



Week beginning 5<sup>th</sup> July 2020  
The Fourth Sunday after Trinity

### Reflection

After careful consideration, the PCC decided that we will open our church for public worship on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> July at 10 am. Just before the beginning of the lockdown, the churchwardens and I went through the cupboards to update our inventory and we discovered a bottle of champagne. I put it in the fridge thinking we could crack it open on Easter morning to share as part of the joyful celebration of the Resurrection. When we closed the church in March, the fridge was turned off but the champagne was left inside. Although we are now able to gather in church for worship, I don't think we're quite ready to celebrate with champagne. We will know when we have come through this crisis when it feels right to drink champagne after church one Sunday morning.

Many of us have longed to come back to church. Perhaps we've discovered how much the Eucharist means to us. We've missed human contact and being with people who share our faith and values. Whatever it is, many of us are looking forward to going back to church. But I must warn you, we won't be worshipping like we used to. There will be no singing, no processing. Responses must be whispered. I will need to wear a mask and you will only be able to receive in one kind (no wine, let alone champagne!). It will be very subdued.

Some members of the PCC rightly argued that until we can worship the way we really want to, we should wait. Others pointed out that we are by no means through this crisis and, as we've seen in Leicester, infection rates can go up suddenly. Our church family includes people who are more at risk from COVID-19 than others and we have a responsibility to them. Is now the right time? Just because we can, doesn't mean we should and just because something is possible, it doesn't make it desirable. Some of you are still shielding and some of you might decide wisely, that the risk of returning to church outweighs the benefit.

We pride ourselves at St John's that we are inclusive, welcoming and hospitable but we have had to put the toys out of sight because they are a risk; we can't serve refreshments because they are a risk. We don't want to have to open the toilets, because they are a risk. If you have fidgety children, stay at home. If you are at all concerned about the risk to your health or the risk that you might pose to someone else's health, I would encourage you to stay at home. We still have to maintain social distancing and that will make life trickier for some than others.

I'm writing this on St Thomas' day. I think he is, without doubt, (see what I did there) my favourite apostle. In the reading set for morning prayer (John 11: 1 – 16), Jesus explains to the disciples that Lazarus is dead and he wants to return to Judea. The disciples are nervous as the last time they

were there, people tried to stone Jesus. Thomas says, 'Let us also go, that we may die with him.' I've always imagined Thomas rolling his eyes. Is he being sarcastic? I've no idea if sarcasm existed in first century middle eastern culture. My children inform me that it was invented by the Anglo-Saxons and they know this is true because they saw it in *Horrible Histories*. However, I think it is in keeping with Thomas' reputation as a sceptic. The point is that the disciples were addressing a perceived risk. It is risky for them to return to Judea as Jesus is persona non grata and his life is in danger. However, if they are prepared to take that risk, they stand to witness signs and wonders: the raising of Lazarus from the dead. They cannot imagine what Jesus intends to do.

You might be thinking, she's giving us very mixed messages here. I am. But I want to be very clear that there is no pressure on anyone to come or not come back to church on 12<sup>th</sup> July. Thomas, I think, didn't really want to go back to Judea but as far as we know he went anyway and that might be because of peer pressure. Maybe he wasn't being sarcastic, and he genuinely thought they should go and die gloriously together. Either way, don't be like Thomas. Don't come back to church because of a misplaced sense of obligation and don't be a martyr. Do come if you feel you cannot keep away and God is calling you back. God might just as easily be telling you to stay at home, so might your GP. Only you know the answer to that.

#### Collect

O God, the protector of all who trust in you,  
without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy:  
increase and multiply upon us your mercy;  
that with you as our ruler and guide  
we may so pass through things temporal  
that we lose not our hold on things eternal;  
grant this, heavenly Father,  
for our Lord Jesus Christ's sake,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

#### Post Communion

Eternal God,  
comfort of the afflicted and healer of the broken,  
you have fed us at the table of life and hope:  
teach us the ways of gentleness and peace,  
that all the world may acknowledge  
the kingdom of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

<b>Readings for today</b>	<b>Readings next Sunday</b>
Genesis 24: 34 – 38, 42 – 49, 58 - end	Isaiah 55: 10 – 13
Psalms 45: 10 – end	Psalms 65
Romans 7: 15 – 25a	Romans 8: 1 – 11
Matthew 11: 16 – 19, 25 - end	Matthew 13: 1 – 9, 18 – 23

## Coming up this week:

This Sunday	10:00am	Parish Eucharist IN THE VICARAGE
Monday to Saturday	9.00am 5.00 pm	Morning Prayer Evening Prayer
<b>NEXT SUNDAY 12<sup>th</sup> JULY</b>	<b>10 am</b>	<b>Parish Eucharist IN THE CHURCH</b>

