



Weekly News

Sunday 13th September 2020

24th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Knowing, loving and following Jesus

Parish Church of St Richard

Vicar: Fr Christopher Brading SSC

t) 01444 413621

e) father.brading@gmail.com

Hon Assistant Priest: Fr Gordon Bond SSC

Deacon: Revd Canon Rebecca Swyer

www.strichards.co.uk

In this **The Link**:

- Worship this week
- Open for private prayer
- Foodbank donations
- Electoral Roll revision and PCC meeting
- Please pray for...
- Fr Gordon's homily (13/09/20)

Worship this week

The details of worship this week can be found below (and also on the St Richard's website); all Masses will be celebrated in church, those in **bold** will be live-streamed.

Services this week

Monday 14th	Mass	12:00
Tuesday 15 th	Mass	09:00
Wednesday 16th	Mass	19:00
<i>(preceded with Exposition from 18:20)</i>		
Thursday 17th	Mass	11:00
Saturday 19th	Mass	10:00
Sunday 20th	<i>25th Sunday in OT</i>	Mass 10:00

Open for private prayer

This coming week St Richard's will be open for private prayer at the following times:

Tuesday 15 th	13:00 – 16:00
Wednesday 16 th	09:00 – 12:00
Thursday 17 th	13:00 – 16:00
Friday 18 th	09:00 – 12:00

When coming into church, please avoid touching any surfaces unnecessarily, and if you feel unwell, you should stay at home and not come to church.

Foodbank donations

Donations for the foodbank may be made at church as normal on Tuesday 10:00-12:00 and Friday 14:00 – 16:00.

Electoral Roll and PCC

The parish Electoral Roll will be revised during the period of 13th – 27th September. After revision, the Roll will be displayed in church for a period of 14 days. If you have any questions on the Electoral Roll, email the Electoral Roll officer, Carolyn Brading (carolyn@brading.net).

There will be a meeting of the PCC on Tuesday 15th September, via Zoom at 19:30.

Of your charity, please pray for, those in need:

Mimi Palmer, Hannah Hales, Paul Moore, Celia Avery, Christopher Grimwood, Linda Miller, George Jobson, Sheila Jobson, Doreen Sparks, Pauline Caffin, Fr John Edwards, Margaret Barter, Adrian Taylor, Pamela Waugh, Fr David Palmer, Tony Costa, Brian Waggar, Una Wade, Barbara Liddington, Shaun Moore, Jean McCarthy, Fr Tony Whitfield, Joe Griffin, Pat Longhurst, Michael Langford-Jackson, Sheila Rawlings, Brian Easey, Fr Michael Gudgeon and Becky.

Those who have died recently and those whose anniversary falls around this time of year:

13th) Marjory Potter, 14th) Phillip Thunder, 15th) Bertha Welsh, 16th) Aubone Millett, Jean Roberts, Pam Rutherford, Dorothy Baldwin, 17th) Kenneth Murray, Alexander Smith, Frank Palmer, John Martin, 18th) James Lewry, 19th) Marion McCarthy.

*If you would like anyone added to the prayer list, or would like someone prayed for, but **not** added to the list, please submit your prayer details using the form on the website www.strichards.co.uk/prayer.*

Fr Gordon's homily– 13th September 2020

“Were you not bound, then, to have pity on your fellow servant just as I had pity on you?”

Mahatma Gandhi once said, “An eye for an eye will make the whole world blind.” Yet how hard it is not to seek revenge, and instead to choose to forgive, when a person has wounded you deeply. There are many extraordinary stories of forgiveness: A young man called Jimmy was killed the day after he turned sixteen in May 2008. He and his older brother Harry were waiting in a local bakery in South London when Jimmy stood up to another customer who barged past them. The nineteen-year-old was angry and threw a glass dish, which cut into Jimmy's neck, fatally wounding him.

Jimmy's mother says of that day: *“The house was full of people and the table stacked with food people brought over. There was this immense outpouring of grief but with it came a huge outpouring of love too. As terrible as this tragedy was, we felt blessed to have so much love in our lives. Love and prayer is what kept us going. For me forgiveness is about not wanting revenge and not being angry. I'm not shouting from the rooftop 'I forgive' but by not wanting revenge I have an inner peace that a lot of people in our position don't seem to have. Jimmy's murder has done a lot of damage to this family and I can't let it do any more.”*

Jimmy's father explained further: *“For me, forgiveness means I don't want to do to Jimmy's killer what he did to Jimmy. And I thank God for that. I don't want retribution. I don't want revenge. In the end, if I want to live in a more peaceful, compassionate society then I have to be more peaceful and compassionate.”*

In today's Gospel Peter asks Jesus about forgiveness. Jewish tradition limited forgiveness to three times, so Peter thought his willingness to forgive seven times would be regarded as generous. Peter's question indicated that he still wanted to count how many times he should forgive. Jesus is, in effect, telling him not to count. Jesus stresses the importance of forgiveness, that a person cannot expect mercy from God if there has not been the same generosity of spirit demonstrated towards others.

He uses the parable of the unmerciful servant to urge forgiveness and mercy. As we say so often in the Lord's Prayer, *“forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us”*.

Jesus talks about forgiving seventy-seven times, but it is not the mathematics that matters. What Jesus describes is vast and cosmic, a forgiveness permeating all creation, making all things new. Refusal to forgive will make it impossible for us to understand and experience the generous forgiveness of God for us.

The Roman philosopher Seneca wrote: *“The sins of others are before our eyes, our own are behind our backs.”* We all know we should forgive, but that doesn't mean it's easy to do so, especially when a person has wronged us in a terrible way. Withholding forgiveness can cause a toxic cloud to hang over our lives and prevent us from truly finding joy. Refusal to forgive can consume the heart and drain the energy. Forgiveness does not tolerate revenge. Learning to let go and forgive will heal our souls and help us to find happiness in this life. Experiencing God's generous mercy transforms who we are and the way we see our lives. We can recognise the blessings given to us. We cannot heal ourselves by clinging to our wounds. And neither can we contribute to the repairing of the world without practising forgiveness.

The practice of forgiveness can both soften our own hearts and transform the world community. We often hear about peace processes in various countries. In every case, each party must listen sympathetically to the stories of the other, overcome misunderstandings and exaggerations, recognise its own misdeeds and begin to forge common links. The spirit of forgiveness is essential for the preservation of human community, whether in the home, the neighbourhood, the nation or the world. The strongest motive is the realisation of our own great need of forgiveness and of the extremes to which God has gone in order to bring us the healing we need. C.S Lewis said: *“To be Christian means to forgive the inexcusable because God has forgiven the inexcusable in you.”*

May the Lord grant us the gift of forgiveness.