



THE FRIDAY EMAIL

Friday 19th April 2024



The Friday Thought from our Vicar - Father Simon:

One of the wonderful photographs I have from my ordination as a priest back in 2017 isn't of anybody at all; apologies to all those family and friends who were present! The photo is a close up shot, taken by a friend, of the curved hook-like end of the Bishop of St Albans' crosier. The intricacy of the carving, studded with precious jewels is beautiful. And, whilst the photo is taken from behind the crosier, the figure of Jesus is clearly visible, tending sheep, with one being carried over his shoulders and a number at his feet.



Of course, shepherding and a shepherd's crook is the symbolic background of a bishop's crosier. Whilst a crosier is a symbol of authority within the Church, it also mirrors the shape of a shepherd's crook, curved at the top to enable animals - particularly sheep - to be guided and cared for. It's a reminder not only that bishops are called to be the shepherds of their Christian 'flock', but that we frequently hear of Christ being referred to as the Good Shepherd. Indeed, in this Sunday's gospel reading (see below), Jesus refers to himself in this way:

"I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep."

The interesting thing about this sentence is that Jesus makes it clear that it needs to be a trusted mutual relationship. And, despite our common assumption, that's actually the way a shepherd's crook is usually used.

We might think that a crook is used solely to reach out and grab dumb animals around the neck, hauling them back into line and out of danger. (For the welfare of my future ministry within the Church, I won't explore that analogy in relation to a bishop and their clergy or a priest and their congregation!!) But a crook is more often used for stability. The shepherd sticks it into the ground so that they have something secure and rooted to hold onto, enabling them to remain a still and calm presence so that the sheep eventually come to trust the shepherd and return to them as frequently as the shepherd needs to go after the sheep.

So, in the analogy, Jesus doesn't simply reach out and hook us into his fold. He wants us to know his voice and know his words - a calm and still rock in our lives. And surely the presumption is: if we know his voice and words, we not only know his desires for us but are, as a result, also eager members of his flock, returning to him whenever we stray.



So, whilst we can rely upon the living Lord Jesus to be proactive in knowing and looking out for us, ensuring we have the potential of an eternal place prepared for us in his heavenly kingdom, we also need to be willing to seek out and know Jesus.

So are we always aware of Jesus' tender care in the world? I wonder whether, perhaps in our complacency, we too frequently fail to recognise his action - those acts of goodness and truth around us and within us, inspired by the power of the Holy Spirit - and we too often fail to respond to such signs. So I pray that we're all able to find time to open our hearts to the loving stillness of Christ so that we too might gladly be able to sing with the psalmist this Sunday:

*"The King of love my shepherd is,
whose goodness faileth never;
I nothing lack if I am his
and he is mine for ever."*

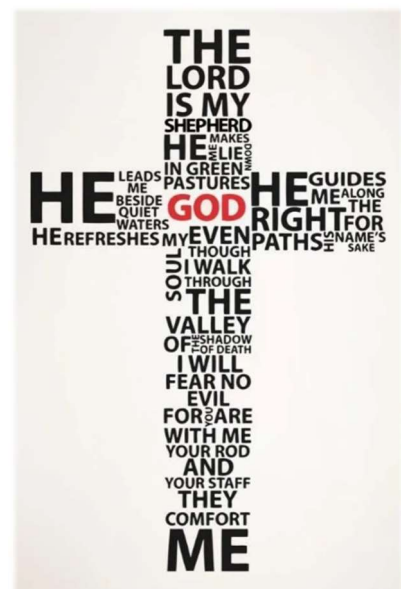
[Adapted from Psalm 23]

Yours in Christ

Fr Simon

➤ **Collect for the Fourth Sunday of Easter:**

Almighty God,
whose Son Jesus Christ is the resurrection and the life:
raise us, who trust in him,
from the death of sin to the life of righteousness,
that we may seek those things which are above,
where he reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen.



