

St Martin of Tours

Epsom

St Stephen on the Downs

Langley Vale

The parish of  
St Martin of Tours  
with St Stephen-on-the-Downs

Weekly Newsletter  
Registered Charity Number: 1134149

## Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> August 2021 – Ninth Sunday after Trinity

Dear Friends,

The theme this week is 'the bread of life.' Something ordinary, part of most of our lives, something we don't often think much about. Like many things upon which we depend, bread is taken for granted. But when it is scarce, or becomes expensive, suddenly it becomes more noticed, talked about, appreciated and sought after. So it is with our relationship with Christ. Particularly the sacramental. These many months without our normal form of communion, or no communion, will hopefully have renewed our appreciation for the value and availability of the bread of life. **Nick Parish**

### THIS WEEK

#### Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> August – Ninth Sunday after Trinity

- 9.30am – Holy Communion at St Stephen's – led by David Candlin
- 10.00am – Holy Communion at St Martin's, in Church and live streamed – led by Nick Parish, with an update from Ruthie Markus, of AMECA. *(NB A sales stall of Malawi made items will be available after the service).*
- 12.00pm – Baptism of Oliver at St Martin's – led by David Candlin
- 6.30pm – NO SERVICE

#### Today, 1<sup>st</sup> August: St Martin's Choir sings at Guildford Cathedral

- 09.45 Sung Eucharist – including music by Richard Shephard and Felton Rapley
- 18.00 Choral Evensong – including music by Sumsion, Dyson and Stanford

Iain will be playing the organ for us as usual, and we certainly intend to 'make a joyful noise' together on behalf of you all!

#### Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> August

- 10.00am – Holy Communion – led by David Candlin.  
In memory of John Syrad, our former verger, who passed away last year. All who knew John are invited to attend and refreshments will be served afterwards.

### FUTURE SERVICES

#### Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> August – Tenth Sunday after Trinity

- 9.30am – Holy Communion at St Stephen's – led by Andrew Haviland
- 10.00am – Morning Prayer at St Martin's, in Church and live streamed – led by Graeme Lodge
- 6.30pm – NO SERVICE

## **DISCIPLESHIP /STUDY/ WORSHIP MEETINGS**

### **Creationtide**

Advance notice that from Sunday September 5<sup>th</sup> to Sunday October 3<sup>rd</sup> we will be observing this season of the Church year. A programme of events, bible study, guest speakers, music and an eco-fair is being planned. Details to follow

### **Our ministry for children.**

Ark will resume regular meetings from Sunday September 5<sup>th</sup>. New, will be a group for older children (year 4+). Both groups will meet during the 10am service on a fortnightly basis. Please pray that they will prosper and nurture faith in the youngest members of our congregation.



For these groups to work additional adult helpers are urgently required. This will not be a weekly commitment and any preparation will be minimal given the resources we use. If you can offer help please contact:

Yvonne (07717 651123 [stmartinsark@outlook.com](mailto:stmartinsark@outlook.com) ) for Ark or

Graeme (01372 741746 [graemelodge@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:graemelodge@hotmail.co.uk)) for the older group.

### **The Pilgrim Course**

Starting in October, this will be led by Graeme Lodge. Described as a 'discipleship course' it is for anyone who wants to explore Christianity and life following a Christian way. Full details soon.

## **OTHER NOTICES**

### **David and Nancy moving to the West Midlands**

As I come to the end of my curacy at St Martin's, it's a joy to tell you that my next post will be as Team Rector of Bloxwich, a town in the West Midlands near Wolverhampton. Bloxwich is a large parish of 20,000 people served by three CoE churches in the Team Ministry - I will be rector of All Saints on the High Street. There are two churches on the housing estates on the edge of the town, which my soon-to-be colleague Rev Chris Ward looks after. There are five primary schools (two of which are Church of England) and a secondary school in the parish - lots to keep me busy! No date has been set yet for the move or my licensing - but I imagine it might be in late September. I'll keep you posted!

***David Candlin***

## STEWARDSHIP

### Giving to St Martin's and St Stephen on the Downs

For general and stewardship giving you can give online giving via the Charities Aid Foundation.

