

In Touch across North Barrow

Sunday 17th. May 2020
The Sixth Sunday of Easter

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Worship during the day, alone or with household members

God has rescued us from the power of darkness,
and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son,
alleluia! alleluia! *Colossians 1:13*

In the name of the Father, + and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Alleluia! Christ is risen.
He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Collect for today

Faithful God,
who loves us in Christ Jesus,
send your Spirit of truth to dwell within us,
that we may always reject what is false,
live by the commands of Christ,
and be true to the love you show us.
Grant this through Jesus Christ, the resurrection and the life,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Readings : Acts 17:22-31; 1 Peter 3:13-22; John 14:15-21
or during the week from the daily prayer and readings.

The Gospel

14: Jesus said to his disciples: ¹⁵ 'If you love me, you will keep my commandments. ¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you for ever. ¹⁷ This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you. ¹⁸ I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. ¹⁹ In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. ²⁰ On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. ²¹ They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them.'

Prayers

Almighty and everlasting God,
we thank you that you have brought us safely
to the beginning of this day.
Keep us from falling into sin or running into danger;
order us in all our doings and guide us to do always
what is righteous in your sight; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

God our Father,
whose Son Jesus Christ gives the water of eternal life:
may we thirst for you,
the spring of life and source of goodness,
through him who is alive and reigns, now and for ever.
Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Conclusion

We are raised to new life with Christ. Alleluia! Alleluia!

Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia!

The promise of God's Personal trainer.

We have become used to keeping the government's commandments, or at least trying to. Social distancing get's complicated in the Supermarket if folk get confused about the one way aisles, or someone is taking time look at what they want to buy - do you wait or try to pass by on the other side, and what about the person coming the wrong way!?

Looking ahead we are all going to need clear guidance and direction as we look to regain a physical rather than virtual presence as a worshipping community. The disciples were just as anxious. Jesus was leaving them not just to face the trauma of the crucifixion alone but because he would be ultimately returning to his father's side.

The experience of lock-down may have left us feeling orphaned from friends and family. For those of us able to use Zoom or have face time with others that may help fill the gap, but a gap it still remains. Jesus points ahead to the time when his disciples will see God's victory and vindication in the resurrection, *on that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.*

Like Zoom and face time, Jesus knows that this will not be enough to fill the gap. Humanity is made for relationship. We need not just to hear or see, but to touch and to experience emotion. Jesus' promise is for another Advocate to be with us for ever. The Greek word is rich in meaning and is variously translated as Advocate, Counsellor, Comforter, and Intercessor, but each of those expresses only one facet of the word **parakletos**. The original readers of this Gospel would have heard the full richness of the word where as we have no one word to capture it's full meaning.

Jesus refers to the Holy Spirit as "another Advocate," the implication being that Jesus is also an Advocate, but one limited by the

Incarnation - by time and space. He can be in only one place at a time, even risen from the dead. While the disciples don't know it, Jesus knows that he is moving toward his Ascension and glorification, and will be leaving the disciples. The new Advocate that Jesus promises will be with all disciples everywhere, unlimited by time and space, and will be with them forever, their own personal trainer just as Jesus was the trainer and teacher for his disciples.

Even though the Spirit-Advocate is coming to help us on earth, Jesus continues to serve as our Advocate in heaven. St. John writes, *If anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous* (1 John 2:1). He is viewed as our Advocate in the court of heaven, pleading the cause of those who own him as Lord. In this light, the Holy Spirit is to be understood as the Advocate from heaven, supporting and representing the disciples in their mission and ministry to an often hostile world.

As we heard last week, Jesus refers to himself as the one who is the Truth. Now he describes the Holy Spirit, the Advocate, as *the Spirit of truth, whom the world can't receive; for it doesn't see him, neither knows him*. To know the Spirit is to access the same advice, friendship and leadership that the disciples found with Jesus. Especially in these strange times we need to take time to learn to hear his voice and respond to his prompting. Jesus doesn't leave us alone, he gives us a personal trainer to help and guide us in our discipleship.

With love and prayers,

Fr. Jack.