➤ READINGS FOR THIS SUNDAY

The Acts of the Apostles, chapter 4, verses 5-12:

The next day the rulers, elders, and scribes assembled in Jerusalem, with Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family. When they had made the prisoners - Peter and John - stand in their midst, they inquired, 'By what power or by what name did you do this?' Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, 'Rulers of the people and elders, if we are questioned today because of a good deed done to someone who was sick and are asked how this man has been healed, let it be known to all of you, and to all the people of Israel, that this man is standing before you in good health by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead. This Jesus is

"the stone that was rejected by you, the builders;
it has become the cornerstone."

There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved.

Gradual Psalm 23:

- 1 The Lord is my shepherd; therefore can I lack nothing.
- 2 He makes me lie down in green pastures
and leads me beside still waters.
- 3 He shall refresh my soul
and guide me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Response: The Lord is my shepherd, there is nothing I shall want.

- 4 Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil;
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

Response

- 5 You spread a table before me
in the presence of those who trouble me;
you have anointed my head with oil
and my cup shall be full.

Response

- 6 Surely goodness and loving mercy
shall follow me all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Response

St John Gospel, chapter 10, verses 11-18:

Jesus said: 'I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father.'

➤ Details of Sunday 9.30am Parish Eucharist which is also live-streamed

- ❖ President: Fr Simon (Vicar)
- ❖ Preacher: Fr Simon (Vicar)
- ❖ Sunday Club: Becky Burton
- ❖ Reader: Roger Leigh
- ❖ Intercessions: Dawn Dickson
- ❖ Mass setting: Mass of St Thomas (music: David Thorne)
- ❖ Processional: Alleluia! Alleluia! Hearts to heaven and voices raise (tune: Lux Eoi)
- ❖ Gradual: The King of love my shepherd is (tune: St Columba)
- ❖ Offertory: I heard the voice of Jesus say (tune: Kingsfold)
- ❖ Communion: Loving shepherd of thy sheep (tune: Buckland)
- ❖ Motet: The Lord is my shepherd (music: Howard Goodall)
- ❖ Final: At the name of Jesus (tune: Camberwell)



INTERCESSIONS FOR THIS WEEK

For the world-wide Church:

- ❖ Bishop Alan - Bishop of St Albans
- ❖ Bishop Jane - Bishop of Hertford
- ❖ The Venerable Janet Mackenzie - Archdeacon of Hertford
- ❖ The Revd Gaz Tracey - Area Dean
- ❖ Archbishop Justin, Archbishop of Canterbury
- ❖ In the Anglican cycle of prayer for the Anglican Church of Australia
- ❖ In the Diocesan cycle of prayer for the parish and people of Holy Trinity, Bishop's Stortford in the Bishop's Stortford Deanery
- ❖ In our Deanery cycle of prayer for our Deanery Chapter and Deanery Synod
- ❖ For those being martyred or persecuted for their Christian faith



[\(https://releaseinternational.org/\)](https://releaseinternational.org/)

For our world:

- ❖ For the victims of Israel and Gaza during the current Israel-Palestinian conflict.
- ❖ For the people of Ukraine, be they in their homeland or refugees in Europe.
- ❖ For just and peaceful governance throughout the world, not least in Russia, Ukraine, Israel, Palestine, Sudan, Somalia, China, Haiti, Lebanon, Afghanistan, Nigeria, Yemen, Iran, Pakistan, Myanmar, North Korea, and the DRC.
- ❖ For the victims of conflict, terrorism, violence, or tragedy.
- ❖ For those suffering from the effects of climate change or natural disaster.
- ❖ For those working to reduce the effects of climate change.
- ❖ For those working to relieve suffering throughout the world.
- ❖ For emergency and keyworkers, scientists and leaders, medical and care workers, and, in this country, particularly for the NHS and social services.
- ❖ For those being unjustly held captive or being persecuted.
- ❖ For those who have been abused in body, mind, or spirit.
- ❖ For those who are victims of modern-day slavery and human trafficking.
- ❖ For those who are victims of famine or poverty, praying for the work of the *Shiksha Rath* educational project in New Delhi which we support.
- ❖ For those struggling with addiction.
- ❖ For those who are homeless, and for the work of the *Holy Trinity Night Shelter* in Bishop's Stortford which we support.
- ❖ For those involved in the migrant and refugee situation.
- ❖ For the work of organisations which are working to bring an end to poverty.



