

# **CUTTING EDGE CAMELOT, No 195**

**Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2023**

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

## **Welcome**

Welcome to this Sunday’s Cutting Edge Camelot.

## **Scripture Passages**

*2 Peter 1: 16-21*

For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we had been eyewitnesses of his majesty. <sup>17</sup> For he received honour and glory from God the Father when that voice was conveyed to him by the Majestic Glory, saying, “This is my Son, my Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.”

<sup>18</sup> We ourselves heard this voice come from heaven, while we were with him on the holy mountain.

<sup>19</sup> So we have the prophetic message more fully confirmed. You will do well to be attentive to this as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. <sup>20</sup> First of all you must understand this, that no prophecy of scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation, <sup>21</sup> because no prophecy ever came by human will, but men and women moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

*Matthew 17: 1-9*

Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain, by themselves. <sup>2</sup> And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became dazzling white. <sup>3</sup> Suddenly there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him.

<sup>4</sup> Then Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here; if you wish, I will make three dwellings here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.”

<sup>5</sup> While he was still speaking, suddenly a bright cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud a voice said, “This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him!”

<sup>6</sup> When the disciples heard this, they fell to the ground and were overcome by fear. <sup>7</sup> But Jesus came and touched them, saying, “Get up and do not be afraid.” <sup>8</sup> And when they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus himself alone.

<sup>9</sup> As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus ordered them, “Tell no one about the vision until after the Son of Man has been raised from the dead.”

## **Reflection**

Have we ever been sworn to secrecy on an important matter? In the Second World War my mother was in a job which gave her advance notice of the preparations for D Day. Not surprisingly she was sworn to secrecy and countless numbers of lives depended on that secrecy being maintained.

But having said that isn't it tempting to give just a little hint of what we might know when we are asked direct questions about our secret? Even our late Queen who was famous for her ability to remain neutral and to keep her political opinions to herself counselled the Scottish people to think very carefully when casting their vote in the independence referendum. She wasn't, however, very pleased when others took this as a statement of where she stood on this issue.

And so Jesus' inner circle of disciples, Peter, James and John were sworn to secrecy about the experience that they had on the Mount of Transfiguration. As they came down the mountain, Jesus told them to speak to no-one about what they had seen until after the Resurrection. This was still some time off

and, in the meantime, I am sure that there must have been times when these three disciples longed to share details about the extraordinary vision which they had seen.

For they had been granted an intense and special spiritual experience in which the other disciples, close to Jesus though they were, had not been privileged to share. They had been taken away from the other disciples and led up a high mountain. There Jesus had been transfigured with his face shining like the sun and his clothes becoming dazzling white. And after that the prophets Moses and Elijah had appeared and had begun talking with Jesus.

It was a dramatic and extraordinary experience. Perhaps we too have had occasions in our lives where we have had a powerful and private spiritual experience which at the time has been simply too deep for us to share.

Recently, for instance, I met a person who had been pronounced clinically dead for a time during a major operation. Eventually she had been brought round. At a later time she asked to speak to me. She told me about this experience and said that in the period when she had been clinically dead she had been to paradise and seen God, Jesus and her family. So joyful was this experience that she had not wished to return. Clearly, however, there was still work for her to do on this earth.

And often there is a significant lapse of time before we find ourselves able to share such experiences with others. This time is important. In it we begin to process and understand more fully what has happened to us and we become able to put it in a wider context and to see its spiritual significance more clearly.

For at the time, Peter and the other disciples were really quite unclear about what this dramatic vision of Jesus in glory alongside Moses and Elijah meant. So, Peter feels he must respond in some way and offers to make

three shelters for Jesus, Moses and Elijah. It is unclear what he felt he was doing by this. But in any event, it was clearly not the appropriate response as he is promptly told by God's voice coming from a bright cloud to stop thinking of such ideas and instead recognise that Jesus is God's beloved Son and to listen to Him.

However, their experience was not one which the three disciples were intended to keep to themselves for all time. If that had been so we would never have known about it. Rather when the disciples had had time truly to recognise what their experience meant it was indeed to be shared.

But why the need for delay? Ahead of Jesus lay a road of rejection, misunderstanding and opposition which would eventually lead to His death on the Cross. It is that road which we will be travelling with Jesus during the season of Lent. And it is only after the Cross that Easter Sunday and the Resurrection can come.

