

A Message from: The Very Revd Nicholas Henshall

“No more heroes any more...” - A Reflection for All Saints Day

“No more heroes anymore” sang the stranglers back in 1977, catching something of the zeitgeist of the times. And they turned out to be right. Heroes, as we have found to our cost as churches and communities, almost always turn out to have clay feet. The recent revelations about figures like Bill Hybels and Jean Vanier suggest that the churches should know this already. Our investment in heroes as a kind of celebrity ends up ringing very hollow, an echo of our own desire for significance.

Which is a big invitation to rethink “All Saints Day”, and indeed what the word “saint” itself. What it means in Christianity and in popular culture. For most, I’d suggest, it conjures up stained glass window versions of unreal human beings wrap in mystical prayer and doing very unusual things. For ten years I was vicar of St Margaret’s Church in west Newcastle. Even the early Christians knew that Margaret was mythical, and the only striking thing about her legend was that she had been swallowed by a dragon and escaped by making the sign of the cross. And I need not move on to the famously named St Christopher the Dog Headed.

The real problem with our idea of “saints” is that it is completely contrary to what the New Testament means by saints.

First of all, the New Testament always and only uses the word “saint” in the plural. It is always corporate, always about the body of Christ. It’s never about the individual. We would expect that anyway. The Biblical languages have no word for “individual” and even in English the word is not used of a single person until the 17th century. The Bible is always corporate, always about “us” rather than “me”. It is a real shame that in modern English we don’t distinguish between “you” in the singular and “you” in the plural. As a result, it’s easy to assume that the words of Jesus and the writings of Paul are addressed to “me” when they are almost always addressed to “us”.

And secondly the New Testament always and only uses the word “saints” to refer to, well, us – you and me, the people of God as we gather for worship and are sent out to serve. Paul frequently addresses his letters to “the saints of God of the church in ...”

So as far as the New Testament is concerned, being a “saint” is simply being a Christian. And we don’t always make that clear in the language we use!

What does that mean for us on this day, All Saints Day?

All Saints turns out to be a powerful invitation to think about who we are as followers of Jesus today; to reflect on our corporate life as Christian communities; to consider personally how we are responding in our daily lives to the joy, simplicity and mercy of the Gospel.

No more heroes any more, who we can pass the buck to. The responsibility is ours in the here and now - to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with our God.

I am going to finish with one of the most beautiful modern prayers for All Saints Day, written specifically in response to the readings for today, above all the Beatitudes in Matthew chapter 5, and which we use at the All Saints Eucharist today:

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Cathedral Life Weekly

All Saints Day Sunday 1st November 2020



All-holy God,
you call your people to holiness.
As we keep the festival of your saints,
give us their meekness and poverty of spirit,
a thirst for righteousness,
and purity of heart.
May we share with them the richness of your kingdom
and be clothed in the glory you bestow.
Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.
All Amen.

This evening: Chelmsford Cathedral will be taking part in a spectacular light display together with other cathedrals across the country. There is no particular time for the lights switch on, in order to conform with government restrictions, but do take a look outside, or take an evening walk with your family, or those in your bubble and take a moment to reflect on those who are beacons of light to us and remember those who are no longer with us. The lights will be on from dusk until around 10pm. The Cathedral will also be open during the daytime for anyone wishing to come in and pray or sit quietly or maybe light a candle. We hope that our own 'beams of light' will remind people that we are not alone at this time. Do post your pictures using the #lightofhope.

Pray with Us:



All Saints' Day: Please pray for the ministry of all those who work with young people, and especially the Diocesan Area Youth Advisers. We remember St Mark's College and all who work there. Also, those who manage and minister at the Asheldham Centre.

Please pray for the Presbyterian Church in Old Moulsham

Please pray for The Church of the Province of West Africa, The Most Revd Dr Jonathan Bau-Bau Bonapart Hart, Primate

Please pray for Jean Cooper, Rita James, Nicole Landon, Winnie Towers, Jill Withams and all those in need of our prayers at this time.