Donations can be either a one-off donation or a regular donation using direct debit.

To make a donation either:

1. Click on the following link:

<https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/13377>

OR

2. Use your Smart Phone and Scan the QR Code below

There is also a "Donate" button on our website.



**Thank you for your continued giving directly and via online giving.**

### Cheques to St Martin's

If you would like to give a cheque donation to St Martin's Church, please can you make the cheque payable to:

The PCC of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Epsom

Many thanks.

## MISSION FOR THE MONTH HOME

Epsom and Ewell Refugee Network

Epsom and Ewell Refugee Network help refugees and asylum seekers in this area with support and guidance. They connect with people and organisations who can help with English classes, housing, clothing, food and other essential needs and also organising social events. They collect goods and donations to help all refugees in the UK and Abroad.

***Jill Chapman***

## ABROAD

USPG

The United Society of Partners in the Gospel are the Anglican mission agency that partners churches and communities worldwide in God's mission to enliven faith, strengthen relationships, unlock potential and champion justice.

St Martin's Mission and Outreach make a donation through USPG specifically to South India.

***Meg Topley***

**Can you please hold these Mission areas in your Prayers – Thank you**

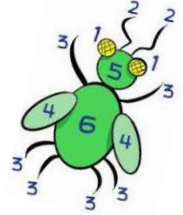
## Eco Fair

As part of the Eco Fair on 25th September (and hopefully raising some money, too!) we are planning to put together a 2022 calendar. This will be available to buy (or at least, pre-order) at the fair. An attractive calendar needs some excellent pictures, of course, which is where you come in: is there a picture you would like to submit? I think it would be nice to stick to images from within the parish, or at least Epsom/Ewell, but apart from that, anything on the theme of God's world/eco is welcome. Please send high quality photographs or art work to the office (the images need to be good quality in order to

withstand being enlarged; highest quality possible on a mobile phone or a high resolution scan e.g. 600dpi), and please don't be shy - it will be lovely to see what appeals to you! We'll include as many as we can. Thank you. ....**Helen Williams**

**\*\*\* SAVE THE DATE \*\*\* - BEETLE DRIVE**

You are all invited to a **Beetle Drive** on **Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2021** between 5.00 – 7.00 pm in Church House. We will be supplying tea and cake and all you need to play that old favourite – “Beetle”. We will continue to follow the relevant COVID guidelines and be socially distanced although we cannot speak for the beetles! **Events Team**



**\*\*\*\* SAVE THE DATE \*\*\*\***



**St Martin's Christmas Fair** will be held on **Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2021** between 11.00 am and 3.00 pm. Please put this date in your diaries so that you can come and support us. The Christmas Fair is always very successful with lots of goodies to buy, food to eat and friends to meet. Watch out for more information in due course.

Thank you

**Events Team**

**CONTACT US**

**Parish Office:**

**Church House, Church Street, Epsom,  
KT17 4PX Phone: 01372 722567**

**E-mail: [stmartinsepsom@btconnect.com](mailto:stmartinsepsom@btconnect.com)**

**Website: [www.stmartinsepsom.org](http://www.stmartinsepsom.org)**

**The Revd Nick Parish – Vicar – 01372 743336**

**Email: [vicar@stmartinsepsom.org](mailto:vicar@stmartinsepsom.org)**

**The Revd David Candlin – Curate - 07723 849 477**

**Email: [revcandlin@gmail.com](mailto:revcandlin@gmail.com)**

**The Revd Canon Adrian Esdaile - Priest in Retirement - 01372 723770**

**Email: [esdaileadrian@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:esdaileadrian@yahoo.co.uk)**

**(available for Contemplative Prayer, Counsel,  
Spiritual Direction and the Healing Ministry)**

## Latest message from Food Bank

Wishlist: This week we need help with:

