

WEEKLY NOTES

20 January 2008

SEPTUAGESIMA.

Sunday in the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

At least that is the title – Septuagesima – that we are using for this particular Sunday at St Mary’s this year. It is a confusing time with the Church Calendar, and some of the more diverting aspects of this muddle are noted in the January number of the *Ewell Parish News*. So this year we are using the traditional ‘themes’ of Creation, the Fall, and the Love of God on the three Sundays before Lent. As themes, they have always been unofficial, being simply inferred from the prayers and readings provided for these days, unlike (say) the Sunday themes of the old *Alternative Service Book*, which were listed out. Until modern times, and still in the permanently authorized Book of Common Prayer scheme of things*, the three Sundays before Lent always concentrated on these three points. Together they serve as a sort of refresher course in soteriology (the aspect of theology which deals with salvation), and they form a fitting prelude to Lent, Holy Week and Easter.

The actual ‘gesima titles are not very helpful. They are based on somewhat crazy arithmetic in respect of the distance of these Sundays from Easter. However, it can be just as cogently argued that the value of the material provided far outweighed any arithmetical scruples. No doubt the curious titles have themselves contributed to the fact that these amber-light Sundays have either been absorbed into the new Epiphany season of *Common Worship* in the Church of England, or into ‘Ordinary Time’ in the Roman rite. Liturgical purists have always disliked them: ‘endless preparations for preparations,’ they used to say, and of course the titles sound arcane and mysterious. Certainly that old rascal, Oscar Wilde, was not far off the mark, when, on being questioned about his own religious practices, replied, ‘I always observe Septuagesima.’

* It is this permanently authorized status of *The Book of Common Prayer* which actually allows us to do things in this particular way.

And on a personal note: I was very touched by the kind words which were said at the Reception after the Sung Eucharist last week to mark my completing twenty-five years in the parish, and also by the presence there of so many people. Susan and I are also most grateful for the flowers and the delightful silver memento (it is on display today) which accompanied the kind words from the churchwarden, David Crick. My thanks also go to others who sent cards and other things at this time, and to those who actually did the work of arranging the event, laying it all up and clearing it all away. It was all greatly appreciated. Very many thanks. W.R.H.

Our prayers today. On Septuagesima Sunday we give thanks ‘for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life.’ More especially we pray for our own church and parish, and in the world-wide Anglican Communion for the Church in the Province of Central Africa. We pray in the Diocese of Guildford during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity for the work of ‘Churches Together in Surrey.’ In the parish we pray for all the other Christian congregations in the neighbourhood, and for the people who live in The Orchard, Tayles Hill.

*Welcome to any visitors or newcomers to St Mary’s today.
Please make yourselves known to us, and join us for
coffee in the church hall across the road after the Sung
Eucharist.*

SUNDAY SERVICES

0800 HOLY COMMUNION *Common Worship rite*
Order 1, page 167. The Collect: page 390. Eucharistic Prayer E: page 196.

0930 SUNG EUCHARIST *Common Worship rite*

Wayfarers and ‘Children’s Hour’; Crèche available on request.
Order 1: page 167. Collect of the Day: page 390.
Eucharistic Prayer G: page 201.
Setting of the Eucharist: *Stanford* in B flat. Choral *Gloria* today.
There is slightly more page-turning than usual at this service today.

Hymn at the entrance: 433
 Black book: page 167. The Invocation, Greeting and opening Prayer.
 Kyrie-confession (page **133** [*Spirit*])
 Gloria in excelsis: traditional language text on page 211; *choral* setting.
 Collect of the Day: page 390.
 New Testament Reading from St Paul's Letter to the Colossians.
 Gradual hymn: 342 [Tune 178]
 A reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew.
 Sermon by *the Vicar*
 Nicene Creed (sung today): traditional language text on page 213.
 Intercession; then all stand for the Greeting of Peace.
 Hymn at the Collection: 440, verses 1-3.
 Then *all sit* for the Offertory Anthem:
 The heavens are telling. *Haydn* (from 'The Creation')

The heavens are telling the glory of God, the wonder of his works displays the firmament. To day that is coming speaks it the day, the night that is gone to following night. In all the lands resounds the word, never unperceived, ever understood. (*Psalm 19: 1-4*)

All stand after the anthem for Eucharistic Prayer G: page 201.
 The Lord's Prayer, etc. back on page 178.
 At the invitation to Communion: *Agnus Dei* (Lamb of God).
 Hymn during Communion (*remain seated or kneeling*): 284
 Then *all stand* after the hymn for the Post-Communion Prayer: page 182.
 The Mutual Salutation, the Blessing and Dismissal. Hymn 437.
 Organ: Toccata in F (BWV 540). *J S Bach* JH

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

1100 SUNG EUCHARIST *Book of Common Prayer rite*

Setting of the Eucharist: *Sumsion* in F.
 Creed and Gloria: *Merbecke* .

