

Today, on **Bible Sunday**, as we celebrate the written Word handed down to us and we are reminded that God still speaks to us through the Bible, which is vital for salvation, as well as instruction and guidance for our Christian faith journey.

**A reflection on Romans 15.1-6:** This letter has been written by Paul to the church in Rome, to inspire, to teach and to encourage their Christian faith. It is a rich seam of theology that has been mined by generations of Christians to their eternal benefit.

Widely thought to have been written somewhere between AD 54 and AD 58, Paul writes to a young church (which he had not yet visited) comprised of a potent mixture of Jews and Gentiles. This is fertile ground for differing opinions on matters of Christian doctrine and approaches to what is allowable and what is frowned upon for Christian behaviour.

Here in Romans 15, we are plunging into the middle of a heated dispute where Paul is seeking to reconcile two groups, who have different views about food and wine. *Why are some happy to eat meat and others aren't?* Debates, rooted in religious and cultural practices. It's down to their approach to freedom. Some ('the weak'), whether because they are Jews or because they simply seek to keep as much of the Jewish law as possible, believe they should still refrain from eating meat which might fit the regulations prescribed in the Law. For them, the Old Testament food laws remained in operation. The same also applied to the wine, though this was probably more to do with wine being offered to the pagan gods (eg. Daniel I). Others ('the strong'), believe they have been set free by the experience of salvation in Christ and are enjoying the removal of lots of rules and regulations. They want to express this freedom in the way they live their lives, *'If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed'* (John 8.36 – see also Mark 7.1-23).

Some of us find comfort in rules and regulations while others love to leave them behind! Which one might you be? *Philip Yancey's book 'What's So Amazing About Grace?'* addresses some Christians' tendency to use rules to exclude others, thereby feeling more comfortable about themselves.

This was an echo of the dilemma faced by Jews and Gentiles. Paul encourages the church to act in a way that benefits others rather than being self-centred (verse 1). This is the way of the good news.

**A blessing for the Bibles we use**

Lord, bless this Bible, your precious Word revealed to us through prophet, priest and king, apostles lives, and in the wisdom of your Son.

Lord, bless this Bible, your living Word given to us to be shared, read aloud, and acted on through the worship of our lives.

# Welcome to the United Benefice of Holy Innocents & St. Mark, South Norwood

*Sharing God's grace and love in our community*



**23<sup>rd</sup> October 2022**

**Vicar:** The Revd. Canon Roxanne Eversley  
**Asst. Priest:** Mother Susan Wheeler-Kiley  
**Lay Reader:** Mrs. Cicelyn Hinds

**BIBLE SUNDAY AND TRINITY 19**

**8am and 10am Parish Mass**

**President** Mtr. Roxanne Preacher, Cicelyn Hinds

*Isaiah 45.22-25 \* Psalm 119.129-136 \* Romans 15.1-6 \* Luke 4.16-24*

**Access online worship via**

[www.youtube.com/c/StMarksSouthNorwood](http://www.youtube.com/c/StMarksSouthNorwood)

## CHURCH NOTICES

**Pastoral Care:** Mother Roxanne is available (except on Mondays) on Tel. 020 8916 1830 or 07723 038215 or [mtrroxanne@gmail.com](mailto:mtrroxanne@gmail.com)

*Mother Susan and Fred will be on holiday next Sunday until the end of the month.*

**To hire the Church Halls, please call:**

Jan on 020 8653 0447 for St Mark; and Annette on 020 8771 5779 for Holy Innocents.

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**We pray:** for Archbishops Justin and Stephen.

**For** the Bishops in this Diocese - Christopher, Karowei, Rosemarie and Richard (about to retire).

**For** the bishops in our link Dioceses of Zimbabwe, their clergy and people.

**For Holy Innocents and St Mark, South**

**Norwood** Roxanne Eversley (V); Susan Wheeler-Kiley (PTO), Alec Randall (SPA Holy Innocents), Cicelyn Hinds (Reader (PTO) St. Mark), St Mark's School.

**For** the Bishops, priests & people of the Diocese of Nelson - The Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia, Tikanga Pakeha

**For the sick** – Claude & Richard, Helen, Jennifer & Reuben, Marie-Gabrielle, Rose, Caroline, Sigi, Anecka, Lynn, Ronald, Tommy, Ena, Rudolph, Pamela, Barry, Dennis, Linda, David, Adrian, Jacqueline, Colin (Castle), Carmen, Annetta, Fay, Marina, Pauline (Riches), Karen and Fr Tom Hurcombe.

**The bereaved** – the McKnight family; **The recently departed** – George McKnight; **Years Mind.**

**As we continue to celebrate 170 years of the dedication of St Mark as a parish Church, please note/ be reminded of our live event in the church, this Saturday, 29<sup>th</sup> October, at 7 for 7.30pm, with local historian John Hickman.**

I would encourage you to arrive early so there's time to peruse the 'historical documents' exhibition as well as items for sale in our 'display' cabinet plus the £5 Anniversary magazine, which I totally commend.