

# CUTTING EDGE CAMELOT, No 115

Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> June 2021

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

## Welcome

Welcome to this Sunday’s edition of Cutting Edge Camelot. Below I reflect on two passages which in their different ways speak about the immensity of God’s compassion and how we can share in this.

## Scripture Passages

*Lamentations 3: 22-33*

<sup>22</sup> The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases,  
his mercies never come to an end;

<sup>23</sup> they are new every morning;  
great is your faithfulness.

<sup>24</sup> “The LORD is my portion,” says my soul,  
“therefore I will hope in him.”

<sup>25</sup> The LORD is good to those who wait for him,  
to the soul that seeks him.

<sup>26</sup> It is good that one should wait quietly  
for the salvation of the LORD.

<sup>27</sup> It is good for one to bear the yoke in youth,

<sup>28</sup> to sit alone in silence when the Lord has imposed it,

<sup>29</sup> to put one’s mouth to the dust (there may yet be hope),

<sup>30</sup> to give one’s cheek to the smiter, and be filled with insults.

<sup>31</sup> For the Lord will not reject forever.

<sup>32</sup> Although he causes grief, he will have compassion  
according to the abundance of his steadfast love;

<sup>33</sup> for he does not willingly afflict or grieve anyone.

*Mark 5: 21-43*

When Jesus had crossed again in the boat to the other side, a great crowd gathered around him; and he was by the sea. <sup>22</sup> Then one of the leaders of the synagogue named Jairus came and, when he saw him, fell at his feet <sup>23</sup> and begged him repeatedly, “My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be made well, and live.” <sup>24</sup> So he went with him.

And a large crowd followed him and pressed in on him. <sup>25</sup> Now there was a woman who had been suffering from haemorrhages for twelve years. <sup>26</sup> She had endured much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had; and she was no better, but rather grew worse. <sup>27</sup> She had heard about Jesus, and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, <sup>28</sup> for she said, “If I but touch his clothes, I will be made well.” <sup>29</sup> Immediately her haemorrhage stopped; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease. <sup>30</sup> Immediately aware that power had gone forth from him, Jesus turned about in the crowd and said, “Who touched my clothes?” <sup>31</sup> And his disciples said to him, “You see the crowd pressing in on you; how can you say, ‘Who touched me?’” <sup>32</sup> He looked all around to see who had done it. <sup>33</sup> But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling, fell down before him, and told him the whole truth. <sup>34</sup> He said to her, “Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease.”

<sup>35</sup> While he was still speaking, some people came from the leader’s house to say, “Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the teacher any further?” <sup>36</sup> But overhearing what they said, Jesus said to the leader of the synagogue, “Do not fear, only believe.” <sup>37</sup> He allowed no one to follow him except Peter, James, and John, the brother of James. <sup>38</sup> When they came to the house of the leader of the synagogue, he saw a commotion, people weeping and wailing loudly. <sup>39</sup> When he had entered, he said to them, “Why do you make a commotion and weep? The child is not dead but sleeping.” <sup>40</sup> And they

laughed at him. Then he put them all outside, and took the child's father and mother and those who were with him, and went in where the child was.<sup>41</sup> He took her by the hand and said to her, "Talitha cum," which means, "Little girl, get up!"<sup>42</sup> And immediately the girl got up and began to walk about (she was twelve years of age). At this they were overcome with amazement.<sup>43</sup> He strictly ordered them that no one should know this, and told them to give her something to eat.

## Reflection

God's compassion is immeasurable. Our Old Testament passage is from the book of Lamentations. It is a book written after the sack of Jerusalem, a devastating and terrible event which caused untold suffering.

How important it is therefore in this context that we are assured of the infinite nature of God's love, compassion and mercy in these famous words,  
*<sup>22</sup> The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases, his mercies never come to an end;*

And for those in great need and suffering there is a call to patience, trust and endurance,

*<sup>25</sup> The LORD is good to those who wait for him, to the soul that seeks him.*

*<sup>26</sup> It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD.*

And once more we are assured of God's unfailing love, compassion and mercy,

*he will have compassion according to the abundance of his steadfast love;*

And we need to remember the immensity of God's compassion because often in our lives we can feel as if we are surrounded by a sea of suffering, an overwhelming experience in which we find ourselves in danger of drowning. No matter where we look we find another face, another cause calling us.

This can happen, of course, simply when we turn on the television and are presented with pictures of one disaster after another. And in the time of this pandemic this has particularly been the case where there have been so many different facets to the suffering caused.

But there are also times nearer to home in the immediate circle of our friends, family and work where we feel we are being pulled in different directions by different demands and needs that are placed upon us.

Perhaps it is comforting therefore to know that Jesus in His ministry and His disciples were also at many times surrounded by just such a sea of suffering and also found themselves pulled in different directions by the immense number and variety of needs that they saw.

In our gospel passage today Jesus is once more surrounded by great crowds and the pressure that they bring. In the boat crossing the Sea of Galilee there was some brief respite from these crowds but immediately they got to the other side the crowds are again there.

And though Jesus is God in human form, in His earthly ministry He was like the rest of us limited by the demands and constraints of the human body. He could not be in two places at once just as we cannot. And so, just as when we are presented with different needs and demands, Jesus had to make priorities and choose.

So out of this vast crowd with its sea of unknown suffering and needs, our focus rests first on the needs of just one person Jairus, a leader of the synagogue. He steps out in front of Jesus and falls at His feet. And Jairus' needs are indeed acute.

Jairus is desperate and begs for Jesus' attention and ministry. His daughter is on the point of death. But Jairus has faith in Jesus. He is convinced that

if only Jesus will come with him and lay hands on his daughter healing will follow.

And Jesus responds with compassion to the immediate needs of the moment. He goes with Jairus. And yet the pressure of the crowd does not let up as they also follow.