Epsom & Ewell  
**foodbank**  
HELPING LOCAL  
PEOPLE IN CRISIS



### Urgent:

- Powdered Milk
- Honey
- Cooking Sauce

- Crisps and treats for children
- Bags for life

### Wanted:

- Milk UHT (SS & FF)
- Long-life Sponge Puddings
- Coffee
- Custard
- Mayonnaise
- Noodles
- Peanut Butter
- Long life fruit juice
- Tinned Vegetables
- Squash
- Instant Mash
- Hot Chocolate
- Tinned Meat (hotdogs, meatballs etc)
- Pasta/beans with meat

- Tinned fish
- Sugar (500g packets)
- Shower gel
- Shaving Foam
- Male/Female Deodorant
- Baby Wash
- Spaghetti in sauce
- Household Cleaning Products
- Adult toothpaste
- Kids Toothbrushes
- Shampoo
- Ketchup/brown Sauce
- Nappies – size 5, 6, 6+ and 7
- Pull-ups – size 6, 6+, 7 and toddler training pants

Please, no more donations of the following items at this time: pasta, tampons, marmalade, cat/dog food, spam/corned beef, adult toothbrushes.

You can donate at the usual supermarket points, or bring donations to our car park (please wear a mask);

Epsom & Ewell Foodbank, Generation Resource Centre, (Behind West Ewell Primary School), Ruxley Lane, Ewell, KT19 0JG

Donation Drop Off Times: Monday to Friday 9am – 2pm

**\* PLEASE MAKE SURE ALL DONATIONS ARE SEALED, IN DATE AND DO NOT CONTAIN ALCOHOL \***

Can't get to the shops? You could text to make a small donation, send us a supermarket delivery to the address above, or contact us about sponsoring some fresh fruit & veg!

You can help by texting 70450 to donate:

Text **FOODBANKGIFT2** to donate £2

Text **FOODBANKGIFT5** to donate £5

Text **FOODBANKGIFT15** to donate £15

Text **FOODBANKGIFT3** to donate £3

Text **FOODBANKGIFT10** to donate £10

Text **FOODBANKGIFT20** to donate £20

Kind regards, Chris Shortt

### 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.

### FIRST READING Exodus 16:2-4. 9-15

*A reading from the book of Exodus.*

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 toward 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."

### PSALM Psalm 78:23-29

**R** *The Lord gave them grain from heaven.*

The Lord commanded the clouds above and opened the doors of heaven.

He rained down manna upon them to eat  
and gave them grain from heaven.  
So mortals ate the bread of angels;  
he provided for them food enough. **R**

He caused the east wind to blow in the heavens  
And led out the south wind by his might.  
He rained down flesh upon them like dust  
and winged birds like the sand of the sea. **R**

He let it fall in the midst of their camp  
and round about their dwellings.  
So they ate and were well filled,  
for he gave them what they craved. **R**

### SECOND READING Ephesians 4:1-16

*A reading from the letter of Paul to the Ephesians.*

I, 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 knit 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.

### GOSPEL John 6:24-35

*Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.*

When the crowd saw that neither Jesus nor his disciples were at the place where Jesus had given the bread, 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.

# Sunday Homily

## NINTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

1 AUGUST 2021

YEAR B

“Whoever comes to me will never be hungry,  
and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.”

John 6:35

### Illustration

For years Maura had been trying to educate her children in the skills of housekeeping such as cleaning, shopping, washing, ironing and cooking. One of the boys, Michael, who could turn his hand to most tasks, placed housekeeping low on his list of priorities. No amount of persuasion from Maura could convince him of the usefulness of such skills when he left home. But he had more interesting things to do. He did the minimum demanded of him and then disappeared.

Going away to college gave him a different perspective. He shared a house with other students and found it difficult to live in a messy and disorganised environment. He was obliged to use instant foods while wishing that he could cook more substantial meals. Admitting this to Maura was uncomfortable, but subsequent visits home taught him what he needed to know in order to grow more self-sufficient and to enjoy using his skills.

Maura was delighted at the transformation. Michael had discovered through experience a new vision, one of what life could be like by using his strength of character to admit his needs and with the motivation of a messy house. Thanks to Maura’s willingness to teach him, Michael grew up into a greater maturity. His boundaries extended, his horizons became more exciting and the quality of his life changed for the better and for ever.