Verses from Psalm 66

1 Be joyful in God, all the earth; sing the glory of his name;
sing the glory of his praise.

2 Say to God, 'How awesome are your deeds!
Because of your great strength your enemies shall bow before you.

7 Bless our God, O you peoples;
make the voice of his praise to be heard,

8 Who holds our souls in life and suffers not our feet to slip.

11 You let enemies ride over our heads;
we went through fire and water;
but you brought us out into a place of liberty.

12 I will come into your house with burnt offerings
and will pay you my vows, which my lips uttered
and my mouth promised when I was in trouble.

14 Come and listen, all you who fear God,
and I will tell you what he has done for my soul.

15 I called out to him with my mouth
and his praise was on my tongue.

16 If I had nursed evil in my heart,
the Lord would not have heard me,

17 But in truth God has heard me;
he has heeded the voice of my prayer.

18 Blessed be God, who has not rejected my prayer,
nor withheld his loving mercy from me.

SUNDAY
MONDAY
TUESDAY
WEDNESDAY
THURSDAY
FRIDAY
SATURDAY
Reflections during the week using Lectio Divina <i>Use the verse, or verses, for each day following the pattern on the previous page. Each colour corresponds to a day of the week. Write any reflections, or ways in which you feel God is speaking to you in the boxes above</i>

NEWS AND NOTES

The Road to a new Normal : It now looks like the key date will be the 4th July and discussions are ongoing. We may begin recording the facebook service from alternate churches next week, but the advice is far from clear.

Ascension / Pentecost Prayer : There will be reflections on the Barrow Mission Community Facebook page for the time between Ascension and Pentecost, and booklets / pdf's for the prayer days after Pentecost will be sent out later. Anyone can access the facebook page whether you have an account or not. The link is <https://www.facebook.com/barrowmissioncommunity>

St. James Virtual Fair : The virtual fair and raffle has raised just over £800. Congratulations to everyone who took part.

Support HUB 9am - 5pm Mon to Fri. Call 01229 444407.

Drop off point for food/ essentials to make up hampers
Living well Centre, Duke Street, Barrow LA14 1XU

Hospital Chaplaincy Hearts: If anyone would like to help, then the hearts can come to Fr. Jack, Jennet (19 Carlton Ave LA13 5AT), or go straight to Debbie at the Chaplaincy department. The hearts should be up to 3 inches or 8cm across at the widest point. One pattern is <https://blog.createandcraft.tv/free-knitted-heart-pattern/>

Resources : The Sunday Worship video is available on the St. James facebook page from Sunday morning.

Radio and TV :
Radio Cumbria Morning Service at 8.00am
CandoFM (106.3) Faith in Furness at 10.30am
BBC Morning Worship at 10.15 on BBC1

For those who are online, the Church of England website has daily and Sunday resources to watch, download and join in with.
The website is : churchofengland.org

Daily Hope Prayer Line - 0800 804 8044 - A Church of England resource with hymns, prayers and reflections for especially for those who are not connected to the internet.

DAILY PRAYER and BIBLE READINGS

SUNDAY *We give thanks for Jesus' promise of the gift of the Holy Spirit to guide us into his truth and empower us as his witnesses. Alleluia!*

MONDAY Acts 16:11-15, John 15:26-16:4
Pray for the work of Christian Aid and all charities impacted by the lock-down.

TUESDAY Acts 16:22-34, John 16:5-11
Pray for our schools as they plan for limited opening and for staff and pupils concerned for their safety.

WEDNESDAY Acts 17:15, 22-18:1, John 16:12-15
Pray for all who work in agriculture producing the food we eat, and for God's blessing on the produce of the land.

THURSDAY Acts 1:1-11, Ephesians 1:15-23, Luke 24:44-53
(THE ASCENSION) Pray that we would be re-equipped and envisioned to proclaim afresh the resurrection of Jesus.

FRIDAY Acts 18:9-18, John 16:20-23
Pray for Debbie and the Hospital chaplaincy team supporting staff, patients and families during the pandemic.

SATURDAY Acts 18:22-end, John 16:23-28
Pray for all who tune in to CandoFM radio or access our facebook pages to join with worship, teaching and prayer.

**If you have prayer requests / thanksgivings,
then please let Fr. Jack know either by email or 'phone.**

NEXT SUNDAY

THE SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Acts 1:6-14, 1 Peter 4:12-14 & 5:6-11, John 17:11-11