

St. Mary's Church Cublington



Trinity 2
Sunday June 21st

Sunday Message June 21st 2020 Father's Day

Hello everyone and greetings from the vicarage.

I should also say Happy Father's Day to all you Fathers out there.

I'm always amused by the joke about Father's Day –

When a young boy was asked to explain Father's Day

He said “well it's a bit like Mother's Day – but you don't have to spend so much on the present!”

It's interesting that we tend to make more of Mothering Sunday and yet if you look back at the history of both days – Father's Day began long before either Mother's Day or Mothering Sunday.

Father's Day dates right back to the 5th century where it was celebrated by the Coptic Church

The European Catholics' were a little later; they began celebrating Father's Day on St Joseph's Day (Father to the Lord) in 1508.

Whereas Mothers Day began in America in 1908 and Mothering Sunday dates to the 16th Century.

Father's Day is an opportunity to think about our own Fathers and also our Heavenly Father.

For some of us we will have to think back to the memories of our Dads because they are no longer with us – and I know this will be especially difficult for a few of you who have just lost your Fathers.

But we remember all the good and happy times we spent with them.

For others who never knew their Fathers or grew up with Dads who may not have been as good as you would have liked them to be - today may be hard for you.

It's sad when we hear of Fathers who fall short of our expectations

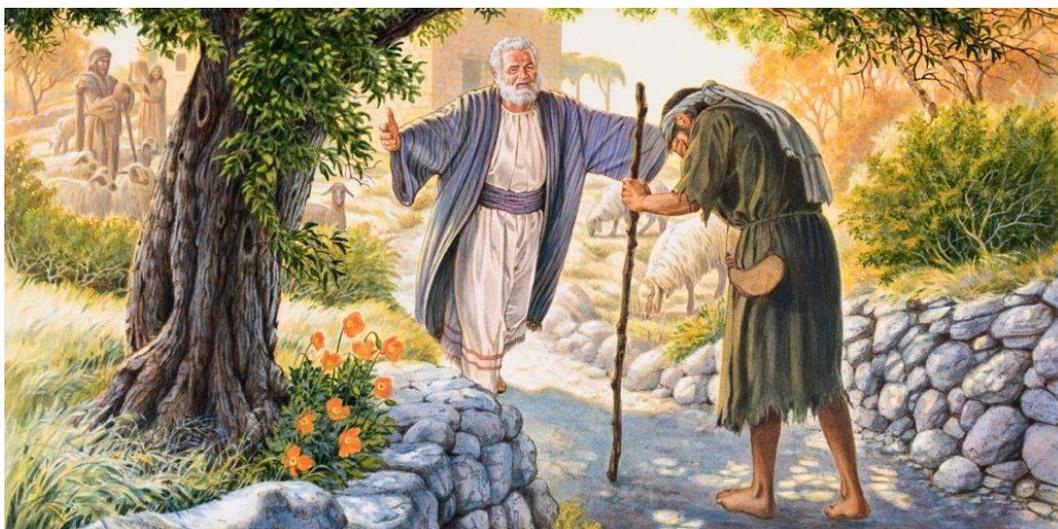
But it's also sad if we let these experiences colour our views of Fatherhood in general

Especially when we consider our Heavenly Father.

Our Gospel reading today is the familiar story of the parable of the Prodigal Son and you will find it in Luke's Gospel chapter 15 verses 11 to the end.

It's one of those readings where we can see both sides – the hurt and anger the older son feels –

Along with the feelings of love and joy that hit the Father when the younger son finally returns home.



There seems to be a lot of unfairness between the two sons – one having stayed and worked hard alongside his Father –

The other having taken his money, left, wasted it, returns and is made so welcome.



It is unfair – but put yourself in the position of the Father – what would you do?

In telling this story I think Jesus is hoping that we would all understand that we are all loved and treasured by our Heavenly Father – despite what we get up to.

And there is always a home that we can return to - knowing that we will be welcomed with arms outstretched by our loving Father

Our Father that we are able to call 'Abba' the most intimate word that we could ever address a Father.

Jesus was very keen for us to think about His Father who is of course our Heavenly Father-

So much so that He when He taught his disciples and us to pray He began with the words "Our Father".



