



Benefice of the Piddle Valley, Hilton & Ansty, Melcombe Horsey and Cheselbourne

Sunday 17th May 2020
Easter 6 (Altar Colour White/Gold)

Readings: Acts 17: 22-31, Psalm 66: 7-end, 1 Peter 3: 13-end, John 14: 15-21

Collect: God our redeemer, you have delivered us from the power of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of your Son: grant, that as by his death he has recalled us to life, so by his continual presence in us he may raise us to eternal joy; 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**

Acts 17:22-31 (ESV) - Paul Addresses the Areopagus

So Paul, standing in the midst of the Areopagus, said: "Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious. For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, 'To the unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything. And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, that they should seek God, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, for "'In him we live and move and have our being'; as even some of your own poets have said, "'For we are indeed his offspring.' Being then God's offspring, we ought not to think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of man. The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead."

COMMENT: Paul's only recorded attempt to convert pagan philosophers in Athens was not particularly successful. In true Greek rhetorical style he argued from the known, idols along the city streets, to the unknown, the God who is the creator of all and now revealed in Jesus Christ. It was the resurrection that so puzzled his audience. As a centre of learning with a great university to which contemporary intellectuals flocked, Athens delighted in philosophical debate in a purely academic spirit. It was the resurrection which so puzzled this audience. How little the world has changed in 2,000 years! The apostle's address showed an impressive knowledge of Greek philosophers, especially the Stoics. Born in the Greek seaport city of Tarsus (now in southern Turkey), an important centre for Stoic philosophers, Paul would have been as thoroughly familiar with Hellenistic culture as with his own Jewish heritage.

John 14:15-21 (ESV) - Jesus Promises the Holy Spirit

"If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you. "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. Whoever

has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.”

COMMENT: This further selection from what scholars call John’s “Departure Discourse” quotes Jesus preparing the disciples for the future when he would no longer be with them. Sentiment, if nothing else, demands that we regard these as Jesus’ own words; but they have been filtered through the prism of John’s mind and the six decade old tradition of the apostolic church. The clue to this is the Greek word *parakletos*, translated variously as “Advocate,” “Counselor,” and “Comforter.” It appears here, in verse 26, in 16:7, and again only in 1 John 2:1. The word describes the role of the Holy Spirit (verse 17). The point being made, of course, was that instead of having Jesus’ physical presence to guide their discipleship, they would always have the Spirit as his personal indwelling presence. The Spirit’s function was identical with that of Jesus himself. The end of verse 19 refers to the Resurrection. It rings triumphantly across the gravesite of every believer giving hope in the deepest shadows of death. Love and obedience to his commandments will be the means by which all his followers will know his continuing presence.

Short Preface: But chiefly are we bound to praise you because you raised him gloriously from the dead. For he is the true paschal lamb who was offered for us, and has taken away the sin of the world. By his death he has destroyed death, and by his rising to life again he has restored to us everlasting life.

Post Communion: God our Father, whose Son Jesus Christ gives the water of eternal life: may we thirst for you, the spring of life and source of goodness, through him who is alive and reigns, now and for ever. Amen

Blessing: The God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the eternal covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Benefice Prayer list

In your prayers, please will you pray for our friends and neighbours throughout the benefice and further afield; as we learn how to ease lockdown controls and remain safe from the Coronavirus. For the sick, the grieving, the lonely and the anxious. For all key workers; including our school teachers, support staff, parents and Children at Cheselbourne and Piddle Valley, Clergy and Funeral Directors, NHS staff and community support groups,



For those who are suffering in mind, body or spirit, through illness & hospital treatment: *Eileen Rawlings, Ken Lester, Sara Milne, Ann Lambert, Geoff Harris, Ruth Tutt, Bernard, Alex Bexon, Fr. Damian Feeney, Wakeham family, Jeanes Family, Michelle Simpson, Giles Maber and Robyn Kotze.* For those in care homes: *including June Kelloway and Roger Gray.*



Requiescat in pace

Nicola Kellaway (Cheselbourne)

Dawn Wheeler (Formerly Alton Pancras)

Any additions or amendments to the prayer list, please email the Rector.

Benefice Notices



Foodbank: Donations for Dorchester Foodbank can be left at The Vicarage - Piddletrenthide, Orchard Cottage - Melcombe Bingham; or at the Bromilow's gate - Hilton for Blandford Foodbank. Thank you for continuing to support this cause during the current pandemic.

Funerals: During the current Pandemic, funeral services are strictly private and therefore will not be advertised on the weekly church notices. Memorial Services will be arranged at some point in the future.

For your information, Fr. Roger is also assisting the Dorchester Churches undertake funerals due to a lack of available clergy.

Saturday Devotions 6pm. If you would like to join Fr. Roger to pray the Roman Rosary each Saturday in the month of May, you are most welcome. An explanation will be given as the service is streamed live; He will attempt to point out some of the theological difficulties. The point here is simplicity and not to pray the system of prayer, rather it is a tool to deepen our relationship with God. Pope Francis is inviting the Apostolic Churches to pray the Rosary over the month of May. The rosary is dedicated for Mary and a Marian prayer is used at the end of the rosary.

Live Streaming: Please drop into our live streamed services, order of services are available on the website home page for download for Communion and Rosary.

Sunday Communion Services are now being uploaded to YouTube after the livestreaming has taken place.

Search 'Fr. Roger Butcher' within YouTube or use this link

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0ru_v3_1MZyZx72ka63g4A

To access the live streamed services, please go to the benefice facebook page at the time of the service, and the live stream will appear. If you 'like' the benefice facebook page, you will receive notifications on live services and other information posted to the facebook page.

You can use this link, log in or follow the instructions to setup an account:

https://www.facebook.com/piddlevally/?eid=ARAxjQNj5mPHQUQD2hKEx_uzUyyf17basudX3D22bYJx4HsCh7ByYB8lltrMbHhsARvgwbTqvapn-Glq

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