

May 31st 2020

WHIT SUNDAY

It was uplifting to see so many people in church this morning for our Pentecost service. Father Rob Warren preached and presided, the blessing was given by Archbishop Ian and the music played by our titular organist Gabriele was by Finck, Lemmens, and last but not last, Bach's great "Komm, Gott, Schöpfer BWV 667", the Veni Creator for Pentecost. Next Sunday is another great day of praise: Trinity Sunday. Please spread the word that we are back, and bring your friends. All measures are being taken to keep safe!

Pentecost, also called **Whitsunday**, (Pentecost from Greek *pentecostē*, "50th day"), major festival in the Christian church, celebrated on the Sunday that falls on the 50th day of Easter. It commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles and other disciples following the Crucifixion, Resurrection, and Ascension of Jesus Christ (Acts of the Apostles, chapter 2), and it marks the beginning of the Christian church's mission to the world.

The Jewish feast of Pentecost (Shavuot) was primarily a thanksgiving for the first fruits of the wheat harvest, but it was later associated with a remembrance of the Law given by God to Moses on Mount Sinai. The church's transformation of the Jewish feast to a Christian festival was thus related to the belief that the gift of the

Holy Spirit to the followers of Jesus was the first fruits of a new dispensation that fulfilled and succeeded the old dispensation of the Law.

Corrado Giaquinto (1703-1766): Pentecoste

When the festival was first celebrated in the Christian church is not known, but it was mentioned in a work from the Eastern church, the *Epistola Apostolorum*, in the 2nd century. In the 3rd century it was mentioned by Origen, theologian and head of the catechetical school in Alexandria, and by Tertullian, Christian priest and writer of Carthage.

In the early church, Christians often referred to the entire 50-day period beginning with Easter as Pentecost. Baptism was administered both at the beginning (Easter) and end (the day of Pentecost) of the Paschal season. Eventually, Pentecost became a more popular time for baptism than Easter in northern Europe, and in England the feast was commonly called White Sunday (Whitsunday) for the special white garments worn by the newly baptized. In *The First Prayer Book of Edward*



Corrado Giaquinto (1703-1766): Pentecoste

VI (1549), the feast was officially called

Whitsunday, and this name has continued in Anglican churches. In Catholic and other Western churches, priests often wear red vestments during Pentecost to symbolize the “tongues of fire” that descended on the disciples from the Holy Spirit; members of the congregation also wear red in some traditions, and the altar is commonly dressed in a red frontal cloth.

From Britannia.com: this article was most recently revised and updated by Melissa Petruzzello, Assistant Editor.

On Wednesday, to conclude Light at Lunchtime, Ksenia read a passage from Basil the Great on the Holy Spirit. Here is the text she read:

Basil the Great [On the Holy Spirit](#)

From: Schaff - Wace, (ed)., *Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, Series II, v. 8, tr. by the Rev. Blomfield Jackson, London 1894.

CHAPTER IX

Definitive conceptions about the Spirit which conform to the teaching of the Scriptures.

On our hearing, then, of a spirit, it is impossible to form the idea of a nature circumscribed, subject to change and variation, or at all like the creature. We are compelled to advance in our conceptions to the highest, and to think of an intelligent essence, in power infinite, in magnitude unlimited, unmeasured by times or ages, generous of Its good gifts, to whom turn all things needing sanctification, after whom reach all things that live in virtue, as being watered by Its inspiration and helped on toward their natural and proper end; perfecting all other things, but Itself in nothing lacking; living not as needing restoration, but as Supplier of life; not growing by additions; but straightway full, self-established, omnipresent, origin of sanctification, light perceptible to the mind, supplying, as it were, through Itself, illumination to every faculty in the search for truth; by nature un-approachable, apprehended by reason of goodness, filling all things with Its power, but communicated only to the worthy; not shared in one measure, but distributing Its energy according to "the proportion of faith;" in essence simple, in powers various, wholly present in each and being wholly everywhere; impassively divided, shared without loss of ceasing to be entire, after the likeness of the sunbeam, whose kindly light falls on him who enjoys it as though it shone for him alone, yet illumines land and sea and mingles with the air. So, too, is the Spirit to every one who receives It, as though given to him alone, and yet It sends forth grace sufficient and full for all mankind, and is enjoyed by all who share It, according to the capacity, not of Its power, but of their nature.

Whitsunday

When God of old came down from Heaven,
In power and wrath He came;
Before His feet the clouds were riven,
Half darkness and half flame:

Around the trembling mountain's base
The prostrate people lay;
A day of wrath and not of grace;
A dim and dreadful day.

