

# The Smestow Vale Team Ministry



**St Benedict's and the Venerable Bede**

**Keeping in Touch with our Church Family**

**Sunday 26th July 2020**

**Trinity 7**

Generous God

You give us gifts and make them grow:  
Though our faith is as small as a mustard seed,  
make it grow to your glory  
and for the flourishing of your kingdom;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

## **Paul affirms the support of God in all aspects of life.**

The Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified. What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, 'For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.' No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord

*Romans 8:26-end*

## **Jesus tells more parables of the Kingdom.**

Jesus put before the crowd another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.' He told them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened. The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Have you understood all this?' They answered, 'Yes.' And he said to them, 'Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.'

*Matthew 13:31-33 and 44-52*

## A Reflection for Trinity 7 from Revd Charmaine Host

One of the best illustrations I have ever heard about how prayer works was from Richard Forster the author of many books on spirituality including,

Celebration of Discipline; I had the good fortune to hear him speak, many years ago, at Spring Harvest. He said this: "Imagine a two-year old approaching her parents with a painting she has just made. How will they react? Will they say, 'that's rubbish, what on earth is it' or will they say, 'that's beautiful darling, I can see what you have made, and I love the colours.'?"

We immediately know the answer to this imaginary conversation, don't we? A good, loving parent will be delighted at the child's efforts and even more so that she brought it to them for approval. So it is with prayer.

With the reading from today's letter to the Romans we have arrived at one of the 'purple passages' of the New Testament. We can almost sense Paul's vigour as he writes with passion about the God whose love holds us through all that life and even death throws at us.

This love is at work in us through the agency of the Holy Spirit who helps us in prayer; this divine, creative spirit is the one who makes sense of our inadequate paintings in prayer. All those times when we don't know how to pray or can't find the words to articulate what is needed are exactly the times when God is closest urging us to turn to him and bring our jumbled brush strokes in prayer.

So, maybe prayer is little to do with the words we say but much more about the movement and intention of a heart turned towards God. And those intentions and thoughts are not always pretty. A cursory reading of the psalms reveals the sacred act of ranting! It often amazes me how often we see the psalmist almost spitting words of rage towards the almighty wanting him to smite those who are making his life miserable. Even in our most sacred texts we find a humanity that we can relate to, or at least I can.

*Vs. 28; 'We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.'*

This verse alone is a good starting point in prayer. Trusting that nothing is wasted in the economy of God when it is offered to him to work in and through. So, this week, I recommend that this passage is read and re-read, and out of it many 'prayer paintings' made and presented to the one who will delight to see them, and somehow use them for his deeper purposes. Thanks be to God.

Charmaine

## Prayer During the Week.

### Sunday

Pray that we may always seek that treasure which is the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 13: 44)

### Monday

Pray for those in refugee camps with no income because of the virus

### Tuesday

Pray for a good response to the DEC Coronavirus Appeal.

### Wednesday

Pray for local authorities as they take over protection against the virus.

### Thursday

Pray for local surgeries as they consider how to manage the flu jab later this year.

### Friday

Pray for the relationships between the major powers to improve.

### Saturday

Pray for would-be immigrants still crossing the Channel in small boats.

## Please remember those who have asked for our prayers

Sarah Stephenson, Lisa, Julia McCormick, Morgan, Michael Concannon, Heather Gent, Jean, Robert Brooks, Margaret Ward, Joy Waistell, Sarah Aldridge.

## Those who have died

Brenda Ann Mason, Sheila Bates, Edna Bucknall, Margaret Hatton, Berenice Pickering, Mitchell Brooks and David Kingston.

## Sunday Worship at St Benedict's

8.00am Holy Communion

10.30am Parish Communion

Please remember to book **each** week by contacting Hilary on 01902 892856 or by email [hilmoore@gmail.com](mailto:hilmoore@gmail.com)

There will be a service led by Paul on Facebook and on You Tube this Sunday.

## Facemasks

£5 for men and women (different sizes and styles) and £3 for children. 100% Cotton, washable/reusable, attractive.

email [jane.vicarage@trysullchurch.org.uk](mailto:jane.vicarage@trysullchurch.org.uk) or phone her on 07939 696486 for products.

