

Saint Mary's Newsletter: May

Vicar: David Smithson 021 985530 Fridays

07 8492761 Afterhours

Peoples Warden: Sally-Ann Riddell 07 8243850

Vicars Warden: John Heaton 07 8243996



SERVICES FOR MAY

Sunday 1st:

10am Holy Communion Service followed by AGM

Refreshments: Helen & Charles Clark

Readings/prayers: The Clarks

Sunday 8th:

10am Holy Communion Service

Refreshments: Majella Heaton

Readings/prayers: Majella Heaton

Sunday 15th:

10am Holy Communion Service

Refreshments: Helen & Charles Clark

Readings/prayers: The Clarks

Sunday 22nd:

10am Holy Communion Service

Refreshments: Trish Smithson

Readings/prayers: Trish Smithson

Sunday 29th:

10am Holy Communion Service

PARISH CAFÉ LUNCH

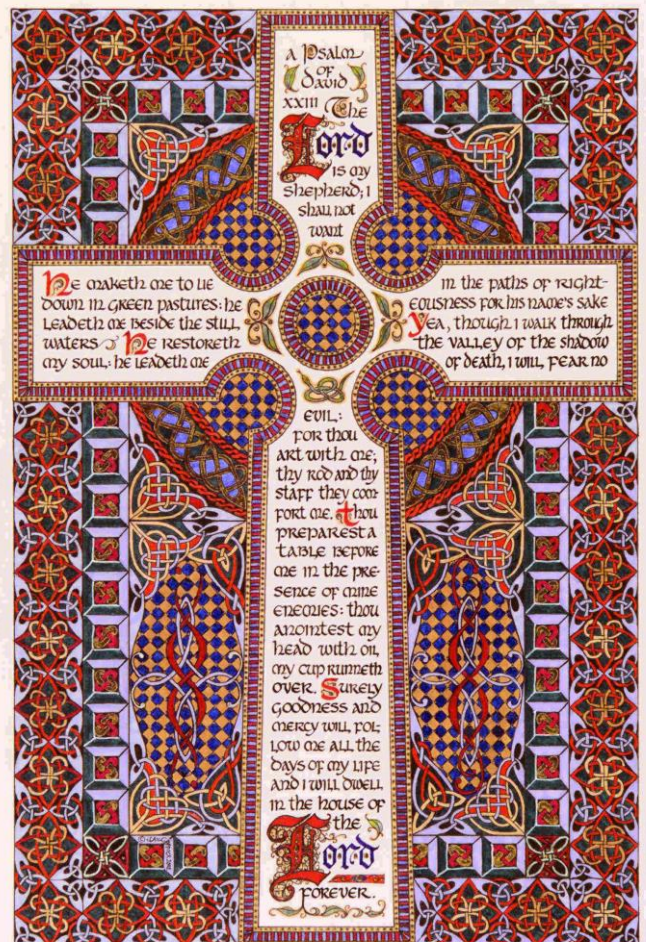


Sun 5th June: Queens Birthday Weekend No service

Scripture for the month:

“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.”

Joshua 1:9



"What is the difference between mercy and grace?"

Mercy and grace are often confused. While the terms have similar meanings, grace and mercy are not the same. To summarize the difference: mercy is God not punishing us as our sins deserve, and grace is God blessing us despite the fact that we do not deserve it. Mercy is deliverance from judgment. Grace is extending kindness to the unworthy.

According to the Bible, we have all sinned (Ecclesiastes 7:20; Romans 3:23; 1 John 1:8). As a result of that sin, we all deserve death (Romans 6:23) and eternal judgment in the lake of fire (Revelation 20:12-15). With that in mind, every day we live is an act of God's mercy. If God gave us all what we deserve, we would all be, right now, condemned for eternity. In Psalms 51:1-2, David cries out, "Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin." A plea to God for mercy is asking Him to withhold the judgment we deserve and instead grant to us the forgiveness we in no way have earned.

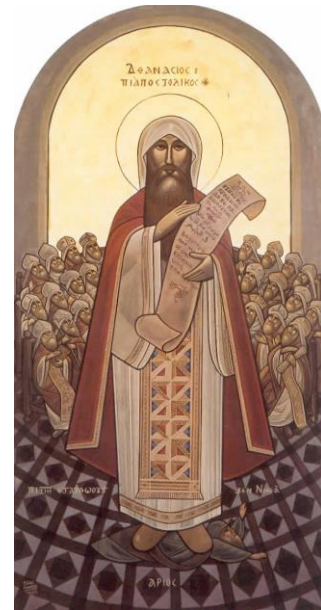
We deserve nothing from God. God does not owe us anything. Anything good that we experience is a result of the grace of God (Ephesians 2:5). Grace is simply defined as unmerited favour. God favours, or gives us good things that we do not deserve and could never earn. Rescued from judgment by God's mercy, grace is anything and everything we receive beyond that mercy (Romans 3:24). Common grace refers to the sovereign grace which God bestows on all of mankind regardless of their spiritual standing before Him, while saving grace is that special dispensation of grace whereby God sovereignly bestows unmerited divine assistance upon His elect for their regeneration and sanctification.

Mercy and grace are best illustrated in the salvation that is available through Jesus Christ. We deserve judgment, but if we receive Jesus Christ as Saviour, we receive mercy from God and we are delivered from judgment. Instead of judgment, we receive by grace salvation, forgiveness of sins, abundant life (John 10:10), and an eternity in Heaven, the most wonderful place imaginable (Revelation 21-22). Because of the mercy and grace of God, our response should be to fall on our knees in worship and thanksgiving. Hebrews 4:16 declares, "Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need."



This Month in Christian History:

2nd May 373: Death of St Athanasius the Great, bishop of Alexandria (328-73). Known as "the father of Orthodoxy" Athanasius was the first Christian writer to list the 27 books of the New Testament that we have today.



Parish Giving

Please consider raising your amount of parish giving, even if it is an extra \$5 extra p/w - it all makes a difference! If you are not already doing so, please also consider giving to the parish via Automatic Payment. 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:

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