For our town:

- ❖ For the staff and patients of our Central Surgery, the Princess Alexandra, Rivers, and Herts & Essex hospitals, for our care homes, social services, voluntary care sector.
- ❖ For our Member of Parliament - Julie Marson MP
- ❖ For Sawbridgeworth Town Council, including our Mayor - Cllr Ruth Buckmaster.
- ❖ For East Herts District Council and our councillors.
- ❖ For local businesses in these uncertain times.
- ❖ For our emergency services.
- ❖ For groups and organisations, including The Hailey Centre and library.
- ❖ For our youth organisations and uniformed brigades.
- ❖ For those supporting the elderly.
- ❖ For the pupils, teachers, staff, governors, and parents associated with our local schools including our church school in Spellbrook.
- ❖ For those feeling isolated and lonely; particularly those living alone.
- ❖ For those who are concerned about making ends meet, and for organisations such as Harlow Foodbank and the evangelical church's pop-up store seeking to bring aid.



For the people of:

Sunday:	Fairway & Linwood
Monday:	Springhall Lane, The Limes & Southbrook
Tuesday:	Newton Drive & Lowfield
Wednesday:	The Crest, Dale Court & High Tree Close
Thursday:	Elmwood & Yewlands
Friday:	Roseacres
Saturday:	Brook Road, Buttersweet Rise & Merefield

For the sick, tired, and bereaved, including:

Angela Alder, June Allen, Linda Bowler, Pam Brown, John Butler, Gwenn Cooke, Robert Davis, Elsa Duce, Katrina Evangeli, Kathy Hanratty, Steven, Wendy, Doug Knights, Paul Mackin, Geoff Pavely, Pauline Phillips, Bishop Alan, Jackie White, Mark White.

For those who have died, including:

- ❖ Joseph Dainty RIP
- ❖ Mick Steward RIP
- ❖ Geoff Heslop RIP
- ❖ Frank Walker RIP
- ❖ Margaret Pack RIP



For our dearly departed ones, remembered at their year's mind:

- ❖ Robert Bruce RIP (24th April)
- ❖ Ethel Tant RIP (26th April)

*God of mission,
who alone brings growth to your Church,
send your Holy Spirit
to give vision to our planning,
wisdom to our actions,
joy to our worship,
and power to our witness.
Help our church to grow in numbers,
in spiritual commitment to you,
and in service to our local community,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.*



NOTICES

➤ **Services and events in church this week:**

(CW = Common Worship

BCP = Book of Common Prayer)

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|--|---------------|--|
| ❖ Sun 21st April
<i>Fourth Sunday of Easter</i> | 8am | Said Eucharist (CW) |
| | 9.30am | Parish Eucharist (CW) with Sunday Club
<i>Followed by refreshments in Church House</i> |
| | 3pm | St George's Day parade and service |
| ❖ Mon, Tues, Thurs & Fri | 9am | Said Morning Prayer (CW) |
| ❖ Wed 24 th April | 9.30am | Said Morning Prayer (CW) |
| | 10am | Said Eucharist (CW) |
| ❖ Sat 27th April | 9.30am | Churchyard Working Party |
| ❖ Sun 28th April
<i>Fifth Sunday of Easter</i> | 8am | Said Eucharist (CW) |
| | 9.30am | Parish Eucharist (CW) with Sunday Club
<i>Followed by refreshments in Church House</i> |
| | 11.30am | Baptism |

➤ **APCM & Revision of Electoral Roll - applications until Saturday 27th April**

Our Annual Parochial Church Meeting - better known as the APCM - is appearing on the horizon; do please pencil Sunday 12th May at 10.45am into your diaries. If you want to be able to vote at the APCM, you will need to be on our electoral roll which is now open for revision and new names

until Saturday 27th April. Enrolment forms are available at the back of church near the contactless payment unit. They can be put into the blue ballot box in church, handed to our Electoral Roll Officer, Fay Clark, or they can be handed into the Parish Office.



