



The Benefice of St Mary's Bocking & Panfield Church



Sunday 27th August 2023
The Twelfth Sunday after Trinity
Staying in Contact

The Very Revd Rod Reid - Incumbent (*usual rest day Monday*)

Email: bockingchurch@gmail.com Call: (01376) 324887 www.stmarys-bocking.com
or on Facebook, search for 'St Mary's Church, Bocking', or 'Panfield Church'

Forthcoming Services

Hymns

St Mary's, Bocking

Sunday 27th August

8am Said Mass
10am Sung Mass

Wednesday 30th August

9.30am Said Mass

Sunday 3rd September

8am Said Mass
10am Sung Mass
with Archdeacon Robin

162

385

Jesus of the Scars

218 (*omit vv 4&5*)

Panfield Church

Sunday 27th August

11am Holy Communion

Tuesday 29th August

5pm Evening Prayer/Office Hour

Sunday 3rd September

11am Holy Communion
with Baptism

Gospel Acclamation

God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, and he has entrusted to us, the news that they are reconciled.

NOTICES

Coffee Morning - There will be a Coffee Morning this coming Friday, September 1st at 10.30am in the Church Hall. All are very welcome. Monies raised will go to support next year's Flower Festival

Heritage Open Weekend - Both churches will be marking the Heritage Open Days next month. St Mary's will be open with events running on **Saturday September 16th 10-4pm**. Panfield Church will be open on **Sunday September 17th from 2pm to 5pm** with a Songs of Praise service to close. More details on events at both churches will follow in due course but please save the dates.

Local wildlife walk - A huge thank you to all those who joined us recently for our first wildlife walk around the parish. We had 25 people join in which is great, and certainly something to build on. We are hoping to get in another Wildlife Walk this year, probably in October. More to follow.

June Blackwood - June's funeral will take place in church at 11am THIS TUESDAY. Please do join us as we celebrate and give thanks for June's life, and the mark she left on each of us.

Friendly Friday Cafe - The Summer Sessions have now come to an end. They will re-start on Friday October 6th after those involved have had a well earned break.

Prayers - We keep in our prayers Ron Cole, Peter Hopkins, Jean Goodwin, Sue, Roger, Frances, Jo, Tony & Ann, David Denny, and Margaret Everitt. We remember our care homes Millard House, Fern Lodge, Aspen Grange, Larchwood, The New Deanery & St Mary's Court. In our Years Mind, we pray for the families of Leone Bennett, John Shaw, Stanley Humphries, Harry Cole, Grace Grice, and Doris Radley.

The Collect for the Twelfth Sunday after Trinity

Almighty and everlasting God, you are always more ready to hear than we to pray
and to give more than either we desire or deserve:
pour down upon us the abundance of your mercy,
forgiving us those things of which our conscience is afraid
and giving us those good things
which we are not worthy to ask
but through the merits and mediation
of 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.

Epistle Reading - Romans 12:1-8

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect. For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgement, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

Gospel Reading - Matthew 16:13-20

Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, 'Who do people say that the Son of Man is?' And they said, 'Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.' He said to them, 'But who do you say that I am?' Simon Peter answered, 'You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.' And Jesus answered him, 'Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.' Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

Address

Wo wohnst du? Where are you from? the lady in the ticket booth asked. In response, the queue of people in front of us, waiting to enter the museum gave an array of answers, Deutschland, Osterreich, England. Willkommen. Welcome she said in response.

Not everyone though understood the question including a group who were just immediately in front of us in this queue. Eventually after much trial and error, they nodded when asked if they were from South Korea. To their astonishment and ours, the ticket lady said welcome in Korean!

A lovely way to make an instant connection, albeit brief. Each person, group or family visiting this, one of many museums in Vienna, felt seen and known. Absolutely it was a light touch, maybe gimmicky, and no doubt forgotten within minutes, but it was appreciated, nonetheless.

It is an approach we all use too. To a stranger we might say where are you from? or what has brought you here? Maybe even who are you? It is an affirming, kind and appropriate way to question, whilst not probing too much.

So who am I? Well after nearly nine years I suspect you could answer that for me. Priest, Husband, Dad, Son. You might go a little deeper, peel another layer or two of the onion to say hater of marmite, lover of Eurovision, and someone who could cry at both sad and happy events!

Could we answer for one another? To varying degrees yes, many of us have travelled together for some time but is that all that we are? For in reality, far more goes unsaid, not least what really makes us tick. There are plenty more layers to these onions around me here today!

The disciples too have travelled with Jesus for some time now. They have learnt a lot about him, and arguably they are starting to get it, beginning to see who he really is.

And then the breakthrough, as captured in the gospel passage today from Matthew. It is Peter, Simon Peter who really 'sees' Christ. For Jesus, his response is one of relief maybe, but certainly joy. It is as if a weight has been lifted. For Peter, a moment of clarity, when any sense of a veil disappears. It is such a joyous passage.

Do you feel the same when someone really sees you? When someone without prompting seems to really get how we tick, and therefore who we are. It is far more than being able to list our roles in life, or our likes and dislikes.

But what had changed? Why now for Peter?

Yes, it could simply have been that God the Father chose this moment for him to know more. Jesus himself comments that it was his Father who did this. Personally though, that oversimplifies the situation and suggests all that God had been doing up until then was not enough.

Instead, I would like to suggest that it is after prayer, after encouragement, after travelling with his friends, and with Jesus that this culminated in an epiphany moment when Peter stopped trying to see the world as everyone else does, indeed the way he has been for so long.

Now, he was no longer just amazed by the miracles Jesus would perform, nor just transfixed by his words and insights, it was more than that. Now he saw the world as God did. He saw Jesus as a Saviour, as someone beloved, divine, more than human. For me, he caught a glimpse of the divine.

In response, now that he has seen, acknowledged by Jesus himself, Peter is told his role, that we would be the foundation of the church that we are part of today, indeed that he would grasp the keys to it, and of it.

Ahead of him lay a fuller life, knowing that he was fulfilling God's will. Peter would go on from here inspired and driven.

He made mistakes too but that closer walk with God as he travelled through life was his greatest desire. And should be ours today.

Back then, Jesus told them sternly to say nothing, he told them that the world was not ready. Events still needed to take place, his death and resurrection and then at his ascension the sending out of all disciples. In between, I am sure they did tell others, I am sure they continued to argue amongst themselves, why Peter? Who was the greatest? Etc...

However, this moment would play a key part in building them up ready to be his disciples, sharing the good news of a God who sees and knows and loves each of his children, and because he does, will wait until we truly see him.

We are those disciples today, the world may still not be ready for his message, for a Saviour but that doesn't mean it isn't needed. We are invited to like Peter, break free of seeing as the world does and invited into that closer relationship with God.

So who do you think you are? Willkommen, welcome!

You are a beloved child of God, seen by him. Expressed in amazing ways, both big and small we are each called to live a richer life, discerning God's will for us and then living it out. As we look to each other, as we look to reflect on this passage, and as we look for God, I hope we each will catch, and then hold onto, a glimpse of the divine.

Amen.

Post Communion Prayer

God of all mercy,
in this eucharist you have set aside our sins
and given us your healing:
grant that we who are made whole in Christ
may bring that healing to this broken world,
in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.