Sermon by *the Vicar*
 Introit hymn: 397
 Then green Prayer Book: page 31
 Kyrie eleison (Lord, have mercy): page 33
 Greeting and the Collect of the Day.
 (*There is a separate leaflet for the Collect and Readings*)
 The Epistle: 1 Corinthians 9: 24-27. *St Paul on perseverance and self-*

control.

Gradual hymn: 359 [Tune: 322]
 The Holy Gospel: St Luke 8: 4-15. *The parable of the labourers in the vineyard.*
 Nicene Creed: page 34.
 Biddings to Prayer and the Offertory sentence.
 Offertory Hymn: 267; Collection
 After the hymn, all kneel for the Prayer for the Church (page 36), the Prayers of Penitence, etc., and for the Prayer of Consecration
 Hymn at the Consecration: 313
 During the Communion: O Lamb of God (page 44)
 Anthem: God is our hope and strength. *J S Bach*

God is our hope and strength,	Honour and thanks to God
All heaven and earth adore him.	Who wrought this world's creation.
Renew eternal praise,	To taste of heavenly joy,
And prostrate fall before him.	In death and tribulation.
For all things are of him,	Him praise we while we live,
And in all things is he,	And on his will attend,
The works that aye have been,	Until we there arrive,
And evermore shall be.	Where song shall have no end.

After Communion: The Lord's Prayer and Prayer of Thanksgiving: page 44.
All stand for Gloria in excelsis: page 46. The Blessing. Hymn 265.

1800 Evening Prayer (in the Parish Room)**In church this week**

Tuesday 1000 **Holy Communion**
1930 for 2000 **Evening Fellowship** in the Parish Room

Other events and notices.

Monday Holy Communion to the housebound.
1930 Meeting of the Estates Committee

Tuesday 2000 Prayer and Worship for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. This will be held at St Clement's Roman Catholic Church in Kingston Road. (See also note below.)

Wednesday 1030-1200 Coffee Morning in the church hall. Tea-drinkers should not feel excluded: the leaf is provided as well as the bean. A pleasant and relaxing time with friendly company.
2000 Meeting of Vicar, Churchwardens and Administrator.

Friday 2000 Deanery Synod at St Paul's Howell Hill.
Speaker: Chris Grayling MP
The Vicar will be attending the Deanery Synod, so there will be no Friday 'open office' this week.

The Ecumenical evening at St Clement's. At the opening of the evening the plan is to have representative of each of the Ewell churches carrying a candle to the front of the church, symbolising both our oneness with Christ as the Light of the world and also our essential unity in him. We need a representative for this; our own representative, Margaret Howard, is at present out of action, and it would be good if someone else could represent us formally on this occasion. Any offers to the Vicar, please. The event is of course open to everyone who would like to attend.

The Hymnathon. This notice appeared last week, and will continue for the remaining Sundays leading up to the Hymnathon. This is an event designed to raise funds for financing the costs of the Village Fair. Certain things have to be paid for 'up front'. The Hymnathon has proved to be a painless, but very effective, way of doing this. Here is a note about it from Rosemarie Henson: 'The annual Hymnathon will take place on **Saturday, 9 February**. There will be two sessions: **1000 to 1300**, breaking for lunch, and then **1400-1600**. If you have not taken part before, this is a very relaxed affair in the Parish Room, sitting around the piano. No-one is asked to sing alone, and apart from exercising the vocal chords it is not too strenuous. Those who have taken part before will agree that it is an enjoyable way of raising funds for the Fair. Those wishing to take part need to pick up a Sponsorship Form in the Welcome Area, and make a note on the rota as to what time of day they would like to sing. For any further information, please contact Rosemarie Henson on 020 8224 2713.'

The remaining sermons on the Lord's Prayer. After all sorts of complications, these are actually about to resume. There are now four left, and they will begin in a fortnight's time, and last until the Third Sunday in Lent. There will not be a straight Lenten Course of sermons at 0930 this year, mainly because of the need to finish this course on the Lord's Prayer, and also because the second half of Lent is not really the time for 'general' subjects, unless they are fairly obviously linked with the season; rather it is the time to start focussing more directly on the Paschal mystery itself in devotion and preaching. The hope is that later in the year the complete collection of the sermons may be made available either in booklet form or in a short series of pamphlets. Meanwhile, this is what remains:

3 February	Quinquagesima.	An overview of the petitions as a whole.
10 February	Lent 1.	The Lord's Prayer in personal devotion.
17 February	Lent 2	The Lord's Prayer in the Church.
24 February	Lent 3	The power and the glory for ever.

Next Sunday. We shall be keeping Sexagesima. Dr Patrick Miller will be the celebrant and preacher at 0930. Services are at the usual times, with the additional celebration at 1200, it being the last Sunday of the month.

Sharing the love of Christ, the Light of the world, with the people of Ewell.