In other words, suffering is inextricably bound up with the story of Jesus and indeed in Jesus we can find a meaning to suffering. Naturally, however, this is a truth that we might wish to shy away from. And so, if the disciples were simply to tell of the overwhelming glory of His presence that they experienced on the Mount of Transfiguration without linking this in to the wider story of Jesus' suffering, death and resurrection its significance could easily become distorted. And so, when we come to understanding our own discipleship we might, if that was all we knew about Jesus, be attracted by its potential glory and not necessarily be able to accept or understand the suffering that comes alongside this glory.

So when we share our spiritual experiences perhaps it is a question of timing.

On the one hand we can keep such private and intense spiritual experiences to ourselves reasoning that they have nothing to do with anyone else. And

we may be right in thinking this. However, it is also possible that God is asking us to share such experiences at an appropriate time and in an appropriate context and not to keep them to ourselves for ever.

On the other hand, however, it is possible that we rush to make public what we should have, for the time being, held on to and meditated upon privately.

If we look at Peter we find that at the time he actually accompanied Jesus up the Mount of Transfiguration he was not ready to share this experience with others. For he had yet to travel with Jesus the road of suffering, rejection, death and resurrection and because of this he could not appreciate the full significance of what it shows us about who Jesus truly is.

Later on, however, he is able to share his experience and indeed it becomes a key part of his proclamation of the gospel. In the letter written towards the end of his life, he speaks of the importance of himself and his fellow apostles being eyewitnesses of Jesus' majesty. And then he turns to his experience on the Mount of Transfiguration and speaks of hearing the voice from heaven declaring Jesus to be God's beloved Son. This was an understanding of who Jesus is that Peter brings to us from first hand and living experience and it is one which confirms the prophecies about Jesus which are given in scripture.

So is there something that we are dying to share with other people? We need first to ask ourselves whether it is wise to do so or whether it is the right time. Some things are better left unsaid at least for the time being.

On the other hand, we need to be careful that we are not holding back when we should say something. How many times have people been to a funeral and thought to themselves, I wish that this person could have heard what has been said in their lifetime what has been said about them on this occasion?

But regardless of whether or not now is the right time to share our secret, there is one secret which is now an open one and is undoubtedly to be shared with other people. For Jesus has now risen from the dead and so we are now to share that good news wherever and whenever the opportunity presents itself.

*Tristram*

## **Points for Prayers**

- Taking the opportunities to share the good news of Jesus Christ with others
- Victims of the Turkish earthquake and those who are helping to rescue them
- For those facing shortages of the essentials of life such as food or the means of heating
- Those seeking to help those facing hardship through projects such as the Lord's Larder and other foodbanks, community fridges and the provision of warm spaces
- Resolution to various industrial disputes
- Conflict between Russia and the Ukraine and those who are refugees from this conflict
- Those whom we know who are facing illnesses of all kinds and have recently been bereaved
- For Elliscombe House in Higher Holton and its residents
- For teachers, children and parents of North Cadbury church school

## **Hymn**

A hymn about Christ's glory is 'Christ, whose glory fills the skies.'

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

Sunday 19 <sup>th</sup> February	9.30 am Communion, Compton Pauncefoot
Sunday 19 <sup>th</sup> February	11.00 am Communion, Maperton
Sunday 19 <sup>th</sup> February	11.00 am Sunday Worship, North Cadbury
Sunday 19 <sup>th</sup> February	4.00 pm Evensong, Yarlington
Sunday 26 <sup>th</sup> February	8.00 am Communion, Blackford
Sunday 26 <sup>th</sup> February	9.30 am Communion, South Cadbury
Sunday 26 <sup>th</sup> February	9.30 am Matins, Compton Pauncefoot
Sunday 26 <sup>th</sup> February	9.30 am Morning Worship, North Cheriton
Sunday 26 <sup>th</sup> February	11.00 am Communion, North Cadbury
Sunday 26 <sup>th</sup> February	11.00 am Communion, Holton
Sunday 26 <sup>th</sup> February	11.00 am Sunday Worship, Yarlington
Sunday 26 <sup>th</sup> February	4.00 pm Evening Service, Galhampton

## **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. The February edition of Excalibur has now been published 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)