

BENEFICE OF ARICONIUM

08th March
3rd Sunday of Lent

Collect

Almighty God, whose most dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain, and entered not into glory before he was crucified: mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross, may find it none other than the way of life and peace; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Readings

Old Testament Exodus 17. 1-7.

New Testament Romans 5. 1-11.

Gospel John 4. 5-42.

It is a particular sort of person who has ambitions to be a politician and I suspect that the majority of us wouldn't touch the job with a bargepole. We may well moan about our leaders, but they have an impossible task in trying to run the country on a limited (and already grossly overdrawn) budget. Limited funds have to be prioritised for getting the best value for the benefit of the greatest majority.

In today's Gospel reading, which is part of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus makes it plain what the Christian priority should be - **'Strive first for the Kingdom of God'**.

How many times over our own lives have we prayed for the coming of the Kingdom using the words of the Lord's Prayer? Prayers are often answered, but not always in the way that we may want or expect. Do we **really** want the Kingdom of God to come?

Think of the implications - no more wars; no more worldly leaders; no more poverty, disease, homelessness, crime; no more lots of other things! So far, so good - all very positive. So what's the problem? Well, there is to be Judgement when the secrets of all hearts will be disclosed. Every one of us will be called to account for those things that we have done wrong. Yes, God is merciful - he is also patient and long-suffering. We pray for the coming of the Kingdom and also for forgiveness - but that is given to us in the way that we offer it to others. Unlike the politicians, our priority must be the Kingdom but Jesus tells us not to worry and take each day as it comes - each day has enough problems of its own. We must however, be careful what we pray for - even unthinking repetition may well be answered. We need to take each day and at the beginning, place it into God's hands and walk through it with him. We are told to 'strive first for the Kingdom of God and his righteousness' - then all the rest falls into place. It is not just a

good idea or an option - but a priority from the mouth of Jesus.

Martin

Services next Sunday 15th March – Mothering Sunday

Weston-under-Penyard	Mother's Day Service	11.00 a.m.
The Lea	Parish Communion	9.30 a.m.
Hope Mansell	Parish Communion	9.30 a.m.
Aston Ingham	Village Praise	10.30 a.m.
Aston Ingham	Compline Service	6.00 p.m.
Linton	Mother's Day Service	11.00 a.m.
Upton Bishop	Mother's Day Service	10.30 a.m.

Forthcoming Services & Events

Compline Service every Sunday in Lent, Sunday 15th March @ Aston Ingham, 6.00 p.m. Short 10 minute Service, all very welcome.

BENEFICE LENT COURSE: Bread of Life Lent Course, is a 6 week course about the Eucharist, it starts on Tuesday 17th Feb @ 7pm LEA Church.

UPTON BISHOP Upton Bishop virtual camino see email for more details,

LINTON. Bible Book Club Bible Book club is an informal monthly book club reading through the Bible one book at a time. Each session is stand alone and starts with refreshments at 10.30am, everyone welcome. Contact Charlotte for more information.

LINTON. Lent Discussion Group Following Lent discussion group last year there will be meetings Friday evenings in February and March, starting on 20th February. All welcome, contact Charlotte for info.

WESTON: The new season of Bible Studies will recommence at Penyard Rise, HR9-7PH on 22nd January 2026 at 2.30 pm. Tony & Mary Pitt 07534510614.

UPTON BISHOP have a BCP communion Service at 9.30 am on the first Wednesday of each month. A quiet midweek service. All welcome"

Please be aware that if you have any events you would like to advertise here, do please contact Debs directly (details below) and she will be pleased to include them.

Please pray for all who are sick,

Please pray for all who have died, Mary Salmon (*WuP*) Gerry Lowth (*WuP*), Amanda Simpson (*UB*), Malcolm Ives (*UB*), David Bailey (*AI*),

Rev David Howell: 07903 790049 email: revdavidhowell@icloud.com

Rev Ewan Gillings: 07568 515628 email: revgillings@gmail.com

If you would like to receive this pew sheet via email, please email Debs

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