

Saint Mary's Newsletter: July

Vicar: David Smithson 027 4213200 Fridays

07 8492761 Afterhours

Peoples Warden: Sally-Ann Riddell 07 8243850

Vicars Warden: Roger Jennings 07 8243712



SERVICES FOR JULY

Sunday 2nd:

10am Family Communion Service

Refreshments - Majella Heaton

Sunday 9th:

10am Family Communion service.

Refreshments - Judy Cole

Sunday 16th:

10am Praise Service

Refreshments - Karen Boyer

Sunday 23rd:

10am Family Communion service.

Refreshments - Katy Cockerton

Sunday 30th:

10am Fresh Expressions service

Refreshments - Kim Simpson



The lovely after church coffee we drink is Fair Trade Coffee - to bring a brighter future and positive change to coffee growers!



Barnabas Fund Our Parish now donates directly to Barnabas Fund that assists persecuted Christians around the world



No Children's Church/Junior Youth:

This month - 7th July and 24th July due to School Holidays. Activity packs are available during the service though - with a chocolate treat!

Youth Group (Year 9+): Friday's 7pm @ Oaks church, Gordonton, & Weds 7pm "Ignite" @ - Horsham Downs Church.

Forgiveness

Two types of forgiveness appear in the Bible: God's pardon of our sins, and our obligation to pardon others. This subject is so important that our eternal destiny depends on it.

WHAT IS FORGIVENESS BY GOD?

Humankind has a sinful nature. Adam and Eve disobeyed God in the Garden of Eden, and humans have been sinning against God ever since.

God loves us too much to let us destroy ourselves in Hell. He provided a way for us to be forgiven, and that way is through Jesus Christ. Jesus confirmed that in no uncertain terms when he said, *"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."* (John 14:6, NIV) God's plan of salvation was to send Jesus, his only Son, into the world as a sacrifice for our sins.

That sacrifice was necessary to satisfy God's justice. Moreover, that sacrifice had to be perfect and spotless. Because of our sinful nature, we cannot repair our broken relationship with God on our own. Only Jesus was qualified to do that for us. At the Last Supper, on the night before his crucifixion, he took a cup of wine and told his apostles, *"This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."* (Matthew 26:28, NIV)

The next day, Jesus died on the cross, taking the punishment due us, and atoning for our sins.

On the third day after that, he rose from the dead, conquering death for all who believe in him as Saviour. John the Baptist and Jesus commanded that we repent, or turn away from our sins to receive God's forgiveness. When we do, our sins are forgiven, and we are assured of eternal life in heaven.

WHAT IS FORGIVENESS OF OTHERS?

As believers, our relationship with God is restored, but what about our relationship with our fellow human beings?

The Bible states that when someone hurts us, we are under an obligation to God to forgive that person. Jesus is very clear on this point:

Matthew 6:14-15

For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins. (NIV)

Refusing to forgive is a sin. If we receive forgiveness from God, we must give it to others who hurt us. We cannot hold grudges or seek revenge. We are to trust God for justice and forgive the person who offended us. That does not mean we must forget the offense, however; usually that's beyond our power. Forgiveness means releasing the other from blame, leaving the event in God's hands, and moving on.

We may resume a relationship with the person if we had one, or we may not if one did not exist before. Certainly, the victim of a crime has no obligation to become friends with the criminal. We leave it to the courts and to God to judge them.

Nothing compares to the freedom we feel when we learn to forgive others. When we choose not to forgive, we become slaves to bitterness. We are the ones most hurt by holding on to unforgiveness.

Parish Bank Account:

02 0410 0103053 00 Thanks for your weekly A/P contributions to keep our Parish running!

A Scripture for you:

1 Corinthians 13:2 *And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.*

This Month in Christian History:

1549: Spanish Jesuit's, led by Francis Xavier, land in Kagoshima, becoming the first Christian missionaries to Japan. The next ninety years came to be known as "the Christian century of Japan". They assimilated their Christian art, dress and churches into the Japanese style. Many missionaries were martyred.

