



The Parish of  
**ST NICHOLAS,  
SUTTON**

*Priest-in-Charge: The Revd Frances Arnold*

The Rectory,  
34 Robin Hood Lane,  
SUTTON  
SM1 2RG

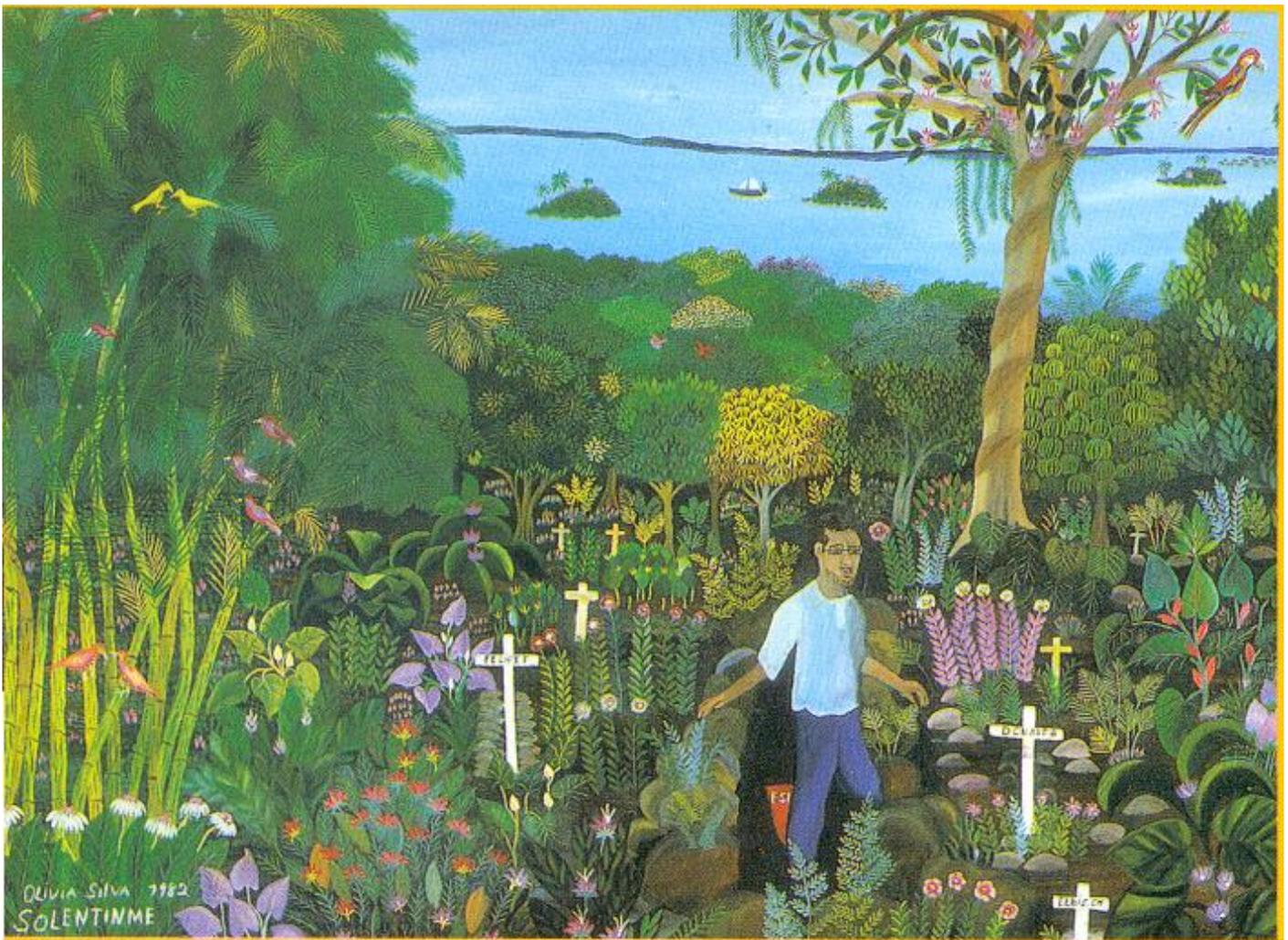
3 May 2020

**St Nicholas Church and Coronavirus (7)**

Dear Sisters & Brothers,

One of the interesting things about prayer and worship in lockdown is the different ways in which we can participate in the same event depending on our technological capabilities or preferences. Debbie and I were used to exchanging a few words about bible texts after Thursday morning worship (pre lockdown). It seemed natural to take up the invitation on the Day of Prayer at this time of national crisis, hosted by Sutton Community Works (30 April), to pray with a friend using 'the good old fashioned telephone'. We chose the hourly call to prayer at 9pm, reading Isaiah 64.1-4 to each other, commenting on the passage and praying with it.

In our conversation, I felt we recovered some of the directness of the commentaries of the Nicaraguan congregation on the gospel read at mass in the church in Solentiname each Sunday. This work was inspired by their priest (and poet) Ernesto Cardenal. The commentaries are still the most detailed record we have of what 'ordinary Christians' made of the Gospel in the context of their own lives (1970's Nicaragua was a time of oppression and persecution by the Somoza dictatorship). *The Gospel in Solentiname* includes paintings by the peasants too. Their art conveys the good news that 'Christ has made us free, and that faith in him brings a paradoxical joy and hope, even in adversity'. The community artists of Solentiname attempt to make the people and stories of the Gospel come alive for the people of their own time, like all Christian artists. So in the art of Solentiname, both Christ and Mary are peasants, seen not in the artist's imaginative reconstruction of what Bethlehem, Nazareth or Calvary might have looked like, but seen in the familiar settings of Solentiname, with its thatch-roofed buildings, bright blue waters, lush vegetation and brilliant flowers.



