

2020 08 23 *Pentecost 12* Bruised and Angry?

Bruised? Under the weather? Covid is a silent and dreadful enemy. Young people's parties – and older one's too, spreading the virus. Lives have been changed, and it's hard to know what can or can't be done. This virus is called Coronavirus because it looks like a crown. Is Covid - King, then?

Here's today's reading from St Matthew 16: 13-20.

When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

"But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."

Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. ¹⁸ And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hell will not overcome it.

I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." Then he ordered his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

So, who really wears the crown? Christ who has the victory; he is King, and has authority over all our enemies.

What helps for me, when I'm tempted to be down, is to keep everyone forgiven: the government; the people who arouse fear and blame; the press; the people who are not distancing; the disease itself. Let them all go. Forgiveness sets us free to live life in as

positive a way as possible. Resentment leads to misery. Grumbles are too heavy to bear. Look up to the Lord and his love.

"Come to me, all who are burdened or heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Christ's love is so great, his compassion so deep, he will bring consolation and healing.

Simon Danks (from the Diocesan Board of Finance) writes: "Say to the mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move."

Matthew 17:20

I am currently using a guided journal during my prayer times in order to work through a significant challenge that I have in my professional life. Late last week the daily reading opened up with these words, "There comes a time when you must quit talking to God about the mountain in your life and start talking to the mountain about your God".

"I started to write in the journal about my mountain, trying to define exactly what it is, and as I did so some interesting thoughts came to mind. But none of them felt like they allowed me to talk to my mountain.

The more I doodled and wrote what was coming to mind the clearer it became that the mountain that I had defined wasn't the real issue; the real mountain was the thoughts and perceptions that I had built in my head about the challenge that I face.

Once I started to pray about how I was thinking, then the challenge looked very different, faith arrived, and what felt like God's strategy started to unfold. I am now starting each working day by praying about my thinking and asking for that to be moved in the right direction."

Some prayers:

Lord of all might and power, you are the King and the Christ.
You hold all things together in your hands
and all our lives depend on you.
Grant us patience and determination
to walk the way of the cross with you,
the golden way that enables forgiveness and joy,
that we may live our lives in peace
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
Amen.

Lord of all compassion,
Grant your protection to all young people who are dismayed,
and give them courage to face life's difficulties.
Please provide the assistance they need
and help them to trust you each day.
Amen

Give your courage to teachers and
children returning to school,
peace to the parents who are concerned,
wisdom for all those leading in education;
and bless our own school in Leamington Hastings.
Amen

King of the world, you know the thoughts of world leaders.
Bring justice and peace in every country;
freedom of speech and expression,
and an end to persecution.
Amen



Notices

This Sunday there will be a service of Holy Communion at
Grandborough at 9am.

On Sunday Aug 30th there will be no service in the Benefice.

On Sunday Sept 6th, there will be a service in Leamington Hastings
at 11am. That will be Communion, and folk from Birdingbury have
asked to come too.

*How we sit in churches in the future
In our churches, we sit 2 metres apart from each other.
It's rather strange at first, but necessary for our health!
So please bear with us, and wear a mask if you possibly
can, unless you have breathing difficulties while wearing
one.*

*For Harvest services there may be more people wanting
to come than there is space; so you might be requested to
ring someone to say you are coming; or we will put on a
second service! More news about this next week.*

The Blessing:

The Lord bless you and keep you;
the Lord make his face to shine upon you
and be gracious to you.

The Lord lift up the light of his countenance on you,
and give you peace. Amen.