

GOSPEL REFLECTION LENT 2 *John 3:1-17*

In this passage we read of Nicodemus, who comes to Jesus in the night. He is a leader of the Jews, a Pharisee and a member of the Sanhedrin, the supreme council and court of the Jews. He is obviously goes to see Jesus in secret because of his position. He recognises Jesus as a Rabbi, a teacher. He has heard of signs that Jesus has done, but wants to see them for himself. Jesus tells him that he needs to be reborn, 'from above', but he does not understand what Jesus is on about. He can't see the full picture. Jesus seems to mock him. Nicodemus cannot see beyond the earthly and easily seen.

Stephen Verney quotes the nursery rhyme:

Pussy cat, pussy cat where have you been?

I've been up to London to look at the queen.

Pussy cat, pussy cat what saw you there?

I saw a little mouse under her chair.

The cat doesn't actually see the queen, but does see the mouse.

The concept of the queen is beyond the cat but the mouse is not! So it is with Nicodemus. He can see the teacher. He relates to that. But he cannot see the king! He cannot yet see who Jesus really is! Do we see Jesus for real? Have we been re-born?

Phil Baker



Coronavirus. Please follow Government advice about regular hand washing and coughing/ sneezing. Intinction (dipping) is not recommended. Keep an ear open for further announcements. <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-parishes>

NEXT SUNDAY 15th March 2020

SERVICES 8am Said Eucharist
10.30am Sung Eucharist
4pm Worship tbc

READINGS



OT: Exodus 17: 1-7
NT: Romans 5: 1-11
GOSPEL: John 4: 5-42

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St Thomas, Exeter

Sunday 8th March 2020

Second Sunday of Lent

Today

8am Said Eucharist
10.30am Sung Eucharist
12 noon Hall Committee
4pm Evening Meditation

Tuesday 10th March

7.30pm House Group at 6 Painter's Court

Wednesday 11th March

10am Holy Communion (BCP)
6pm Standing Committee
7pm Lent Course at The Manse, 21
Dunsford Road

Thursday 12th March

9.30-11am St Thomas Tots with Breast-feeding support

Friday 13th March

12noon Stations of the Cross & Mass
followed by soup lunch & discussion

Saturday 14th March

9am Men's Breakfast at the Sawyers



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

Genesis 12: 1-4a

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.

Romans 4: 1-5, 13-17

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, as 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.

John 3: 1-17

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

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**

**Resources are available in the
Children's Corner,
please ask for assistance.**

ADVANCE NOTICES

St Thomas Stories with Theatre Alibi at Emmanuel Hall. Are looking for people of St Thomas to be part of the 'Community Company' in **May** and be in the performance. If you are interested contact Annie Chave—01392 217315 annie@theatrealibi.co.uk

Laurence Freeman OSB speaking about prayer and meditation at St James Church on **12th March at 7pm**. All welcome £5 donation suggested.

Saturday 14th March at 7pm. A quiz will be held at the Hall. £1 per entry with free tea/coffee and a raffle. All welcome.

Gift of Years: Joy 2020 Festival. You are invited to a special event exploring how to make the most of life over 60. Hosted by the Bishop of Exeter, featuring talks and practical advice. **Friday 20th March 2—4.30pm** St Boniface Centre, Crediton. EX17 2AH