

ST. MARY OF NAZARETH /ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI – WEST WICKHAM

17th July 2022: Fifth Sunday after Trinity

Hazel writes: Here's a picture of part of the collage created at St Francis' last week – wonderful colours and creativity. Everyone who came to both St Francis' and St Mary's said how much they appreciated the variety of art which they found there. You can also see a video of the event on the livestream of the service from last week:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JhEnc7D5Ovw> (beginning soon after 11 minutes).



Today, we have Holy Communion services at 8am and 9.15am in St Mary's Church and at 10.45am in St Francis' Church. There will also be a Healing Service at 3pm in St Mary's Church.

Hymns at 9.15 a.m. in St. Mary's – Seek ye first – To be in your presence – Rejoice rejoice! – By your side – Jesus shall take the highest honour.

Hymns at 10.45 a.m. in St. Francis' – Jesus shall take the highest honour – To be in your presence – Lord of all hopefulness – By your side – At the name of Jesus.

Next **Sunday 24th July**, we will have Holy Communion services at 8am in St Francis' Church, 9.15am in St Mary's Church and at 10.45am in St Francis' Church.

Morning Prayer is held each week in St Francis' Church on Wednesday morning at 9.30am, followed by the church being **open for private prayer** from 10.30-11.30am. It is also held at St Mary's Church on Thursday morning at 9am.

Together with St John's, the women's group is hosting a **Welcome Evening for Ukrainian families** and their hosts on July 19th. This evening is by invitation only, so if you know of any Ukrainian people, please pass on Milly's contact details, or give her theirs (with their permission): linktohopehighams@gmail.com or 07796 338483. If any women would like to be a welcomer or to provide support 'back of house' - washing up, serving, etc., please contact Kate Dyer (katedyer41@hotmail.com or 07808 468591) who will look after roles on the night.

On Thursday 21st we are welcoming a new pianist Arnaldo Cogorno to our **lunchtime concert** at St. Francis. He is a prize winning Venezuelan student at Trinity Laban

conservatoire and will be playing a varied programme of familiar and unfamiliar music. It will be a real treat to hear him. Do come along at 12.30 for tea/coffee and bring a friend.

Resources and updates for the week ahead – This week our service will be livestreamed on YouTube from St Mary's at 9.15am. All other files for this week have been combined and posted as a pew sheet which has been sent on paper to those who have told us that they are not on-line.

Please bring **Foodbank donations** to the Vicarage or St Francis' Church. Currently they require soup, toilet rolls, cooking sauces, tinned cold meat, squash, coffee, surface spray cleaner, toothpaste and washing up liquid. They are well stocked with pasta, cereal, tea and biscuits. Please do not bring any fresh or frozen food, or baby milk as the foodbank cannot pass this on. You can also donate financially here:

<https://bromleyborough.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-money>. Thank you for your continuing support.

Oak Lodge School are looking for **volunteer community governors** who play an important role in supporting the school and holding it to account for standards. You don't need to be an expert in education or have links with the school, but you must be committed to the successful running of the school. This means being available to give your time to be in school and to attend meetings at various times throughout the year. In return, you'll find that being a governor is hugely rewarding and that you develop new skills and knowledge. As a school that is committed to building a diverse community, we're particularly keen to hear from people from underrepresented groups and with protected characteristics, particularly older people and those with disabilities. For more information or to express an interest please contact the Trust Governance Manager, Joyce Munro at governance@compassacademytrust.org.

If anyone would like a pedestal at either church in memory of a loved one or to commemorate a special anniversary etc., please contact Merri Womack (8777 8772) for St Mary's (or there is a list to sign in the vestibule at St. Mary's) or Nicky Nightingale (nicholanightingale@hotmail.co.uk or 8916 9855) for St Francis'.

Any items for the joint pew sheet to Beryl berylbolton@hotmail.com and items for the websites to brian.griff19@btinternet.com or Gifty office@stmarywestwickham.co.uk.