### Gospel Teaching

The crowds who came searching for Jesus in today’s Gospel reading brought with them a confused set of questions and desires. They wanted to find out more about God; they wanted to see signs of God’s presence among them; they wanted help in understanding the relationship between Jesus’ teaching and the teaching they had grown up with.

Jesus was surprisingly gentle with them. He knew he was making headway in his ministry when the people began asking him questions about their lives and how the way they lived related to his teaching. They had discovered their need for a teacher.

The sick, always in need of healing, began to realise that this man Jesus might be a source of their desire. Sinners had come to see him as one with spiritual authority who could see into hearts, could understand the motivations and circumstances of their lives, one who might grant them God's forgiveness. Lonely people, outcasts from the Temple or society, saw in him a friend who would not let them down, one who, in bringing them together with one another, would also share their exile.

Jesus came to his followers according to their need. Jesus knew them well and recognised their motives but did not judge them accordingly. Instead he offered them a new vision of life and its expectations, a new vision of God. They had originally followed him because they were physically hungry. Now they were ready for something beyond the physical. He offered himself as their salvation, which he spoke of in terms they would understand. Their new hunger could only be met by a new bread. Jesus would be this bread. With him as their bread, he would not only satisfy their temporary needs but would fill them with a new life.

When the people recognised their needs, Jesus was ready to satisfy them and bring them into a deeper relationship with God through himself.

## **Application**

We too must try to understand where our own lives are impoverished: to look at ourselves honestly in order to discover our weaknesses and strengths so that we know what to pray for in order to become more perfect before God.

We are already strengthened and blessed by our baptism, so we are partly prepared. We may have gifts which are underused; ideals as yet unfulfilled; longings for life to be different, a desire to change ourselves and the world more in keeping with God's will.

When we experience these feelings we are beginning to grow in maturity. We see that we can change and we reach for a greater wholeness in our lives. This is the moment for us to ask: "Jesus, what must we do, to be doing the works of God?" Being aware that we need to be told will open our eyes and ears and hearts to the answers. But an earnest desire to grow and to change for God's purposes will give us a clearer vision of Christ and his teaching. He will feed us with the manna from heaven that we need.



**MONDAY**  
**2 AUGUST**

Numbers 11:4-15  
Psalm 81:11-end  
Matthew 14:13-21  
or 14:22-end

**TUESDAY**  
**3 AUGUST**

Numbers 12:1-13  
Psalm 51:1-8  
Matthew 14:22-end  
or 15:1-2. 10-14

**WEDNESDAY**  
**4 AUGUST**

Numbers 13:1-2. 25  
– 14:1. 26-35  
Psalm 106:14-24  
Matthew 15:21-28

**THURSDAY**  
**5 AUGUST**

Numbers 20:1-13  
Psalm 95:1. 8-end  
Matthew 16:13-23

**FRIDAY**  
**6 AUGUST**  
**Transfiguration  
of Our Lord**

Daniel 7:9-10.  
13-14  
Psalm 97  
2 Peter 1:16-19  
Luke 9:28-36

**SATURDAY**  
**7 AUGUST**

Deuteronomy  
6:4-13  
Psalm 18:1-2. 48-  
end  
Matthew 17:14-20

**REFLECTION**

**F**aith, they say, can move mountains. This week's readings end with the Bible verse that gave rise to that expression, although anyone who's holidayed in Switzerland, for example, might wonder what Jesus could mean.



As well as mountains we read a lot about faith this week. Our Old Testament readings remind us how the people miraculously freed from slavery in Egypt still lacked faith in what God could do for them.

In the Gospel reading for Wednesday Jesus praised the Canaanite woman's faith for believing in what he could do, and persisting in that. This week we see Peter's faith, and lack of it. He even walked on water when Jesus called him, before momentarily losing faith when the wind got up. He recognised Jesus as the Messiah (Thursday) but then earned another rebuke for refusing to accept what that really meant.

