

REFLECTIONS

In Matthew 10 Jesus prepares his disciples for their first experience of mission alone. He does so by being very realistic about the challenges they will face. They are to expect mixed reactions: appreciation and gratitude, but also rejection. To become a disciple of Jesus Christ, in any age, will inevitably bring a degree of tension, because Jesus calls us to seek first the kingdom of God and to live by its values, which may mean living in a counter-cultural way. When Jesus says: '...whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me' he is emphasising the cost of such discipleship.

Our reading from Romans reminds us that Jesus' cross is not only about dealing with sin, it's also about receiving a new identity, a new life in Christ. Baptism is the sign of becoming dead to self-centred ways and alive to God in Jesus Christ. Whilst we know that we continually fall short and are in need of God's forgiveness, our resolve is always to walk in newness of life with Christ, and this will naturally mark us out as different.

The gospel reading gets even harder when we hear Jesus say: 'I have not come to bring peace, but a sword.' This is a reference to tensions *within families*: a son against his father etc., and he is probably speaking from personal experience. Members of his family seemed out of sympathy with his ministry; on one occasion they even tried to restrain him. Here Jesus describes the possible *effect*, not the *purpose*, of his coming.

Going deeper

Matthew Chapter 10 is undoubtedly a difficult passage but in it there is a recurring message of hope: three times Jesus tells his disciples not to be afraid (vv. 26, 28 and 31). The opposite of faith is not so much doubt, as fear. We are living through anxiety creating times with the pandemic, with economic hardship, and community unrest. We need to hear again and again Jesus' words: 'do not be afraid', recognizing God is fully aware of all that goes on in his world and that each one of us is precious to him - he knows every tiny hair on our heads! God is faithful: his love never comes to an end, he is with us in our sufferings and beside us every step of the way. We can cast all our cares upon him, because he cares for us dearly.

I wonder...

How can we live counter-cultural lives, but still be open and welcoming to others with different values and attitudes?

THIS WEEK'S SERVICES ONLINE

Sunday - Live on Zoom

9.30am Holy Communion

President: Paula Griffiths

Preacher: Caroline Curren

9.30am i Church

Leader: Tim Hardingham

10.00am Holy Communion

President: John Saxon

Pre-recorded (youtube)

Act of Worship

Leader: Alex Jeewan

Preacher: Andy Colebrooke

Tuesday - Live on Zoom

5.00pm Evening Prayer

Leader: Judith Hasler

Wednesday - Live on Zoom

9.30am Holy Communion

Alex Jeewan Caroline Curren

SAFFRON WALDEN & VILLAGES TEAM MINISTRY

The Grapevine

COVERING THE PARISHES OF SAFFRON WALDEN, WIMBISH,
DEBDEN, ASHDON AND HADSTOCK.

Second Sunday after Trinity
21st June 2020

Collect

Lord, you have taught us that all our doings without love are nothing worth: send your Holy Spirit and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of love, the true bond of peace and of all virtues, without which whoever lives is counted dead before you. Grant this for your only Son Jesus Christ's sake, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

First Reading: Romans 6.1b-11

Should we continue in sin in order that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin go on living in it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. For whoever has died is freed from sin. But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. The death he died, he died to sin, once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Gospel: Matthew 10.24-39

Jesus summoned the twelve and sent them out with the following instruction: 'A disciple is not above the teacher, nor a slave above the master; it is enough for the disciple to be like the teacher, and the slave like the master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household! So have no fear of them; for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered, and nothing secret that will not become known. What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops. Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground unperceived by your Father. And even the hairs of your head are all counted. So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows. Everyone therefore who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven; but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven. Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and one's foes will be members of one's own household. Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.'



See St Mary's church, SW, website at www.stmaryssaffronwalden.org to find out more.

