**Sunday 16th February 2020**

**2nd Sunday before Lent**

**THOUGHT FOR TODAY**

How can I resist evil?

*‘I can resist anything except temptation’* -the words of this well-known quote from Oscar Wilde probably ring true for many us, which might be ok when the thing being resisted is the occasional bar of chocolate, or the additional glass of wine. But what about more serious temptations? I’m thinking now about the things in the world around us that might lead us into the dangerous territory of breaking Jesus’ New Commandment, teaching he gives his followers (Mark12:30-31) summed up in us being told the importance of loving God and loving one another. How good are we at resisting breaking this law?

In Alpha this is described as resisting evil, and as Jesus’ followers we must have no doubt that evil does exist in our broken world. Jesus himself met evil, personified as the devil who tempted him when he was in the desert after his baptism by John (Luke 4:1-13). Jesus resisted the evil that the devil tempted him with through knowing his own weaknesses, and even more importantly knowing that God loved him and valued him in spite of these weaknesses. Jesus was also certain that God was with him in his fight, and through using prayer and knowing scripture, Jesus won and the devil and temptation was defeated. Whether it’s a big temptation or something not so important, our God loves us and helps us whatever we face in life, including resisting temptation. Being built up in our relationship with God through prayer and Bible reading will help us too. The prayer on our lips must often be ‘*protect us and your whole church from the work of the evil one’. Amen.*

*Rev Margaret*

**THIS WEEK AT ST. JOHN’S**

Sunday

9.00 am Morning Prayer (1st 3rd)

Holy Communion (2nd 4th 5th)

**FORTHCOMING EVENTS**

**Coffee Morning at St. John’s**. First Wednesday of each month at 10.30 am. £2.50 including tea/coffee, biscuits and home-made cakes. Come along for a chat. You will be very welcome.

**TODAY! - Rummage Sale** at Church of the Good Shepherd 11am-2pm Sunday 16th February. Refreshments available.

**Holy Spirit Monday Club** meet 11am - 12.30pm on Mondays.  
17th Feb – Seated exercises  
24th Feb – Rosie Knight showing her glass work

**Prayer Light Prayer Group:** 12.30pm 21st February at St Michael’s. Bring a packed lunch to share after a time of prayer.

**Curry and Quiz night** at St Michael’s on Saturday 29th February, 7:00pm, £5.

**Children against climate change** monthly event. Tuesday 3rd March,   
4-5pm at St A’s. Ideas and activities to encourage recycling and looking after our environment.

**Lent Lunches across the benefice:** This year we visit different churches across the benefice. All on Wednesdays, start at 12.30pm with short reflection on Lent, followed by bread soup and cheese.  
4th March at St John’s, Armitage  
11th March at Holy Spirit  
18th at Good Shepherd  
25th March at St Michael’s  
1st April at St Augustine’s.

**World Day of Prayer – Churches Together.** Friday 6th March 2pm at the Church of the Holy Spirit.

Saturday 21st March - **Open House at the Curate's** - drop in anytime between 2pm to 5pm. Enjoy some Lenten friendship and fellowship at Jo, Andy & Grace's at The Vicarage, 14 Peakes Road.

**Parish Easter Trail**, Saturday 28th March, St. Michael's Church, more details to follow!

**ACROSS THE PARISH**

We are happy to say that we have been able to **send the Pathway Project £300** out of the proceeds of the Christmas Tree Festival at St Augustine’s.

**Electoral Rolls**: Will everyone please check their entry on the roll and make any amendments necessary. i.e. change of address, spellings,, etc, and tell us if you know anyone has moved away from the area.

**St Michael’s Church flood lighting.** For a £25 donation you can sponsor the lighting up of the church in memory of a loved one. Contact Revd George for details.

**HAVE YOU BOOKED YOUR PLACE ON THE PARISH WEEKEND AWAY 26th-28th JUNE 2020? ? THE DEADLINE FOR BOOKING YOUR PLACE IS THE END OF FEBRUARY.** Find a brochure and booking form at the back of church today! This is for everyone. We do not want cost to be a barrier to people coming, so if that is a factor for you, talk in confidence to Revds Brian, Margaret, Jo, George or David. Folks who went to the last weekend away loved it, so do sign up!

**The Changing Room Counselling service.** Call **075 9125 7737.**

*The Changing Room is now available three days per week – Tuesday, Wednesday and Fridays!*