

Reflection John 6: 24-35

Our move of the successful Zoom service to the evening to prioritize again the mid morning Mass on Sunday reminds me of how only a very short time ago we were prevented from being in our churches to celebrate the Eucharist at all. At that moment in this parish we did two things: recorded a Mass for Ascension Day and Corpus Christi and put these on the website, committed ourselves to the regular Sunday zoom services from our homes. These proved to be more popular and 'successful' than I had imagined, and we have learnt from them, not least that it's good to have lots of people participating.

Some groups in other similar parishes went much further, by celebrating a Mass live on Zoom, with the congregation encouraged or at least not discouraged, to have bread and wine in front of them. Initially, I was very doubtful of this, but some academic reading and a reflection on this Gospel passage and the Exodus reading behind it persuaded me otherwise.

We very much need Jesus the bread of life as our sustaining spiritual food as the ancient Israelites needed literal bread in the desert. They called on God to provide and indeed God did with manna and quails. We have called on God to provide, and God did with the technology which is available to us. Who are we to gainsay that?
Fr David



Codes for the Zoom worship at 6pm
These are codes for Sundays from 04.07.21 until the end of August

Meeting ID: 859 7288 7300

Passcode: 605760

Telephone numbers (unchanged) 0203 051 2874, 0203 481 5237, 0203 481 5240, 0131 460 1196

NEXT SUNDAY 08.08.2021 Transfiguration

SERVICES 10.30am in Church, 6pm by Zoom

READINGS

OT	Daniel 7: 9-10,13,14
NT	2 Peter 1: 16-19
GOSPEL	Luke 9: 28-36



CONTACT US

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St Thomas, Exeter

Sunday 1st August 2021

9th Sunday after Trinity

10.30am Mass in Church

6pm via Zoom

We had a successful **Back to Church** Sunday last week, marking this, St James and Phil's birthday with a glass of prosecco—thank you for providing this Phil. So I'm wondering if every Sunday in August should not be Back to Church. Joking apart, we did have the largest congregational attendance for 18 months, but still down on what was 'normal' before Covid. While numbers are certainly not everything—and I do want to thank those who came to Mass though thick and thin, freeze and less freeze—I'm hoping to encourage those who have not been for a very long time, and not taken part in zoom services, to consider returning while the weather is warm, and we can easily have church doors open. We are moving forward carefully but deliberately, so there is a **safe welcome** at St Thomas.

Fr David



Collect

Almighty God, who sent your Holy Spirit to be the life and light of your Church: open our hearts to the riches of your grace, that we may bring forth the fruit of the Spirit in love and joy 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.

Amen

Exodus 16: 2-4, 9-15

The whole congregation of the Israelites complained against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. The Israelites said to them, 'If only we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots and ate our fill of bread; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.' Then the Lord said to Moses, 'I am going to rain bread from heaven for you, and each day the people shall go out and gather enough for that day. In that way I will test them, whether they will follow my instruction or not. Then Moses said to Aaron, 'Say to the whole congregation of the Israelites, "Draw near to the Lord, for he has heard your complaining." ' And as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the Israelites, they looked towards the wilderness, and the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud. The Lord spoke to Moses and said, 'I have heard the complaining of the Israelites; say to them, "At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall have your fill of bread; then you shall know that I am the Lord your God." ' In the evening quails came up and covered the camp; and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. When the layer of dew lifted, there on the surface of the wilderness was a fine flaky substance, as fine as frost on the ground. When the Israelites saw it, they said to one another, 'What is it?' For they did not know what it was. Moses said to them, 'It is the bread that the Lord has given you to eat.

Ephesians 4: 1-16

I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism,

one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all. But each of us was given grace according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore it is said, 'When he ascended on high he made captivity itself a captive; he gave gifts to his people.' (When it says, 'He ascended', what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is the same one who ascended far above all the heavens, so that he might fill all things.) The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ. We must no longer be children, tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine, by people's trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming. But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knitted together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love.

John 6: 24-35

So when the crowd saw that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they themselves got into the boats and went to Capernaum looking for Jesus. When they found him on the other side of the lake, they said to him, 'Rabbi, when did you come here?' Jesus answered them, 'Very truly, I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For it is on him that God the Father has set his seal.' Then they said to him, 'What must we do to perform the works of God?' Jesus answered them, 'This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.' So they said to him, 'What sign are you going to give us then, so that we may see it and believe you? What work are you performing? Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, "He gave them bread from heaven to eat." ' Then Jesus said to them, 'Very truly, I tell you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.' They said to him, 'Sir, give us this bread always.' Jesus

said to them, 'I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

Post Communion

Holy Father, who gathered us here around the table of your Son to share this meal with the whole household of God: in that new world where you reveal the fullness of your peace, gather people of every race and language to share in the eternal banquet of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

NOTICES

Just to underline the new pattern of Sunday worship: Mass in Church at 10.30, and an online Zoom service of Evening Worship at 6pm, codes overleaf.

4th August Holy Common in Church at 10am. Mask wearing may still be advised by the Church of England for services in church. We await final confirmation of future precautions

House Group. On holiday until September!

Community Larder The Community Larder will be collecting on **Tuesdays only** from 10am-12noon. The collecting point is in the Choir Vestry via the Tower door. Please continue to be generous.

Knit and Natter Update for August 2021 We have decided unanimously to meet weekly on Thursdays in St Thomas Pleasure Ground, from 10.30 to 12 noon. If it's wet, at 19 Maple Road. All details from Jenny on 01392 498715.

200 Club If you would like to join the 200 Club please see Andrew Withers.

Ladies Lunch 31st July at 12.30pm at the Royal Oak. Contact Pat Metford.

