

DIOCESAN STRATEGY PRAYER

Living God, Jesus calls his followers to seek first your Kingdom.

Renew us as we make your love known;

Release us to share freely together in mission;

Rejuvenate us to be fruitful in your service.

Give us courage, wisdom and compassion,

That strengthened with the grace of the Holy Spirit,

We may, as the Diocese of Sheffield,

Both flourish and grow through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Anyone wishing to book weddings and baptisms, please contact the Vicar.

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Welcome to our Services

We have a hearing loop; please switch your hearing aid to the 'T' setting

All are welcome to share bread and wine at Communion or a blessing at the altar rail.

If you would like to speak to someone or for someone to pray with you, please speak to the Clergy.

To the toilets, go through the Lady Chapel, across the vestry and into the St James' Room corridor

COLLECT for Easter 5

Risen Christ,

your wounds declare your love for the world

and the wonder of your risen life:

give us compassion and courage

to risk ourselves for those we serve,

to the glory of God, the Father.

Amen

New Testament Reading

²⁶ Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Go south to the road—the desert road—that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." ²⁷ So he started out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian^[a] eunuch, an important official in charge of all the treasury of the Kandake (which means "queen of the Ethiopians"). This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship, ²⁸ and on his way home was sitting in his chariot reading the Book of Isaiah the prophet. ²⁹ The Spirit told Philip, "Go to that chariot and stay near it."

³⁰ Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. "Do you understand what you are reading?" Philip asked.

³¹ "How can I," he said, "unless someone explains it to me?" So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.

³² This is the passage of Scripture the eunuch was reading:

“He was led like a sheep to the slaughter,
and as a lamb before its shearer is silent,
so he did not open his mouth.

³³ In his humiliation he was deprived of justice.

Who can speak of his descendants?

For his life was taken from the earth.”^[b]

³⁴ The eunuch asked Philip, “Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?” ³⁵ Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus.

³⁶ As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, “Look, here is water. What can stand in the way of my being baptized?” ^[37] ^[c] ³⁸ And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. ³⁹ When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing. ⁴⁰ Philip, however, appeared at Azotus and traveled about, preaching the gospel in all the towns until he reached Caesarea.

Gospel Reading

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. ² He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes^[a] so that it will be even more fruitful. ³ You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. ⁴ Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

⁵ “I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. ⁷ If you remain in

me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸ This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

Thought for the Week

John Ch 1 verse 5 *‘The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it’.*

This is one of the most well-known verses in the whole of John’s Gospel. It expresses a simple fact that if you bring light into darkness then the light is visible, no matter how dark it is. On another occasion in John’s Gospel Jesus referred to himself as ‘The Light of the World’, not a light but as the light.

This imagery is clear, as far as Jesus was concerned, he was distinct, and the first disciples and the Church have agreed with him. He was distinct in that as God his influence in this world is way beyond that of any human, before or after. I always think of Jesus shining in the darkness in two ways, firstly that he illuminates the way forward making following him clear. Secondly, that in the difficulties that are always present in life in one form or another, as we look to Jesus, and away from our own difficulties, then the light of his presence puts things into perspective. No matter how dark the situation the light of the presence of Jesus is always visible above and beyond the problem. As the limitations on our movements are relaxed you might like to take time to ponder where it is that you would like Jesus to bring some clarity and direction, to the darkness that isolation may have brought upon us.

Dear Lord Jesus, please shine the light of your presence into the uncertainty that this virus is having upon our world. May we see a way forward through trusting in you.

Amen