

# CUTTING EDGE CAMELOT, No 263

Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> July 2024

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

## Welcome

Welcome to Cutting Edge Camelot this Sunday.

## Scripture Passages

*Ezekiel 2: 1-5*

He said to me: O mortal, stand up on your feet, and I will speak with you.

<sup>2</sup> And when he spoke to me, a spirit entered into me and set me on my feet; and I heard him speaking to me.

<sup>3</sup> He said to me, Mortal, I am sending you to the people of Israel, to a nation of rebels who have rebelled against me; they and their ancestors have transgressed against me to this very day. <sup>4</sup> The descendants are impudent and stubborn. I am sending you to them, and you shall say to them, “Thus says the Lord GOD.” <sup>5</sup> Whether they hear or refuse to hear (for they are a rebellious house), they shall know that there has been a prophet among them.

*Mark 6: 1-13*

He left that place and came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him.

<sup>2</sup> On the sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astounded.

They said, “Where did this man get all this? What is this wisdom that has been given to him? What deeds of power are being done by his hands! <sup>3</sup> Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and

Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us?” And they took offense at him.

<sup>4</sup> Then Jesus said to them, “Prophets are not without honour, except in their hometown, and among their own kin, and in their own house.” <sup>5</sup> And he could do no deed of power there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and cured them. <sup>6</sup> And he was amazed at their unbelief.

Then he went about among the villages teaching. <sup>7</sup> He called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. <sup>8</sup> He ordered them to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts; <sup>9</sup> but to wear sandals and not to put on two tunics. <sup>10</sup> He said to them, “Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave the place. <sup>11</sup> If any place will not welcome you and they refuse to hear you, as you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them.”

<sup>12</sup> So they went out and proclaimed that all should repent. <sup>13</sup> They cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them.

## **Reflection**

Back in March, I was told that my permission to officiate - the authority I have from the Bishop to lead worship, had expired. It had expired exactly a year before, so everything I did in 2023 was, in some footling technical way, not allowed. All sorted now, but it does bring up the subject of Authority, Post-Tristram, we might have to rely on lay people to lead worship, and they will need authority.

At a time, and in a place when medicine was primitive to say the least, and there were more things you could die of than we have today, in our first world society, anyone who could heal was sure to be popular. Illness then meant no work, no pay, disability meant very likely you'd have to beg for a living, so Jesus the healer would always be sought out and surrounded by

people needing his help. And when word got around that he could, and sometimes did, bring dead people back to life, you know people got to think he was really special.

When I was learning to be a minister, preparing for ordination, the brief was fairly clear. I was to preach the Gospel, visit the people, comforting the bereaved, the unhappy, rejoicing with the fortunate, to celebrate the sacraments of Holy Communion, baptism and weddings, and when I became a vicar, there was a lot of admin, paperwork and organisation to do. All the business of running a group of parish churches. All within the scope of my abilities. And I was given a nice document with a big red seal on it to say I had authority from the bishop.

When Jesus sent out his twelve Apostles, their brief was a bit different. Preach the Gospel - check. But heal the sick? Exorcise demons? And in Matthew's telling of this story, Jesus told them to raise the dead. And that was before lunch. No money, no bag to carry food in, no change of clothes, and not even a stick to fight off a mad dog or a mugger. OK, their mission was just to their fellow-countrymen, not to the gentiles or Samaritans, but even so, that's a big ask. They were, effectively, wholly dependent on God. There was no back up, only Jesus' confidence that they were, whether they believed it or not, up to the job, otherwise he wouldn't have asked them. Jesus surely wouldn't have given his Apostles such a brief unless he had also given them the power to do it. He gave them authority.

There were more disciples by this time, but Jesus had chosen twelve to be Apostles - messengers. Some of them we don't know for sure any more than their names, but the church soon built up a body of legend about them, about their adventures after Jesus had left them, and especially about how they died, which was mostly violently. But that was way ahead. For now, just notice that included in the twelve is Judas, who was to betray Jesus, but for now, he's part of the group, and whatever disappointment or disillusionment later made him turn Jesus in, it hadn't happened yet.