Celebrating the Transfiguration on Friday, we recall how Jesus was revealed as God's beloved Son, on what Peter later called a "holy mountain". Peter eventually understood. Faith isn't always easy. Neither is climbing a mountain. But if we start with that tiny amount Jesus mentions, we don't need to climb – we can move the mountains of doubt from our path.

**PRAYER**

Creator God, you gave us the grandeur  
and beauty of the mountains.  
Strengthen our faith in your amazing love  
for each one of us,  
that, when life's problems look like mountains  
we could never climb,  
our trust in you will make them scaleable.

# THE EUCHARIST

## PART III – REFORMATION TO THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER

The sixteenth-century Reformation theologians were unanimous in regarding the congregation's exclusion from almost every aspect of the Eucharist as untenable. Communion should take place only if people and clergy both received bread and wine. However, the nature of Christ's presence in the Eucharist provoked profound debate and disagreement. Martin Luther rejected the traditional doctrine that at consecration bread and wine became Christ's body and blood, yet he maintained that while the elements remained of bread and wine Christ was nevertheless present in them. Others, such as Ulrich Zwingli, went further: bread and wine were purely symbols of Christ's body and blood, Communion simply evoking remembrance of the Lord's sacrifice and thus was only a means to devotion, not an agency of grace. The paradox was that while the reformers reclaimed the Eucharist for everyone, translating its key texts into the vernacular, by downgrading its importance they dramatically reduced the frequency with which it was celebrated.

European Reformation theology influenced Thomas Cranmer's transformation of the Church of England. By 1549 English was used throughout a new Eucharistic liturgy and all references to the Mass as sacrifice were removed. More radical change was introduced in the 1552 Prayer Book that rejected Cranmer's emphasis on Christ being present when bread and wine were faithfully received by each congregant. The liturgy now explicitly declared that the elements were simply eaten in grateful remembrance of Christ's passion. Vestments were reduced to plain surplice over cassock, clergy instructed to preside from the north side of a wooden table adorned only with linen and positioned in the chancel on an east–west axis. Penitence rather than celebration became the overriding tone.

The 1559 revision softened some instructions regarding vestments and the position of the Communion table, while further minor changes were introduced when the Book of Common Prayer was approved in 1662. But, textually, Anglican liturgy from 1559 to the middle of the twentieth century was remarkably consistent with Cranmer's original reforms, providing a comforting spiritual rhythm across personal and national life.

LIVE  
the WORD

SUSTAINING YOU  
THROUGH THE WEEK

Edited by  
Caroline Hodgson  
and  
Heather Smith



Ninth week  
after Trinity

Monday 2 August  
to Saturday  
7 August 2021

WEEK

# Food for the journey

Gillian Cooper *reflects on* Exodus 16:2-4, 9-15

Imagine it. You and your family have fled from an oppressive regime. With many others you have followed a charismatic leader across borders. You have dramatically escaped murderous pursuers. Now you are safe.

But you are in a wilderness. There are a lot of you, and there is no obvious food. Going back means slavery at best, death at worst. Going on means thirst and starvation. You turn on your leaders. What were they thinking, bringing you out here? What is the point of freedom if you are going to starve?

It could be the story of twenty-first-century refugees. But it is also the story of the Israelites. And God has things covered. It is not for the sake of their own freedom

that they have been rescued from Egypt; it is because they are destined for a role as God's people, God's representatives in the world. They have a lot to learn, and one of the first things is trust. It will take forty years to learn, and this is the first lesson. In the evening God sends meat in the form of birds. And after the morning dew there is something else, something they have never seen before, something they call "whatsit", "manna".

In our developed world we mostly take our food for granted. But on Sundays we gather to remember our dependence on God, and to eat our manna, the bread of heaven that binds us together in Christ as God's saved people. 🍞

**Give us today, Lord, our daily bread, that we may be sustained on our journey. Keep us always mindful of our dependence on you, and feed us with the bread of life, that we may look forward with joy to our final feast at your table. Amen.**



## The books of the Old Testament

*"In the beginning" – the book of Genesis*

by Gillian Cooper

Genesis is the first chapter in a grand story that takes us from a garden of delight to a glorious city. It sets the stage, as God makes the world and its creatures, despairs of human beings, but allows them to play a role in the plan of salvation.

