

Cathedral Life Weekly

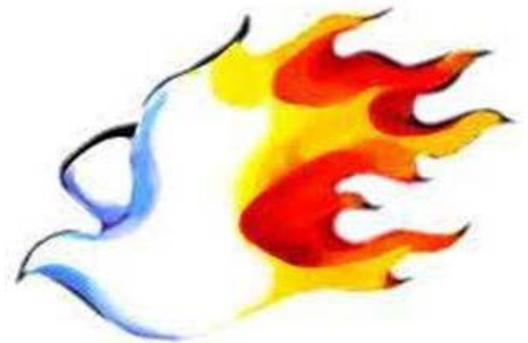
Trinity 14, 13th September 2020

A Message from the Director of Ordinands, The Revd Tim Goodbody:

2020 has been a strange year. This may seem something of an understatement, but it has certainly added new dimensions to peoples' lives and to the process of discerning vocations and bringing candidates through training to ordination. Taking over the role of DDO from the inimitable Canon Philip Need was always going to be a daunting task, and then to be denied the expected handover and time working in the offices being guided by him and getting to know the systems and the team, made it even more challenging. Face-to-face meetings became Zoom calls (other online platforms are available), planned visits to colleges to meet up with students had to be abandoned, meetings, training sessions, farewell services and celebrations were all cancelled. Existing Deacons had their June Priestings deferred until the end of September, those to be ordained Deacon in September moved the final term of teaching online and were unable to enjoy their final weeks of teaching and farewell celebrations together. Candidates already at colleges also moved their training online, with that continuing into the new academic year for some, and those seeking curacies for next year may still not have been able to visit the churches in which they are being invited to serve. Those heading toward training had to undergo a hastily convened online discernment process instead of a residential one and visit potential colleges online. All this has led to heightened levels of stress, anxiety and uncertainty, and yet...God is good.

We have several candidates in the process of having their vocations tested, and lots in the discernment process. 35 Candidates have been recommended for training for ordained Ministry this year and already several future curacies are settled and relationships are growing.

Deacons' Ordinations are now happening over a whole weekend, instead of in one day, and residential retreats for Deacons and Priests have been replaced with two-day ones in the Cathedral. Ordinands and curates alike have had to learn anew the lessons of obedience and patience, which can be challenging when they are excited and fired-up to serve God in the way to which they feel they have been called. The DDO Department is extremely grateful for the immense lengths to which the Bishops, Archdeacons and other Clergy have helped us to continue in our work; we thank the Cathedral staff for making possible the necessary legal and liturgical services; we are grateful to all in the process of having their vocations tested, and for those starting or continuing at college in September. We thank our ordination candidates, both Deacons and Priests, for the grace and patience with which they have borne the uncertainties and upheavals they have undergone on the road to the Ordinations services, and we thank everyone who has prayed for anyone who is in the process and who walks beside them on their path.



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For many these have been dark times, but it is important to remember that in the discerning words of Psalm 139, 'If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light around me become night," even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is as bright as the day, for darkness is as light to you.'

Please pray for those to be ordained as Deacons this weekend or Priests in the next few weeks, and for all who are in the process, or feel they might be being called. Never forget that God is 'that still small voice of calm' in this current time of upheaval and uncertainty and it is up to us to listen for it and then act upon it. To 'meet' everyone being ordained, go to the Diocesan website <https://www.chelmsford.anglican.org/Ordinations> . As numbers are restricted this year there is no public entry to the services so all four services will be live streamed through the Diocesan website and you will find the link on the same link above.



Pray with Us:

Please pray for all being ordained this weekend, their families and friends.

Lord God, we thank you for the education we have received from teachers and schools, from colleges, academies and universities, from parents and friends. Help us to support those who work in education, especially with the difficulties they have faced over the past months. We appreciate the important job that they do in shaping the future of our world and remember them in our prayers.

Pray for Life Church, City Centre

Please pray for The Anglican Church of South America, The Most Revd Gregory James Venables, Presiding Bishop

Please pray for those who are unwell including Jean Cooper, Rita James, Nicole Landon, Winnie Towers, Jill Withams and all those in need of our prayers.

Daily Gospel Readings for this week, to use in your daily prayer:

Monday: John 3. 13-17

Tuesday: Luke 7. 11-17

Wednesday: Luke 7. 31-35

Thursday: Luke 7. 36-50

Friday: Luke 8. 1-3

Saturday: Luke 8. 4-15

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Study with Us:

Study Notes on the Sunday Gospel: Sunday 13th September



Romans 14.1-12 Ps 103.8-13 Matthew 18.21-35

The Lord is compassion and love

The readings this week speak of forgiveness, urging us to forgive others just as God forgives us. God loves us unconditionally. There is no limit to that forgiveness, so long as we ourselves show forgiveness to others, and don't hold on to any grievances.

