

The Smestow Vale Team Ministry

St Benedict Biscop and the Venerable Bede

Keeping in Touch with our Church Family

Sunday 20th September 2020

Trinity 15



Lord God,

defend your Church from all false teaching
and give to your people knowledge of your truth,
that we may enjoy eternal life
in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Philippians

For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labour for me; and I do not know which I prefer. I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better; but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, so that I may share abundantly in your boasting in Christ Jesus when I come to you again. Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel, and are in no way intimidated by your opponents. For them this is evidence of their destruction, but of your salvation. And this is God's doing. For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ, but of suffering for him as well – since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

Philippians 1.21–30

Jesus tells the story of the labourers in the Vineyard

Jesus said to his disciples: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire labourers for his vineyard. After agreeing with the labourers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the market-place; and he said to them,

"You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right." So they went. When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, "Why are you standing here idle all day?"

They said to him, "Because no one has hired us." He said to them, "You also go into the vineyard." When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, "Call the labourers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first." When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, saying, "These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat." But he replied to one of them, "Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?" So the last will be first, and the first will be last.'

Matthew 20.1–16

A Reflection on our Readings by Paul Brown

A man who died and went to heaven. St. Peter met him at the gates and asked to examine his life "We have a point system". Peter said, "and only those with enough points are allowed to enter.". Tell me

about your life. I'll add up your points, you need a hundred points to get in."

The man thought for a moment and said, "Well, let's see. I was a member of my church, gave regularly to the collection and I contributed to all sorts of charities especially Christian Aid. I coached the local football team and I served on several committees. Peter said, "Very good. You get one point."

Disappointed the man said, I was a good husband and a good father. I always tried to tell the truth and I don't think that I ever cheated anyone. Peter paused and then said "You get another point." The man's face sank, and he said, "I'll never make it. The only way I'd ever get into heaven is by the generosity of God."

St. Peter smiled "And that, my friend, is worth ninety-eight points. Welcome!"

"It's not fair", "some people have all the luck." Two comments that I have heard many times when someone else appears to have been treated generously. They are thoughts that have floated into my mind on occasion especially when someone seems to be treated more generously than me

"It's not fair" and "some people have all the luck" I can imagine that is exactly what the workers in the vineyard would have felt in Jesus story. Yes, they were fortunate to have been employed for the day. Yes, they worked hard all day. Yes, they were probably pleased when more labourers were Employed and I suspect that they were even pleased when the latecomers were paid the wage for the whole day. But they were not at all happy when their expectations of even greater generosity were thwarted and they were paid exactly the same amount. The story of Peter and the man at the gate reminds me of just how generous God is to me and that I should celebrate that breadth of that generosity rather looking over my shoulder and think that's not fair when I see his generosity to others.

Paul Brown

Please remember those who have asked for our prayers

Lisa, Morgan, Margaret Ward, Joy Waistell, Monika, Sarah Aldridge, , Robert Brooks, Carl Baker, Dot Inskip, Michael Concannon, Kath Humpheson, Ann and Barrie Taylor.

Those who have died

Betty Farrier, Roger Clowson, Denise Whitmore, Ann Barker, Sarah Stephenson.

Please send requests for prayers to the Parish Office.

Prayer During the Week.

Sunday

Pray that we may be content with what we receive from our generous God. (Matthew 20: 14)

Monday - Saint Matthew

Pray that we may be prepared to give up self-interest and follow Jesus. (Matthew 9: 9)

Tuesday

Pray for all the members of the Team Council, unable to meet because of Coronavirus restrictions.

Wednesday

Pray for those subject to renewed restrictions, that they may follow them.

Thursday

Pray for victims of wildfires in the eastern coastal states of America.

Friday

Pray for honesty and integrity in all the post-Brexit negotiations.

Saturday

Pray for all in hospital because of the resurgence of Covid 19.

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. Please telephone by 12noon on Saturday. There will be a service led by Paul on Facebook and on You Tube this Sunday.

Resumption of the Prayer Meeting.

We will meet on Tuesday 29th. Sept.2020 at 7pm for 45mins. Please book suewatson@telecomplus.org.uk or phone 07932 175846- maximum numbers possible 15.

Morning Prayer

Morning Prayer is said daily at 9.00am. We will use the nave so as to maintain social distancing. Don't forget that you must wear a mask.

Electoral Roll

The new Electoral Roll is displayed at St Benedict's.

Grapevine

Disappointingly and with regret, following the increased restrictions relating to the Covid 19 Pandemic Grapevine will only be available digitally from the 29th September to those that we have an email address for. If you, or anyone you know, would like a copy please send your email address to Maxine at the Parish Office (office@stbenedictbiscop.org.uk) requesting a copy.