

- - TEAM NOTES - -

As the stages out of lockdown continue to come and go, so the Church services will be adapted and we look forward to a gradual return to communal in-person worship with choirs and congregational singing. Currently we have no further information about how things are likely to be after 19th July - the date set provisionally for a lifting of more of the restrictions. We are working on the assumption that the choirs may recommence and that social distancing and the wearing of face coverings are going to be relaxed, at least, but this is speculation and provisional.

This Sunday, services will continue in-person in all four of our churches. The pattern is largely for Services of the Word in St Nicholas', All Saints' and St Mark's with the Eucharist in St Mary's, though we are moving gradually to a greater number of the services being Eucharistic across the team of churches. We are hoping that the Wednesday service of Holy Communion at St Mary's will be able to recommence before the end of July, but this is to be confirmed. St Mark's is experimenting with a lay led service once a month.

In the meantime:

A simple Sunday service will continue to be prepared for the team website every week, for those unable to get to Church physically, including hymns and a short homily - www.swanageteam.com. This service, being one to be read at home, is also being posted out to those who would like to receive it in printed form. We are trying to post it to people on a Wednesday, with the hope that it will arrive in homes by the Friday. Please let Karon know if you would like to be sent a copy: ring 421117 and leave a message if there is no answer.

On Line Services are as follows:

All Saints' 10.30am Sunday service is live-streamed. Simply go the All Saints website at www.allsaints-swanage.org and follow the links,

St Nicholas' Studland has ceased its Zoom service at 10.00am but that at 6.30pm will continue every week for the time being. To join the zoom services please email Tony to request the link for each Sunday: revtonyhiggins@btinternet.com.

We hope that this range of options for worship each Sunday provides something for everyone.

SWANAGE & STUDLAND

TEAM MINISTRY

St. Mary's – St. Mark's – All Saints' – St. Nicholas'
11th July 2021 – Trinity 6

Mark 6: 14-29

The story of the death of John the Baptist, through being executed by King Herod at the time of a banquet is the only story in St Mark's Gospel that is not directly related to Jesus. It appears as a 'filler' marking some time between when the disciples were sent out by Jesus two by two, as we recall from last Sunday, and when they return, which occurs immediately after the story before us today.

It is thought that Mark may have taken this story about John's death from another source and more or less copied it into the position in which we find it, here in chapter 6. Actually, once that idea has been placed in the mind, it does read like that, with it being in a slightly different style and only loosely linked to what went before and what goes after.

Nevertheless it does give us detail as to the demise of John, who had such an important role in preparing the way for Jesus that we make much of his place during the course of Advent each year. One thing that I feel that we can overlook is what the effect of John's death must have had upon Jesus - and, added to that, the nature of his death.

We know that they were related. Traditionally they have been seen as cousins. So, Jesus is losing, in a most hideous way, a member of his own family. But also, this is such a sad end to the life of a great prophet. The words at the end of the Gospel are very touching, though, as the love in which John's disciples held him continues to the end, as they come and take his body for burial.

Overall, we should not miss this interlude in the understanding of how the story of Jesus himself is unfolding. How serious the opposition was becoming is clear, and Mark's mention of this - as an interlude in the sending out of the disciples of Jesus, two by two, sheds light on the path that Jesus was about to tread himself.

John Mann