

## PCCs MEETING

There will be a joint meeting of the three PCCs in the benefice at 7pm on Friday 21st August, here at St Thomas' to approve the parish profiles. Archdeacon Martin will be present to answer any questions about the recruitment process.

## CLERGY CONTACT

A reminder that, during the interregnum, messages for both Fr Herbert and Canon Judith may be left on 01273 937678.

Additionally, Fr Herbert may be contacted by email: [associatevicar@st-thomas-lewes.org.uk](mailto:associatevicar@st-thomas-lewes.org.uk) Contacts for Br. George remain as before.

## COFFEE

For those who would like, several of us are meeting informally for coffee from 10.30am on Wednesday mornings outside Irma's café now that it has re-opened; weather permitting. All welcome.



The toilets are open!



Cliffe High Street, LEWES BN7 2AH  
Email: [warden@st-thomas-lewes.org.uk](mailto:warden@st-thomas-lewes.org.uk)

## CANON RICHARD

Next Sunday (August 16th) we welcome Canon Richard Moatt back as our guest celebrant and preacher for Trinity X.

Richard has now settled in his new house in Lewes and has agreed to cover some Sundays when Fr. Herbert is away.

Being a self-supporting minister, Fr. Herbert is entitled to one week off in four.

We look forward to seeing Richard again and hearing his news.



## PRAYER REQUESTS

Parish prayer requests are an important part of our ministry and pastoral care.

Given the current circumstances written requests may be left in the offertory plate. Each Sunday, Fr. Herbert will then pray for them all himself, until we can have paper and pen available for requests to be written.



## FACE MASKS

From today, face masks become mandatory in churches for everyone, including priests, and should be worn at all times except when receiving Communion, apart from those who have any of the exemptions.



## SUMMER FAIR

With deep regret, the 2020 Cliffe Summer Fair has been CANCELLED.

Any donation, in lieu of the amount you would have spent at the Fair, would be gratefully received; either in the Plate, or to Imogen or Sue Hammond.

## CLIFFE HALL

The Hall's disabled toilet is now usable. Please speak to the sidesman for details of access.

Helen has retired as Hall Manager after many years of faithful service, to be replaced by Trevor. Helen remains Treasurer to the Cliffe Feoffees

PLEASE TAKE THIS SHEET AWAY WITH YOU

Tel: 01273 937678  
[www.st-thomas-lewes.org.uk](http://www.st-thomas-lewes.org.uk)



Sunday 9th August 2020 – Trinity IX



## THE COLLECT

GRANT to us, Lord, we beseech thee, the spirit to think and do always such things as be rightful; that we, who cannot do any thing that is good without thee, may by thee be enabled to live according to thy will; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## THE EPISTLE - 1 Corinthians 10 vs1-13

BRETHREN, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud, and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them; and that rock was Christ. But with many of them God was not well pleased; for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

## THE GOSPEL - St Luke 16 vs 1-9

JESUS said unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods. And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? Give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward. Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig, to beg I am ashamed. I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses. So he called every one of his lord's debtors unto him, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord? And he said, An hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty. Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, An hundred measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write four-score. And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light. And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.

## SERMON

**O**UR gospel reading from St Luke today seems perhaps to be one of the most difficult passages to understand. Jesus is speaking to His disciples and tells them a story or is it a parable? – for a parable has a meaning.

I have looked at a couple of commentaries which confirm the difficulties arising in this passage. For instance was the steward called dishonest because of his conduct leading to his dismissal or because of what we hear he then did after receiving notice of his dismissal ?. Furthermore, why did his master approve of the his actions which resulted in his master losing out financially ?

Well, there appears to be two scenarios for us to consider. The first scenario is that if the actions of the steward were deemed dishonest why were they then approved by his master who lost money? Could it be that the steward was praised instead for his shrewdness in dealing with an urgent situation – that of his dismissal ?

The situation was that the steward confronted with notice of his dismissal and seeing himself as being unable to work, decided to prepare for his future and to place himself in good favour with others by amending his master's accounts with those debtors. It is interesting to note that the large sums involved indicate that the debtors were merchant traders.

The second scenario to consider is that alternatively we could take the view that the steward was dishonest because of his longstanding bad management of his master's estate, as would be suggested by the opening verse 'and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his

**WELCOME** to our service of Holy Communion according to the Book of Common Prayer. It is lovely to have you with us this morning.

Unfortunately, we are still not permitted to sing, and Communion can be in one-kind only: received in silence

while standing at the chancel steps.

This pew sheet now contains the weekly Collect, Epistle and Gospel reading. The service sheet is generic and, when we run out we will start to use our white service booklets again, storing them safely between Sundays.

You may like to take the service sheet away with you today and bring it with you to church each Sunday.

Please do not congregate in the church after the service but make your way outside where Fr Herbert and Br George will be waiting to greet you.

goods'. Furthermore, that the steward's subsequent actions of amending the accounts were not dishonest in the eyes of the law and so his master had approved those actions on the basis of his shrewdness in dealing with the issue of his dismissal.

Now according to commentators this second scenario is quite possible when we take a look at the Jewish law on usury and lending money. It is interesting to learn that the Law of Moses prohibited receiving interest on loans and as a result Jewish merchants had asserted that the law was to protect those most destitute from exploitation. So they conducted their financial transactions for their mutual benefit and treated loans as a business contract. This meant that if the debtor already had some of the commodity under the contract in question he was deemed not to be destitute and so could freely enter a transaction without usury taking place.

What is significant for this type of business loan transaction is that it was expressed in wheat or oil which were the vital commodities acceptable under the Jewish law. And as we know our Gospel reading in this parable records how the steward amended his master's accounts by reassigning the debts owed in terms of wheat and oil. So the steward, whilst still in his master's employment and before his dismissal had happened, amended the loans of his master's debtors in a way that was seen to be acceptable under the Jewish law. Although this was of course to his master's detriment financially his master still saw fit to approve and praise the steward because of his shrewdness .

Therefore, if we see this story as a parable it can be viewed as a way of Jesus showing His disciples, as a warning, how the Jewish traders had devised their business practices so shrewdly as not to contradict their religious observances whilst still keeping within the law. The consequences of such practices might indeed be unfair such as it was to the master of the steward but nevertheless the merchants interpreted those practices as being justified and acceptable by both law and religion.

The point which is to be drawn out for us, as it was for the disciples, is that if worldly merchants can assess their business dealings with such astute observance then ought not God's people be likewise as diligent in their spiritual lives and observance of God's laws with such eagerness ?.

As we know money and wealth are not in themselves bad but what matters is how we use them and place them in our lives. So easily for many can they become their master leading people in false ways of dealing with others. They essentially draw us away from God and from living our lives in honour and worship of Him as our creator, redeemer and king.

It is that good conduct in right dealings, by God's help, which builds in us right character both for Godly living in this world and in the heavenly realm which is beautifully summed up in our Collect today - 'Grant to us, Lord, we beseech thee, the spirit to think and do always such things as be rightful: that we, who cannot do any thing that is good without thee, may by thee be enabled to live according to thy will; through Jesus Christ our Lord'. Amen.

Fr Herbert.