



22nd Nov 2020

Christ the King

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

In these troubling coronavirus times, we are told again and again that decisions must be based on expert advice. We are reliant on experts who know what they are doing. And most of us are content with that, not least because we feel our own knowledge inadequate. But then a disconcerting thought strikes me from this parable of the sheep and the goats – in the story Jesus told, the righteous – the heroes of the piece – have no idea what they're doing!

The king says, 'You're blessed, the whole kingdom is yours because you served me again and again. What a joy you people are.' And they reply, 'You what? I can't remember doing any such thing.' They weren't experts in social care, food logistics, or penal reform. Their good works didn't arise out of a policy decision, a funded campaign, or an aid strategy, as useful as those things might be. No, the good things they had done had no premeditated quality to them at all. No expertise was exercised here, in the sense of consciously learnt technique and application. None! What they had done was feed, comfort, visit, clothe, and the like without a second thought – without a moment's calculation – without training, instruction, or practice.

These efforts had simply issued from the people they are – as natural to them as breathing, without the hesitation of so much

as a blink. They didn't know what they were doing – they just did it. The love of God had all unconsciously just poured out of them. No scores kept; they don't know what they did.

Of course, it doesn't work the other way about. The unrighteous are all too clear about what they had done. They know that they had not responded; they know they had turned their backs. The calculated failure to meet need means that they are cast out of life forever.

In Matthew's gospel this parable is the last word from Jesus. Now the story will move on to the passion. It will tell of what happens to Jesus and that small band of followers who stay close to him – those awful last days and his death. His teaching is at an end. His last word is about the last things – about judgement at the end of time.

But this final parable is not some fanciful story of a future age or a calling to account after death. It's put in such a way that it asks a hard question of every person who hears it: Do you know what you are doing day by day, every single day? Do you live as a person who gives away God's love, God's gift of life, of care, of liveliness, without keeping score? This is about living in such a way that trust in God, trust in life itself, oozes from your very pores and flows all unconsciously in action and concern for others. Live that, especially in coronavirus times.

With every blessing,

Christopher



NOTICES

Holy Trinity Blacon are the living church of our living God, and we continue to be at work here! If you are able, do check the parish website www.holytrinityblacon.org (especially the Coronavirus Support page) or our Facebook page ([holytrinityblacon](https://www.facebook.com/holytrinityblacon)) for updates.

SUNDAY WORSHIP We are unable to meet together for worship during the national lockdown, but do join us for video worship each Sunday which will be available through our website, and also on our Facebook page.

CHURCH OPEN FOR PRAYER we are able to open the church for private prayer. It is open each Thursday 3-4pm for private prayer. page of our website www.holytrinityblacon.org For more information, please contact 07719960541 or blaconactionteam@gmail.com

PRAYING FOR BLACON During lockdown, Louise and Tina are taking our exercise particularly along those streets we are praying for each week. Do join us in praying for those residents. This week we pray for: *Meynell Place, Marlowe Close, Palgrave Close and Tennyson Walk.*

CHRISTMAS PLANS Inspired by the NHS rainbows around the place, what if we put scenes from the nativity in our windows this Christmas? Let us know if you plan to take part, so we can form a trail around Blacon.

CHRISTMAS MEAL we are joining with Avenue Services to deliver a Christmas Dinner for Blacon residents on Thursday 17th December. If you would like one, or know someone who you think would enjoy one, please contact Kerry on managerblaconbeacon@gmail.com or 07851870078 We will also be delivering a Christmas Dinner to families on Tuesday 22nd December, more details to follow soon.

JOIN US FOR EVENING PRAYER every Wednesday at 5pm via Zoom. This will continue for the foreseeable future. If you are not on the internet, it is possible to join us over the telephone – please contact us in advance if you would like to do that.

BIBLE GROUP continues to meet each Thursday evening at 7.30pm via Zoom. We are currently working through the letter to the Philippians. Do let us know if you would like a link to join.

DAILY HOPE is a free phone line for hymns, prayers and reflections – 0800 804 804

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