

St Francis Weekly News for The Seventh Sunday of Easter 24th May 2020



This bulletin may have come to you by email or through your letterbox, if you received it on paper but are happy to receive an email in future please email deborah.lechmere@ntlworld.com If you know anybody else who would like this delivered or emailed please contact Deborah or Revd Janet: revdjanetwyer@outlook.com

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN ST FRANCIS CHURCH?

REVD WINNIE'S 'PICTURES FOR WOODSIDE'

What an amazing response Revd Winnie has received for his appeal for pictures to cheer up the residents at Woodside House Care Home.

No sooner had the appeal gone out then the pictures started to flood in.

To date 15 children have joined in, with over 35 pictures being safely received. All have been photographically recorded and they are now in the process of being made ready to pass on to Woodside.

I'm also pleased to report that thanks to Sarah Lechmere, many of the children who have submitted pictures have already received their books as a thank you from Revd Winnie.



One of the pictures received - a beautiful sunflower created by Theo aged 4 yrs & Riley aged 13 yrs

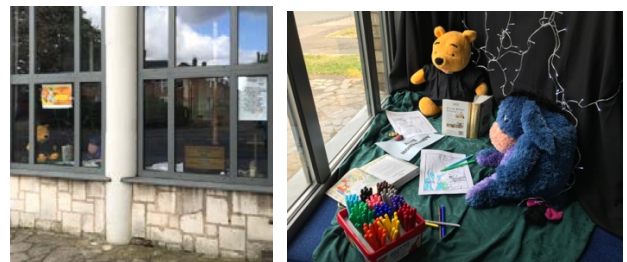
There is still lots of time to send in pictures for Woodside; You can post them through the vicarage door [100 Rider Haggard Road], take a photo and post it to St Francis Facebook page – or you can email a copy to deborah@stfrancisheartsease.co.uk

THE DISAPPEARING EMPTY TOMB

The story continues... not only did the plants disappear – now the tomb has gone as well!

But, not to worry, all is well. Ascensiontide which began on Thursday 21st May means that Eastertide is over and a new season begins.

So - away goes the empty tomb, the empty cross and the Eastertide display; and in comes all thing Ascensiontide and 'Thy Kingdom Come'.



And as you can see the window display includes Revd Winnie encouraging Eeyore to learn all about the Ascension of Jesus into heaven.

THE EMPTY TOMB & "LET IT GROW"

It may well have gone from view, but I'm happy to say that the tomb is not too far away. It has simply moved location. After being carefully dismantled and loaded onto the vicar's famous trolley [no, not the one people say she's off of] but the very useful contraption that has moved many a heavy item from vicarage to church and vice versa [again, no - not the vicar]. Successfully travelling the short distance from the front to the back of the church the tomb has been reassembled and placed at the heart of the Prayer Station area situated there.



As time progresses it is hoped that it will again be used as not only a place of prayer, but the heart of the 'Let it Grow' plant and seedling giveaway initiative.



Even as I write trays of marigolds [thank you Joyce Fish] and sunflower seedlings [thank you David Wyer] have almost reached the point when they can be shared with love from St Francis church.

Continuing on with the subject of St Francis 'Let it Grow', all the hard work is beginning to come to fruition in the Hugelkultur bed. I'm delighted to say that the first broad beans have been harvested and the other veg plants are flourishing beautifully.

If you have the opportunity please do take the time to wander across to St Francis to have a look. You may well even bump into Jim (at a social distance) who is ever faithful in ensuring that the plants get the water, care and attention they need. We are always on the lookout for people to join in with the Let it Grow project – please do ask if you would like to be involved.

I hear that one of the perks of being a volunteer is the opportunity to share in the harvest. Yum yum...



ST FRANCIS HEARTSEASE FREE FOOD

Over the past eight weeks we have found that although the number of parcels we send out remains fairly constant [we average around 24 – 30 per week] we are falling into a routine that means that we are now more or less able to predict when our busy days will be.