Collect

Almighty God, send down upon your Church the riches of your Spirit, and kindle in all who minister the gospel your countless gifts of grace; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

First Reading:

Col.1: 1-14

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,² To the saints and faithful brothers and sisters in Christ in Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

³ In our prayers for you we always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, ⁴ for we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, ⁵ because of the hope laid up for you in

heaven. You have heard of this hope before in the word of the truth, the gospel ⁶ that has come to you. Just as it is bearing fruit and growing in the whole world, so it has been bearing fruit among yourselves from the day you heard it and truly comprehended the grace of God. ⁷ This you learned from Epaphras, our beloved fellow-servant He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf, ⁸ and he has made known to us your love in the Spirit.⁹ For this reason, since the day we heard it, we have not ceased praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, ¹⁰ so that you may lead lives worthy of the Lord, fully

pleasing to him, as you bear fruit in every good work and as you grow in the knowledge of God. ¹¹ May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, and may you be prepared to endure everything with patience, while joyfully ¹² giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light. ¹³ He has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Gospel Reading:**Luke 10: 25-37**

²⁵ Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. 'Teacher,' he said, 'what must I do to inherit eternal life?' ²⁶ He said to him, 'What is written in the law? What do you read there?' ²⁷ He answered, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself.' ²⁸ And he said to him, 'You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.'²⁹ But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, 'And who is my neighbour?' ³⁰ Jesus replied, 'A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. ³¹ Now by chance

a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. ³² So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. ³³ But a Samaritan while travelling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. ³⁴ He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. ³⁵ The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, "Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend."³⁶ Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of the

robbers?' ³⁷ He said, 'The one who showed him mercy.' Jesus said to him, 'Go and do likewise'

Post Communion Prayer

Grant, O Lord, we beseech you, that the course of this world may be so peaceably ordered by your governance, that your Church may joyfully serve you in all godly quietness; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The collect and post communion prayer, copyright © The Archbishops' Council of the Church of England or reproduced with permission from other copyright owners.

Bible reading from the New Revised Standard Version Bible: Anglicised Edition, copyright © 1989, 1995 the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America.

REFLECTION – Ven John Kiddle, Archdeacon of Wandsworth

One of the very striking things about Jesus as we encounter him in the gospel narratives is the way in which, when he wished to illustrate or identify a characteristic of discipleship or a quality of spiritual life, he often did so by pointing to someone far beyond the circle of those closest to him.

So, for example, he sees a poor widow in a far corner of the temple putting two small coins into the offering box and says that is true generosity. The Roman centurion who comes to Jesus to ask for healing for his servant exhibits, for Jesus, faith beyond that of any he has seen in the “house of Israel”. To illustrate the heart of prayer, Jesus tells a parable comparing the self-confident, self-righteous prayer of a pharisee with a publican who stood far off, bowed his head and asked for God’s mercy. Those who were Jesus’ true mother and brothers and sisters were all those, whoever they were, who did the will of God.

And to illustrate the true nature of love for neighbour, Jesus tells the story in today’s gospel reading about a foreigner, a Samaritan, who crosses the road, takes time and cares for the need of an injured Jew.

Today we reflect on the ministries to which God calls each of us. It is timely to be reminded that, if we open our eyes, we might see the radical reality of ministry modelled in unexpected places and in surprising people. As you take time to pray and listen to God about your own discipleship and vocation, take a look around, look to those on the edge or the fringe, see what God is up to; and, as you do, listen to your heart, and hear God’s call.

The good Samaritan wasn’t a Jew and, as far as we know, had no status or ministry within a religion. But he responded to a need in front of him, he saw a human being in need, he crossed the road, he acted with compassion, love and courage. It was a ministry.

It is of course necessary and right that we build structure around our ministries within church and in the community. Our structures of training, shared discernment and authorisation provide the framework within which ministries can flourish effectively, safely and joyfully. But if, in rigidity or formalism, we lose the essence of spontaneity, compassion, service and love we will lose everything.