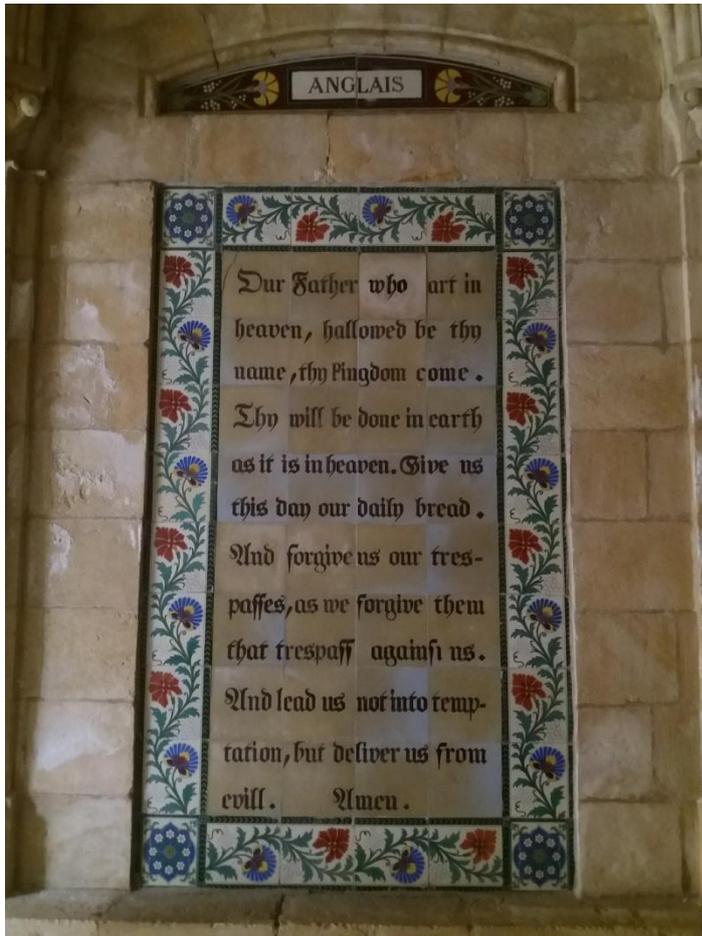
On the Mount of Olives there is a church called Church of the Pater Noster which is more commonly known as the

Our Father Church because it is believed to have been built on the site where Jesus taught His disciples the Lord's Prayer.

On the walls all around the church are the words of the Lord's Prayer in 171 different languages.

*The 'Our Father' Church on the Mount of Olives
Each panel has the Lord's Prayer in a different language.*





Jesus taught His disciples and us the words of the prayer to help us to remember each day how we should live.

So let's honour all Fathers by living as Christ intended us to.

It is said that "A child is not likely to find a **Father in God** -unless he finds **something of God in his Father**"

The inside of the 'Our Father' church.



The cave below the 'Our Father' church where it is believed that Jesus taught His disciples to pray.



**I'd like to close by reading you a story about
a Father and a daughter
It is written by Melinda Clements.**

"Have you ever looked at your hands?" a dad asked his daughter.

"I mean really looked at your hands.

"Stop and think for a moment about the hands you have, how they have served you well throughout your years.

These hands, though wrinkled, shrivelled and weak, have been the tools I have used all my life to reach out and grab and embrace life. "They braced and caught my fall when as a toddler I crashed upon the floor.

They put food in my mouth and clothes on my back.

As a child, my mother taught me to fold them in prayer.

They tied my shoes and pulled on my boots.

They dried the tears of my children and caressed the love of my life. They wiped my tears when my son went off to war.

"They have been dirty, scraped and raw, swollen and bent.

They were uneasy and clumsy when I tried to hold my newborn daughter.

Decorated with my wedding ring, they showed the world that I was married and loved someone special.

"They have been sticky and wet, bent and broken, dried and raw.

And to this day when not much of anything else on me works very well, these hands hold me up, lay me down, and again continue to fold in prayer.

These hands are the mark of where I've been and the ruggedness of my life.

“But more importantly, it will be these hands that God will reach out and take when He leads me home.”

A Prayer for all Fathers

Lord, thank you for all fathers

For the new ones who endure sleepless nights
with babies in their arms.

For the busy ones who juggle the pressures of home
and family life.

For the steadfast ones who nurture and care
for vulnerable children.

For the patient ones who always seek to forgive and
engage with their teenagers.

For persistent ones who cleverly find new ways to
connect with their young adults.

For all dads that we love but see no longer.

For all granddads who love and support their
precious grandchildren.

For the foster dads that are called to gather and
cover the fragile ones.

For dads who give far beyond their own resources,
who overcome disability to cherish and love.

Thank you Lord for all our wonderful fathers.

Help us to support them and keep them in our prayers.

May you bless them now on this special day.

Amen

Reverend Graham



Something to think about

- What are some words you'd use to describe your father?
- What was he like? What qualities did he have?
- What sorts of things did your father teach you?
- What did your father do for work? Around your home? In your community?
- Why do fathers sometimes say "no"?
- How do you typically talk about God—what do you call him?
- Think of the Lord's Prayer: "Our Father..." Who is our Heavenly Father? What is He like?
- God is close to us, intimate. Jesus calls the Father "Abba," an Aramaic word that means "Daddy." How is the word "daddy" different than "father"?
- As God's children, what are we supposed to do?

Happy
Father's
Day

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.