

## Remembrance Prayer

Almighty and eternal God, from whose love in Christ we cannot be parted, either by death or life: hear our prayers and thanksgivings for all whom we remember this day; fulfil in them the purpose of your love; and bring us all, with them, to your eternal joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## LOCKDOWN II

Lockdown Two means that, although we are allowed to keep the church open every day for private prayer and mediation, we are not permitted to hold any public worship.

You are very welcome to call in to St Thomas' for some peaceful time in the presence of God.

If you know anyone who would like to be kept in touch during lockdown, please ensure Trevor has the details: preferably an email address but otherwise a postal address. Contact him via: warden@st-thomas-lewes.org.uk or by 'phone to 01273 937678 and he will ensure distribution.

## PCC MEETING

Due to lockdown, the next meeting has been moved to Friday 11<sup>th</sup> December at 7pm in the Hall.

## RECTOR

Shortlisting has taken place and candidates were invited for interview; one has sadly withdrawn. Unfortunately, due to lockdown, the date has had to be changed and is now scheduled for 7<sup>th</sup> December if regulations allow. We are permitted to decide to re-advertise if neither proves suitable.

## PRAYERS

We pray for all those in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness or any other adversity at this time; including: . Pam Swabey, Joan Bishop, Ken Allbon, Jean Burges, Susan Larkin and Rosemary Burnett.

## PRAYER REQUESTS

Parish prayer requests may be sent to Fr. Herbert or to Trevor.



## POPPIES

With thanks to all those who have decorated the church so beautifully to mark Remembrance Sunday as we recall all those in the parish who fell in the service of their country.

## LEAKING ROOF

Our architect has received tenders back and we have selected an approved contractor to undertake the work. The Faculty is being prepared and will be sent to the diocese for approval. It's a long process!

## For the Fallen

They shall grow not old,  
as we that are left grow old:

Age shall not weary them,  
nor the years condemn.  
At the going down of the sun  
and in the morning  
We will remember them.

The Parish Church of  
**St Thomas à Becket**  
Cliffe High Street, Lewes



Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2020

TRINITY XXII



## The Collect

Lord, we beseech thee to keep thy household the Church in continual godliness; that through thy protection it may be free from all adversities, and devoutly given to serve thee in good works, to the glory of thy name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## The Epistle - Philippians 1.3-11

I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, for your fellowship in the Gospel from the first day until now; being confident of this very thing, that he who hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ; even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart, inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the Gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace. For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ. And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgement: that ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere, and without offence, till the day of Christ: being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ unto the glory and praise of God.

## The Gospel - St. Matthew 18.21-end

Peter said unto Jesus, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, until seven times; but until seventy times seven. Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants. And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents. But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. The servant therefore fell down and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt. But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow-servants, which owed him an hundred pence; and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest. And his fellow-servant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And he would not; but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. So when his fellow-servants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done. Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.



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## SERMON

### REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY collects:

Almighty Father, whose will is to restore all things in thy beloved Son, the King of all: govern the hearts and minds of those in authority and bring the families of the nations, divided and torn apart by the ravages of sin, to be subject to his just and gentle rule; who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

O God of peace, whose Son Jesus Christ proclaimed the kingdom and restored the broken to wholeness of life: look with compassion upon the anguish of the world and, by thy healing power, make whole both people and nations; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen

**O**N THIS Remembrance Sunday our gospel reading in St Matthew concerns the parable of the unmerciful servant. It is preceded by St Peter asking Jesus a question about forgiveness, asking 'Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him?', till seven times?'

Peter's question relates to forgiveness between brothers, his own people, which in the wider context would later concern fellow Christians and the whole church. Jesus' response to Peter is that forgiving a person should not just be until seven times only but until seventy seven times, that is it should be continuous and unlimited. These numbers reflect a reference in Genesis chapter 4 concerning vengeance and Abel but here in our gospel passage it concerns the opposite ie. Jesus' teaching of forgiveness. What St Peter, the disciple, has to forgive in his brother is tiny compared to what God has forgiven in him.

To make the point Jesus proceeds to tell the disciples a parable about the king who greatly forgave his servant owing him much, out of compassion we are told, but which servant then fails to show gratefulness and like forgiveness to one of his own fellowman who only owed him a little. It is a situation for personal reflection that

is addressed not only to St Peter but to each of us and to everyone in life.

Jesus opens the parable with the words 'Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened...'. and in this is reflected the Lord's Prayer which cites placing Heaven and the coming kingdom in petition before asking forgiveness for our sins, or trespasses, as we are told to forgive those who trespass against us. Forgiveness and mercy are the ways of God and ought to be our ways too.

In the parable the servant of the king pleads for patience and says 'I will pay thee all' but later we learn that he obviously cannot pay him for the king puts the servant in prison when he failed to show forgiveness to his own fellow servant. This reflects the fact that the sins of man are a debt that cannot be repaid by man but thanks be to God that it has been cancelled by Him in Christ through His death and resurrection. When we come to Christ in repentance and seek forgiveness our sins are forgiven and the debt paid.

The king, we note, does not accept the servant's promise to pay all but instead 'loosed him and forgave him the debt'. In this is the kingdom of God where Jesus offers that divine forgiveness which is unlimited with mercies unending.

The parable ends by the king asking the servant 'Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow servant, even as I had pity on thee?' and that question is also addressed and asked to all of us too. In reality we do not have a choice in withholding forgiveness towards others for we are all sinful before God, like that servant who refused to show forgiveness to his fellow servant.

However, through Christ God has forgiven us all our sins when we come to Him in repentance. In consequence and gratefulness we are to show mercy too for one another from our hearts which means not just thoughts and words but by attitude and actions in the way we treat each other. This is the great calling which reflects the love and compassion of God for His created.

So returning to this Remembrance Sunday we remember with great thanksgiving all those who have died serving in world wars and military conflicts together with all those who serve today to pursue freedom and peace. So let us all seek to live lives reflecting mercy and forgiveness to make this world a better place and to look towards the coming kingdom of God in the heavenly glory. Amen.

Fr Herbert.