

A Message from the Vice Dean:

The 2014 World Cup Final between Germany and Argentina was watched by a global TV audience of over one billion viewers. Tentatively it is the highest number of people ever to have watched a football match. The seventy-seven thousand who were in the stadium on the 13th July 2014 were surrounded by an enormous number of supporters, unseen and unidentified, but who tuned in to be present to lend their presence and their support to this landmark occasion.

Chelmsford Cathedral cannot boast such numbers of course (!) but our online services including the Sunday morning Eucharist and daily morning and evening prayer have ensured that the congregation here have been joined by many others unseen and unidentified who have tuned in to lend their silent but solid support to the proclamation of faith here during the pandemic 'lockdown'.

It can be hard to see many positives through these difficult challenging times, but the phenomenon we have witnessed over these past weeks has given us so much encouragement, not only because we are managing to reach out to so many, but because their virtual presence is symbolic of something we always need to keep in mind- that we are surrounded by 'a great cloud of witnesses' who support us in our faith, and remind us that the church is far, far bigger than the cathedral building we inhabit.



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Study with Us:

Study Notes on the Sunday Gospel: 9 August 2020



Romans 10.5-15 Ps 85.8-13 Matthew 14.22-33

'Courage! It is I! Do not be afraid.'

In the Gospel this week, Jesus both seeks out quiet places to pray alone. Jesus reveals to us an ever-present God who reaches out to us and brings peace, especially amidst the storms of our own lives.

In the Psalm we are invited to asks for the Lord's saving help and to listen to God's voice – a voice that speaks of justice and peace, mercy and faithfulness.

In the First Reading, Paul invites us to recognise our role in taking responsibility as ministers of the good news of Jesus Christ. This is not the job of some particular trained group in the church, but our common job together

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The events of recent months may have made us more aware of God's presence in times of chaos. As we continue to move through these uncertain times, we pray for the grace always to be aware of God's presence in our lives, and confident in the peace he offers us.

Gospel Matthew 14: 22–33

Today's Gospel passage comes just after the feeding of the 5000. In this section of the Gospel, Jesus is instructing his disciples about their mission.

Jesus made the disciples get into the boat

The Greek word, translated here by 'made', is much stronger, akin to 'forced' or 'compelled' . His sending away of the crowds, mentioned twice, is also a sign of Jesus's authority.

He went up into the hills by himself to pray

In the Bible mountains and hills are places where God can be encountered in special and unique way. Just as there are times to pray as a community, Jesus also shows the necessity to pray on our own, alone with God.

The boat, by now far out on the lake

Fishing boats of the time were of moderate size: 26.5 ft long, 4.5ft deep and 7.5 ft wide, able to hold between 5–10 passengers and a ton of fish. A more literal translation indicates that the boat was 'several stadia' from the shore. A stadion is a Greek measure corresponding to 200 yards. It was battling with a heavy sea, for there was a headwind The Sea of Galilee is in fact a freshwater lake 700 ft below sea level, 8 miles wide and 13 miles long. Because of the surrounding hills 1200 ft above the sea surface, in the evening, there was a difference in the drop of temperature between the hills and the lake. The clash between cold and warm air led to sudden strong winds with waves 6ft high. The storm would last as long as it took for the lake to cool off. Because of their lack of scientific knowledge the people attributed these storms to spirits. Large bodies of water were seen as places of evil, chaos and threatening powers.

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Study with Us cont.

In the fourth watch of the night

This Roman measure of time would be between 3am and 6am.

Jesus was walking towards them

Matthew, writing for a Jewish audience, knows they would remember Old Testament episodes where God controls water (Genesis 1: 6–7) or overcomes waves (Psalm 77: 16–19; Job 9: 8; Isaiah 43: 16). Jesus demonstrates his power over the forces of nature and chaos.

It is I! Do not be afraid.

In saying these words, Jesus is quoting the name of God given in Exodus 3:14, and indeed identifying himself explicitly as God. Although we particularly associate the phrase “I am” with John’s Gospel, where it is used frequently throughout, Jesus used this phrase in all the Gospels.

Symbolism

The boat has often been seen as a symbol of the Early Church, still fragile at the time Matthew wrote his Gospel, subject to persecutions (storms) and saved by the presence of Jesus among them. To this day, many churches have a ceiling in the shape of an upside-down boat hull.

The events of recent months may have made us more aware of God’s presence in times of chaos. As we continue to move through these uncertain times, we pray for the grace always to be aware of God’s presence in our lives, and confident in the peace God offers us.

Daily Gospel Readings for this week, to use in your daily prayer:

Monday: Matthew 17. 22-end

Tuesday: Matthew 18. 1-5, 10, 12-14

Wednesday: Matthew 18. 15-20

Thursday: Matthew 18. 21 – 19.1

Friday: Matthew 19. 3-12

Saturday: Luke 1. 46-55



Safeguarding Officer: Elizabeth Marshall tel: 07902 225131
or email: safeguarding@chelmsfordcathedral.org.uk



Cathedral Eucharist 10.30am on Sundays: We are delighted that the Cathedral is now open for public worship on Sundays and you are invited to join us for the Cathedral Eucharist at 10.30am. Please note there is no longer a requirement to reserve a place/book a ticket for Sunday's 10.30am Eucharist service. Following the latest Church of England guidance, it is now expected that all visitors to the Cathedral, for worship or private prayer, wear a facemask.

Junior Church is also back in Guy Harlings Garden. Please click on the link below to book in as numbers are currently limited in order to comply with government guidelines. You are very welcome to join Jean for some fun activities. <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/chelmsford-cathedral-30658868236>

The Annual Report and Accounts for 2019 can now be viewed and downloaded from the website. From the menu at the bottom of the home page (in blue) click on Annual Report (under useful links).

Foundation Course in Pastoral Care: Many people offer Christian pastoral care in parishes and the aim of this course is to give confidence them and to develop their skills. The short courses are appropriate for anyone who provides care informally or more formally.

Either: 10 Tuesday evenings from September 8th to November 10th, 7pm to 9.30pm

Or: 10 Thursday evenings from September 10th to November 12th, 7pm to 9.30pm.

ALL courses on zoom, accessible via laptop, smartphone or iPad. We ask you to provide a letter of support from your church leader. More information from Di Hardy:

dhardy@chelmsford.anglican.org 01245 294449 Or Judy Cecil:

jcecil@chelmsford.anglican.org Information and application form at: chelmsford.anglican.org/lay-ministry/pastoral-assistant

Being Resourced: Bible Reading notes for the September - December period now on sale at the Bookstall in the Cathedral. You can pay for them either by putting the correct money in the slot in the wall or by using our new contactless giving plate.

If you would like to receive the Dean's letter emailed to you once a week and you do not already receive it, please email clare.broome@chelmsfordcathedral.org.uk

Growing in Faith resources in a weekly email. If you would like to receive it, please sign up via the 'Church at Home' page of the website or email imogen.nay@chelmsfordcathedral.org.uk

Pray with Us:

Please pray for the work of the Leprosy Mission. Remember, too, the people of those countries where leprosy is still a major problem today.

Chelmsford Cathedral and Chelmsford Diocese

Pray for the Anglican Church in Rwanda, The Most Revd Laurent Mbanda, Archbishop

Please pray for those who are unwell including Jean Cooper, Rita James, Winnie Towers, Jill Withams and all those in need of our prayers.