Daily Gospel Readings for this week and use in your prayers:

Monday: John 6. 37-40

Thursday: Luke 15. 1-10

Tuesday: Luke 14. 15-24

Friday: Luke 16. 1-8

Wednesday: Luke 14. 25-33

Saturday: Luke 16. 9-15

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Study with Us: Bible Study Notes for Sunday 25th October

All Saints Day

2 Esdras 2.42-48
Ps 34.1-10
Matthew 5.1-12



*I will never stop thanking God,
with constant words of praise.
My soul will boast of God;
the poor will hear me and be glad.*

These opening words of Psalm 34 set the tone for today as we celebrate the Lord whose compassion embraces all peoples, and whose law is wisdom, freedom, and joy for the poor.

The first reading gives us a vision of the kingdom of God, the gathering of all God's saints. Note the final line: 'Go, tell my people how great and how many are the wonders of the Lord God that you have seen.' Let us hear that for ourselves as the saints of God in Chelmsford – that is our task too.

The Gospel is the famous opening of Jesus' first "teaching seminar" in Matthew's Gospel, often called the Beatitudes or "blessings" because each line begins "blessed". Read through the Gospel with care and note just how unlikely the candidates for blessing are; the poor, the meek, the grieving, the hungry...

As we hear Jesus address these words today, how do we feel invited to respond?

Sunday Services:

7.45am	Morning Prayer	Live streamed on the Facebook page	
10.30am	Cathedral Eucharist	In the Cathedral and live streamed	President: The Very Revd Nicholas Henshall Preacher: The Revd Kate Moore
10.30am	Junior Church	In Guy Harlings Garden	
5.15pm	Evening Prayer	Live streamed on the Facebook page	
8.15	Compline	Live streamed on the Church at Home Cathedral Facebook page	Gary Fleming

Morning Prayer and the Cathedral Eucharist are available later on our YouTube channel – link from the Church at Home page of the Cathedral website.

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News:

News

We are seeking to appoint a new **Safeguarding Officer** to develop and implement robust safeguarding practice across all areas of the Cathedral's life, working with paid staff and volunteers, and liaising closely with the Diocesan Safeguarding Team. The interviews will be held on Monday 7th December 2020. To find out more, please visit the Cathedral website (www.chelmsfordcathedral.org.uk) to download the application pack or ring: Mr Keith Baggs/Mrs Marion Palmer, 01245 294492

Interfaith week 2020: Breaking barriers through our shared history: Islam's role in the English enlightenment

This is taking place on 12 November 2020, from 19:30 - 20:30 online. To book your free tickets [click here](#). Dr Imranali Panjwani shares Islam's under-recognised role in inspiring notable English writers who used the egalitarian teachings of the Qur'an and Prophet Muhammad to reform aspects of English society during the Enlightenment. Historical evidence shows that writers such as Henry Stubbe, John Toland, Samuel Coleridge and others were drawn to Prophet Muhammad's reforms of women's rights, education and civic participation. By examining how all our histories connect together, we can break barriers and stereotypes about each other's religions and cultures. Dr Imranali Panjwani has lived, studied and worked in the UK, Middle East and Australia as an academic, lawyer, chaplain and community worker. His work combines his diverse legal, cultural and religious experiences with an emphasis on the aspiration, metaphysical and moral nature of the law.

Inter faith week quiz: on 13 November 2020, from 20:00 - 22:00 online. To book your FREE tickets [click here](#). To celebrate National Inter Faith Week, you're invited to join ARU & the Mid Essex Inter Faith Forum for an on-line Inter faith quiz. Test your knowledge in a fun, interactive quiz and see if what you think you know about other faiths is really true. Event hosted by The Rev'd Canon Ivor Moody, Vice Dean and Canon Pastor of Chelmsford Cathedral and quiz mistress Sidra Naeem

White Poppies for Peace: At this time of the year many wear red poppies to remember those who have died in the horrors of war. That is important, lest we forget. It is also important to look forward to the future and to work for a peaceful world following Jesus' words, "Blessed are the peacemakers". This year there will again be white peace poppies freely available in the cathedral. You may wish to take one to wear as a commitment to work for peace in every sphere of life.