We are also looking to spread the workload so that more people are involved thereby reducing the

workload of some of us who have been committing a great deal of time to the enterprise.

We are also now advising those who are seeking food that we would appreciate early notice of needing a parcel and that in future Saturday and Sunday deliveries will be for dire emergencies only.

It is and has always been our aim to ensure that no one on the Heartsease experiences the anxiety and effects of going without food, and that in asking for assistance no one is made to feel awkward or embarrassed.

Anyone who lives in the St Francis Heartsease parish [which includes Greenborough Road] who asks for assistance will receive food assistance.

All we ask is their full name, the address the food needs to be delivered to – and who is in the household. We generally ask what has led to the request [for us to be able to gauge what is happening], but if someone would rather not say - we will not refuse anyone if we have the food available to give.

Obviously sometimes the food we offer is limited, we can only give what we have. But we will always endeavour to ensure that if someone is completely without food general parcels contain not only non-perishables for nourishing meals, but also fresh fruit and veg, salad stuff, bread and bread products and eggs. Thanks to our generous benefactor who continues to give us funds we are able to ensure that we have a good supply of these perishable items, and by God's grace every week we always have enough.



We do not , however, have any stocks of toiletries, toilet rolls or cleaning products – so if anyone is willing to help with these essentials, it would be most appreciated.

What we do have is a modest stock of feminine products, so please do pass the word around that these are available. Please call or text Revd Janet: 07990 576118

PASTORAL CARE

Please Don't Forget...

In times of stress and anxiety it's always good to know that help and support is always available.

This is just a gentle reminder that we are always ready to listen if you need to talk.

Revd Janet [07990 576118]

Eleanor [07840 206716]



USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS

In these difficult times someone might just need one of them...

Childline: 0800 1111

Samaritans: 116 123

Domestic Violence Hotline: 0808 2000 247

[If you hear a neighbour in distress please do not hesitate to call this number or 999; you could save a life]

Mind: 0300 123 3393

Age UK: 0800 169 6565

St Francis Free Food: 07990 576118

WORSHIP & PRAYER

ZOOM SERVICES

Each Sunday at 10.30am I have been celebrating Holy Communion using the Book of Common Prayer service. For those who have the necessary technology this is available to watch on Zoom.

This service will again take place on Sunday 24th [Easter 7] but the following week 31st May we will be marking Pentecost in a slightly different way.



For those who are able to access Zoom we will be offering a Service of the Word for Pentecost followed on by a service of Holy Communion said in contemporary language [Common Worship]

Between the two services we will have the opportunity to share the Peace in the Zoom Room – a chance to say hello to each other as we celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit.

If you would like to join the Zoom Room, please contact Sarah Housden who will be happy to enable that to happen. sarahj.housden@gmail.com

THY KINGDOM COME – The Global Wave of Prayer 2020 that began on Ascension Day continues and there is plenty of time for you to take part if you haven't yet done so.

For those who can the best way is probably to use the free app available for mobile phones and tablets. The app is called "DP for TKC" and can be found either in the Google Play app store or the Apple store. It offers resources for prayer and reflection up to four times a day.

There are all sorts of other resources available from the TKC website which can be found at <https://www.thykingdomcome.global/>.

For those with families there is a special interactive prayer map. There are also resources for a wide variety of prayer styles.

Also, if you are near St. Francis there is the opportunity to use the prayer stations on the field behind the church should you wish to do so. We do hope that many will join us in praying "Thy kingdom come" for our Heartsease community.



WEEKLY PRAYER GROUP ON ZOOM

If you find it hard to pray alone, pray with other people. St Francis has a weekly online prayer group and you are very welcome to join us if you wish.

This is organised by Sarah Housden using our church Zoom account and if you would like to be included then please email Sarah on sarahj.housden@gmail.com and she will send you the link.

A WORD FROM THE VICAR

Jesus said, 'What is impossible for mortals is possible for God.' Luke 18: 27

This has been yet another busy week with lots of things going on Revd Winnie's Pictures for Woodside, St Francis Free Food, Let it Grow, The Ascension Day service, Thy Kingdom Come global wave of prayer, not to mention the many and varied contacts some of us have been able to share – how amazing it is that we find ourselves in such challenging times and yet still able to be God's church in so many different and exciting ways.

