

WEEKLY NOTES

1 October 2006

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

We are going through a series of Sundays where the gospel readings at the Eucharist are not exactly full of comfort. Today we are given stern warnings about Christian conduct. It seems that even in the early Christian community, which we so often think of as being some sort of Christian golden age, such words needed to be set down. Having said that, one also needs to remember that it is unlikely that St Mark's gospel was written before about A.D.70, and that there are clearly issues concerning the transmission of the material to its present written form. Did Jesus really tell us to cut off our hand, if it is causing us to sin? And that is only an example from today's passage. St Mark's gospel is not a gentle one; his 'crisis theology' leads him to find all sorts of confrontational situations for Jesus. It is a powerful work, and the writer does not mince his words.

However, all this raises the question of whether our Revised Lectionary is actually giving us what we really need. The principle of *lectio continua*, which means in practice the reading of virtually all the four gospels over a three-year cycle, has its drawbacks as well as its advantages. It is interesting that, by contrast, the continuous reading of the psalms in the monthly course has been regularly frowned upon by modern liturgical revisers. Why one rule for one bit of scripture and another rule for another bit? The price of having a wider selection of New Testament scripture means that on certain Sundays some passages are read, which might arguably be more appropriate in the setting of a Bible study group than in the open church on a Sunday. The *Alternative Service Book*, with its different approach based on Sunday themes, hardly ever gave us passages in its two-year cycle which would cause bewilderment or consternation to an honest enquirer. The *Book of Common Prayer* only gave us a one-year cycle; so, for that matter, did the old Roman missal. Generations of Church of England folk grew up on this diet, and they were none the worse for it. Sooner or later I suspect it will all have to be looked at again, but for the foreseeable future we are lumbered with what we have, and we have to make the best of it, but this does mean that some of the Sunday readings are not necessarily the most edifying ones.

Our prayers today. We pray for our own church and parish, and in the world-wide Church we pray today for those who belong to the Presbyterian Churches, such as the Church of Scotland. In the diocese of Guildford we pray for the work of the chaplains at the four prisons in the diocese: Coldingley, Send, High Down and Downview (the last two are near us at Banstead). In our systematic prayer for the people of the parish we pray for those who live in Ewell Downs Road.

SUNDAY SERVICES

0800 HOLY COMMUNION

Book of Common Prayer rite

The usual note about this; it makes things easier. The Prayer Book rite, which we have about quarterly at 0800, can be followed (with about 98% accuracy) in Order 2 of '*Common Worship*,' beginning on page 229. Unlike the monthly Prayer Book Sung Eucharist in the Mattins slot, the BCP rite at 0800 follows the 1662 order without *any* deviations from the actual text, except for the omission of the long exhortations. In order to achieve this, the simple rule is to *disregard any indented material* in the text. This includes gospel responses. The Collect of the Day and the Readings are on a separate paper.

Wayfarers and 'Children's Hour'; Crèche available in church.
 Order 1: page 167. Collect of the Day: page 418
 Eucharistic Prayer C: page 191.
 Setting of the Eucharist: *Plainsong*, Missa Cum Jubilo.
 Gloria and Creed: *Merbecke* (See page numbers below).
 There is a note about the Gloria and Creed further on in the Notes.

October is traditionally the month of the Holy Angels. The hymns at the Eucharist today are our 'glance in that direction' for this year; two of them are specifically about the angels of God. However, Mattins later this morning will be entirely 'of the Holy Angels', with appropriate psalms, lessons and hymns.

Introit hymn: 343 [Based on Isaiah's vision of the heavenly hosts in Isaiah 6.]
 Black book: page 167. The Greeting and the first prayer; *Kyrie eleison*.
 Gloria in excelsis: traditional language text, *not* as on page 171.
 Words and *Merbecke* melody for the Gloria today: at Hymn 542, on page 830 in the melody edition, or on page 559 in the words-only book.
 Collect of the Day: page 418. *Readings on separate paper*.
 Old Testament Reading from the Book of Job.
 Gradual hymn: 451 [Tune: *St Theodore*.] The angels as the leaders of God's praise.
 A reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Mark.
 Sermon by *the Vicar*
 Nicene Creed (*sung today*): traditional language text, *not* as on page 173.
 Words and *Merbecke* melody for the Creed today: at Hymn 542, on page 833 in the melody edition, or on page 562 in the words-only book.
 Intercession; then all stand for the Greeting of Peace.
 Offertory hymn: 193 [First tune]; Collection 9th cent. Greek hymn about the angels.
 Eucharistic Prayer C: page 191.
 Turn back to page 178 for the Lord's Prayer, etc.
 Hymn at the Invitation: Hymn 274 [Tune: OEH 303]

Author of life divine, Who hast a table spread, Furnished with mystic wine, And everlasting bread, Preserve the life thyself hast given, And feed and train us up for heaven, And feed and train us up for heaven.	Our needy souls sustain With fresh supplies of love, Till all thy life we gain, And all thy fullness prove, And strengthened by thy perfect grace, Behold without a veil thy face. Behold without a veil thy face.
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During the Communion:

Anthem: The Song of the Tree of Life.