Missing your coffee and chat after the service on Sundays? Why not join us for a zoom coffee (or even sherry) every Sunday anytime from 12noon - 12.40pm? The zoom link for this week is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9861248861?pwd=MFFXOGtDUUJHV0FYRzBSMWZxcENKUT09>

Cathedral quiz!

Come and join us for another Cathedral Quiz this Saturday on Zoom, **31st October** at 7.30pm. Last time it proved very popular and a fun way to spend an evening, particularly during the new lockdown restrictions. Contact Yvonne Spence on yvonnespence@hotmail.com if you would like to form a team. Everyone is welcome.

The Cathedral's Got Talent?

Britain's Got Talent may have finished but you still have the opportunity to share yours! The social committee would like to organise a zoom concert for members of the cathedral family. Maureen
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Benson is looking for musicians, singers, actors, poets and..... more... to make up an evening of entertainment. Please contact Maureen on 01245 697781 for more information.

Cathedral Book Group: Our next meeting will be by Zoom on Monday 2nd November at 7.30 when we will be discussing Franny and Zooey by J D Sallinger. All are welcome to join us – email sallydilley@tiscali.co.uk to be added to the mailing list.

Worship with Us:

Thursday Eucharist: We have now introduced a simple celebration of the Eucharist at 10.30 am on Thursdays. Everybody is warmly welcome – and all the procedures in place on Sundays will of course be on place on Thursdays too. That includes leaving contact details, wearing a mask and sitting in a socially distanced way. But – as with Sundays – we will begin to inhabit this new pattern of services as we continue to live through a very provisional time of change.

Cathedral Eucharist 10.30am on Sundays: Please note there is no longer a requirement to reserve a place/book a ticket. However, if we reach capacity for any service and it would be unsafe to allow any more people into the building, it is with regret that we would have to close the doors and you would be unable to attend. Following the latest Church of England guidance, it is now expected that all visitors to the Cathedral, for worship or private prayer, wear a facemask.

Junior Church is also back in Guy Harlings Garden. Please book in via Eventbrite as numbers are currently limited in order to comply with government guidelines. You are very welcome to join Jean for some fun activities.

Support us:

On-line Giving: if you would like to donate to support the mission and ministry of the Cathedral through these challenging times, please visit the Cathedral website. Towards the bottom of the opening page you will see a heading “Supporting your Cathedral”. Simply click the link in the paragraph below to make your donation.

Study with Us:

Advent Day Retreat: – “Jacob Limping”, led by the Dean from Pleshey Retreat House but available on-line. It takes place on Thursday, 26 November 10 am – 4 pm. Nicholas writes: Vulnerability is how we open up to grace in the upside-down values of the kingdom - in the desert we face ourselves as we really are and discover that God's love for us is without limit. Through prayer, silence and a series of addresses we will go on a journey with texts from Scripture and wisdom from the tradition - the desert fathers, the cloud of unknowing, Teresa of Avila through to Thomas Merton and other contemporary voices. Please visit the Pleshey website (<https://www.retreathousepleshey.com>) to find out more and to book your place.

Breakfast with the Bible: meets via zoom Sundays from 8.30am-9.30am. If you would like to join the sessions, please email Canon Imogen Nay on imogen.nay@chelmsfordcathedral.org.uk for the Zoom code each week. Breakfast with the Bible is led by various members of the Cathedral congregation, lay and ordained. It includes time for discussion as well as some teaching input from the leaders. See the Breakfast with the Bible page on the website for full details.

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