But when he came the second time,
He came in power and love,
Softer than gale at morning prime
Hovered His holy Dove.

The fires that rushed on Sinai down
In sudden torrents dread,
Now gently light, a glorious crown,
On every sainted head.

Like arrows went those lightnings forth
Winged with the sinner's doom,
But these, like tongues, o'er all the earth
Proclaiming life to come:

And as on Israel's awe-struck ear
The voice exceeding loud,
The trump, that angels quake to hear,
Thrilled from the deep, dark cloud;

So, when the Spirit of our God
Came down His flock to find,
A voice from Heaven was heard abroad,
A rushing, mighty wind.

Nor doth the outward ear alone
At that high warning start;
Conscience gives back th' appalling tone;
'Tis echoed in the heart.

It fills the Church of God; it fills
The sinful world around;
Only in stubborn hearts and wills
No place for it is found.

To other strains our souls are set:
A giddy whirl of sin
Fills ear and brain, and will not let
Heaven's harmonies come in.

Come Lord, Come Wisdom, Love, and Power,
Open our ears to hear;
Let us not miss th' accepted hour;
Save, Lord, by Love or Fear.

John Keble

Hymns for Pentecost

Because of coronavirus restrictions we are not yet singing hymns together but one of the most well-loved hymns for this occasion is “Come down O love divine”, a 19th century adaptation of a hymn by Bianco da Siena (b. 1434). It largely owes its fame to the tune composed for it by Ralph Vaughan Williams, named Down Ampney after the village where the composer was born. It first appeared in the English Hymnal in 1906, and was one of only four new melodies he wrote for this hymn book, as he generally favoured adapting existing folk tunes.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6HPKL1wOVXk> (King’s College Choir)

A hymn for Pentecost that has remained constant throughout the ages is Veni Creator Spiritus, usually conveyed in English as “Come Holy Ghost our souls inspire.” The hymn has existed for over a thousand years, and we even today still use the

Hymn
8

V e-ni Cre- á-tor Spí-ri-tus, Méntes tu-ó-rum vís i-ta:

Imple su-pér-na grá-ti-a Quae tu cre- á-sti pécto-ra.

plainsong melody of the original. Although its origin is not certain there is evidence that it was used in the tenth century generally accompanied by the ringing of bells, the lighting of candles and the use of incense. The translation now used was made by John Cosin (1594-1672), who after the vicissitudes of the Restoration was made Dean and Bishop of Durham. It is the only hymn to appear in the 1662 Prayer Book, though there have been more accurate translations made since.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gQGBMI_CGQI (From Notre Dame de Paris!)

Another hymn often sung at Pentecost is “O thou who camest from above”, one of Charles Wesley’s most popular texts. It first appeared in 1762, and it is usually sung to a tune composed by Charles’s grandson Samuel Sebastian (1810-1876), who composed over 130 hymn tunes, as well as oratorios and anthems. In the second verse there is the word “inextinguishable” and hymn book editors have sometimes tried to re-write it: “Hymns Ancient and Modern”, for example, replaced it with

“ever-bright, undying” while the “Church Hymnal” solved the problem by leaving the verse out altogether!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R3UYybc7Xa0> (Rochester Cathedral choir)

News from All Saints'

- Last week marked our first Sunday back for a Eucharist service, and there was a small but grateful, masked congregation, joined by the many who followed the service on our live Facebook page. By the end of the day there had been more than 500 contacts. In a weekly newsletter it is not always easy to keep up to date with the latest developments, but please keep an eye on our Facebook and Instagram pages for live news on future services.

A summary of the weekly services at present:

Wednesdays 12.45 Light at lunchtime: payers and bible study. ZOOM

Thursday 12.45 Eucharist IN CHURCH

Thursday 21.00 Compline LIVE ON FACEBOOK and recorded on the website from 21.30

Friday 17.00 Evensong ZOOM

Sunday 10.30 Mass with music IN CHURCH

Information is available in the church office (0636001881), as are the invitation codes for the Zoom services.