Please 'Like' our Facebook page so we reach more people! Click on the link on our website, or go to: www.facebook.com/saintmaryschurchsaffronwalden

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

Churches Together Prayer Cycle: In June please pray for:
Saffron Walden Assemblies Team, Stort Valley Schools Trust

The family and friends of those who have died recently:
Jane Ranford, John Read, Ken Jeffries

EVENTS

LITTLEBURY FETE WITH A DIFFERENCE! If you feel you're maybe missing out on summer fetes this year why not take a look at Littlebury's Fete with a difference. The community have come together to raise funds for the continuing upkeep of Holy Trinity. www.facebook.com/groups/Littleburyfete2020/littlebury.org.uk

MINISTER'S LETTER

Dear Friends,

So much of the news is always about conflict surrounding identities. As I write there is a storm over J K Rowling's remarks about gender; there is renewed interest in our future relationship with Europe; and the Black Lives Matter protests are sparking debate about our imperial past. These are questions of who we are, how we want to define ourselves, and what has made us who we are. After 3 months of pandemic shutdown many are now experiencing a further crisis of identity: the worker with no work, the restaurant owner with no customers, the grandmother with no grand parenting duties. Who are we, and what will we be when we finally emerge from all the restrictions?

Major distinctive markers used to be class, education, and wealth. Whilst these are still there, they are weaker than they were. In today's pick and mix society with all its choice it is not only teenagers who explore who they are, but also many others hoping to discover 'their true selves'. We all want to belong and there are many different groups or communities with which to identify.

In 2016, it was reported that Justin Welby's father was not who he had always thought, but a former private secretary of Winston Churchill. The Archbishop's press response was: 'I know that I find who I am in Jesus Christ, not in genetics, and my identity in him never changes.' Surely, he is right: rather than looking within ourselves we must look to Christ, which is where ultimate meaning can be found. It was St Paul who said: 'If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation' (2 Corinth. 5.17), for: 'you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God' (Colossians 3.3). It is recognition of our baptism that gives us this new identity, the truth of which will one day be disclosed, for 'when he [Christ] is revealed, we will be like him' (1 John 3.2).

Of course, today the pressure is always strong to define ourselves in other ways (nationality, racial origins, sexual orientation etc), but we must not allow these to trump our identity in Christ. It is this that holds us together and will see us through all hardships.

With love and prayers,
Andy Colebrooke

PRAYER FOR THIS WEEK

Open wide the windows of our spirits, O Lord, and fill us full of light; open wide the door of our hearts, that we may receive and entertain thee with all our powers of adoration and love.
Amen.

Christina Rossetti

NEWS

ALL CHURCHES IN THE TEAM REMAIN CLOSED FOR PUBLIC WORSHIP, in line with government and national church guidelines. **Please check St Mary's website for updates.**

PRIVATE PRAYER St Mary's Church, Saffron Walden, is currently open for private prayer on Wednesday and Sunday 12-4. *Gill and Denis*

ST JAMES CHURCH, SEWARDS END, will be open for private prayer on Sunday 2.30-4.00pm. *Lynne & Mike*

EMAIL BULLETINS We are issuing regular email bulletins that highlight information from the website, attach the Grapevine and service sheet and provide the Zoom links for live services that weekend. Please email Dawn at office@stmaryssaffronwalden.org if you would like to be added to the distribution list.

WORSHIP ONLINE There are several ways of joining in our team worship which can be accessed from links on St Mary's Church at Home webpage.

<http://www.stmaryssaffronwalden.org/churchathome>

You can watch a pre-recorded services and you can participate in live Zoom Services around the team. The service sheets and Grapevine are also available on the webpage.

YOU CAN NOW JOIN LIVE WORSHIP BY PHONE - you don't need a computer or tablet. If you would like to know more please contact Steve Hasler 01799 525041 s.hasler@btopenworld.com

BIBLE READINGS FOR THIS WEEK

Mon 22nd	Morning Psalm 44 & Luke 13:1-9 Evening Psalm 47
Tue 23rd	Morning Psalm 48 & Luke 13:10-21 Evening Psalm 50 & Romans 9:19-end
Wed 24th	Morning Psalm 50 & Luke 3:1-7 Evening Psalm 80
Thurs 25th	Morning Psalm 57 & Luke 14:1-11 Evening Psalm 62
Fri 26th	Morning Psalm 51 & Luke 14:12-24 Evening Psalm 38
Sat 27th	Morning Psalm 68 & Luke 14:25-end Evening Psalm 66

MINISTRY TEAM

Parish Administrator: Dawn Saxon	01799 506024
Email: office@stmaryssaffronwalden.org	
Pastoral Assistant: Judith Hasler	01799 525041
Email: judithhasler@btopenworld.com	
Revd Paula Griffiths	01799 599141
Revd Tim Hardingham	01799 542874
Revd Alex Jeewan	01799 531153
Revd John Saxon	01799 541619
Revd Dr Caroline Currer	01799 584839