

Prayers:

Let us pray to our heavenly Father, who is familiar with our world and understands our humanity. We ask for your courage and inner strength wherever we are called to be your witnesses and we ask for the grace to communicate your love. We lift to you all those who are sick, especially:

Sick: Dawn Forey, Ruth Gillespie, Hanna Lebrato, Marion Mason and Sue Ralfe.

RIP: Malcolm Mair, Bibaa Henry, Nicole Smallman

We pray in the name of Jesus, our hope and our joy. Amen.

Who's who Rector	The Revd Matthew Stone Email: rector@stjohnschurchstanmore.org.uk	020 8954 3876
Assistant Curate	The Revd Jonny Rapson Email: jonny.rapson@london.anglican.org	07557 808527
Safeguarding Officers	Mark Lynch Louise Gregory	07982 906833 07504 527118
Children's Champion Adults at Risk Champion	Sue Wright Sheila Oliver	07958 499682 020 8954 4976
Churchwardens	Mark Lynch Jane Prentice	07982 906833 07976 388958
Deputy Wardens	Susan Jones Graham Nicholson	07864 846148 01923 226969
Treasurer	Jenny Neve Email: jenny.neve@googlemail.com	07989 378840
Data Protection Compliance	The Rector	020 8954 3876

The Parish Office is closed.

**Matthew and Jonny are continuing to say
Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer
in their homes every day. Join them [here](#).**

St John's Church Lockdown Pew Sheet 21st June 2020

Welcome!

The Church of England continues to follow Government advice. It is not possible for services, baptisms and weddings to take place in church. We are allowed open the church for individual prayer now.

This is the 14th edition of our lockdown pew sheet. We remain in touch with everyone at St Johns and offer some resources: [here](#).

If you need any help or assistance from Matthew or Jonny, please be in touch (see opposite).

**Be gracious to me, O Lord,
for to you do I cry all day long.
Gladden the soul of your servant,
for to you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.
For you, O Lord, are good and forgiving,
abounding in steadfast love to all who call on you.
Give ear, O Lord, to my prayer;
listen to my cry of supplication.
Psalm 86:3-6**

ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST - MISSION STATEMENT

Drawn together by Christ's love, we seek by his grace to live out his commandments to love the Lord our God with all of our being; and to love everyone we come across as we love ourselves.

www.stjohnschurchstanmore.org.uk

Please do check our website for future updates

St John's

The Second Sunday After Trinity

Collect

Faithful Creator, whose mercy never fails: deepen our faithfulness to you and to your living Word, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Bible Readings (click on links to access passages):

[Jeremiah 20:7-13](#)

[Romans 6:1b-11](#)

[Matthew 10-24-39](#)

Short Sermon by the Rector, the Revd Matthew Stone

In today's gospel, Jesus instructs his apostles about the cost of discipleship. Christianity is just not an easy life, he seems to say. In fact, you may be handed over to councils who will flog you, drag you before governors and kings, you will be betrayed by your family, and hated by all because of the very name of Jesus. Who wants that, we wonder? And the words "children will rise against parents and have them put to death" are quite shocking.

Jesus used this shocking language to make people listen. Now that he has their attention - and ours - he goes on to say some things that have more comfort value. Do not fear death, for the forces of evil may kill the mortal body, but they cannot kill the soul. Also that beautiful, poetic image: the sparrow, worth half a penny, is cared for and loved by God. Every sparrow and even every hair on your head!

In this bizarrely contrasting narrative, Jesus lays out two fundamental principles of Christianity which are worth reflecting on:

- we are not spared from suffering, but
- when we suffer God suffers along with us.

Today, I would like to examine these basic tenets of the Christian life.

St John's

First, suffering: we may not be flogged before governors or hated by everyone - but we do struggle. We have relationship breakdowns, addictions, hardships, problems with our children, unemployment, illness and the death of loved ones. And part of what Jesus seems to be saying in this passage - in his own exaggerated manner of polemical hyperbole - is that we will most probably continue to suffer. The Christian life is not a magic fix to the woes of this mortal life.

The second point is that our God is with us. "He shall be called Emmanuel, God with us"— familiar words we hear at Christmas. The promise made by Jesus is that we are not alone in our struggles. God is here, to comfort us, to help us through the difficult times, to show us the way when we don't know where to turn, to help us when we cannot help ourselves and certainly to rejoice with us in good times. We will sometimes suffer, but God is with us to comfort and guide us.

Perhaps then, we could look towards Jesus not to put an end to our struggles, but to recognise that he is with us right in the middle of what we are going through. If we can accept this, then the Holy Spirit can show us the way forward as we listen for the still, small voice of God.

One of the hymns we are singing today is "We have a Gospel to proclaim, good news for all throughout the earth." We believe that Jesus Christ is risen from the dead, that the kingdom of God has come very near us, and when we suffer (as we will) we have the church, the Christian community where we "bear one another's burdens," as St Paul so aptly said (Galatians 6:2).

Again from Paul, "this light momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal" (2 Corinthians 4:17-18).

In this Christian life, we are not spared from suffering, but when we suffer, God suffers along with us. It is through suffering that we are prepared for eternal glory. Amen.