

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?

SAFFRON WALDEN & VILLAGES TEAM MINISTRY

The Grapevine

COVERING THE CHURCHES OF
GREAT & LITTLE CHESTERFORD, LITTLEBURY WITH
LITTLEBURY GREEN, & WENDENS AMBO

Welcome to our services today
SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

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 rooftops. 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.'

OUR CHURCHES' DIARY

TODAY	21st June	TRINITY 2
SERVICES ONLINE at www.camvillages.org.uk This week on YouTube and 9.30 am iChurch on Zoom (contact Alex or Gillian to get there) 11.30 am HOLY GROUNDS on Zoom		
THIS WEEK		
Wednesday 17th June 9.30 am Holy Communion Alex Jeewan & Caroline Curren Evening Prayer 5 pm (Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday)		
NEXT SUNDAY	28th June	TRINITY 3
SERVICES ONLINE at ww.camvillages.org.uk 11.30 am HOLY GROUNDS on Zoom		

CAM VILLAGES MINISTRY TEAM

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Elizabeth Marshall 01799 530265
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PLEASE PRAY FOR:

Those who are unwell:

Margaret Reed (Gt Chesterford)
Ken Harvey (Wendens Ambo)

Those who need our support:

Betty Dowsett (Littlebury Green)
Lucy Maskell (Great Chesterford)
Kylie Moore-Gilbert (in prison in Iran)

Friends and families of those who have died:

Ken Jeffery (Littlebury)
Those whose anniversaries are this week

Other topics for your prayers:

- For thoughtful and peaceful protest against discrimination
- For ongoing efforts to contain Covid-19, especially in developing countries
- That relaxation of those efforts may not be fuelled by anything other than the well-being of all people and the rest of God's creation
- Children returning to school
- Those with the responsibility for determining the level of lockdown in the coming weeks
- Our churches as we maintain worship in new ways
- Those missing loved ones who have died

VICAR'S LETTER

Dear friends,

I'm not sure whether writer's block truly exists as authors tend to differ on opinion on the topic, but I think I may have developed preacher's block! I have been rather aware that have been continually writing sermons, services, articles and these letters throughout lockdown and the coronavirus for about three months. At the moment I am finding writing harder than usual.

It could possibly be because I have not had enough new experiences, or because I haven't been outside enough or had a proper holiday since Easter due to the restrictions placed on all of us. It may any one of these things or it may be a combination of them.

The author Hilary Mantel has some good advice. She says, "If you get stuck, get away from your desk. Take a walk, take a bath, go to sleep, make a pie, draw, listen to music, meditate, exercise; whatever you do, don't just stick there scowling at the problem. But don't make telephone calls or go to a party; if you do, other people's words will pour in where your lost words should be. Open a gap for them, create a space. Be patient."

It is not always easy to do this, is it? However, creating space is something that even Jesus did. In Matthew's gospel we hear, 'And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone.' This is just one of the many instances where Jesus goes off by himself to pray and to be alone with God.

I wonder if you feel that you need some space to spend time with God, to reflect or to read. Lockdown seems like the ideal opportunity for this but we often find that we fill our time with other things don't we? Because of this vicars are often encouraged to go on retreats at least once a year for this very reason. We all need to be replenished, to recharge our batteries and rest. Jesus says, 'Let anyone who is thirsty come to me.' So I urge you all, as I do myself, do take time for some self care, to rest and replenish yourself spiritually and physically.

God wants us to serve Him when we are at our best, so He wants us to look after ourselves. Do look after yourselves in this delicate and difficult time, you have His permission.

With love,
Alex

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

CORONAVIRUS UPDATE

THANK YOU . . . to those of you who have responded to Alex's reminder not to forget your church giving at this time when there are no collections. You can now give online too. Just visit the 'giving' section of our website. Thanks, too, to those who have chosen to commit to regular planned giving.

AT LAST. . . As from Monday 15th June our churches have been able to be open for private prayer. All Saints, Great Chesterford, is open each day 10 am - 3 pm, Holy Trinity, Littlebury is open on Wednesdays and Sundays 10 am - 4 pm, Littlebury Green is open Wednesdays and Sundays 10am - 6pm and St Mary, Wendens Ambo will be open soon - please ring 01799 218309 for opening details.

All are welcome but please use the instructions provided for your safety and that of others.

WEDNESDAY 9.30 am ZOOM HOLY COMMUNION with Alex Jeewan and Caroline Curren
For an invitation to Zoom services please contact Alex or Gillian (website.camvillages@gmail.com)

SUPPORTING EACH OTHER

There is support available in all our 5 communities during the lockdown. Contact details have been circulated. Don't hesitate to get in touch with them or to encourage your neighbours to - whatever the need.

KEEP IN TOUCH

With all that's going on via our churches' website www.camvillages.org.uk especially the variety of services available for us on Sundays; don't forget at 11.30 am on Sundays there's

Holy Grounds

the Cam Villages Churches virtual after service coffee and chat. on Zoom at 11.30 am. For an invite or if you need help get onto Zoom please email Gillian on Website.camvillages@gmail.com and she will get back to you and talk you through.

NEWS

STOP PRESS!!

Sunday, 28th June

If you feel you're maybe missing out on summer fetes this year, take a look at Littlebury's Fete with a difference. See www.facebook.com/groups/Littleburyfete2020/

PARISH OFFICE The Parish Office is now closed to visitors but we are contactable by telephone and email as usual.

BISHOP STEPHEN

Bishop Stephen Cottrell will be confirmed as the 98th Archbishop of York at 11am on Thursday 9 July 2020, in a service broadcast entirely via video conference on the Church of England website due to the coronavirus restrictions. Full details at <https://yorkminster.org/latest/confirmation-of-election-of-bishop-stephen-cottrell/>

WEEKEND AWAY

There are still places available on the rescheduled weekend away on the **16th-18th July 2021**. Go to <http://stmaryssafronwalden.org/weekendaway2021> for details and how to book.