- Jane Castrucci writes: On Friday evening I joined the volunteers from Ognissanti to take food to the homeless - they have been operating (with masks and gloves) for the whole lockdown time. They go first to Termini and then to Ostiense. Last night we found another



- group working at Termini so we moved on to Ostiense - where we were welcomed by our usual 'clients'. The main difference to the operation is the pre-preparation of the packs - a cheese, egg or salami roll, a piece of pizza- a small bottle of water and a dolce, which this week was a small bag of Easter eggs. Before handing out the bags we added a container of warm pasta. It was good to catch up with our friends from Ognissanti- and it would be good if others from our congregation could come and help. More next week from Andrew Colvin!
- We have recently made a donation of €200 marmalade money to the nutrition Centre run by Franciscan sisters at Chililabombwe in Zambia, near the Congo border, which helps many hungry families in the area - if you are interested in helping please contact Tina Etherington (tinajane.etherington@gmail.com) or Jane Castrucci.
- Dana English sends her greetings, and next Sunday there will be a full letter from her.

From Thelma Mitchell, a former parishioner of All Saints'

This article first appeared in the parish magazine of St Nicolas, King's Norton, and is reproduced by permission of its editor.

The New Normal: reflections from lockdown 2020.

What will be the new normal? We suspect that it will not be like the old normal for some time to come. We are having to come to terms with who we are and what our value is.

A prince, a prime minister, a senior government advisor and possibly the president of Brazil have succumbed to Covid-19. While we can say that this virus is no respecter of status, it is NOT a leveller. It has hit the poorest hardest across the world, including in the UK. Covid-19 deaths are twice as high in poorer areas. On the African continent there are only 5 intensive care units for every million people. A Christian hospital in Bethlehem has launched an urgent appeal for donations. They are critically short of the most basic supplies.



One of our broadsheets, and repeated in the Church Times (so it must be true!), reported the story of the death of an American couple during the pandemic, not of the virus but by suffocation, when their 11-ton hoard of lavatory paper fell through the bedroom ceiling from the loft. They had responded to every world drama since the Cuban missile crisis in October 1962 by hoarding the stuff.

Is this how our time will be remembered? We need our responses to be the ones to direct, to control this story! Is it a

story of a virus that brought out the worst in human nature, showing up our weaknesses, selfishness and frailties, a world which fell apart in the face of a disease? Or will it be a tale of how people responded with their best, how the virus was a medical, not a social tragedy and how, when we were faced with a challenge on a scale not met before in this lifetime, we met and overcame it?

The choice is ours and in Europe we seem to be stoically weathering the storm. The social order has not collapsed. We do have 'corona days', raising mental health issues, asking if it will always be like this, but generally we've got our heads down and got on with it!

We now have the two metre dance when out walking or shopping during our allowed time, moving apart with a smile and, in the UK, an apology! We're able to measure 2 metres by eye so accurately we could win prizes! It is impossible to have a private conversation out of the window but when we are out those we meet seem friendlier. There has been a large

outpouring of love for the NHS and for all its workers, for carers, shop workers and those vital delivery people who now always find us at home! There has been a tangible increase in neighbourliness and a desire to take care of each other, with offers of fetching essentials from folks we have not spoken to before. 'Social distancing' has actually made us more sociable.

As we re-evaluate the value of work and workers and recognise the real value of what people do, it is up to us to make it more than skin deep, to create a more cohesive society. Community life is stronger in more equal societies. Spiritually, in online surveys it is reported that the normal of 6% in the UK who regularly worship has shot up to 25% joining in online services, and 45% say they now pray. Passing the peace will not be a contagion problem for now!

Interestingly, and maybe slightly ghoulishly, the films most downloaded to watch in the past few weeks have been about plagues, pestilences and pandemics! One of these is the 2010 film, *Contagion*. Its theme is 'Nothing spreads fear like fear!' This film almost predicts 2020, with its conspiracy theories and crackpot and dangerous 'cures' like those peddled by a president. In the film the virus is spread by respiratory droplets and focuses on attempts by medical researchers and public health officials to contain the disease and prevent social disorder. In one scene a bulldozer knocks down a banana tree while clearing a rain forest, disturbing the natural habitat of some bats. One bat finds shelter in a pig farm, dropping a piece of banana which is eaten by a pig. The pig is slaughtered and prepared for the table by a chef who transmits the disease caught from it in a handshake. Definitely prophetic! We should have been much better prepared, heeded the warnings after SARS, swine flu and Ebola.

I will draw to a close with a heartfelt excerpt from an email to the editor; *'I read every edition of the parish magazine on my commute to work. Currently this commute is across the landing as I wander into the home office each morning. I have become very aware recently that, although we all face the same restrictions, lockdown is affecting us all so differently. A friend who lives on his own is finding isolation very difficult whereas I, with two small children, struggle to get anytime to myself and am finding it difficult.*

There has been so much emphasis, I feel, on all the things you can do now that you have SO much free time as a result of lockdown – learn a new skill, do up the garden, clean the house. I, along with many parents, are looking forward to seeing it! I may not be able to leave the house but the truth is, I have never been busier. Time to myself on commutes or lunch breaks is now non-existent.'

