

## Newsletter Pentecost St Mary's and St Augustine's

**Sunday's Readings:** Acts 2. 1-21; Psalm 104. 26-end; John 7.37-39

**Wednesday's Readings:** Psalm 136; Job 3; Roms.2.1-16.

I wonder whether you are a destination person or a person who just appreciates the journey – maybe you are a mixture, or perhaps it depends on how you feel and what day it is. Pentecost to some extent offers us the end of a journey. The ending of the 50 days of Easter with the promised coming of the Holy Spirit – is it the ending or just the beginning? We may be thinking the same about lockdown, is the easing of lockdown the end or the beginning of the process for us? It is certainly a marker on the way, a staging post on the journey. As I believe is Pentecost, a marker for us as pilgrims and a marker for the Church, just as it was for the early Church, 'gathered together in one place' (Acts 2. 1). Pentecost signifies for us the beginning of Ordinary Time within the Church's calendar, we are hankering after ordinary time, something of how things used to be before the pandemic struck.

I was talking this week with a Jewish friend; we were sharing our experiences of lockdown from our different faith communities. She said that during the week she had contacted and spoken to holocaust survivors, now well into their 90's. Her intention was to check on them to make sure they were alright. But as is often the case it was their wisdom and insights that gave her hope and reassurance. Their reflections were that this too would pass and that whilst the lockdown was restrictive, they understood a deeper blessing of a secure and safe home, of food to eat and of a 'system' that was primarily there to care not to annihilate them. They displayed a remarkable sense of resilience within the face of adversity because they had lived through something far worse and survived.

We are all, I think now, quite understandably, struggling with the extended restrictions to our lives and wondering what the future may look like, we may be wanting 'all this' to go away, to wake up and discover that it was just a bad dream and everything is as it was ... we are only human. Our Christian faith does help us to navigate this uncertain space, but it does not provide us with a quick fix or a fairy godmother who is going to suddenly wave a magic wand. We may hope that Pentecost will be the answer to our prayers, our longings and that suddenly God's Holy Spirit will come a fresh on us and we will suddenly feel like the sun is shining on us and have a sense of wellbeing and overall happiness. As Christians we are pilgrims and will find that this year Pentecost becomes a way marker for us but that the path remains the same, the land we are walking in will still feel foreign and alien. So, we find that we become marked not by the destination but by the journey we are on.

This Pentecost will not provide for us the fizz and whizz we may have been hoping for. It may appear as if nothing much has changed ... no flash of insight ...no resolution of perplexity but deep down there will be a shifting, a moving, a change, a release ... a fitting of ourselves and Church to meet this hour. Unperceived by the human eye and perhaps even at an unconscious level but a shifting and a renewing, nevertheless. This is the deeper wisdom and truth that will lead

*O Breath of Life, come sweeping  
through us, revive your Church with life  
and power; O Breath of Life, come  
cleanse, renew us, and fit your Church  
to meet this hour.*

*O Breath of Love, come breathe within  
us, renewing thought and will and  
heart; come, love of Christ, a fresh to  
win us, revive your Church in every  
part!*

*O Wind of God, come bend us, break  
us, till humbly we confess our need;  
then in your tenderness remake us,  
revive, restore – for this we plead.*

*Revive us, Lord; is zeal abating while  
harvest fields are vast and white?  
Revive us Lord, the world is waiting –  
equip thy Church to spread the light.*

*Elizabeth Ann Porter Head*

us home. It is that deep well that Jesus offers to us as 'streams of living water' (John7.38). It is the wisdom known and revealed to us by our Jewish elders, the holocaust survivors who now in the 90<sup>th</sup> year offer us hope and life that we too may endure and know also that this season too will pass.



#### **Prayer for Pentecost**

Spirit of truth whom the world can never grasp, touch our hearts with the shock of your coming; fill us with desire for your disturbing peace; and fire us with longing to speak your uncontainable word through Jesus Christ, Amen.

*A time of disengagement*

*From routine.*

*Desert. Emptiness.*

*Wordless waiting before*

*The mystery.*

*Nothing much happened:*

*No flash of insight,*

*No resolution of*

*perplexity,*

*But deep down,*

*Shifting perceptions,*

*Something understood.*

Ann Lewin – Watching  
for the Kingfisher, 2004.

**Thy Kingdom Come Beacon Event** remotely from Rotherham Minster 4pm Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> May. Canon Sophie will be preaching and our very own Miriam Cavanagh will be hosting. Tickets on line **EventBrite registration**

link: <https://sheffdio.org/tkc20>

Yo Tozer-Loft has offered to co-ordinate a **24-hr prayer marathon for Sat 30<sup>th</sup> May**, Pentecost Eve, if you want to take part for a 30 mins slot please contact her 07925 634420 for a time slot. Text or phone Yo. There are still some slots up for grabs!!!

Jem Clines will continue to offer a **zoom service** on Sunday mornings at 11am - the meeting link is 955-8571-0442 join from 10.45am via zoom or by phone using one of these numbers 0208 080 6592; 0330 088 5830; 0131 460 1196; 0203 481 5237; 0203 481 5240; 0208 080 6591. After Pentecost the format for this will change slightly.

**Roots** resources are providing free prayers and reflections for adults, families and children for each Sunday

<https://www.rootsontheweb.com/i-am-looking-for/public-copies/worshipathome10may>

Check out this link. St Marys continue to provide emergency food provision across the city. **Bread for Sheffield** is a fundraiser to help support the work. <https://breadforsheffield.wixsite.com/flour>

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