Even though some of us are stuck at home, it is my hope and my prayer that through this newsletter and via other means almost everyone who wants to will feel in touch with their church and know in their heart that they belong, not only to St Francis Church family, but to God's family.

As church it is so important that we do everything in our power to be open, inclusive, and accessible – and this time of lockdown has focussed our minds like no other way could have in terms of how we might go about achieving this aim.

Suddenly we have been forced to think about what it means to be God's church, and how to be church when we are not able to do the things we usually do and meet together as once we did.

I do believe that we are being shown that when we allow God to take the reins wonderful things happen – even to the point of bringing us closer together when we have been forced to be at least two metres apart and unable to meet in our church building.

Over the next few weeks as we and the rest of the country and the world take tentative steps in seeing how we can move forward, we must continue to explore new ways of sharing our faith and drawing everyone into the family.

I believe that we have made an amazing start, but there is still much work to be done. Especially as our community begins to feel the impact of weeks of lockdown and the uncertainty of the future.

The road ahead may be bumpy – and the task might seem daunting; but just as Jesus reminds us, God is able to make impossible things happen. We cannot do this in our own strength, but we can if we keep God firmly at the helm and we allow God to steer us in the direction he would have us go.

This may mean that we have to let go of cherished ways of doing things as a church – and possibly even ways of being church. But if we are open and

willing to let go and let God, I am convinced that we will find ourselves not only surviving, but flourishing and growing.

As we journey on together how fitting it is that we are approaching Pentecost and have the opportunity to pray the beautiful collect appointed for this week; may I humbly suggest that as the weeks pass by we keep this prayer close to hand and pray it at every opportunity. We have never been more in need of God's Holy Spirit at work in and among us.

*O God the King of glory,
you have exalted your only Son Jesus Christ
with great triumph to your kingdom in heaven:
we beseech you, leave us not comfortless,
but send your Holy Spirit to strengthen us
and exalt us to the place where our Saviour Christ
is gone before, who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen*

God's peace and blessing be with you and yours

Revd Janet



KIMBILIO

For many years St Francis church has supported work in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

We first supported the work of Louise Wright a CMS missionary working in the area. When she retired we started to support the work of Ian Harvey who set up a project for street children in one of the major city.

When Ian left the project it continued to be run by the local church and Ian supports the work from the UK.

This week Ian sent us a video to put on our facebook page and I would encourage anybody who has access to facebook to watch the short video. For those of you who do not have access I will summarise the news.

Life is becoming increasingly difficult food prices have increased because borders have been closed to prevent the spread of COVID 19. This has led to increased violence and thefts.

Restrictions have meant they have had to shut their day centre down, but the number of children on the streets is increasing and so they are going out taking hot meals on to the streets and bringing the most vulnerable back into their homes.

On a positive note the work on building a primary school is going well with only the roof left to go on when the funds are sufficient.



ROGATIONTIDE

Four days of this last week are designated by the Church of England as Rogation Days. It is time traditionally set aside to pray for good Harvests. It is the time of year when most sowing has been done and all that farmers (and gardeners) can do is wait for the sun and rain necessary to make the crops grow.

Rogation days, which come just before Ascension Day, are traditionally days of prayer and fasting, when thanks are given to God the Creator for his wonderful world and prayers are offered for a successful growing season and Harvest. While many children grow up thinking all food just comes from a supermarket, in a county like Norfolk it's important to realise that many people depend on growing crops for their living.

We need also to reflect that the human race has been given a special responsibility by God to look after his Creation and to use its resources wisely. We may feel the need to say "sorry" for the way that those resources have been exploited. Those of us lucky enough to have gardens can watch all the different aspects of the growing process, from sowing to shoots to flowers to pollination to actual fruit and vegetables and we can only marvel at the way all those processes are interlinked by the design of our loving Creator.