In the **First Reading**, we hear of how the way in which we live our lives affects one other. Through Christ's life, death and resurrection, he has shown us that we belong to him both in life and death, unless we choose to turn away.

The parable of the unforgiving servant in the **Gospel** emphasizes the message of forgiveness. So long as we forgive others with complete sincerity, God will show compassion towards us. So long as we repent, he will forgive our sins an infinite number of times.

The Gospel begins with Peter's question to Jesus on forgiveness. Lord, how often must I forgive my brother...? When Peter asked this, he would have thought that to forgive someone as many as seven times was generous; seven was seen as a symbol of completeness. Indeed, Rabbis of the time taught that to forgive three times was sufficient. Biblical proof for this was taken from the opening chapters of the book of the Prophet Amos in the Old Testament.

'Seventy seven times seven.' Jesus replies to Peter, also using the symbolism of numbers: he indicates that forgiveness must be without limit. He multiplies Peter's seven, a symbol of completeness, by ten, a number seen as a symbol of infinity.

The real meaning of forgiveness.

Jesus teaches the people that their attitude towards forgiveness is at fault, using a parable that forms one of the sternest and most challenging passages in the Gospels. The parable of the unforgiving debtor has been referred to as a dramatisation of the fifth beatitude: Happy the merciful: they shall have mercy shown them (Matthew 5: 7).

The debt that could never be repaid.

One of the most important points in the story is the significant contrast between the two debts. The first servant owed his master 10,000 talents, a talent being the equivalent of 15 years wages. This huge debt was more than the total budget of an ordinary province. The total revenue of the province which contained Idumaea, Judaea and Samaria was only 600 talents, whereas the total revenue of a wealthy province like Galilee was only 300 talents. This first servant was himself owed 100 denarii, a denarius being a day's wage; a fraction of the debt which had caused him to beg for mercy.

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

The king was an extreme despot, but to take a man's family in lieu of his debt was common practice in many parts of the ancient world. Tyrants made use of torture to extract confessions or to force the victim's family into paying the debt. Regardless of this, we see that the king, in his pity for the servant cancels the entire debt and expects the forgiven one to do the same.

Over the week ahead, the scriptures invite us all to pray for one another and welcome God's gift of forgiveness, together with the healing, reconciliation and restoring of any broken relationship that it brings.

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 click on the link below to book in as numbers are currently limited in order to comply with government guidelines. You are very welcome to join Jean for some fun activities. <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/118973724613>

Heritage Tours 2020: In September we normally see a series of tours and events around the national heritage weekend, and the Cathedral always takes part. This year, thanks to the hard work of the Civic Society, this is still going ahead – and everyone is welcome to join in online! You can find details of the whole series by going to <http://www.chelmsfordcivicsociety.co.uk/heritage-open-days.html> The virtual tour of the Cathedral goes live at 10 am on Saturday, 19th September. You can find the link to that by scrolling down the page to the 19th September.

Grappling with Mark's Gospel: a seminar by Zoom taking place on Tuesday, 29 September 2020 from 10:00 am – 12:00 noon. This is a morning for anyone interested in engaging at depth with Mark's Gospel. The seminar is led the Dean of Chelmsford, Nicholas Henshall, and will be taking place by Zoom. It will feature a series of short presentations, group discussion and an opportunity for questions. Participants will be sent a link to the seminar and preparatory materials in advance. To register, please follow this link: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/grappling-with-marks-gospel-seminar-by-zoom-tickets-118604572469>

Breakfast with the Bible: started again last week, meeting via zoom from 8.45am to 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.

