

Good News Sheet



ST PETER, SLINFOLD and ST NICOLAS, ITCHINGFIELD

22nd NOVEMBER CHRIST THE KING

Collect

**Eternal Father, whose Son Jesus Christ ascended to the throne of heaven
that he may rule over all things as Lord and King:
keep the Church in the unity of the Spirit and in the bond of peace,
and bring the whole created order to worship at his feet;
who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen.**

Bible readings

Ephesians 1:15-23

I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love towards all the saints, and for this reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

Matthew 25:31-46

Jesus said to his disciples: 'When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand, "Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me."

Then the righteous will answer him, "Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?" And the king will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me." Then he will say to those at his left hand, "You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me." Then they also will answer, "Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?" Then he will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me." And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.'

Reflection

Today we celebrate the feast of Christ the King, a commemoration of Jesus' reign over all. It is an image at the heart of the Christian tradition and as Christians we share in the glory and kingship of Christ. St Peter calls us "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people". That is a high calling to live up to.

The parable of the sheep and the goats tells us that we fulfil our calling – and are judged in our calling – by our willingness to see Christ in the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick and those in prison. Jesus is giving us here an agenda for social involvement. His judgement does not depend on the knowledge we have amassed, or the fame that we have acquired, or the fortune that we have gained, but in the help that we have given.

The things that Jesus picks out in the parable are simple things that anyone can do. It is not a question of giving away huge sums of money, or of writing our names in the annals of history; it is a case of giving simple help to the people we meet every day. This is a parable that opens the way to glory for us all.

Although the help we give must be uncalculating. Those who helped did not think they were helping Christ and therefore piling up eternal merit; they helped because they could not help themselves. It was natural and instinctive, the reaction of a loving heart. Whereas the attitude of those who failed to help was: 'If we had known it was you we would have gladly helped; but we thought it was only some insignificant person who was not worth helping.' There are those who will help if they are given praise, thanks and publicity; but to help like that is not real generosity of heart but disguised selfishness. The help which wins the approval of God is that which is given for nothing but the sake of helping.

Jesus confronts us with the wonderful truth that all such help given is given to him; in contrast, all such help withheld is withheld from him. We are all the children of God and created in his image; as brothers and sisters we should naturally love and care for each other. This is an area in which the Church has long been active. It is an area in which many of us already make our own personal contribution.

In the letter of James we receive a similar message to that of today's Gospel. He says:

“For judgement will be without mercy to anyone who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgement. What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, “Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill,” and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.” This extract highlights to us again the unity required between faith and deeds. One without the other does absolutely no good to those in need of practical help.

There is a line of thought among some Christians that we are justified by faith alone, this may be in part due to Saint Paul’s words in Romans: “...since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand...” And yes, faith is necessary for salvation, but scripture also makes it unmistakably clear, including St Paul in other parts of his writings, that God also commands us to do good works.

But these need not be done slavishly, to buy our way to heaven, to pile up merits or brownie points with God, but can be done freely and spontaneously and naturally, out of gratitude to God; not to get to heaven but because heaven has already got to us. So they can be done for the sake of our neighbour, not for our own sake, to purchase salvation.

I am sure that no one wants to be loved as someone else’s good deed for the day, but loved from the heart and cared for because of that true love. I often pray that God will fill me with his love to overflowing so that I may pour out that love on others; it is God’s love that we are passing on.

We could look at the concept of salvation as a plant: faith is the root, the necessary beginning. Hope is the stem, the energy that makes the plant grow. Love is the fruit, the flower, the visible product, the bottom line. Similarly, the life of God comes to us by faith, through us by hope, and out of us by works of love.

And so, as “a royal priesthood...God’s own people”, Christians are called to share in Christ’s own care and concern for those in need. In ministering to them, we are giving glory to him. Christ the King is also Christ the Judge, a reality never to be forgotten. But he is also Christ the Saviour, who meets repentance with infinite mercy. Amen.

Intercessions

For the spirit of love and service, let us pray to the Lord.

Eternal Father, we pray for your Church, of which your Son is King. We pray that you will draw us together and unite us in the love of Christ that we may proclaim with one voice your justice and righteousness in a broken world. Grant to the Church light to know the will of God and grace to perform it. Make all Christian people true followers of Christ in their lives day by day.

Fill the world with the spirit of compassion, that the powerful may use their power to help the weak. We pray that the spirit of Christ the King will teach them humility and a willingness to stand alongside those who depend on them for leadership, building up a kingdom of justice, peace and love. Break through the barriers that divide people and nations, and draw all together for the common good.

Open our eyes to see the presence of Christ in all people; may pride be reduced, compassion increased, and the good of all become our common aim. Grant us insight to know where we can give help in the needs of friends and neighbours and in all our community, and grace to offer it. Help us to know the people around us to be our brothers and sisters in Christ and to serve them as Christ the King would serve them.

