



THE FRIDAY EMAIL

Friday 26th July 2024



The Friday Thought from our Vicar – Father Simon:

The Bible records quite a few incredible miracles. There's Moses summoning up the ten plagues to afflict the Egyptians before he divides the Red Sea so that the Israelites can pass through the water to safety. Then what about the walls of Jericho falling down at the sound of a mighty trumpet blast and the great shout of the people? In the New Testament we have Jesus calming the storm, healing the sick and casting out demons, and turning water into wine. And then what about the greatest miracle of all: Jesus' resurrection?



So much could be said and has been written about every single miracle in the Bible. So a great big thank you is owed to those who devised our lectionary - the calendar of readings for the Church year - for scheduling two of Jesus' most well-known miracles together this Sunday: the feeding of the five thousand and Jesus walking on the water. (If you haven't guessed, I'm being sarcastic!) Either this penultimate Friday Thought from me will be the longest I've ever written, and my sermon on Sunday will be so long that your Sunday lunch will be well and truly roasted, or I need to focus on just one thing!



And it's on Jesus walking on the water of the Galilee that I'm going to focus my attention right now. I'm reminded of the words Neil Armstrong famously uttered in 1969 when he became the first human to set foot on the surface of the moon: 'That's one small step for man; one giant leap for mankind.' Is Jesus walking on water a similar small step/giant leap event?

Of course, Neil Armstrong was presenting himself as a representative of all humanity; the first to make that small step onto the surface of the moon, but a step which they thought at the time would be the first of many giant beneficial leaps over the coming years - not just on the moon but on other planets too. The reality, though, is that a human has only ever stepped on Earth and the moon, and the last mission to the moon was in December 1972, with the benefits for us of returning questioned by some, despite NASA's recent renewed interest.

So the big difference between Armstrong's moon-walk and Jesus' water-walk is that Jesus, as the Son of God, wasn't representing humanity. Nor did he need many people to help him achieve the impossible. Unlike Armstrong, Jesus' action was all his own, and therefore something much deeper and more mysterious, even causing, in the account of this incident in another gospel, his disciples to believe that they were seeing a ghost!



But whilst Jesus was being fully divine in his action, he was also being fully human in his interaction with his amazed disciples. As the eternal Son of God, not of this world, Jesus is mysterious and, at times, difficult to understand. But, as flesh and blood, he's also a person with a family, knowing all of life's joys, frustrations, and temptations.

And that helps me connect to him - with his human side; the fact that he experienced all the same things we do, and therefore understands me fully. He understands me as I strain at the oars of life, even when he seems distant. And as I take the strain, trying to move forward, he whispers in my heart: 'It is I; do not be afraid.'

Yours in Christ,
Fr Simon



➤ READINGS FOR THIS SUNDAY

The second book of Kings, chapter 4 verses 42-44:

A man came from Baal-shalishah, bringing food from the first fruits to the man of God: twenty loaves of barley and fresh ears of grain in his sack. Elisha said, 'Give it to the people and let them eat.' But his servant said, 'How can I set this before a hundred people?' So he repeated, 'Give it to the people and let them eat, for thus says the Lord, "They shall eat and have some left."' He set it before them, they ate, and had some left, according to the word of the Lord.



Gradual Psalm 145, verses 10-19:

10 All your works praise you, O Lord,
and your faithful servants bless you.

11 They tell of the glory of your kingdom
and speak of your mighty power,

Response: I will bless you and praise you for ever, O God and my King.

12 To make known to all peoples your mighty acts
and the glorious splendour of your kingdom.

13 Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom;
your dominion endures throughout all ages.

Response

14 The Lord is sure in all his words
and faithful in all his deeds.

15 The Lord upholds all those who fall
and lifts up all those who are bowed down.

Response

16 The eyes of all wait upon you, O Lord,
and you give them their food in due season.

17 You open wide your hand
and fill all things living with plenty.

Response

18 The Lord is righteous in all his ways
and loving in all his works.

19 The Lord is near to those who call upon him,
to all who call upon him faithfully.

Response

St John's Gospel, chapter 6, verses 1-21:

Jesus went to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, also called the Sea of Tiberias. A large crowd kept following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing for the sick. Jesus went up the mountain and sat down there with his disciples. Now the Passover, the festival of the Jews, was near. When he looked up and saw a large crowd coming towards him, Jesus said to Philip, 'Where are we to buy bread for these people to eat?' He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he was going to do. Philip answered him, 'Six months' wages would not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little.' One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, 'There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But what are they among so many people?' Jesus said, 'Make the people sit down.' Now there was a great deal of grass in the place; so they sat down, about five thousand in all. Then Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated; so also the fish, as much as they wanted. When they were satisfied, he told his disciples, 'Gather up the fragments left over, so that nothing may be lost.' So they gathered them up, and from the fragments of the five barley loaves, left by those who had eaten, they filled twelve baskets. When the people saw the sign that he had done, they began to say, 'This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world.'

When Jesus realized that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, he withdrew again to the mountain by himself.

