

Sunday September 13th, 2020:
Little Paxton Church

9.15am – 10.45am: Morning Service with readings and prayers.

Great Paxton Church

10.30am - 11.00am: Morning Service with readings and prayers.
Open from 11.00am to 4.00pm for private prayer/quiet time.

Southoe and Diddington Churches are now open daily

Please observe social distancing and use hand sanitizer if visiting.

Follow us on Facebook @ ThePaxtonsBenefice.

Forgiveness and reconciliation are at the forefront of ministry in Coventry Cathedral. The old cathedral of St Michael's was bombed on 14th November 1940 during the Coventry Blitz. After the destruction, the Provost of the cathedral had the words *Father Forgive* inscribed on the wall behind the altar of the ruined building. The new cathedral was consecrated in 1962 and every Friday, at noon, people gather around the altar of reconciliation in the ruins and The Litany of Reconciliation is prayed. Those present ask God the Father of us all to forgive us and the whole human family for our failure to live up to the hope that God has placed in us. Here are the words which we can all pray.

All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

The hatred which divides nation from nation, race from race, class from class,
Father, forgive.

The covetous desires of people and nations to possess what is not their own,
Father, forgive.

The greed which exploits the work of human hands and lays waste the earth,
Father, forgive.

Our envy of the welfare and happiness of others,
Father, forgive.

Our indifference to the plight of the imprisoned, the homeless, the refugee,
Father, forgive.

The lust which dishonours the bodies of men, women and children,
Father, forgive.

The pride which leads us to trust in ourselves and not in God,
Father, forgive.

Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

Sunday September 13th, 2020: The Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity
The Benefice of the Paxtons with Diddington and Southoe
“Keeping in Touch” Edition 25

Father Forgive:

the altar in the ruins of the old cathedral in Coventry



Annette writes: greetings to you all!

I hope that your week has had pleasant times with experiences of love and kindness. Many of us have been trying to understand the implications of the new social gathering restrictions which come into force on Monday.

I'm pleased to say that they do not affect the services which we have been able to offer in church for the past few weeks. We continue to work to 30 people being the safe number to host in our churches with social distancing and face coverings. But we know that many across the country are being tested when it comes to implementing guidelines, not least in schools and colleges. It may mean that some of you can't see all of your family together as you would wish, and many social events are still on hold. Let's hope and pray that the legalisation of the guidelines will halt the rise of cases and we can move towards winter and Christmas in an optimistic frame of mind.

There may be times when things happen to us or those we know and love and we harbour long standing feelings of resentment and anger towards others. Today's gospel is all about the unlimited forgiveness which Jesus commends. Take care and God Bless.

With love and prayers, Annette

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A Reading from Romans Chapter 14 Verses 10-12

Why do you pass judgement on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgement seat of God. For it is written: 'As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God.' So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

The Gospel Reading: Matthew Chapter 18 Verses 21-35

Peter came and said to Jesus, 'Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?' Jesus said to him, 'Not seven times, but I tell you, seventy-seven times.

For this reason, the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him 10,000 talents was brought to him; and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with all his possessions, and payment to be made.

So, the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, "Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything." And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. But that same slave came upon one of his fellow-slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, "Pay what you owe." Then his fellow-slave fell down and pleaded with him, "Have patience with me, and I will pay you." But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt.

When his fellow-slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord said to him, "You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow-slave, as I had mercy on you?" And he punished him for his deeds. So, my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.'

The Collect for the Day.

Almighty God, whose only Son has opened for us a new and living way into your presence: give us pure hearts and steadfast wills to worship you in spirit and in truth; through 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.**

Pause for Thought.

**Gandhi said "an eye for an eye"
leaves the whole world blind.**

Reflections on the Passage from Matthew

The Greek word for forgiveness is *apheemei*. It means *letting go*.

On a purely human level forgiveness is good for us.

Forgiving, letting go of feelings of revenge and retribution, is a potent healing act. Research shows that holding on to anger increases our chances of developing a serious illness and damaging our health.

Forgiveness though reduces anger, hurt and stress and leads to greater feelings of optimism, hope, compassion and self-confidence.

Forgiveness has healing power in the lives of those who utilize it.

There is a story about a monkey. Someone put a coconut in a jar and the monkey reached into the jar and got the coconut and couldn't get his hand out. He pulled and pulled to try and get away, but he couldn't get his hand out. He wouldn't let go and so he got caught. So, we too must let go and set ourselves free. Forgiveness is letting go of any resentment and hurt that lives within our hearts.

But most importantly we forgive because we are forgiven.

As we reflect on the cost of forgiveness shown by Jesus on the cross, we cannot be other than forgiving.

There is a strong link between how we forgive others and the deep realization that we have been forgiven by God in Christ. If we are at peace with God, then we are at peace with others.

To be a Christian is to be somebody who knows they are forgiven and to be a person able to forgive and let go.

We don't just forgive because it's good for us.

We don't just forgive because the bible tells us to.

We forgive because we have been forgiven.