Who knows what variety and depth of human need and suffering could be found in the crowd that day? Almost inevitably Jesus is presented with another and very different call upon His ministry.

A woman suffering from haemorrhages who has been unable to find healing through the normal medical channels has heard about Jesus and what He is able to do. Though she has an extraordinary degree of faith in Jesus assuring herself that *“If I but touch his clothes, I will be made well”*, she wishes to remain anonymous. She is afraid to step outside the comforting obscurity of the crowd. So from behind she just touches Jesus’ cloak. The healing comes instantaneously and the woman is able to feel that the healing which she has sought over such a long time has been given effectively and powerfully.

Jesus then faces another question about His priorities. It is seemingly impossible to identify who has touched Him? And does it matter or is it simply a waste of time trying to find out?

But Jesus nevertheless looks around to see who has touched Him. The disciples, on the other hand, think that it is both unimportant and impossible to identify this person. They say, *“You see the crowd pressing in on you; how can you say, ‘Who touched me?’”*

The disciples then have a very clear sense of what the priorities should be and how Jesus’ time should be managed. We might be tempted to agree with them and see the logic of their argument.

And yet God's priorities are not necessarily our priorities. Jesus takes no notice of the disciples. He simply persists in His search.

And eventually the woman is drawn out. Just like the leader of the synagogue she throws herself at Jesus' feet. She is entirely at His mercy and she tells Him the whole truth.

And having heard her story, Jesus commends the woman for her faith. We might wonder why if the woman has already been healed Jesus needs to go further and say that her faith has made her well. His choice of words is interesting. What is translated in English as being made well is, in the Greek, the same word that is used for being saved or salvation. So in fact Jesus is saying much more than that the woman has been physically healed. She has also experienced emotional and spiritual healing. She is well or whole in the fullest sense. This is the reason why Jesus spends time and energy drawing this unknown person out into the open and enabling her to tell her story of faith in public.

And then it seems that Jesus' priority in this shifting sea of human needs changes again. Jesus' mission towards the woman suffering from haemorrhages is complete. However, His journey to help Jairus and his daughter has been interrupted and in the meantime the daughter has died. Once again those around Jesus think that they know better how to order His priorities and organise His time than He does. But they do not understand either His mission or His powers. They think that Jesus is limited by death. But He is not. They try to persuade Jairus to stop bothering Jesus.

But once again Jesus takes no notice. God's priorities and ours are different. Jesus knows that His mission is not limited by death. Though some needs might seem impossible to meet, they are not to Jesus. He simply says to Jairus, do not fear, just believe. And then He makes good on

this promise by miraculously healing and raising his daughter from the dead.

So what can we take away from these passages? Surely our starting point needs to be simply to share in the immensity of the compassion of God and Jesus. But when we share this compassion how do we prevent ourselves from becoming overwhelmed by all the variety and number of needs that we are made aware of? It is so easy to suffer from 'compassion fatigue'.

And so we need to form a sense of priority and to remember that even Jesus could not be everywhere. In this we need to beware that sometimes as with the disciples and others our priorities may not be God's priorities.

Our gospel passage focusses on two very different people with very different needs but the rest of the crowd too had their own needs. How were they to be met?

Sometimes if we have no time or space to respond with action we say 'I'll pray about it.' This can be an empty cliché but it does not have to be. After all as we pray we are sharing in the immensity of God's compassion and trusting that He will do far more than we could ever understand or imagine.

*Tristram*

### **Points for Prayers**

- To share in the immensity of God's compassion and to be able to see God's priorities within the needs that surround us
- Continued thanksgiving for care, skill and courage of NHS workers and those in care homes demonstrated throughout the course of this pandemic
- For our forthcoming weddings and blessings at St Michael's North Cadbury today and on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> July

- Those whom we know who are facing illnesses of all kinds, those who have recently been bereaved and those suffering as a result of social isolation and in other ways
- Bishop Ruth and the rest of the Diocesan staff as they take on additional responsibility following Bishop Peter's retirement and plan for the future
- For North Cadbury Church Primary School and other local schools as they continue the 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.

## **Hymn**

A well-known hymn based on our passage from Lamentations and celebrating the immensity of God's compassion is 'Great is thy faithfulness.'

## **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.

## **Services for this week and next**

Sunday 27 <sup>th</sup> June	8.00 am Communion, Blackford
Sunday 27 <sup>th</sup> June	9.30 am Communion, South Cadbury
Sunday 27 <sup>th</sup> June	9.30 am Matins, Compton Pauncefoot
Sunday 27 <sup>th</sup> June	9.30 am Morning Worship, North Cheriton



Sunday 27 <sup>th</sup> June	11.00 am Communion, North Cadbury
Sunday 27 <sup>th</sup> June	11.00 am Open Air Sunday Worship, Yarlinton *
Sunday 27 <sup>th</sup> June	6.30 pm Evening Service, Galhampton
Sunday 4 <sup>th</sup> July	9.00 am Communion, Yarlinton
Sunday 4 <sup>th</sup> July	9.30 am Camelot Matins, North Cheriton
Sunday 4 <sup>th</sup> July	11.00 am Communion, North Cadbury

### **Yarlinton Open Air Service, Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> June \***

The Yarlinton Open Air Service on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> June will be followed by a picnic. Please bring your own picnic. Please bring a chair and a blanket as needed.

### **Excalibur**

Excalibur is back in paper form. It contains details of Camelot people, a record of baptisms, weddings and funerals undertaken through the church in the Camelot Parishes. Previous editions of Excalibur can be found online at [camelotparishes.co.uk](http://camelotparishes.co.uk)

### **The Parish Office**

If Rob is not in the Office during normal office hours please contact him via email ([office@camelotparishes.org.uk](mailto: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)