When evening came, his disciples went down to the lake, got into a boat, and started across the lake to Capernaum. It was now dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. The lake became rough because a strong wind was blowing. When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the lake and coming near the boat, and they were terrified. But he said to them, 'It is I; do not be afraid.' Then they wanted to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat reached the land towards which they were going.

The collect for the Ninth Sunday after Trinity

Almighty God,
who sent your Holy Spirit
to be the life and light of your Church:
open our hearts to the riches of your grace,
that we may bring forth the fruit of the Spirit
in love and joy and peace;
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.



➤ **Details of Sunday 9.30am Parish Eucharist which is also live-streamed**

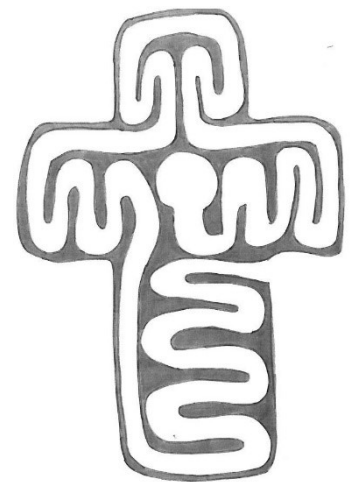
- ❖ President: Fr Simon (Vicar)
- ❖ Preacher: Fr Simon (Vicar)
- ❖ Reader: Dawn Dickson
- ❖ Intercessions: Sandie Abery
- ❖ Mass setting: Mass of St Thomas (music: David Thorne)
- ❖ Processional: Ye servants of God, your Master proclaim (tune: Paderborn)
- ❖ Gradual: Our hunger cries from plenty, Lord (tune: Wareham)
- ❖ Offertory: O thou, who at thy Eucharist didst pray (tune: Song 1)
- ❖ Communion: Bread of the world in mercy broken (tune: Rendez à Dieu)
- ❖ Motet: Ave verum corpus (music: W.A. Mozart)
- ❖ Final: Lord Jesus Christ, you have come to us (tune: Living Lord)



INTERCESSIONS FOR THIS WEEK

For the world-wide Church:

- ❖ Bishop Alan - Bishop of St Albans
- ❖ Bishop Jane - Bishop of Hertford
- ❖ The Venerable Janet Mackenzie - Archdeacon of Hertford
- ❖ The Revd Gaz Tracey - Area Dean - whilst on study leave
- ❖ Archbishop Justin - Archbishop of Canterbury
- ❖ In the Anglican cycle of prayer for the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem & the Middle East
- ❖ In the Diocesan cycle of prayer for the parish and people of St Andrew, Stapleford in the Hertford and Ware deanery
- ❖ In our Deanery cycle of prayer for the people of the parish of All Saints', Hockerill
- ❖ For those being martyred or persecuted for their Christian faith



[\(https://releaseinternational.org/\)](https://releaseinternational.org/)

For our world:

- ❖ For the victims of Israel and Gaza during the current Israel-Palestinian conflict.
- ❖ For the people of Ukraine, be they in their homeland or refugees in Europe.
- ❖ For just and peaceful governance throughout the world, not least in Russia, Ukraine, Israel, Palestine, Sudan, Somalia, China, Haiti, Lebanon, Afghanistan, Nigeria, Yemen, Iran, Pakistan, Myanmar, North Korea, and the DRC.
- ❖ For the victims of conflict, terrorism, violence, or tragedy.
- ❖ For those suffering from the effects of climate change or natural disaster



- ❖ For those working to reduce the effects of climate change.
- ❖ For those working to relieve suffering throughout the world.
- ❖ For emergency and keyworkers, scientists and leaders, medical and care workers, and, in this country, particularly for the NHS and social services.
- ❖ For those being unjustly held captive or being persecuted
- ❖ For those who have been abused in body, mind, or spirit.
- ❖ For those who are victims of modern-day slavery and human trafficking.
- ❖ For those who are victims of famine or poverty, praying for the work of the *Shiksha Rath* educational project in New Delhi which we support.
- ❖ For those struggling with addiction.
- ❖ For those who are homeless, and for the work of the *Holy Trinity Night Shelter* in Bishop's Stortford which we support.
- ❖ For those involved in the migrant and refugee situation.
- ❖ For the work of organisations which are working to bring an end to poverty.

For our town:

- ❖ For the staff and patients of our Central Surgery, the Princess Alexandra, Rivers, and Herts & Essex hospitals, for our care homes, social services, voluntary care sector.
- ❖ For Sawbridgeworth Town Council, including our Mayor, Cllr Reese Smith.
- ❖ For East Herts District Council and our councillors.
- ❖ For local businesses in these uncertain times.
- ❖ For our emergency services.
- ❖ For groups and organisations, including The Hailey Centre and library.
- ❖ For our youth organisations and uniformed brigades.
- ❖ For the pupils, teachers, staff, governors, and parents associated with our local schools, including our church school in Spellbrook, as they begin their summer holiday.
- ❖ For those feeling isolated and lonely; particularly those living alone.
- ❖ For those who are concerned about making ends meet, and for organisations such as Harlow Foodbank and the evangelical church's pop-up store seeking to bring aid.