So as we watch our gardens grow, whether flowers or fruit or vegetables let's remember to give our thanks to God and remember that "all things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small, all things wise and wonderful, the Lord God made them all.

FOR OUR PRAYERS

We pray for those who are in acute need of prayer at this time: David; Jeanette, David & Grace; David B; Paula; Gill; Karen; Maegan; John R & Bee; Colin; Pete; Lauren; Fr Brian; David and Hazel L.

We continue to pray for all those in our Church, friends and family who are managing long term health issues including Alma, Rosemary, Sheila, John, Joy, Shirley.

We remember with love Molly Gunton, Edith Cotton [Minn], Margaret Lemmon and all those who have died in recent days and pray for their family and friends

**The Church of St Francis
Heartsease**

Heavenly Father

**We ask your blessing upon us,
Hold the Heartsease Community,
and all the world,
in your arms of love.**

Be with us.

**Give us your strength,
peace, and healing grace.**

**Watch over us,
protect us from harm;
and keep in safety**

**all those who care for the sick
and attend to our needs,
in Jesus name we pray.**

Amen

A PRAYER FOR THESE UNCERTAIN TIMES

God of compassion,
be close to those who are ill, afraid or in isolation.
In their loneliness, be their consolation;
in their anxiety, be their hope;
in their darkness, be their light;
through him who suffered alone on the cross,
but reigns with you in glory,
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYERS FOR SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

O God the King of glory,
you have exalted your only Son Jesus Christ
with great triumph to your kingdom in heaven:
we beseech you, leave us not comfortless,
but send your Holy Spirit to strengthen us

and exalt us to the place where our Saviour Christ is gone before, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen

Risen, ascended Lord,
as we rejoice at your triumph,
fill your Church on earth with power and compassion,
that all who are estranged by sin
may find forgiveness and know your peace,
to the glory of God the Father. Amen

Eternal God, giver of love and power,
your Son Jesus Christ has sent us into all the world to preach the gospel of his kingdom:
confirm us in this mission,
and help us to live the good news we proclaim;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

READINGS FROM SCRIPTURE FOR THE SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

EZEKIEL 36: 24 - 28

I will take you from the nations, and gather you from all the countries, and bring you into your own land. I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will remove from your body the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. I will put my spirit within you, and make you follow my statutes and be careful to observe my ordinances. Then you shall live in the land that I gave to your ancestors; and you shall be my people, and I will be your God.



PSALM 68: 1 - 10

Let God rise up, let his enemies be scattered;
let those who hate him flee before him.

As smoke is driven away, so drive them away;
as wax melts before the fire,
let the wicked perish before God.

But let the righteous be joyful; let them exult before God; let them be jubilant with joy.

Sing to God, sing praises to his name;
lift up a song to him who rides upon the clouds
— his name is the Lord — be exultant before him.

Father of orphans and protector of widows
is God in his holy habitation.

God gives the desolate a home to live in;
he leads out the prisoners to prosperity,
but the rebellious live in a parched land.

O God, when you went out before your people,
when you marched through the wilderness,
the earth quaked, the heavens poured down rain
at the presence of God, the God of Sinai,
at the presence of God, the God of Israel.

Rain in abundance, O God, you showered abroad;
you restored your heritage when it languished;

your flock found a dwelling in it;
in your goodness,
O God, you provided for the needy.



ACTS 1:6-14

So when they had come together, they asked him, 'Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?'

He replied, 'It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority.

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.'

When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight.



While he was going and they were gazing up towards heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them.

They said, 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up towards heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.'

Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey away.

When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying, Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James.

All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.

1 PETER 4:12-14; 5:6-11

Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that is taking place among you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice in so far as you are sharing Christ's sufferings, so that you may also be glad and shout for joy when his glory is revealed. If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the spirit of glory, which is the Spirit of God, is resting on you.



Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you in due time.

Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you. Discipline yourselves; keep alert. Like a roaring lion your adversary the devil prowls around, looking for someone to devour. Resist him, steadfast in your faith, for you know that your brothers and sisters throughout the world are undergoing the same kinds of suffering. And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, support, strengthen, and establish you. To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.

JOHN 17:1-11

After Jesus had spoken these words, he 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.



Reflection for the Seventh Sunday of Easter (Sunday after Ascension)

Today's reading from the book of Acts tells us about Jesus' last month on earth. Following his initial appearances to prove he had risen from the dead Luke (the writer of Acts) tells us that he spent forty days with them "speaking about the kingdom of God". Jesus was fully aware that the bunch of frightened men he had left behind at the time of his death needed not just reassurance that he was alive again but an explanation of all that it meant. So the forty days were spent opening their hearts and minds to understand the Jewish Scriptures more fully, how he had fulfilled them, how he was fulfilling them, and how he was going to fulfil them.

Having spent this time with them he led them up to the Mount of Olives just outside Jerusalem where he told them what was now expected of them. Having said all this a cloud covered him and he disappeared from view. In his place appeared two angels who explained to the apostles that Jesus had gone up to heaven but would eventually return. In the meantime they were to do what he had told them to.

So what does the Ascension of Jesus actually mean?

It means that his work on earth is accomplished
By his death and resurrection Jesus has comprehensively defeated the powers of darkness, sin and death. He has provided the remedy for our sins and has opened the way for us to have a real relationship with him.

It means that his time on earth had come to an end
There is a point in any leader's life when they have to pass on the role and hand over the responsibility. That time had now come. Jesus had done all he could to train his followers and to explain what they should now do so he had to leave it up to them.

It means that he has taken his rightful place in heaven
Having achieved all that was necessary on earth Jesus now goes to be with his Father in heaven.

It means that the way is clear for the Holy Spirit to come
Even in his resurrected body Jesus was limited to a single time and place. However he wanted the

good news of his kingdom to spread to all the world. This has to be done through his followers and he has promised the Holy Spirit who will come and fill them, guiding them, strengthening them, teaching them and encouraging them. We will hear more about this next week.

It means that the real work has now begun for the disciples.

They are to wait in Jerusalem until the promised helper has come but they have been instructed to be witnesses of all that Jesus said and did "in Jerusalem, in all Judaea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth". The effect is like that of a stone being thrown in a pond with the ripples spreading wider and wider. The rest of the book of Acts is devoted to telling us how they fulfilled this challenge.

It means that the work has to continue
There were 11 apostles on the mountain with Jesus, and the number of believers totalled about 120. Today there are 2.3 billion Christians spread across the world, representing just under 1/3rd of the world's population, so they achieved quite a lot!

