

St. Mary's Church
Cubbington



FIFTH SUNDAY
In Lent

Sunday 21st March

Fifth Sunday of Lent

Passion Sunday

Sunday 21st March

Second Best

It was whilst flicking through some very old photographs recently to celebrate Mothering Sunday that I found a black and white picture of me sitting on my mother's knee, with her proudly holding a 2nd place winning banner sign at a Bonny Baby competition!

Why is this relevant you may ask? Well it got me thinking about 2nd places in life with regard to work and family and all aspects of daily life really.

I was the 'second' born child of three girls and have spoken often with others with regard to 'middle child syndrome' and what that might mean. I was also 'second' choice when I became Deputy Head Girl at my senior school.

I can recall many times when I have got second place, so as you can imagine, I was delighted back in 1983 when I received the highest mark in the country for my Orthopaedic Nursing Certificate Examination and received a medal and certificate from Sunderland Royal Hospital. Happy memories....

Anyhow back to the theme of being second. What does the bible have to say about this? Of course God wants us to do our very best in everything we do: Jesus quoted the greatest commandment as loving the Lord "with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind" Matthew 22:37.

Sometimes in life however, we often strive to give and be our best but we can still fall short. All matters of life's obstacles can get in the way and God understands this. With God's Grace, we can be forgiven by a loving caring God when we do fall short.

Let us look at the story of Mary and Martha to look more deeply into this story to examine what Martha might have perceived as being second best to Mary.

The Bible Story of Mary and Martha comes from Chapter 10 of the Gospel of Luke. Mary and Martha, who are sisters, open their home to Jesus as he travels with his disciples. As Martha hurries to ensure the preparations, Mary simply sits at the feet

of Jesus and listens to the wisdom of Christ. Mary and Martha are two sisters with incredibly different focuses.

Whilst Mary soaks in the moments with Jesus, Martha can't think past the cooking and cleaning. Martha quickly becomes frustrated with all the work she is doing alone and complains to Jesus! and says to Him, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!" Jesus replies, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."

In Martha's eyes, she thought she was 'doing her best' for Jesus, but had sadly misinterpreted the true meaning of Jesus' visit. By doing what she thought was of first importance to her, was of less importance... cooking and cleaning were of secondary importance to Jesus.

If Jesus was in front of you, would your first thought be to make everything perfect or to stop and spend time with Jesus? What is your mind's attention on? What we give our mind's attention to, gets our heart's affection. Mary prized the time with Jesus and gave her entire focus to his presence. When Martha complains to Jesus, he gently reminds her of what her focus should be on - building a relationship with Him. Of course, Martha showed wonderful hospitality welcoming Jesus and his disciples in, but she got lost in the distractions.

This bible story teaches me personally a lot. I know I need to take learning from this scripture, what about you?

I do however know that we are all loved equally by the Lord and take comfort when I might not be feeling quite up to par... or if I didn't quite make the grade of this very reassuring bible verse from Matthew 19: 29-30. 'So the last will be first and the first will be last'

This might be my 'last' weekly booklet letter to you all. Reverend Graham may soon feel able to return to writing his weekly booklet letter.

I hope I have in some small way been able to fill Reverend Graham's shoes. I have certainly tried to give of my best to glorify our Lord.

With love in Christ.
Sam x



I do hope that you are all keeping well and safe.

If you would like prayers for yourself or someone you know, please let me know.

