

Fr Christopher's Sermon for Sunday,
22 March 2020 – Mothering Sunday

There are a number of strange things about this Sunday. It is Mothering Sunday, when people would normally travel home to visit their mothers. This Sunday people are unable to do that. Similarly, people cannot visit their churches for public worship, though you can of course still come to pray on your own.

In person contact, *physical* contact even, is central to how we operate as a species, even in the age of the internet. As Christians, almost all of our sacraments involve stuff, physical stuff that you can touch: baptism obviously requires water; the Eucharist requires bread and wine; in a wedding the couple take each other's hands; and, at the end of our life, we are anointed with holy oil.

In our gospel reading this morning, Jesus does something that you certainly couldn't do in these days of social distancing: he spits in the mud and makes a paste, which he then spreads on a blind man's eyes. And yet it is in the personal, physical touch, and in his washing, that this blind man comes to see. And in seeing, to acclaim, '*Lord, I believe.*'

We continue to see at the moment of course; you can see this Mass taking place if you are online, though you cannot physically receive. You can see, and you can make your spiritual communion, receiving the body and blood of Christ into your hearts; just as we can all say our prayers at home, and speak to friends and family over the phone.

It would be wrong to pretend that this is the same; and yet, we are doing everything we can to get as close as possible to what we normally do, and how we normally worship. The fact that over a hundred people have been watching Morning and Evening Prayer, Mass and the Angelus through our Facebook page is a great thing.

So, mark what we are currently missing, so that they seem all the more special and holy to us when they are restored; but also focus all the more on reading scripture, your private prayer, and on the communal prayer we can share together thanks to the advanced technology we enjoy. And as we continue this year's strange journey towards the cross and the empty tomb of Easter, continue to care for each other, and to shout out with the man born blind who now sees, '*Lord, I believe.*'

God bless you all !

Contact information:

Fr Christopher Rogers:
Call on **020 8461 5632** or email at
frchristopherrogers@outlook.com

St John's Social Media details:
Website: stjohnscatford.co.uk
Facebook: @stjohnscatford
Twitter: @StJohnsCatford
Instagram: @stjohnscatford

If you have access to the internet, you will find copies of the weekly Sermon and Reading Sheet on St John's website.

Please contact Fr Christopher by phone or email if
a) you wish to be added to our email distribution list or
b) wish to receive a copy delivered to your home.