For the people of:

Sunday:	Lawrence Avenue & Saffron Gardens
Monday:	White Post Field, Highgate Grove & Nursery Field
Tuesday:	Three Mile Pond, Parsonage Lane & Tednambury
Wednesday:	Spellbrook
Thursday:	Reedings Way, Kecksy's & Queen's Close
Friday:	Leat Close, Mill Lane & Burtons Mill
Saturday:	London Road, Farriers, Kings Head Court & The Smithy

For the sick, tired, and bereaved, including:

Sue Adams, Angela Alder, June Allen, Linda Bowler, Pam Brown, John Butler, Barbara Carter, Robert Davis, Rachael Dineen, Elsa Duce, Katrina Evangeli, Kathy Hanratty, Nick Heslop, John Ireland, Steven, Wendy, Julie Patterson, Douglas Rose, Alan Vickers, Jackie White, Mark White.

For those who have died, including:

- ❖ Jennifer Snowden RIP
- ❖ John Edwards RIP

For our dearly departed ones, remembered at their year's mind:

- ❖ Alison Frost RIP (29th July)
- ❖ Phylis Mason RIP (1st August)
- ❖ Muriel Middleton RIP (2nd August)



NOTICES

➤ Services and events in church this week:

(CW = Common Worship

BCP = Book of Common Prayer)

❖ Sat 27th July

10am-5pm Great St Mary's Flower Festival

❖ Sun 28th July

Ninth after Trinity

8am Said Eucharist (CW)
9.30am Parish Eucharist (CW)
Followed by refreshments in Church House
11.30am Service of Holy Baptism
12.15-3pm Great St Mary's Flower Festival
5pm Choral Evensong

❖ Mon, Tues, Thurs & Fri

9am Said Morning Prayer (CW)

❖ Tues 30th July

11.30am Interment of the ashes of Mr Michael Steward

❖ Wed 31st July

9.30am Said Morning Prayer (CW)
10am Said Eucharist (CW)
11.30am Funeral of Mr John Edwards RIP

❖ Sun 4th August

Tenth after Trinity

8am Holy Communion (BCP)
9.30am Parish Eucharist (CW)
Followed by refreshments in Church House
Followed by Fr Simon's leaving event

➤ **Great St Mary's Flower Festival - this weekend**

With a profusion of flowers appearing in the church, ready to take artistic shape, there's a buzz in the air - and that's not all because of the church bee infestation! With the theme 'Children's Books', and with activities and things of interest for young and old alike, this weekend is going to be special. So do bring friends and family along and enjoy the wonderful creations.



➤ **Farewell light lunch for Fr Simon - next Sunday - 4th August - Church House**



A reminder from Gilly and Anthony our churchwardens that we'll be saying farewell to Fr Simon next Sunday - 4th August. His final service will be the 9.30am Parish Mass, which will be followed by coffee and then a light lunch.

➤ **Murder Mystery Evening - Saturday 12th October - hold the date!**



This autumn we're going to have a bit of fun with a murder mystery evening in Church House entitled 'The Jewel of the Ocean', performed by *Quintessence* - an amateur dramatics group from Hunsdon. The cost of the evening will be £15 which will include a welcome drink and Ploughman's Supper. Whether you choose to come dressed for a cruise on the high seas or not is optional!!

*God of mission,
who alone brings growth to your Church,
send your Holy Spirit
to give vision to our planning, wisdom to our actions,
joy to our worship, and power to our witness.
Help our church to grow in numbers,
in spiritual commitment to you,
and in service to our local community,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.*

Thank you for your ongoing support of Great St Mary's

➤ **Content for the Newsletter**

If you have a notice for the Friday Email, please let us know by lunchtime on Thursday.

Website: www.sawbridgeworthchurch.org.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com and search for 'Great St Mary's, Sawbridgeworth'

YouTube: www.youtube.com and search for 'Great St Mary's, Sawbridgeworth'

➤ **Contact us**

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Sponsored Bike 'n Hike
BEDS AND HERTS HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST

Bike 'n Hike

Saturday 14 September 2024
9am to 5pm



For more information please make contact:



- ▶ Have fun visiting over 600 churches and chapels
- ▶ Raise funds for your local church or chapel
- ▶ Help save other churches in Beds and Herts



BEDS & HERTS
Historic Churches Trust

Bike 'n Hike in association with the national *Ride + Stride*
and with acknowledgements to **THE WIXAMTREE TRUST**
www.bedshtsct.org.uk BHHCT Registered Charity No. 1197228



Great St Mary's, Sawbridgeworth

Flower Festival 2024

Saturday 27th July - 10am to 5pm
Sunday 28th July - 12noon to 3pm

Theme 'Children's books'

Children's activities in the church yard

Treasure Hunt

*Refreshments and
grand raffle at
Church House*

FREE ENTRY