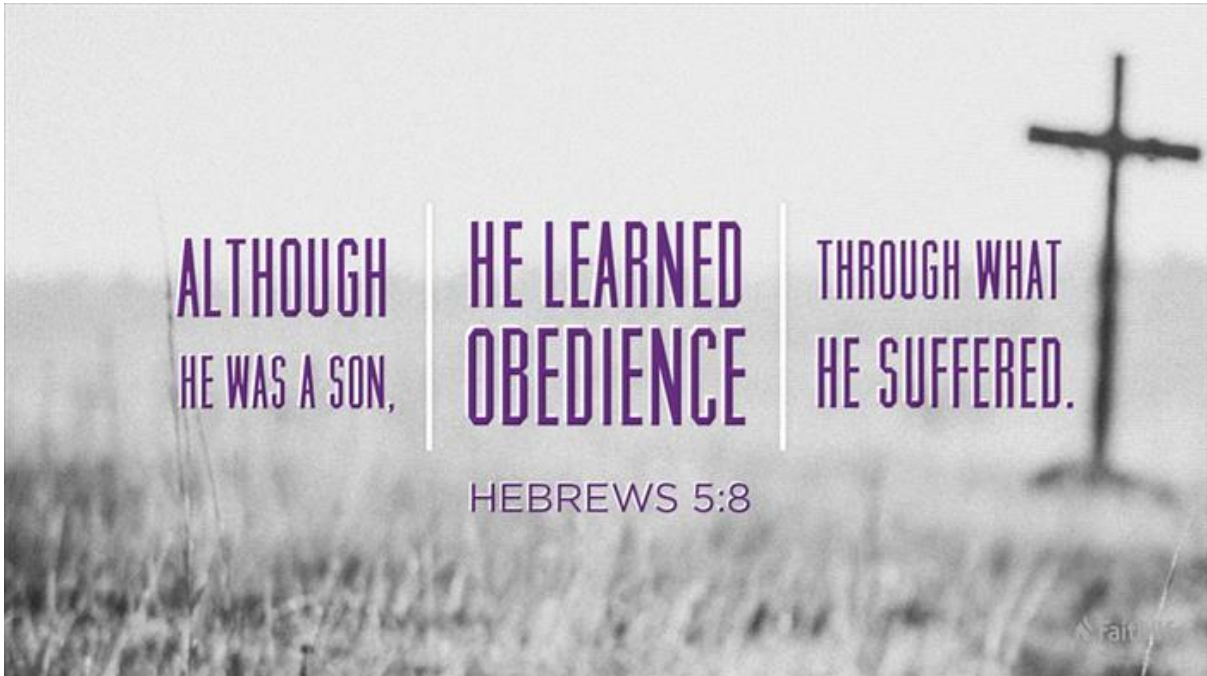
You will shortly be receiving an invitation to a service in church starting with Palm Sunday. If by the end of the week your invitation has not arrived for a service, either Palm Sunday or anytime during April, please let me know.

St. Mary's is open each day from **10am until 2pm** for Individual Private Individual Prayer as usual.

Sue – Churchwarden

**Passiontide begins
and our readings are**

Hebrews 5: 5-10



⁵ So Christ also did not take upon himself the glory of becoming a high priest. But God said to him,

“You are my Son;
today I have become your Father.”

⁶ And he says in another place,

“You are a priest for ever,
in the order of Melchizedek.”

⁷ During the days of Jesus’ life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. ⁸ Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered ⁹ and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him ¹⁰ and was designated by God to be high priest in the order of Melchizedek.

and the Gospel reading is

John 12: 20-33



Jesus Predicts His Death

²⁰ Now there were some Greeks among those who went up to worship at the Feast. ²¹ They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, with a request. "Sir," they said, "we would like to see Jesus." ²² Philip went to tell Andrew; Andrew and Philip in turn told Jesus.

²³ Jesus replied, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. ²⁴ I tell you the truth, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. ²⁵ The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. ²⁶ Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honour the one who serves me.

²⁷ "Now my heart is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour. ²⁸ Father, glorify your name!"

Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and will glorify it again." ²⁹ The crowd that was there and heard it said it had thundered; others said an angel had spoken to him.

³⁰ Jesus said, "This voice was for your benefit, not mine. ³¹ Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out. ³² But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself." ³³ He said this to show the kind of death he was going to die.

LENT 5



Collect

Most merciful God,
who by the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ
delivered and saved the world:
grant that by faith in him who suffered on the cross
we may triumph in the power of his victory;
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.

For any of your family, friends
and neighbours
who have access to the internet,
you might like to suggest
that they look at the church's website
where they will be able to see this message
and other useful information.
Also, anyone you know with
Primary Age school children will find stories
from
'Open The Book'.

Tell them to Google
St. Mary's Church Cubbington.