There is drama, when it seems Abraham will never have the descendants God has promised. There is humour,

when his grandson Jacob wakes up after his wedding to find he has married the wrong sister (chapter 29). There is horror, when Isaac lies on a sacrificial pyre, his father's knife descending on him (22). There is pathos, when Joseph and his brothers are reunited (45). There is mystery, when God and Jacob wrestle in the night (32).

Ancient tradition suggests that the first five books of the Bible, the Torah to Jews, the Pentateuch to scholars, were written by Moses. Yet many inconsistencies are evidence of more than one author. Scholars have long believed that these books grew up over centuries, with stories from different sources collected to make a rich tapestry. The final editor is probably responsible for prefacing the whole with Genesis 1, a statement of the supremacy of God, who brings order out of chaos. 🍞

## The Sheldon community in a time of pandemic

Part I – "guinea pigs needed"

by Julian Smith

"Guinea pigs needed", said the email – and who could resist? The Sheldon Centre was looking for volunteers to test its procedures and help assess its readiness to re-open for retreats after the first wave of the coronavirus pandemic.

The centre exists to support the work of people in ministry and is the home of the Community of Mary and Martha. The online aspects of the centre's work continued throughout lockdown last year, but the residential side

of Sheldon's life had, of course, to close.

The "guinea pigs" normally help with hospitality during retreats, so being a guest was a strange experience. For many of us this was the closest contact we'd had with anyone other than our husbands or wives since 24 March and a dozen people felt like a multitude.

The usual rule – "no clergy shop talk" – was supplemented by directions on social distancing, one-way routes and new procedures, and constant watchfulness proved exhausting.

To learn more about the centre's work, go to [www.sheldon.uk.com](http://www.sheldon.uk.com) 🍞

“Do not be afraid... I am your shield.”

Genesis 15:1



Sunday 1 August 2021  
John 6:24-35  
18th Sunday in Ordinary Time

## IN THE GOSPEL TODAY

Jesus tells the people that he is the bread of life and if we believe in him we can live forever and be happy with him.

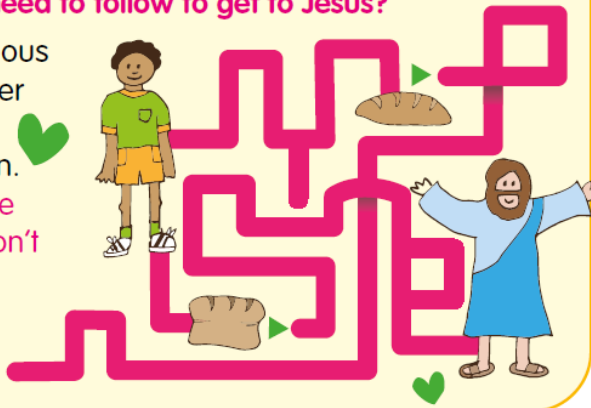
My name is \_\_\_\_\_

# LIVE FOREVER!

Which path does Ben need to follow to get to Jesus?

Two paths lead to delicious loaves of bread. But after Ben has eaten them, he will get hungry again.

Jesus says that if we are friends with him, we won't feel hungry for bread anymore and he will fill us up with his love.



## I will follow Jesus when I...

How can you follow in Jesus' footsteps?



Draw a picture of yourself inside the footprint doing something kind and loving.

## Who is the bread of life?

E=                  J=                  S=                  U=



## Jesus fills us with good things!

Here are some things which may make you feel joyful. Look up and down, backwards and forwards to find them:

HOPE LOVE  
JOY PEACE  
LIFE

A	D	K	X	L
H	J	O	Y	O
O	V	G	Z	V
P	E	A	C	E
E	F	I	L	M

## A PRAYER TO SAY

Dear Jesus, thank you for feeding me with your love. When things bother me, help me to remember that the one thing that never changes is that you love me and that I can be happy with you forever. Amen.