We do feel for you and all parents on lockdown, especially when you are expected to be working as well. I think that we all will have a higher regard for teachers now too! Hang on in there – it can't go on forever ... can it?

Thelma Mitchell May 2020

From the Church Times

- The power of the Holy Spirit is needed “more than ever” in a world that is “experiencing a tragic famine of hope”, Pope Francis will say as part of an online service with the Archbishops of Canterbury and York on Pentecost Sunday.

The service, which marks the end of the global prayer movement for evangelism, Thy Kingdom Come, will be the first time that the Pope has joined the Archbishops online. It will be live-streamed on YouTube and the Church of England’s social media channels.

- THE Archbishop-designate of York, the Rt Revd Stephen Cottrell, has dismissed a Sunday-newspaper report that he was to lead a review involving “massive shrinkage” in the number of cathedrals, dioceses, and parish churches. The report appeared in *The Sunday Times* this week under the headline “Church of England weighs up cull of bishops”. It followed a meeting of the House of Bishops on Thursday of last week, which reported, besides hearing coronavirus updates and insights, “a series of breakout groups further looking at issues including political and economic change, shifts in technology, as well as the impact of demographic change”.
- Three-quarters of all parents who have children under five years old have attended a church activity in the past year, new research commissioned by HOPE Together, the Church of England, and the Evangelical Alliance suggests. The findings of the online Savanta ComRes survey of 1182 British parents of children aged 0-4 years old (6 to 28 February) were published in the annual *Talking Toddlers* report, on Monday. It states that 12 per cent of all parents of under-fives were practising Christians; the rest (non-practising parents) had attended a church activity for this age group anyway in the past year. More than half of these parents (55 per cent) said that they had explored their own beliefs as a result. The assistant director of HOPE Together, Dr Rachel Jordan-Wolf, said: “We so often hear about ageing Church, but here is something new — very young Church. . . The Church has . . . a huge opportunity to help a generation begin in faith if they start with the under-fives and their parents.”
- The Pope held an audience on Wednesday with a group of young athletes who would have been participating in an international fund-raising event, “We Run Together”, the next day if it had not be cancelled, owing to the pandemic. He praised their efforts, describing the event as “a concrete witness of what sports should be: a ‘bridge’ that unites men and women of different religions and cultures, promoting inclusion, friendship, solidarity, education. In other words, a ‘bridge’ of peace.” Proceeds from the auction accompanying the event will benefit the Pope John XXIII Hospital in Bergamo and the Poliambulance Foundation in Brescia, institutions that have been serving coronavirus patients.

November 24th 1911

ALL SAINTS', ROME.

Sir, -May I call the attention of your readers to the sad loss which has befallen us at All Saints' Church? On the night of October 30th, just before the festival, the vestry was broken into, and all our altar plate was stolen. No trace of it has been discovered, and we are faced with the difficulty of adequately replacing it, not to mention the sadness of the loss, and the grievous wrong done thereby. The ordinary resources of the church, which has hardly any endowment, cannot be drawn on in the emergency, and I am therefore appealing for contributions to enable us to make some provision for our needs. Will some of those who have worshipped at the altar of our beautiful church, and enjoyed delightful hours in Rome, send a thank-offering to help us? We shall be most grateful. Contributions may be sent to me at 7, Via Principessa Clotilde, or may be paid to the credit of "All Saints' Altar Plate Fund," at Sabatini and Esoli's Bank, 29, Piazza di Spagna, Rome.

JOHN GARDNER-BROWN.
Chaplain of All Saints', Rome.

You will notice that the address is Via Principessa Clotilde, which is just off the Piazza Flaminio. This was before the Canonica was completed. The Rev Gardner-Brown was Chaplain of All Saints' from 1910-1915 after serving in Bournemouth and Clapton. He then became Chaplain to the Bishop of Gibraltar. He died in 1926, aged 83.

• **Please Consider Supporting Us During This Challenging Time**

Churches such as ours in Italy are highly dependent on revenue not only from the plate but also from concerts and other rentals of space which are impossible at the present moment. These are uncertain times for us and we would be grateful for your generosity at this moment in our history. If you have the ability and willingness to help sustain us during this time, please use the link on our website to donate. www.allsaintsrome.org. Thank you!