

SUNDAY 26th July 2020 – 7th Sunday after Trinity

PRAYER FOR THE DAY (The Collect)

Lord of all power and might,
the author and giver of all good things:
graft in our hearts the love of your name,
increase in us true religion,
nourish us with all goodness,
and of your great mercy keep us in the same;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen.

FIRST READING: Romans 8. 26–39

The Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us.

Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, 'For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.' No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

GOSPEL: Matthew 13.31–33, 44–52

Jesus put before the crowd another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.'

He told them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.'

The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad.

So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Have you understood all this?' They answered, 'Yes.' And he said to them, 'Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.'

INTERCESSION

Heavenly Father, we come to you in the multitude of your mercies, to offer you our thanks for all the gifts you

have so richly bestowed upon us. Help us to use your gifts wisely, and glorify you in our lives.

We pray for the mission and unity of the Anglican Church throughout the World. In our Diocese we pray for Chaplains to the British Army, Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force. We pray for Parishes in the Lavenham Deanery.

In our life at the Tower, we pray for one another, that we can all remain safe. We welcome all who can now return to worship together on Sunday. We pray for families during the Summer Holidays, remembering also those for whom family life is difficult. We pray for those who will be travelling that everyone will be alert and safety conscious and remain safe on beaches near rivers and in the countryside.

We pray for our future ability to maintain our Choral Tradition: and to serve people in the Town Centre around us. We pray for the financial resources needed and give thanks for the generosity of all who give to St Mary -le-Tower. We pray for the staff of our church at an unsettling time.

In the World we remember those who live in fear of conflict, persecution and poverty. For the work of the World Health Organisation, for Aid agencies and the United Nations; and for international solidarity and peace. We pray for our Government, and the work of its Ministers and its advisers.

We pray for those who as a result of the Covid-19 epidemic have been made redundant and have lost their livelihoods and the means to support their families. May they be comforted in their loss and be able to find alternative fulfilment and new employment.

We pray for those we know who are sick or otherwise distressed including Angela Pantelis, Freyer, Andrew Hastings and John Wheeler. We continue to pray for Derek le May, Andy Courage, Bob Tostevin, Linda Haywood Smith, and Carolyn, Margrid Brooks, and Mary Gurney.

We pray rest in peace and rise in glory for those who have recently died, among them Christine Redford, and we pray for all who mourn. We give thanks for the lives of those whose remembrance falls at this time of year, among them Canon Ted and Sylvia Wells.

NOTICES

10.30am Parish Eucharists have resumed. All welcome, however everyone is strongly encouraged to wear a face covering.

There will be one service per Sunday at 10.30am and services will still be live streamed for those unable to attend or who feel it remains better for them to remain at home.

We are continuing the practice of Spiritual Communion at least for now, where only the celebrant receives on behalf of the whole Body of Christ. There are a number of reasons for this. The main reason is in order to make the service in church as safe as possible for anyone who wishes to attend, and this is achieved by having the minimum of movement around the church. It also means that it is the same for people participating in church or at home on line. The policy will be kept under review.

Those who are attending the service in Church are asked to download the service at home and to follow it on their phone or tablet or print out their own copy. There will be some printed copies available in church for those who prefer not to do this, but it would be good to save printing and paper as much as possible.

CAN YOU HELP to staff the church for opening for private prayer? We are looking to put teams of welcomers together for this. If you would like to help make our church available for private prayer, please get in touch with the Vicar.

SERVICES WILL CONTINUE TO BE STREAMED LIVE

You do not need your own social media account, and you do not need to watch at the time of live streaming. Just go to the St Mary-le-Tower website and click on "LIVE" after the **Streamed Services** title, and this will take you to the St Mary-le-Tower Facebook Live page. Then click on the service when it appears about five minutes before the time, and you will be logged on.

To Access the Service when it is no longer being streamed live, click on "RECENT" after the **Streamed Services** title, and this will take you directly to the video.

Orders of service will continue to be available in advance to be viewed either on screen or printed off. Just click on the version you want.

SMLT WEBSITE SURVEY

Please let us know what you think!

The new Social Media team at SMLT are keen to have your opinions on our website, to help inform updates and proposed improvements. To that end we have designed a very brief survey and would be really grateful if you could find a minute or two to complete it. It is just five short questions. To access the survey, click this link: www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/G6C8RQ6 or hover your smartphone camera over the QR code below.



PLEASE LET ONE OF THE MINISTRY TEAM (Vicar, Elders, Churchwarden) know of any pastoral needs amongst the SMLT Community, so that we can respond, especially news of anyone suffering from the Coronavirus, but also other illness, or death, or just loneliness.

PLEASE PASS THIS ENEWS on to anyone you think would appreciate it. However, if you are going to put it through someone's door, please handle the paper with thoroughly washed hands and put it in an envelope before delivering it.

CURRENT PARISH CONTACTS

Please refer to the Parish Website for latest updates and downloads www.stmaryletower.org.uk

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FINANCE UPDATES

EMERGENCY APPEAL The PCC has launched an emergency appeal to sustain our church over the coming winter following all the disruptions of the Covid-19 pandemic crisis. Letters have been delivered to all regular members of the St Mary-le-Tower Church Community, and over the coming weeks we will be reaching out further to other contacts. You can download the appeal documents from our website.

THANK YOU SO MUCH for the response that has already been made to this appeal. We have already received over £30,000 towards the initial target of £50,000. This is really fantastic progress!

THIS IS NO TIME TO RELAX. No one should be in any doubt that our church faces a very significant challenge to sustain St Mary-le-Tower into the future. A good start has been made. Thanks be to God! But let's keep it up.

CUTTING STAFFING COSTS. At the same as launching this appeal we have been seeking to cut operating costs in a meaningful way. This has forced the PCC to the sad conclusion that we had to make two posts redundant: the Parish Administrator and the Church Cleaner.

These redundancy processes are now complete and sadly Donna Joyce and Irina Alekhina have now left the employ of St Mary-le-Tower. We can report that these partings have both been amicable, as both people care about our church and understand the challenges.

So we hold both Irina and Donna and their families in our prayers and in due course we shall be thanking them for all their work for St Mary-le-Tower in our usual way. There are no further staffing cuts currently being planned by the PCC.

WAYS OF GIVING TO SMLT. Because of the Covid-19 restrictions, there will continue to be no plate collections in church. Donations can be made in the following ways:

- Via the Donations Cabinet in church
- Via the Contactless Terminal in church
- Via the Donation Button on our website
- Via regular giving by Standing Order
- Via BACS to 30-94-55, 00059383
PCC St Mary le Tower Ipswich

[The donations bank account is separate from the PCC's operational account and is seen only by the Churchwarden, Donations Officer and Bookkeeper.]