R Vaughan Williams

Unto him that overcometh shall be given of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God. On either side of the river groweth the tree of life; the leaves of the tree are for thy healing. In the midst of that fair city flows the river of water of life, clear as crystal. Whoso will, let him take of the water of life freely. Whose drinketh of this water shall never thirst. Take thou the leaves of the tree of life, so shalt thou enter in through the gates of the city.

(From *Vaughan Williams' morality-masque, based on John Bunyan's 'The Pilgrim's Progress', this passage being largely based on words from the Revelation to St John.*)

After the anthem all stand for the Post-Communion Prayer: page 418.
 The Mutual Salutation, the Blessing and Dismissal.
 Hymn 447.

[The composer of this fine tune, Michael Fleming, died earlier this year. He composed it when he was an undergraduate. He was a fine church musician, and Director of Music at several important churches, including All Saints Margaret Street, St Alban's Holborn, and St Michael's Croydon, and he also served on the staff of the Royal School of Church Music.]

Welcome to any visitors or newcomers to St Mary's today. Please make yourselves known, and join us for coffee in the church hall across the road between the 0930 and 1100 services.

1100 CHORAL MATTINS (of the Holy Angels). *Book of Common Prayer* rite

The hymns at Mattins today are from the small *red* hymn-book.

Sermon by *the Vicar*

Responses: green book, page 8.

Music: *Field*.

Venite (shorter version).

Office-Hymn: 365

Psalm 148. *The universal praise of God.* Page 311.

First Lesson: 2 Kings 6: 8-17. *The unseen hosts.* Blue book: page 802

Te Deum: page 10.

Second Lesson: From St Matthew 18. *The holy guardian angels.*

Blue book: page 803

Hymn 160

The Creed and the Greeting; then all kneel for the Lord's Prayer, the Responses and the three Collects (the first Collect on page 88).

Anthem: Duo seraphim.

Dering

English version: Above him stood the seraphim, and one cried unto another, and said, 'Holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.' [Isaiah 6: 2a,3]

Prayers.

Hymn 354; Collection.

The Blessing.

1800 Evening Prayer

In church this week

Tuesday

1000 **Holy Communion**

1930 for 2000. 1930 for 2000. The third meeting of the new **Evening Fellowship Group** in the Parish Room. Continuing the five weeks or so with St John's Gospel, this week's title will be 'The miracles of Jesus.' Further information from Iain McKillop (Tel. 01932 341687).

Other events and notices.

Wednesday

1030-1200 Coffee Morning in the Church Hall. A time for drinking coffee, and for relaxation and pleasant *conversazione* in very congenial surroundings.

2000 Annual General Meeting of Churches Together in Ewell at Cuddington Parish Church.

The New English Hymnal has mutilated a very fine Welsh tune, which apart from one irritating feature was perfectly all right in the older book. We shall be singing it at the Invitation to Communion today in its earlier form, and with the irritating feature cleaned up. The tune *Rhosymedre* was later arranged as a well-known organ prelude by *Vaughan Williams*.

The Michaelmas Market. The Welcome Area is now screened to allow for people to leave items for the Market on 14 October. Please take lots of handbills, at least four, so that they can be pushed through the letter-boxes of the two houses adjacent on either side. That oughtn't to be too

burdensome. There are also some posters still about; they are jolly to look at, and very eye-catching. There are a few laminated ones available for those who have asked for them. Please take what-ever you can. The general information about the Market is now reasonably well-known to the general congregation, and there is not much served by printing it all out again. Obviously we want as much as we can get in order for the Market to do well, and for our four designated charities to benefit as much as possible.

Children and Holy Communion. We were one of the first parishes in the diocese to go down the road of encouraging the practice of Holy Communion being received by children *before* Confirmation, after Bishop John Gladwin had said that he would wish to encourage this. Some years on there are now about forty parishes which do this. The diocese is now making sure that all is in order, and all the parishes concerned now have to re-register. (It is expected to be a formality.) At the next meeting of the Parochial Church Council an appropriate resolution will need to be passed in support of our current practice. There are a few children coming into zone at the moment, and we shall shortly be having 'First communions' one Sunday morning. We do not want anyone who might otherwise be involved in this to slip through the net, so it would be a considerable help if names were given to the Vicar or to Kathie Burgess *today*. The latest communication from Bishop Christopher (who is continuing Bishop John's support for the practice) says that whilst there is no actual stipulation about a minimum age, he would assume that the basic principle is seven years of age and upwards. This is slightly lower than what we have been doing here, but there is no reason why we should necessarily stick to what we have been doing, if circumstances seem right.