



Praying Together

during the week beginning Sunday 24 May:

The Seventh Sunday of Easter

The Sunday after Ascension Day

**DURHAM
CATHEDRAL**

THE SHRINE OF ST CUTHBERT

During this time of great anxiety and uncertainty, we want to stay in touch with our regular worshippers and indeed with everyone who is associated with the Cathedral family.

This is particularly important to us at a time when, following the Church of England's instructions, public worship at the Cathedral has been suspended. The residential clergy are still saying the Daily Offices at home or from church, and they are being live-streamed via the cathedral website where there is a link that takes you to the Cathedral's Facebook page (you don't need a Facebook account).

We hope that this pamphlet will provide you with important worship and prayer resources for use at home as well as a reminder of how to keep in touch with us, especially if you have particularly needs. Please be assured that you are firmly in our thoughts and prayers, and please pray for us at this very difficult and worrying time.

Gospel

John 17. 1-11

Jesus looked up to heaven and said, 'Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed. I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.

Thought for the Day

by the Reverend Canon Professor Simon Oliver

The gospel at the Eucharist this Sunday (John 17.1-11) is part of Jesus' prayer immediately before his betrayal by Judas. He prays 'Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you.' Jesus says that he has been glorified in his disciples.

What does 'glory' mean? It means that wonderful, luminous, shimmering beauty which draws us and invites our wonder and praise. We can imagine the glory of a sunset, the glory of a tree in full blossom, the glory in the face of a child, the glory of music, art or poetry. Jesus prays that, in him, the full luminous beauty of God will shine.

As Jesus prays, that divine beauty is about to be revealed in what, at first sight, looks like the most grotesque and inglorious of acts: his crucifixion. Yet in the crucifixion, the full glory of God is revealed. God does not hold himself back or resist rejection. In the crucifixion of Christ, the glory of God's love is fully revealed – a love that flows abundantly and freely even in the utter darkness of human sin and death.

When we think of glorifying someone, we tend to think this means obscuring or even belittling others. We might glorify a political or cultural hero and at the same time demonstrate everyone else's dull ordinariness. But the crucial lesson we must learn about glorifying God in Jesus Christ is that we do not glorify him at our expense.

In other words, the glory of God in Christ *is also our glory*. It is also our glory because Jesus Christ is divine *and* human. He shows us divine glory and human glory. He shows us that a human life can be the mirror, vessel, or channel of God's glorious love.

To give glory to God is also to give glory to the beauty and mystery of the human person. In Jesus, the full glory of God and the full glory of the human person are revealed. We are, the Bible tells us, made in God's image and likeness; Jesus shows us what this means.

We can shine with a divine glory. When we give glory to God – when we give praise to the luminous, shimmering beauty of God's love in the holiness of worship – we also give glory to Christ and glory to the mystery and dignity of every human person. We

can see God's glory in the face of others, in the deep mystery of those we know and love.

One of my predecessors as Canon Professor at Durham, Michael Ramsey, wrote a wonderful book titled *The Glory of God and the Transfiguration of Christ*. 'Glory' was a major focus of his writings.

Michael Ramsey is commemorated in Durham Cathedral in the transfiguration window just outside the feretory – a wonderful image of Christ's shining glory. Michael Ramsey's ashes are interred in Canterbury Cathedral and on the memorial stone is one of his favourite writings.

It is by Irenaeus, a theologian of the second century: 'The glory of God is the living man, and the life of man is the vision of God.' In the living person, God's glory – his luminous, shimmering beauty – is made visible. Human life in its fulness is the vision of God. God's glory and the glory of the human person are intertwined, for our faces can shine with God's luminous, shimmering beauty.

Divine glory and human glory meet in the glory of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, crucified, risen, ascended, and glorified.

The Venerable Bede: Monday 25 May

St Bede 'the Venerable' was said to be the most learned scholar in Europe in the 8th century. Born in Northumbria in about 673, he was given as a boy to Benedict Biscop's newly-founded monastery at the mouth of the River Wear (in what is now Sunderland), being translated to Jarrow when that community was established as Wearmouth's twin in 682. The churches of St Peter's Monkwearmouth and St Paul's Jarrow contain Saxon fabric which goes back to Bede's day.

Bede's fame rests on his writing, suffused not only by his wide learning and insatiable intellectual curiosity, but also by a gentle and humane wisdom. He wrote prolifically in many areas of early medieval thought including natural science, linguistics, mathematics and poetry. His treatises on the calculation of the date of Easter were influential throughout the middle ages, as were his biblical commentaries. He is best known for his *History of the English Church and People*, the single most important source for our knowledge of the Saxon church in England. In the north, he is also especially honoured for his two lives of St Cuthbert. He died in 735.

That Bede's bones lie in the Cathedral is the result of an act of 'sacred theft' 1000 years ago, when the monks of Durham, coveting the relics of so distinguished a saint, and recognising Bede's importance as Cuthbert's biographer, arranged for them to be removed by stealth to Durham from their home at Jarrow in 1022. His shrine has been in the Galilee Chapel of the Cathedral since the 14th century. He was declared to be a Doctor of the Church by Pope Leo XIII in 1899.

The Collect

Almighty God, maker of all things,
whose Son Jesus Christ gave to thy servant Bede
grace to drink in with joy
the word which leadeth us to know thee and to love thee:
in thy goodness grant that we also may come at length to thee,
the source of all wisdom,
and stand before thy face;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who liveth and reigneth with thee,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen.