## PRAYER THIS WEEK

Saint's Day	Prayer in the parish	Prayer in the diocese
Fourth Sunday after Trinity	<b>Work with children and young people on the estate</b> Residents of: Pine Close, Queen Elizabeth Road, Queen Mary Road	Jesus said 'Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.'  Pray for the united Church of Pakistan The Most Revd Humphrey Peters - Bishop of Peshawar & Moderator of the Church of Pakistan
Monday 6 <sup>th</sup> <b>Thomsa More</b> , scholar, and <b>John Fisher</b> , bishop, martyrs 1535	<b>The PCC and Parish officers</b> Phil Betts, Philip Howell, Jessica Bayston, PCC members Residents of: Ravendale Drive, Redbourne Drive, Retief Close, Retief View	<b>Legbourne and Wold Marsh - Legbourne, Raithby, Tathwell, Withcall, Wold-Marsh, Strubby, Belleau, Swaby, South Thoresby, North Reston - Fr James Robinson</b>  'Please pray that we may be compassionate, faithful and full of hope as we seek to meet the challenges of the pandemic across our communities'.  North Queensland (Australia) The Rt Dr Keith Ronald Joseph Awgu  Aninri (Nigeria) The Rt Revd Emmanuel Ugwu  Kaduna (Nigeria) The Rt Revd Timothy Yahaya
Tuesday 7 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Community Police and Neighbourhood Watch</b> Helen Kumar, Amanda Allen, Craig Mobbs and Tina Worden Residents of: Ridge View, Riseholme Road, Riverton Close, Riverton View	<b>The Louth Team - Louth St James, St Michael, Holy Trinity, Welton le Wold, South Elkington, Stewton - Revd Canon Nick Brown</b>  North West Australia (Australia) The Rt Revd Gary Nelson Awka (Nigeria) The Rt Revd Alexander Ibezim Kafanchan (Nigeria) The Rt Revd Marcus Dogo
Wednesday 8 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Choir and musicians</b> Especially at a time when there will be no singing in our churches. Residents of: Rolleston Close, Rothwell Road,	<b>Mid Marsh Group - Alvington w Yarburgh and North Cockerington, South Cockerington, Carlton, Grimoldby, Manby (Plurality with Saltfleetby and Theddlethorpe) - In Vacancy</b>  Northern Argentina (South America) The Rt Revd Nicholas James Quedest Drayson Awori (Nigeria) The Rt Revd J Akin Atere

	Roughton Court, Ruckland Avenue	
Thursday 9 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Lincoln Castle Academy; Yarborough Leisure Centre and the Sports Hub</b> Residents of: Rusland Close, Rushlip Close, Sanders Close, Sanders View	<b>Saltfleetby - (Plurality with Mid Marsh and Theddlethorpe) – In Vacancy</b>  Northern California (The Episcopal Church) The Rt Revd Barry Beisner Badagry (Nigeria) The Rt Revd Joseph Adeyemi  Ballarat (Australia) The Rt Revd Garry Weatherill
Friday 10 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Vergers and servers</b> Residents of: Scopwick Place, Searby Road, Sedgebrook Close, Stainton Gardens	<b>Somercotes and Grainthorpe w Conisholme (Plurality with The Fotherby Group) – In Vacancy</b>  Northern Indiana (The Episcopal Church) The Rt Revd Douglas Sparks Bangor (Wales) The Rt Revd Andrew John
Saturday 11 <sup>th</sup> <b>Benedict</b> , abbot, c. 550	<b>United Reformed Church</b> The elders and people of the church Residents of: Stapleford Avenue, Steeping Court, Sturton Close, Sudbrooke Drive	<b>Theddlethorpe (plurality with Mid Marsh and Saltfleetby) In Vacancy</b>  Northern Luzon (Philippines) The Rt Revd Hilary Ayban Pasikan Banks & Torres (Melanesia) The Rt Revd Alfred Patterson Worek Kagera (Tanzania) The Rt Revd Darlington Bendankeha

The Diocesan Prayer Calendar can be downloaded from the website:  
<https://www.lincoln.anglican.org/sharing-in-prayer>

<b>Give thanks for:</b>	The opportunity to worship together again in church
<b>Special prayers this week for:</b>	All the ordinands and curates who were anticipating ordination this weekend but who will have to wait because of corona virus.
<b>People in need:</b>	Clive Seabury, Dave Notman, Rosa
<b>Rest in peace:</b>	David Vince

Revd Rachel can be contacted Saturday – Thursday  
 on 07813 617977  
 e-mail: [revd-rachel@stjohnthebaptistparishchurch.org.uk](mailto:revd-rachel@stjohnthebaptistparishchurch.org.uk)  
 Web site: [www.stjohnthebaptistparishchurch.org.uk](http://www.stjohnthebaptistparishchurch.org.uk)  
 Any items for this weekly sheet should be received by Revd Rachel  
*no later than Wednesday evening.*  
 If you would like to receive this weekly sheet by email, please e-mail  
[revd-rachel@stjohnthebaptistparishchurch.org.uk](mailto:revd-rachel@stjohnthebaptistparishchurch.org.uk) or speak to a churchward