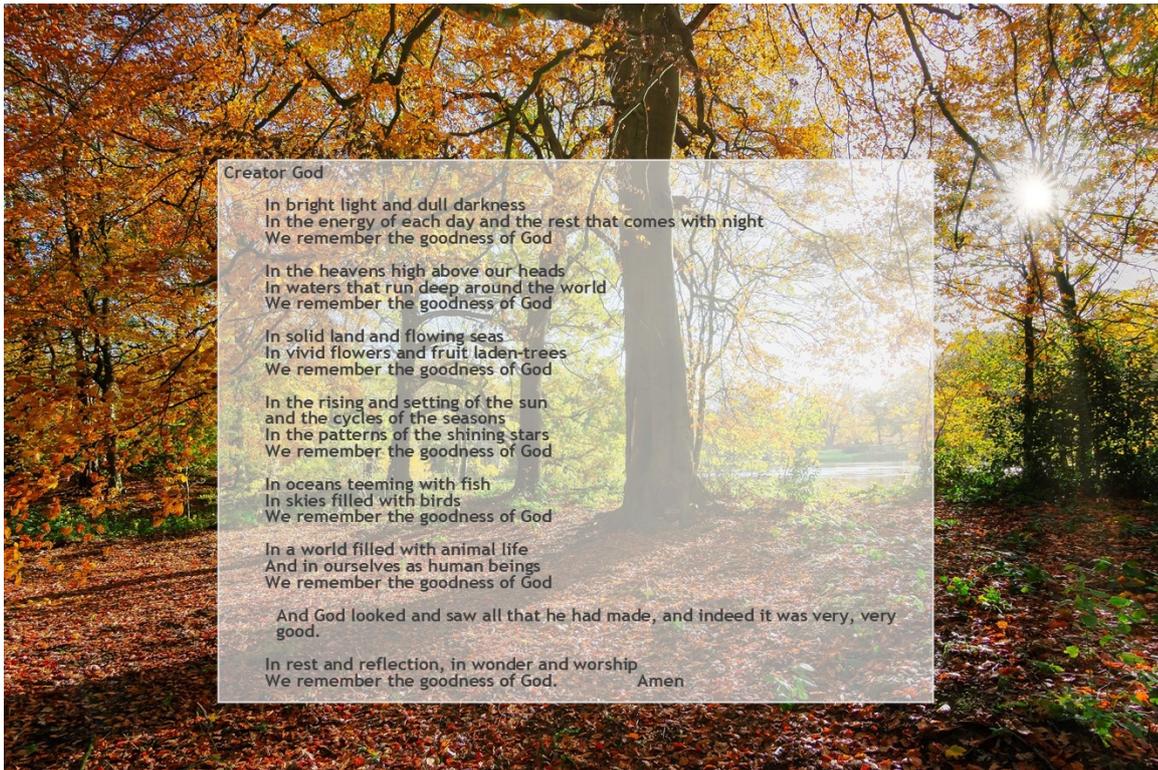
THE ANNUAL MEETING will take place on Sunday, 27 September straight after the 10.30 Sunday Eucharist. We are encouraged to make this as short as possible and it will finish by 12 noon. The Agenda and the Annual Report are already available on the Cathedral website and please submit questions in advance of the meeting if you will be joining us on line to dean@chelmsfordcathedral.org.uk. The Dean will use the sermon as an introduction to the Annual Meeting and both the 10.30 am, and Eucharist and the Annual Meeting will be streamed live on Facebook.

Stewarding at Sunday Services: Since we have returned to public worship at Sunday Services the roles of the Welcome Stewards and Wardens have changed considerably. We are seeking to expand the team of Welcome Stewards for the future as a number of our current team are still shielding or are cautious about returning to the rota at the moment. Is this something that you would consider? We don't know yet what worship will be like as we progress towards Christmas but if we can expand our team, we will be ready when we need to step into action. Please speak to Elizabeth Marshall or Maureen Benson (or email ej.marshall@blueyonder.co.uk) if you are interested. New stewards need to be appointed at the Annual Meeting on September 27th. All volunteers must complete a Diocesan Confidential Declaration Form and online safeguarding training in line with our Safer Recruitment Policy

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Creationtide or the Season of Creation is the period in the annual church calendar, from 1st September to 4th October, dedicated to God as Creator and Sustainer of all life. Throughout this month there will be prayers, video clips and reflections on the Church at Home page to reflect this season.



You can get involved too. Letters for Creation invites children and young people under 30 to write letters reflecting on what caring for creation means to them and how they want their voice to be heard in the climate justice conversation. But it doesn't have to be a letter! You can choose to create a video, take a photograph, write a poem or song. The Church of England will be launching a digital exhibition of some of these 'letters' later this year. Enter at lettersforcreation@churchofengland.org

However, we are inviting anyone of any age to **send their own reflection of creation** to us and we too will share some of these in a display in the Cathedral over the harvest weekend and on our website. Please send your entry to Laura Brayford laura.brayford@chelmsfordcathedral.org.uk or drop it in to the Cathedral office. We look forward to celebrating Creationtide with you.