For in the radical, barrier-breaking love of the good Samaritan we see, in sharp focus and vivid colour, the true nature of the eternal, inclusive, unconditional love of God. It is that love which shapes and inspires every Christian ministry.

As you reflect on your ministry, or the ministry to which God might be calling you, where do you see that same love giving it shape and direction?

Paul, in today's New Testament reading, introduces the metaphor of growth. The gospel, like a seed, bears fruit and grows. The lives we live bear fruit in the good work we do and in our own growth in our faith and knowledge of God.

Seeds are good symbols for the ministries to which God calls us. Sometimes they might appear small and even insignificant. At other times, like a seed that disappears in the ground, what we do might seem to be wasted or ignored. But in God's economy, nothing is wasted. The seeds that are our acts of love and service, the care, the leadership, the companionship we offer and the action we take, will in God's hands produce fruit.

Seeds are planted, seeds are thrown and blown, seeds are carried on the wind. The ministry to which God calls us is not carefully calculated, it is not half-hearted, nor does it come with strings attached. It is a gift from God to us that we hold lightly in our own hands, and it is a gift we choose to offer to others freely and generously.

We don't offer our service to God and others seeking any reward or result, we are not looking for praise or appreciation. But as we offer ourselves, our time, our words, our energy and our love with generosity, creativity and joy we will see fruit, God's fruit. The seeds we plant, the love we give, by God's grace, bring life to others and hope to communities.

As you reflect on your ministry and your life, what are the seeds you sow? Where do you see these making a difference and bearing fruit?

It might be that you are listening to this and finding that word "ministry" difficult or puzzling. We often use ministry to refer to very specific roles or jobs within the Church. There are, certainly, some specific ministries, including ordained ministries, to which some people are called. But each one of us is called to share in God's mission in the world and in supporting and strengthening each other in playing our full part in that mission.

The particular shape or form of our ministry is something we are invited to explore. This exploration is in essence a task of shared listening, or discernment. We listen to our heart, we listen to the gifts and skills and passions that God has given us, we listen to the reflections and wisdom of others, and we listen to the needs around us. In that listening we are seeking to listen to the voice of the Spirit of God, and to hear the call of

God. It might seem a big task or a complicated exercise, but it doesn't need to be. Just give it time, give it space, talk with others, open your eyes and your heart and it is amazing how clearly God can speak. Find someone to share this journey with you.

In particular, do take time to find out about the various opportunities for service and ministry in your local parish, both inside and outside the church. And do talk to someone about the opportunities that the Diocese of Southwark is offering for training and commissioning.

Is this an opportunity for you to review or renew the shape of your ministry? Who might walk alongside you and help you in that journey of listening? Might you help someone else in their discernment?

Prayer Pointers

Pray that we may find time in our busy lives simply to sit and be with Jesus. Pray for space that is quiet and helps us to focus our minds on things of the Holy Spirit.

Pray for those seeking to be the next Prime Minister that they do so with justice, honesty and compassion, seeking an agenda for all and not just for themselves; may those who wish to lead listen to the needs and voices around them.

Pray for the people of Sri Lanka where the Government has collapsed and the cost of living is daily forcing thousands into poverty way beyond our understanding.

Pray for those in our own country who are hungry and struggling to make ends meet. Pray that they find the kindness and support of neighbours and strangers, of foodbanks and more, to feed not just their bodies but their minds and their souls.

Hold before God all those we know who are sick, especially those suffering from cancer and undergoing treatment. In our congregations we pray for those struggling with ill health – especially Vicky Pearce, Mike East, Pat Allegacone, Jane Smith, Graham Stone, Daphne Dack, John and Anita Curtis – and those known to God alone.

Pray for all who have died recently and for all who we have loved and yet see no longer. May they rest in peace and rise in glory.

Offer our own personal prayers and thanksgivings. We entrust to God all those things that worry us; those situations we feel helpless in; those decisions that burden us; those losses that overwhelm us, and all that we are thankful for.