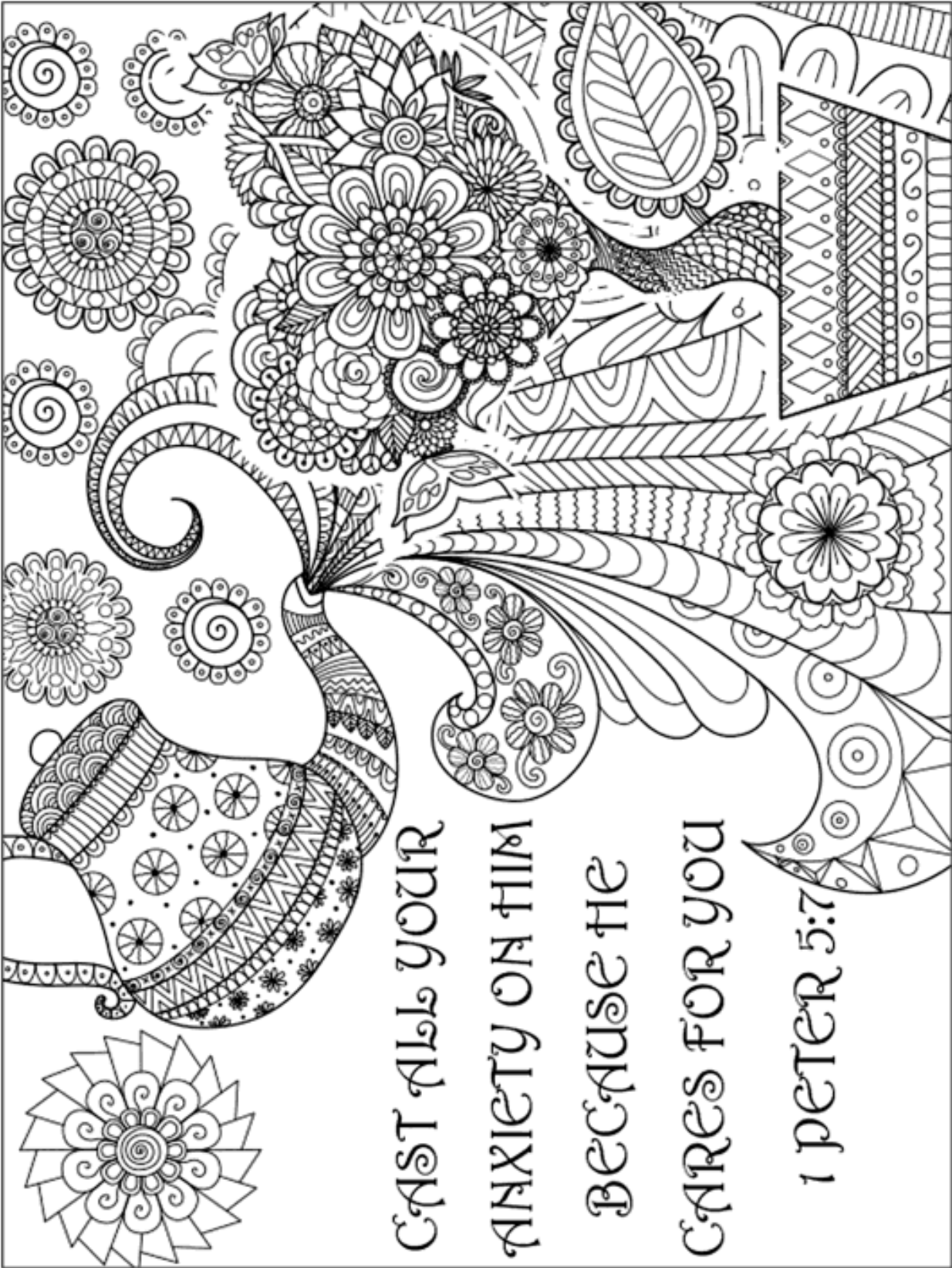
What does it mean for us today?

While what Jesus achieved on the Cross was a complete act of redemption which need never be repeated the work he gave the apostles is still vitally important today. Jesus asks all who believe in him to continue to be his witnesses, to spread the good news of his kingdom far and wide.

He calls his followers to speak of his love and to show it in practice by loving service to family, friends and neighbours. This is something that we in St. Francis have been trying very hard to do during the present crisis. Among other things, we have been helping those who need food, those who need printing of schoolwork and those who need friendship in their isolation. We are also praying regularly for the community.

In all this we are following the command Jesus gave his apostles. The Good News that Jesus commanded them to spread is for everyone and we want everyone to have the chance to hear about the love of Jesus and to see it in action.

David Lechmere
Reader



CAST ALL YOUR
ANXIETY ON HIM
BECAUSE HE
CARES FOR YOU
1 PETER 5:7



Jesus looked up to heaven and prayed: **‘Father, the hour has come.** Now is the time for me to be glorified. You have given me power over everyone. I will give eternal life to all those you have given to me. They will know you as the one true God and they will know me as Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.

‘I have brought glory to you in the way I have lived my life on earth. **But now I have finished the work you gave me to do.** And so, Father, the time is right for you to glorify me in heaven.

‘I have told the people that you sent me and that you are God. **They believe in you and have been faithful to you.** They know that the things I have taught them come from you, and that everything I have comes from you.

