank God today for his long life and his dedicated service.

His loss will of course be felt most heavily by Her Majesty the Queen and his family and we remember them in our prayers today and in the coming days and weeks.'

A special prayer for Prince Philip is included in this edition as well as a notice of special times of private prayer this morning at St Michael's North Cadbury and St Mary's Compton Pauncefoot.

Scripture Passage

John 20: 19-31

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." ²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord.

²¹ Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." ²² When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

²⁴ But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵ So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

²⁶ A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." ²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe."

²⁸ Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!”

²⁹ Jesus said to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.”

³⁰ Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. ³¹ But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

Reflection

We have the story of Thomas, famously Doubting Thomas. Ten of Jesus’ friends saw their Lord alive after the Sunday morning - in a sense, they didn’t *need* belief, or faith - they had it rather thrust upon them. But Thomas wasn’t there, so he only had their word to go on. Maybe he was also a pessimist - Jesus being alive was too good to be true, so he couldn’t accept it. How well did he know his friends? Well enough to know they wouldn’t pull his leg? What would convince him if ten sincere friends couldn’t?

When Jesus set his face towards Jerusalem, Peter tried to talk him out of it. Jesus replied that he had to go - dying was what he’d come into the world to do. And it was Thomas who said “Ok- we’ll go with you, and die too.” So Thomas was pessimistic. Pessimistic, but brave.

So does our personal belief in the resurrection of Jesus depend on our outlook on life generally? I think I can say that one reason I believe in the Easter miracle is that I *want it to be true*. I want there to be life after this one, so when I hear the story of Jesus coming back from the dead and promising that I too will survive the death of my physical body, I want that to be true, so I believe it. And that belief has changed my life.

One of my best friends is an actual atheist. She doesn't believe there is a God, and she doesn't believe in any form of life after death. We've never really discussed it at length, but her outlook on life is of love, and service, and doing whatever good she can. Her life is ruled by goodness and kindness, not because she looks beyond it for any reward, but because she believes this is all there is.

It's commonly said that the worst that can happen is death. What my belief has given me is the confidence that the worst is not death, and that death itself is not to be feared. Jesus said, "If a man trusts me, he will not taste death". That means, if we trust Jesus, we won't *notice* death. I find that very encouraging, and I want it to be true.

Thomas surely wanted it to be true, that his friend Jesus wasn't dead. But he still found it hard to actually accept. He turned to another possibility - that the person his friends had met wasn't really Jesus. Which is why he said he'd need to see the nail holes, and the spear wound, to rule out that possibility.

And when he did see Jesus, he was convinced, and more - he made the great leap of faith from Jesus being alive, to Jesus being God. He knelt at Jesus' feet, saying, "My Lord and my God!" That's an amazing thing for a Jewish person to say - worshipping anything other than God would be blasphemy. So did Jesus tell him off? Not at all. He accepted what Thomas said.

Jesus said, "You believe because you've seen me - blessed are those who haven't seen me, but believe." That's me! And you! We're blessed! Alleluia!

Ron

Points for Prayers

- Christian teaching on death, Resurrection and what we can learn from Thomas
- The Queen and the Royal Family following the death of Prince Philip
- Thanksgiving for care, skill and courage of NHS workers and those in care homes and prayers for those suffering from coronavirus in hospitals, care homes and at home
- Wisdom and sensitivity to others as the lockdown restrictions continue to ease
- For North Cadbury Church Primary School and other local schools in their preparations for next term
- Prayers for those who are lonely or housebound and for those who may be doing all right but who are really missing everyday social interaction in shops, the street or over the garden fence
- 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.
- Those facing illnesses of all kinds and those whom we know who have recently been bereaved.

A special prayer for Prince Philip

God of our lives,
we give thanks for the life of Prince Philip,
for his love of our country,
and for his devotion to duty.
We entrust him now to your love and mercy,
through our Redeemer Jesus Christ. Amen.

Private Prayer following the death of HRH Prince Philip

St Mary's Compton Pauncefoot will be open for private prayer today Sunday 11th April from 9.30 am to 10.30 am. Some prayers suitable for the occasion will be printed and available.

St Michael's North Cadbury will be open for private prayer and reflection today Sunday 11th April from 11 am to 1.00 pm. Set prayers will be led by Tristram at 11.30 am, 12 noon and 12.30 pm.

Hymn

One hymn often used on this Sunday and which relates to the end of Ron's message is 'Alleluia, sing to Jesus'.

Congregational Singing

Congregational singing is now permitted for those services which are taking place outdoors in the churchyard. However, the position remains unchanged for services inside the church. Here congregational singing is not permitted.

The rule on outdoor gatherings has been relaxed in order to allow groups of up to six people to meet outside. The rule on not socialising inside church buildings remains unchanged.

Services in April

Services arranged to date are:-

Sunday 11 th April	9.30 am Communion, Galhampton
Sunday 18 th April	9.30 am Communion, Compton Pauncefoot
Sunday 18 th April	11 am Sunday Worship, North Cadbury
Sunday 25 th April	6.30 pm Evening Service, Galhampton

Please note that North Cadbury and Galhampton are holding joint services for the time being.

Excalibur

The April edition of Excalibur is now online at camelotparishes.co.uk

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.

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)