The adventures of the twelve would have been a great book, but nobody wrote it. So we're not told what they did on their travels, whether they really healed lepers, or actually raised any dead people to life. I do wonder whether Jesus meant that in a figurative sense, bringing new hope to the despairing, encouraging people who had lost their faith, reviving the hopes of people who had given up waiting for God to fulfill his promises to them.

Remember Ezekiel was given a vision, at the site of a battle, of all the skeletons lying unburied, and at the word of God, they rattled themselves together, put on flesh, sinew and skin, and stood up, alive and breathing. This was to show Ezekiel that his people really did have a future, that an exiled, downtrodden, hopeless group could, if God willed it and they trusted him, could become a nation again. His job was to tell them that, and make them believe it. Maybe a word from one of Jesus' followers, telling people what powerful things he'd done, backed up by their own healings, might have raised the expectations of their listeners, and made them realise that God was still with them.

This mission goes on, and will go on until the end of the world. The twelve went back to Jesus, but once he had ascended, and sent them his Holy Spirit, off they went in different directions to spread the good news - this time, of Jesus crucified and resurrected, and of sin forgiven, and a new relationship with God for all who will accept it. Missionaries go out into the world now, and sometimes they just take the Gospel, but more often they take healing and medicine, practical help and aid, because people are more likely to respond to the good news if the bearers bring them things they need, and can't get any other way. And on the home front, here in the church, some of the workers for the Gospel are paid for their work, some get their expenses, and some are able to minister free because they support themselves by other work, or like me, have a pension. St Paul was a tent-maker, and carried on making tents to support himself as a preacher. And there is no difference between the work that is paid, and that which is given free. It's all done for God, and for the advancement of his kingdom. And it

isn't just clergy, and readers - we're all in this together. And maybe raising the dead in that figurative sense is something we can do, by reminding people that God is there, that he cares, and he loves us. And maybe, people will get a little glimpse of the love of God by the way we live, and the way we are.

Going back to the money for a moment, if we look to Jesus, we see that money was quite unimportant to him. In fact, there is no record of his ever carrying money at all. Maybe he did, but when he was asked about paying taxes to the Romans, he had to ask someone to show him a coin. When he needed to pay tax himself, he told Peter to catch a fish, which turned out to have a coin in its mouth. And he very convincingly turned over the tables of the money changers in the Temple court. Coins rolling in every direction, and I bet if there were children in the court that day, some of them went home a bit richer. So I don't think he would have much to say about our society's current preoccupation with money. The cost of Calvary wasn't calculated in denarii or shekels. It was measured by human need, out of sheer love, freely given. We have received freely, so we can share freely.

So long as we are doing his work, God will see we have what we need, which may not be either as much or as little as we think we need.

*Ron*

## **Points for Prayers**

- Sharing in spreading the good news of the Kingdom of God
- The new government and opposition of this country
- Political developments in other countries including France and the USA
- For continuing and new conflicts including those in the Ukraine, Israel, Gaza and Iran

- 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 and children of North Cadbury church school

## Hymn

One hymn set for this Sunday is 'We have a gospel to proclaim.'

## Services for this week and next

Sunday 7 <sup>th</sup> July	9.00 am Communion, Yarlinton
Sunday 7 <sup>th</sup> July	9.30 am Camelot Matins, North Cheriton
Sunday 7 <sup>th</sup> July	11.00 am Group Communion, North Cadbury
Sunday 14 <sup>th</sup> July	9.30 am Communion, Galhampton
Sunday 14 <sup>th</sup> July	9.30 am Communion, North Cheriton
Sunday 14 <sup>th</sup> July	9.30 am Matins, Blackford
Sunday 14 <sup>th</sup> July	11.00 am Sunday Worship, Holton

## Excalibur online

The July edition of Excalibur has now been published online at [camelotparishes.co.uk](http://camelotparishes.co.uk). It contains details of Camelot people, a record of baptisms, weddings and funerals undertaken through the church in the Camelot Parishes.

## 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)