We pray for all who suffer, for the poor and hungry, for the sick and the homeless, for prisoners and those who have no one to care for them. May they know Christ to be a King who was crowned with thorns, who suffers with them, and who cares for them with an everlasting love. Bring them relief in their misery and strengthen all, who as individuals or organizations, work for relief.

Have mercy on those who have passed from this world and come to judgement. Pardon their failures and receive them in the compassion of Christ. Grant mercy to us all when we are called to account at the end of our lives.

May our prayers be accepted in the name of Christ the King, our Judge and our Redeemer. Amen.

FOR YOUR PRAYERS

**All who have recently been bereaved, and especially:
the families and friends of Pauline Gordon Clark and John Parry.**

Those who are sick, and all who care for them, remembering:

Pamela Campbell	Peggy Johnson	Lucy Dalrymple	Adrian Skeates
Matt	Ian McBean	Jacqueline Dacey	Heather
Alex	Anna Holmes	Jane Busby	Becky
Linda Howard	Barbara	Sarah	Molly Bonsor
Louis Venni	Christine Lister	Martin	Diana Metson
Frances Aldridge	David Glaister	Michael Barling	David Bourn
Ashlyn	Ann Godfrey	Geoff Fuller	Madge
Chris Godfrey	Hazel	Jenny	Sally
Helen	Molly Finch Hatton	Daniel	Peter Busby
Julia	Robin		

Let us pray for the coming of the kingdom in the words our Saviour taught us:

Our Father, who art in heaven hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory
for ever and ever. Amen.

Final Blessing

Christ our King make you faithful and strong to do his will,
that you may reign with him in glory;
and the blessing of God Almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be amongst us and remain with us and those we love, now and always. Amen.

Notices

During this second Lockdown, our churches will be open for private prayer as follows:

St Nicolas – Sunday's 9am-1pm and Wednesday's 1-4.30pm

St Peter's – Sunday's 12.30-4pm and Thursday's 9am-12.30pm

If you or someone you know of is in need of help, please contact a member of the ministry team, who will do their very best to get this organised.

A call to prayer for the nation The Archbishops of Canterbury and York and a number of senior church leaders are inviting Christians across the nation to participate in the month of prayer as a second lockdown in England comes into force. Further information from:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-churches/call-prayer-nation>

Foodbank contributions are much needed, at present they are asking particularly for instant mashed potato, sponge puddings, custard, rice pudding, tea and toothpaste. Please drop donations to the churches or The Rectory and they will be picked up from there.

Shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child - St Peter's will be supporting this charity again this year. Please deliver filled shoeboxes to the church on Thursdays and Sundays, up to and including Thursday, 10th December. Empty shoeboxes and leaflets detailing suitable donations are available in St Peter's. An alternative is to pack a shoebox online or give a donation; www.shoeboxonline.org.uk Further details from Gill Collier-Morgan 791241.

Toys for onward distribution to needy children of the Horsham area by **The Salvation Army**, may be brought to the churches by the 29th November. Toys should be new, unwrapped but placed in bags with labels to indicate whether for a boy or a girl, and the age group of the intended recipient. Amazon gift vouchers are suggested as an alternative for teenagers, if you prefer. Further details from Gill Collier-Morgan 791241.

Daily Hope National phone line for hymns and prayers. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, has launched a free national phone line as a simple new way to bring worship and prayer into people's homes while church buildings are closed because of the coronavirus. Daily Hope, offers music, prayers and reflections as well as full worship services from the Church of England at the end of a telephone line. Call on: **0800 804 8044**

While we are unable to worship in church there are other alternatives for prayer: the following link will direct you to services of Morning Prayer, Prayer During the Day, Evening Prayer and Night Prayer in which you will be joining with people all over the world.

<https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-service-daily-prayer>

Churches together in England are offering prayers for this ongoing situation, along with Christians all over our nation and our world at this time. A range of prayer resources are being collated within this article:

[https://www.cte.org.uk/Publisher/Article.aspx?ID=568755&utm_source=CTBI+Newsletter+S ubscribers&utm_campaign=204985aeae-CTBI Monthly Newsletter March2020&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_e94acb8d57-204985aeae-508071405&ct=t\(CTBI Monthly Newsletter-March2020\)](https://www.cte.org.uk/Publisher/Article.aspx?ID=568755&utm_source=CTBI+Newsletter+S ubscribers&utm_campaign=204985aeae-CTBI+Monthly+Newsletter+March2020&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_e94acb8d57-204985aeae-508071405&ct=t(CTBI+Monthly+Newsletter-March2020))

Please do contact Revd. Sandra if you need to talk or require assistance.

Tel: 01403 790197 or email sandra.richard@tiscali.co.uk

Sandra's day off is Friday

Revd. Rosemary can be contacted on 01403 264396

or email r.a.cattell@btinternet.com

Rosemary's day off is Monday

Carol Shepherd can be contacted on 01403 730001

or email carol_shepherd46@hotmail.co.uk

This document is also available on the websites, if you know anyone who might want a copy, please print one off and drop it through their door, or let Revd. Sandra know.

With love in Christ and continued prayers,

Revd Sandra