➤ **Churchyard Working Party - next Saturday 27th April - 9.30am-12.30pm**



Okay, so the churchyard grass is never going to look like that at Wembley but, whether you're able to commit a whole morning of gardening to the churchyard next Saturday or just an hour or so, your help will still be much appreciated, particularly ahead of the Sawbridgeworth May Fayre on Sunday 5th May. Chris Battson will be delighted

to see you and your gardening gloves, and he'll soon have you doing something to suit your talent and ability. After all, as they say, many hands make light work.

➤ Request for help during Sawbridgeworth May Fayre - Sunday 5th May

This year's Sawbridgeworth May Fayre is almost upon us when, from 12 till 4pm, the town will be full of people enjoying the activities and spending their money on the many stalls.

As in previous years, we expect many of those people to pop into the church - not least because donkey rides will once again be a great attraction at the gates of the churchyard. As well as photographic displays, at 1.30pm there will be a **tour of the church** led by our Lay Minister Di Kitson, and then at 2.30pm there's going to be a **tour of the churchyard**. In addition, the **bellringers** will be providing trips up to the church's ringing chamber, as well as offering budding ringers the opportunity to try their hand on a mini ringing frame set up in the churchyard.



And then, as a new addition to our activities, there's going to be a **Teddy Zip Wire** rigged from the top of the church tower so that brave and willing cuddly toys can be hoisted to the top of the tower before being whisked back down again. (Fear not - paramedics who specialise in the art of restuffing a cuddly toy will be on hand to attend to any teddy casualties!) For those of you without a courageous cuddly toy, you will be able to purchase a teddy for a small fee who, we are assured, will be willing to make the death-defying trip. (Sadly, there is not a human zip wire available!)

Of course, none of this will happen, as we reach out to the town's wider community, without your help. We need, please, help with the set-up on Saturday 4th May, help on the day including church welcomers, and help from 4pm on the day to tidy the church ahead of Choral Evensong at 5pm. Therefore, if you're able to offer an hour or two, do please put your name on the sign-up sheet at the back of the church or speak to Angela in the parish office.

➤ Quiz Night - Saturday 18th May - Church House 7pm

Fr Simon is the quizmaster for our Quiz Night in Church House next month. Fear not - he promises the questions won't all be about organs, Formula One, Manchester City, or testing your knowledge of the Bible!!! So why not form a team of up to six people per table? If you can't manage that number, we will be making teams of six on the night. The cost of the evening is £12.50 per person, which includes a ploughman's supper, wine and/or soft drinks. Tickets can be obtained from the Parish Office, either in person (Tuesday to Friday mornings) or by calling 01279 726629 and leaving a message.



➤ Content for the Newsletter

If you have a notice for the Friday Email, please let us know by lunchtime on Thursday.

Website: www.sawbridgeworthchurch.org.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com and search for 'Great St Mary's, Sawbridgeworth'

YouTube: www.youtube.com and search for 'Great St Mary's, Sawbridgeworth'

➤ Contact us

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(Day off Friday)

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Di Kitson (Lay Reader)

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01279 723212

Angela Kenny (Parish Administrator)
Office hours: Tues-Fri - 9am till 1pm

office@sawbridgeworthchurch.org.uk
01279 726629

Anthony Heard (Churchwarden)
Gilly Squire (Churchwarden)

anthony@sawbridgeworthchurch.org.uk
gilly@sawbridgeworthchurch.org.uk

Jane Johnson (Parish Safeguarding Office)

safeguarding@sawbridgeworthchurch.org.uk
07808 684357

Thank you for your ongoing support of Great St Mary's

Great St Mary's
Sawbridgeworth *Passion for Christ - Compassion for all*

**QUIZ
NIGHT**

Saturday 18th May
7pm in Church House

*With Ploughman's supper, wine,
and soft drinks included in ticket price*
£12.50 per person

Tickets available from Parish Office
(Tuesday to Friday mornings - 01279 726629)