

This Week at St Mary's

13th December 2020

WHEN YOU PRAY..

This Advent, as I am sure all will have spotted, the focus of the sermons is prayer. Advent is meant to be used to re-set priorities, as we reflect on the presence and action of God in our world and how we might participate. 'Watch' - to open our eyes and beings to Jesus Christ - is a great advent word.

Surveys on the praying habits of church leaders make gloomy reading. Many struggle to pray for 5 minutes a day - a lot don't even make that. The pattern is likely to be the same for congregation members. It's impossible to overstate the priority of prayer, the scarce believable privilege we have of being able to enter God's presence at any time and in some extraordinary way, joining in His 'Kingdom purposes'. We can be a bit guarded - 'it's a very private thing', we say, as it gets crowded out and if we do pray, many continue in the way they learnt as young children.

There is no simple 'one size fits all', but all will discover that unless prayer is made a priority, with fixed points, the outcome is predictable. This Advent, we have each week focused on a different practical suggestion, combining both what you might do on your own and with others. In the time available, we've done little more than sow a seed. These are the areas we are covering - not at all an exhaustive list, but some ways to go.

- Being part of a group which includes praying together.
- Praying words of scripture, the Benedictine way
- Praying with one or two other people
- Praying the Examen at the end of the day
- Prayer in a liturgical service
- Prayer and action

This is the sort of conversation which will continue.

Tom Gillman

RUTH AND MATTHEW'S CONFIRMATION LAST SUNDAY

Covid uncertainties had meant whether this went ahead was 'touch and go', but it was great that it did.

Ruth writes: *I became a Christian in 1987. Jesus appeared in the midst of an unhappy time. Wonderful things have happened and are still happening in my life.*

On Sunday evening at St Barnabas Lenton Abbey, 8 of us were confirmed by Bishop Paul. As I knelt before him, he said, 'Ruth, God had called you by name and made you his own'. Then he laid his hands on my head. I felt there was nothing else in this moment and a great sense of peace and calmness come over me. I also felt myself trembling and I felt Bishop's Paul's hand trembling too as he prayed for me. I wanted to stay like that forever.

Back in my seat I felt a stillness and also a feeling of "completeness" at being confirmed. Afterwards I spoke to Bishop Paul about the trembling I'd felt. He replied that it was the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit had been there indeed.

Matthew (Matt) writes: *I'm 27 and originally from Manchester. I moved down to Nottingham after University five years ago for graduate work. I attended church as a child until I started playing rugby at 12 years old. Since then, I would have described my faith as quite private.*

Over the lockdown, I felt an urging to go back to church. Upon attending St. Mary's for quiet reflection, I felt a remarkable sense of peace. After praying, I followed this up by speaking to Tom and decided to get confirmed.

I was so pleased that my confirmation could go ahead on Sunday. Bishop Paul talked about how everyone who couldn't be there still being with us and supporting us in spirit (e.g. my family), and it really helped me enjoy the service. If I haven't met you already, I look forward to meeting you soon.

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

IT IS NECESSARY TO BOOK A TICKET FOR ALL THESE

Friday 18 1pm Lace Mkt Carol Service in the Church Garden

with Brass Quartet www.trybooking.co.uk/XCA

Sunday 20 6.30pm 9 Lessons & Carols

www.trybooking.co.uk/WZS

Christmas Eve 7.00pm 9 Lessons & Carols

www.trybooking.co.uk/WZW

Christmas Eve 11.30pm Midnight Communion

www.trybooking.co.uk/WZX

Christmas Day 10.30am Carol Singing outside

11am Sung Eucharist inside www.trybooking.co.uk/WZZ

LONE Emmanuel House Support Centre's short (9 min) film, highlighting actual experiences of homeless people in Nottingham. Very highly recommended. Available to watch on their website emmanuelhouse.org.uk. Launching their Winter Appeal in an alternative way.

GIVING MONEY - Best done online via **Donate** button on the website. Preferable from St Mary's viewpoint is a **Standing Order** (NatWest St Mary's PCC 560061 00834602) For **one-off donations**, cheque, cash yellow envelope, in chest by South Porch Door. **IT WOULD BE APPRECIATED IF YOU COULD MAKE ANY DONATION YOU ARE PLANNING BEFORE 31/12/20.**

ALAN GODBER - Martin, one of Alan's sons has informed us of his death on 24th November. Alan was Churchwarden and Treasurer at St Mary's, a keen supporter of the church until limited mobility meant he could get into town less easily, he was a keen concert goer. Our sincere condolences to the family.

THE MEADOWS FOODBANK - this week they welcome toiletries, washing up items, pasta sauce, sugar, tinned veg & meat. Contact Beth Mitchell 07775707855 0115 947 6736 tony.m1941@icloud.com

Wherever you are, we extend a very warm greeting to you, especially if you've recently discovered St Mary's

*St Mary's is usually open for private prayer and reflection
11.30-2.30pm each weekday - please call to confirm if visiting*

11.00am SUNDAY SERVICE

(Live & broadcast - see our website and follow link, including Order of Service)

6.30pm SUNDAY EVENSONG *(Live & broadcast)*

6.15PM WEDNESDAY EVENSONG *(Live & broadcast)*

6pm THURSDAY EVENING PRAYER (skype) Contact Grant

WORSHIP AT ST MARY'S.

- Numbers limited to 50, please let the office know (during office hours) if coming.
- Test and Trace signing in or by App, please.
- Automatic hand sanitiser at door and/or wash hands.
- Distancing as you would expect.
- Wearing of masks, please.
- Still no communal singing inside.
- Please take away the paper service sheet you use
- Please avoid gathering at the South Porch on arrival/exit

PLEASE CONTINUE TO PRAY FOR Estelle Barks, John Bowers, Barbara Davis, Harry Palmer, Mike Ridley

Email admin@stmarynotts.org Web stmarysnottingham.org

Facebook Instagram Twitter [@stmarysnotts](https://www.instagram.com/stmarysnotts)

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