From a letter to Cuthwin from Bede's pupil Cuthbert the Deacon from *Celebrating the Saints*

On the Tuesday before the feast of the Ascension, his breathing became very much worse, and his feet began to swell. Even so, he spent the whole day teaching us, and dictated cheerfully and among other things said several times: 'Be sure to learn your lessons quickly now; for I do not know how much longer I will be with you, or whether my Maker will take me from you very soon now.'

It seemed clear to us that he knew very well when his end would be. He spent all that night in thanksgiving, without sleep. When dawn broke that Wednesday, he gave further dictation on the work which we had begun. We were still working at nine o'clock when we went in procession with the relics of the saints, as the custom of that day required.

One of us stayed with him, and said to him: 'Dear master, there is still one chapter left to be done of that book you were dictating; is it too much trouble if I question you about it?' But he replied 'It is not hard at all. Take up your pen and sharpen it,

and then write quickly.’ And so he did. At three o’clock he said to me: ‘I have a few valuables in my chest, some pepper, and napkins, and some incense. Run quickly and fetch the priests of our monastery, so that I may share among them these little presents God has given me.’

I did so in great agitation; and when they were all present, he spoke to all and to each personally, encouraging and pleading with them to offer mass and prayer on his behalf; and they promised they would do this. But they were very sad, and they all wept, especially when he said that he did not think they would see his face much longer in this world.

Yet they rejoiced at one thing that he said: ‘If it so pleases my Maker, the time has come for me to be released from this body, and to return to the One who formed me out of nothing. I have lived a long time, and the righteous Judge has provided for me well throughout my life. The time for my departure is near, and I long to be dissolved and be with Christ. My soul longs to see Christ my King in all his beauty.’ Having said this, and indeed several other things to our great profit, he spent his last day in gladness until the evening.

Then Wilberht, the boy whom I mentioned earlier, said once again: ‘Dear master, there is still one sentence that we have not yet written down.’ And Bede said: ‘Then write it quickly.’ After a little while the boy said: ‘There, it is written.’ And he replied: ‘Good! It is finished; you have spoken the truth. Hold my head in your hands. It would please me much if I could sit opposite the holy place where I used to pray, so that I may call upon my Father sitting up.’

And so it happened that as Bede sat upon the floor of his cell, singing ‘Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit’ he breathed his last. And we can believe without hesitation that, inasmuch as he always laboured in this life to the praise of God, so his soul journeyed to the joys of heaven for which he longed.

Prayers for the Saints

United in the company of all the faithful
and looking for the coming of the kingdom,
let us offer our prayers to God, the source of all life and holiness.

Merciful Lord,
strengthen all Christian people by your Holy Spirit,
that we may live as a royal priesthood and a holy nation
to the praise of Christ Jesus our Saviour.

Lord, have mercy.

Bless *N* our bishop, and all ministers of your Church,
that by faithful proclamation of your word
we may be built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets
into a holy temple in the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

Empower us by the gift of your holy and life-giving Spirit,
that we may be transformed into the likeness of Christ
from glory to glory.

Lord, have mercy.

Give to the world and its peoples
the peace that comes from above,
that they may find Christ's way of freedom and life.

Lord, have mercy.

Hold in your embrace all who witness to your love
in the service of the poor and needy;
all those who minister to the sick and dying;
and all who bring light to those in darkness.

Lord, have mercy.

Touch and heal all those whose lives are scarred by sin and pain,
that, raised from death to life in Christ,
their sorrow may be turned to eternal joy.

Lord, have mercy.

Remember in your mercy those gone before us
who have been well-pleasing to you from eternity;
preserve us who live here in your faith,
guide us to your kingdom, and grant us your peace at all times.
Lord, have mercy.

Hasten the day when those who fear you in every nation
will come from east and west, from north and south,
and sit at table in your kingdom.
Lord, have mercy.

And so we give you thanks
for the whole company of your saints in glory,
with whom in fellowship we join our prayers and praises;
by your grace may we, like them, be made perfect in your love.
Blessing and glory and wisdom,
thanksgiving and honour and power,
be to our God for ever and ever.
Amen.

Christ is the morning star
who when the night
of this world is past
brings to his saints the promise
of the light of life
and opens everlasting day.

Bede: from his Commentary
on the Book of Revelation

Contact details for The Reverend Canon Michael Everitt

Address: 15 The College, Durham, DH1 3EQ
Email: michael.everitt@durhamcathedral.co.uk
Telephone: 0191 384 0164

A Prayer for use during the Coronavirus outbreak

Keep us, good Lord,
under the shadow of your mercy
in this time of uncertainty and distress.
Sustain and support the anxious and fearful,
and lift up all who are brought low;
that we may rejoice in your comfort
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love
in Christ Jesus our Lord.
Amen.

A Prayer for Kate McIlhagga:

Creator of rainbows,
come through the closed doors
of our emotions, mind and imagination;
come alongside us as we walk,
come to us at work and worship,
come to our meetings and councils,
come and call us by name, call us to pilgrimage.
Wounded healer,
out of our dis-unity may we be re-membered,
out of the pain of our division may we see your glory.
Call us from present pre-occupation
to future community.
Spirit of Unity,
challenge our preconceptions,
enable us to grow in love and understanding,
accompany us on our journey together,
that we may go out with confidence into your world
as a new creation – one body in you,
that the world may believe. Amen.

The next issue of *Praying Together*
will be published on Monday 1 June