

Saint Mary's Newsletter: Oct 2020

Vicar: David Smithson 021 985530 Fridays

07 8492761 Afterhours

Peoples Warden: Sally-Ann Riddell 07 8243850

Vicars Warden: John Heaton 07 8243996



SERVICES FOR OCTOBER

Sunday 4th:

10am St Francis - PET BLESSING DAY

Refreshments: Sally-Ann

Readings: Sally-Ann

Intercessions: Sally-Ann



Sunday 11th:

10am Holy Communion Service

Refreshments: Majella

Readings: Majella

Intercessions: Majella

Sunday 18th:

10am Holy Communion Service

Refreshments: Adrienne

Readings: Adrienne

Intercessions: Adrienne

Sunday 25th:

NO SERVICE - Labour Weekend



Pet Blessing Service In honour of St Francis (whose day is on the 3rd Oct) we are having our Annual Pet Blessing Service Sun 4th Oct. Bring along your cat, dog, fish, bird...!

No Service 25th Oct: Due to Labour Weekend there will be no service on Sunday 25th

Did you know?

The first Nativity Scene was made by St Francis of Assisi, and it consisted of live animals



Scripture for the month:

I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life. This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.

1 John 5:13-14

What does the Bible say about witchcraft?



Since early times, people have sought supernatural experiences God did not endorse. The nations that surrounded the Promised Land were saturated with such practices, and God had stern words for His people concerning any involvement with them. Deuteronomy 18:9–12 says, “*When you enter the land the Lord your God is giving you, do not learn to imitate the detestable ways of the nations there. Let no one be found among you who sacrifices their son or daughter in the fire, who practices divination or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft, or casts spells, or who is a medium or spiritist or who consults the dead. Anyone who does these things is detestable to the Lord.*”

God takes witchcraft very seriously. The penalty for practicing witchcraft under the Mosaic Law was death (Exodus 22:18; Leviticus 20:27). First Chronicles 10:13 tells us that “*Saul died because he was unfaithful to the LORD; he did not keep the word of the LORD and even consulted a medium for guidance.*” In the New Testament, “*socery*” is translated from the Greek word *pharmakeia*, from which we get our word *pharmacy* (Galatians 5:20; Revelation 18:23). Witchcraft and spiritism often involve the ritualistic use of magic potions and mind-controlling drugs. Using illicit drugs can open ourselves up to the invasion of demonic spirits. Engaging in a practice or taking a substance to achieve an altered state of consciousness is a form of witchcraft.

There are only two sources of spiritual power: God and Satan. Satan has only the power that God allows him to have, but it is considerable (Job 1:12; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Revelation 20:2). To seek spirituality, knowledge, or power apart from God is idolatry, closely related to witchcraft. First Samuel 15:23 says, “*For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry.*” Witchcraft is Satan’s realm, and he excels in counterfeiting what God does. When Moses performed miracles before Pharaoh, the magicians did the same things through demonic power (Exodus 8:7). At the heart of witchcraft is the desire to know the future and control events that are not ours to control. Those abilities belong only to the Lord. This desire has its roots in Satan’s first temptation to Eve: “*You can be like God*” (Genesis 3:5).

Since the Garden of Eden, Satan’s major focus has been to divert human hearts away from worship of the true God (Genesis 3:1). He entices humans with the suggestions of power, self-realization, and spiritual enlightenment apart from submission to the Lord God. Witchcraft is merely another branch of that enticement. To become involved in witchcraft in any way is to enter Satan’s realm. Seemingly “*harmless*” modern entanglements with witchcraft can include horoscopes, Ouija boards, Eastern meditation rituals, and some video and role-playing games. Any practice that dabbles in a power source other than the Lord Jesus Christ is witchcraft. Revelation 22:15 includes witches in a list of those who will not inherit eternal life: “*Outside are the dogs, those who practice magic arts, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.*”

We don’t need to fear Satan’s power, but we should respect it and stay away from it. First John 4:4 says, “*Greater is He who is in you, than he who is in the world.*” Satan can create much havoc, harm, and destruction, even in the lives of believers (1 Thessalonians 2:18; Job 1:12–18; 1 Corinthians 5:5). However, if we belong to the Lord Jesus Christ, there is no power that can ultimately defeat us (Isaiah 54:17). We are overcomers (1 John 5:4) as we “*put on the whole armour of God so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes*” (Ephesians 6:11). When we give our lives to Christ, we must repent. This repentance should include renouncing any involvement with witchcraft, following the example of the early believers in Acts 19:19.

Isaiah 8:19 says, “*When someone tells you to consult mediums and spiritists, who whisper and mutter, should not a people inquire of their God? Why consult the dead on behalf of the living?*” When we follow those words to their logical conclusion, we could also ask, “*Why seek any power apart from the source of all real power? Why seek spirits who are not the Holy Spirit?*” Witchcraft and its many counterparts promise spirituality but lead only to emptiness and death (Micah 5:12; Galatians 5:19–21). Only Jesus has the words of life (John 6:68).

Parish Giving

Please consider giving to the parish via Automatic Payment. Did you know that St Mary’s has to pay for our vicar and all other costs of running a parish, as well as giving a proportion to the Diocese? Please help us to be sustainable by giving via Automatic Payment. It is an easy way to give and is useful for the parish in running its budget. The Parish Bank Account is:

02 0410 0103053 00

CHEQUES TO ST MARY’S:

If you are writing a cheque out for the parish, please ensure it is made out to: “*Gordonton Anglican Church*”

This Month in Christian History:

3 Oct 1852: In the chapel at New York City’s University of New York, an Anglican priest, the Reverend Thomas Gaullaudett held the first ever church service for deaf worshippers.

