

the substantial Christian teaching, that there is something essentially tainted and corrosive in the very desire for worldly pre-eminence and success.”

THIS WEEK

Today

9.15am Morning Prayer
10am Parish Mass
5pm Christchurch London Service

Monday 9th March (St Frances of Rome, St Gregory of Nyssa)

9am Morning Prayer

Tuesday 10th (The Forty Martyrs)

9am Morning Prayer
1.10pm Said Mass

Wednesday 11th (St Eulogius)

9am Morning Prayer
7pm Said Mass

Thursday 12th (St Maximilian)

9am Morning Prayer
7pm Concert in church: Jim Moray, with Tom Moore

Friday 13th (St Euphrasia)

Saturday 14th (St Matilda)

9.15am Morning Prayer
9.30am Said Mass (Book of Common Prayer)
12-17.30pm East London Climate Summit in church

Sunday 15th (3rd SUNDAY OF LENT)

9.15am Morning Prayer
10am Parish Mass
12am Ss Peter & Paul Knanaya Church (Jacobite Syrian Orthodox) Service
5pm Christchurch London Service

FURTHER AHEAD

Friday 20 March – Concert in church: EOS Ensemble

Sunday 22nd March – Mothering Sunday Mass at 10am

Saturday 28 March – Concert in church: Ben Eshmade

CORONAVIRUS ADVICE

Current guidance regarding arrangements in church to minimise the risk of spreading the virus are displayed on the church noticeboard. Please read!

Keep up to date with events at St John visit www.stjohnonbethnalgreen.org

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WELCOME TO ST JOHN ON BETHNAL GREEN



THE SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT 7 MARCH 2020

Today's Hymns - (New English Hymnal): 468, 434, 76, 485

Introductory Sentence

Send out your light and your truth; that they may lead me; and bring me to your holy hill and to your dwelling.

The Collect

Almighty God, you show to those who are in error the light of your truth, that they may return to the way of righteousness: grant to all those who are admitted into the fellowship of Christ's religion, that they may reject those things that are contrary to their profession, and follow all such things as are agreeable to the same; through our Lord Jesus Christ, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Amen

First Reading: Genesis 12. 1-4a

A reading from the book of Genesis

Now the Lord said to Abram, 'Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.' So Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran.

Second Reading: Romans 4. 1-5, 13-17

A reading from the Letter of St Paul to the churches in Rome

What then are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what does the scripture say? 'Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.' Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. But to one who without works trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is

reckoned as righteousness. For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation. For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, 17as it is written, 'I have made you the father of many nations')—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

The Gospel: John 3. 1-17

Praise and honour to Christ Jesus!

Those who do what is true come to the light, says the Lord, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.

Praise and honour to Christ Jesus!

Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, 'Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God.' Jesus answered him, 'Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.' Nicodemus said to him, 'How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?' Jesus answered, 'Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, "You must be born from above." The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.' Nicodemus said to him, 'How can these things be?' Jesus answered him, 'Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?

'Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

'For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

'Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

Post Communion Sentence

Whoever believes in the Son of Man shall have eternal life.

Post Communion Prayer

Almighty God, you see that we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves: keep us both outwardly in our bodies, and inwardly in our souls; that we may be defended from all adversities which may happen to the body, and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Please join us for refreshments at the back of church after the service

Temptations: 2 All the Kingdoms of the World, by Malcolm Guite

'So here's the deal and this is what you get:
The penthouse suite with world-commanding views,
The banker's bonus and the private jet
Control and ownership of all the news
An 'in' to that exclusive one percent,
Who know the score, who really run the show
With interest on every penny lent
And sweeteners for cronies in the know.
A straight arrangement between me and you
No hell below or heaven high above
You just admit it, and give me my due
And wake up from this foolish dream of love...'
But Jesus laughed, 'You are not what you seem.
Love is the waking life, you are the dream.'

Malcom writes, "Then the Devil led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And the Devil said to him, "To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me and I give it to anyone I please. If you then, will worship me, it will all be yours" (Luke 4.5–7).

This second temptation is the temptation to worldliness, to 'success', money and power, set up obsessively on the throne of our hearts as rivals to God. It is the supreme temptation of our own materially obsessed culture. And it is our failure at this point that has led to the gross imbalances between what has recently been termed the '1%' and the '99%'.

'To you I will give their glory and all this authority' is the dreadfully conditional offer that the Devil still makes, and in my sonnet I have tried to flesh out in contemporary terms some of the figures who seem to be making and receiving that offer now, and the contemporary contexts in which this dreadful deal is transacted. It's a striking thing that the old terms 'wordly' and 'worldliness' are scarcely ever used in contemporary moral discourse. We still talk of course, and rightly about fairness, and fair distribution of resources. We are rightly concerned with justice and fair dealing in the worlds of finance, commerce and trade, but we seem to have lost sight of the long Christian tradition, and