‘I am not asking for the world’s sake, but for the sake of those who belong to me. And all those who belong to me are yours. Now I am no longer in the world, but they are still in the world. I am leaving them to come to you. **So I ask you, Holy Father, to protect them in your name,** so that they may be as one, just as you and I are one.’

Glossary

to glorify: to praise or honour greatly

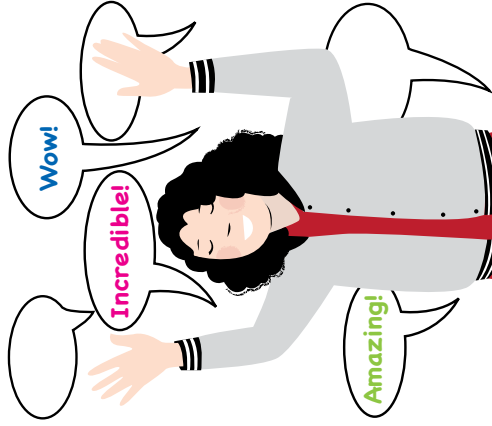
eternal life: fullness of life in God’s presence, both now and after death.

Name



John 17.1-11

Jesus talks to the Father about being glorified and prays for his followers.



Family time

Talk Discuss the things you do as a family that point to Jesus.

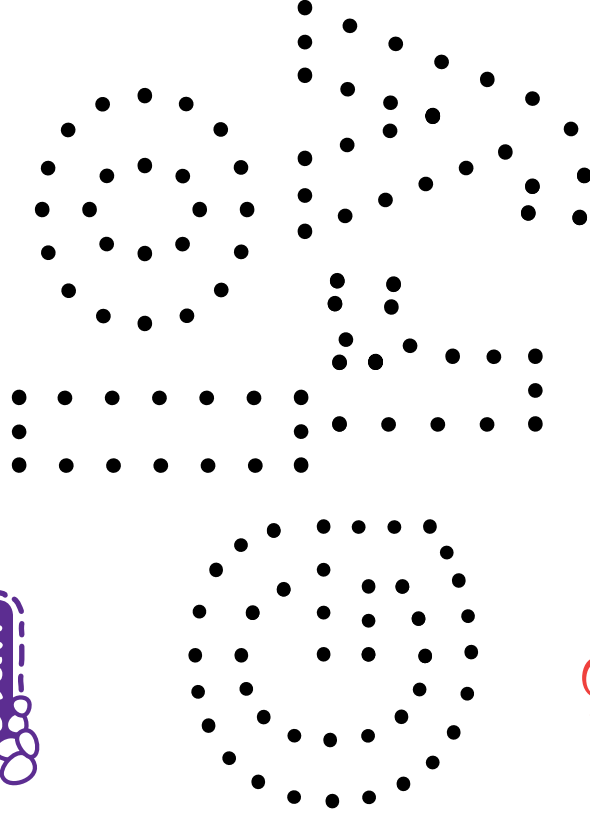
Do Go for a walk in a park, the countryside or at the beach, and talk about the ways that creation glorifies God.

Pray Jesus, we want to be people who notice your glory in the world around us. Help us to point to you with our words and actions so that people see how glorious you are. **Amen.**

Activity time



Join the dots to show today's key word.



Can you unscramble the words to describe Jesus?

camjiste _____

sroigolu _____

beedlicrin _____

dranait _____

het gink _____



Puzzle

Can you circle the things that give God glory?

Talk Discuss the things you do as a family that point to Jesus.

Do Go for a walk in a park, the countryside or at the beach, and talk about the ways that creation glorifies God.

Pray Jesus, we want to be people who notice your glory in the world around us. Help us to point to you with our words and actions so that people see how glorious you are. **Amen.**

Using our voices to praise God

Helping others

Being cheeky

Using our voices to swear

Leaving out people

Doing things as well as we can

Loving others

Looking after the environment

Making friends

Forgiving others

Sharing our things

Name

24-30 May 2020

Colouring time

Can you fill in the rest of the speech bubbles with words that glorify Jesus?

