

## Reflection for St Thomas Beckett

The assassination of Thomas Becket in Canterbury Cathedral on 29 December 1170 changed the course of history. Becket was one of the most powerful figures of his time, serving as royal Chancellor and later as Archbishop of Canterbury. Initially a close friend of King Henry II, the two men became engaged in a bitter dispute that culminated in Becket's shocking murder by knights with close ties to the king. It is a story of betrayal, of the perceived abuse of power and those who fall for standing in the way of the Crown. ...

In death Becket remained a figure of opposition to unbridled power and became seen as the quintessential defender of the rights of the Church. To this end you can find images of his murder in churches across Latin Christendom, from Germany and Spain, to Italy and Norway. Becket was, and remains, a truly European saint. His relics at Canterbury were visited by people from across the continent until 1538, when Henry VIII would label him a traitor, order the destruction of his shrine and try to wipe him from history altogether.



[Reliquary, Limoges c1200]

<https://blog.britishmuseum.org/thomas-becket-the-murder-that-shook-the-middle-ages/>

### Codes for the Zoom worship at 10.30

These are codes for Sundays from 6 December to the end of January:

**Meeting ID:** 894 0983 2572

**Passcode:** 061920

**Telephone numbers:** 0203 051 2874, 0203 481 5237, 0203 481 5240, 0131 460 1196

### NEXT SUNDAY 03.01.2021 Epiphany

**SERVICES** 10.30 by Zoom, 12 noon in Church



#### READINGS

OT Isaiah 60: 1-6

NT Ephesians 3: 1-12

Gospel Matthew 2: 1-12

#### CONTACT US

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# St Thomas, Exeter

**Sunday 27th December 2020**

## St Thomas Beckett

**10.30 by Zoom (phone-in available)**

**12 noon Mass in Church**

I'm privileged to be continuing the tradition set by my predecessor (and perhaps other Rectors too) of marking the feast of **Saint Thomas of Canterbury** or Saint Thomas a Beckett as co Patron of this parish on one of the days after Christmas. Strictly his feast day is 29 December, the date of his murder in the cathedral, but we can emphasize his importance by a move to Sunday.

Before the year closes, I want to underline **my thanks** to many different people during the very strange times we have been experiencing, especially the staff team of Revd Sarah Cumming, Ian Totterdell, Phil Baker and Revd Alison Whiting; with Mary Daunton, these folks have worked very hard at maintaining what we do, and creatively imagining new things. Thank you also to PCC members and everyone who in various ways have contributed to the well-being of the parish.

**\*\*HAPPY HEW YEAR TO YOU ALL\*\***



## Collect

.Lord God, who gave grace to your servant Thomas Becket to put aside all earthly fear and be faithful even to death: grant that we, disregarding worldly esteem, may fight all wrong, uphold your rule, and serve you to our life's end; 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. **Amen**

## Ecclesiasticus 51: 1-8

I give thanks to your name, for you have been my protector and helper and have delivered me from destruction and from the trap laid by a slanderous tongue, from lips that fabricate lies. In the face of my adversaries you have been my helper and delivered me, in the greatness of your mercy and of your name, from grinding teeth about to devour me, from the hand of those seeking my life, from the many troubles I endured, from choking fire on every side, and from the midst of fire that I had not kindled, from the deep belly of Hades, from an unclean tongue and lying words—the slander of an unrighteous tongue to the king. My soul drew near to death, and my life was on the brink of Hades below. They surrounded me on every side, and there was no one to help me; I looked for human assistance, and there was none. Then I remembered your mercy, O Lord, and your kindness from of old, for you rescue those who wait for you and save them from the hand of their enemies.

## Hebrews 13: 10-16

We have an altar from which those who officiate in the tent have no right to eat. For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest as a sacrifice for sin are burned outside the camp. Therefore Jesus al-

so suffered outside the city gate in order to sanctify the people by his own blood. Let us then go to him outside the camp and bear the abuse he endured. For here we have no lasting city, but we are looking for the city that is to come. Through him, then, let us continually offer a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that confess his name. Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

## Matthew 10: 28-33

Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground unperceived by your Father. And even the hairs of your head are all counted. So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows. 'Everyone therefore who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven; but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven.

## Post Communion

Eternal God, who gave us this holy meal in which we have celebrated the glory of the cross and the victory of your martyr Thomas Becket: by our communion with Christ in his saving death and resurrection, give us with all your saints the courage to conquer evil and so to share the fruit of the tree of life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

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## NOTICES

**Community Larder** The Community Larder will reopen on **Tuesday, 5th January 2021** from 10am-12noon, and is allowed to continue operating during the period of lockdown. The collecting point will now be in the Church tower. Please continue to be generous.

**Knit and Natter 24<sup>th</sup> November 2020** We shall continue with Zoom meetings on Thursday mornings. 11.15-11.55am, for the time being, thanks to Vanessa for setting this up. As always, we shall move with the times when we know more clearly what we can safely do together. Details from Jenny on 01392 498725