And the peasants' comments on the Gospel show forth their deep conviction that Jesus lives, and is indeed, present among them. The paintings too reflect their faith that the Gospel is the living word of the living God heard in their world: Gabriel finds Mary at her sewing machine. Bottles of Coca-Cola stand on Herod's table. The troops of Herod/Somoza carry automatic weapons and wear uniforms supplied by the United States. You will notice in the Resurrection scene (above) that the crude wooden crosses bear the names of Elvis, Felipe, and Donald, young men who are frequently quoted in the commentaries.

My favourite quotes from the commentaries on Resurrection:

*Felix Mayorga*: After many centuries (the news of the resurrection) has reached as far as Solentiname. And later it will be heard by people not yet born.

*Olivia* (the artist): The news is not only about his resurrection but about ours.

*Ernesto*: That's why Olivia didn't wear mourning but wore a green dress when her daughter Olga was buried.

You might wish to respond to what you have heard about the community of artists in Solentiname by drawing or painting a naïve or primitivist colourful picture based on a Gospel scene, which reflects modern day life and flora and fauna in Sutton.

### **Church of England worship**

Bishop Christopher is encouraging everyone to say the Lord's Prayer daily and suggests either 1 or 7 pm.

You can find national online resources including weekly streamed services and daily audio at

<https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/church-online>

as well as additional worship provision on the BBC, for example Radio 4 Sunday morning worship at 8.10am (or later using BBC Sounds) and the service on BBC1 later in the morning.

### **Pastoral Network**

A big thank you, as ever, on behalf of all of us, to the Mothers' Union/Lunch Team joint initiative who are continuing with their marvellous work in co-ordinating telephone/WhatsApp support and supply of provisions to those self-isolating.

A particular thank you to Nicki Richards, Jeff Richards, Emma & Keith Cann, Liz & Chris Cann, Lily Bande, Helen Yately, Paul Butler and Diane Young.

### **Staying in touch**

Stay in touch about ways that we can care for you and pray for you. I'd be glad to hear from you.

My contact details are: [rector.stnicholassutton@gmail.com](mailto:rector.stnicholassutton@gmail.com) 020 8642 3499

Thank you for your calls. I love receiving telephone calls from you.

In particular can I make a plea to those who find themselves in pressing need (or who know of others of our number in difficulties)? Please don't feel that you have nowhere to turn. I really want you to contact me in the first instance. When you do, I will either be able to help you myself or point you in the right direction for access to food or emotional support for people who are struggling during the pandemic.

### **Love one another**

Please continue to watch out for each other and contact me or the wardens, John Kerr or Geoff Rendall, if you are concerned for someone.

And do be assured of my prayers for you. May almighty God keep us safe in body, mind and spirit as we ask him in Jesus' name. Thank you too for your continued prayers and support.

With warmest good wishes to you all,

*Frances*

O God, the protector of all who trust in you,  
without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy:  
increase and multiply upon us your mercy;  
that with you as our ruler and guide,  
we may so pass through things temporal  
that we lose not our hold on things eternal;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

# ST NICHOLAS CHURCH SUTTON

3 MAY 2020 EASTER 5

## IN THE PAST WEEK...

### BLESSINGS...

- Clap for Carers
- NHS staff
- Sutton Community Support Hub
- Retail staff
- Sutton Police
- Bus drivers
- Sky, a deeper shade of blue
- Less pollution
- Capt/Col Tom Moore's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday (30.04.20)
- 

### WE MISS...

- Worshipping together
- Sharing the Peace (hands or elbows)
- Hearing from JAM & Spectrum
- Coffee on Sundays and soup on Thursdays
- Light coming through the church windows
- Strolling through the churchyard

### AMONGST OTHER THINGS, THIS WEEK I...

- Took part in a weekly Zoom meeting with the Churchwardens
- Observed a minute's silence for key workers who sadly lost their lives (11am on Tuesday 28 April)
- Prayed with a friend during the Sutton Community Works Day of Prayer (30.04.20)
- Joined 1<sup>st</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> Sutton Scouts in the attempt to set the world record for the Largest Virtual Camp (initiated by Northumberland Scouts) by sleeping under my piano. It made a splendid den (30.04.20)

### PRAYERS for...

- those suffering the economic, psychological & social effects of the crisis
- the disadvantaged & the vulnerable
- those in authority, including our local leaders in the Council, the Police, the NHS & our MP's
- essential workers including NHS/Care Workers, Emergency Services, Refuse Collectors/Retail Staff
- faith leaders

### Southwark Diocesan Prayer Calendar (monthly)

can be found at  
<https://southwark.anglican.org/information/resources/prayer-calendar/>  
(this includes the Anglican Cycle of Prayer)

## Worship

There will be an Order of Service for 10.30am Sunday morning worship each week. I will be leading worship from The Rectory. Please join me by following the Order of Service (which is sent to you and can be found on the website) and singing confidently in your own homes. I think of you all and pray for you each day.

**Sunday 10 May is the Fifth Sunday of Easter.**

**VE Day 75<sup>th</sup> service** Sadly the Service in Commemoration of the 75th anniversary of Victory in Europe Day at 4pm on Sunday 10 May 2020 will not take place at St Nicholas.

You will find the 1945 service of Thanksgiving for Victory (Westminster Abbey) and a VE Day prayer on the website.

I encourage you to make a habit of daily prayer, whether *A Way of Daily Prayer* (attached, or on website under Useful Information-Service Sheets);

Common Worship *Daily Prayer* <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-service-daily-prayer>;  
or *Book of Common Prayer*.



Bible readings for Morning and Evening Prayer:

**Sunday 10 May**

MP Ezekiel 37.1-12, John 5.19-29

EP Zechariah 4.1-10, Revelation 21.1-14

**Monday 11 May**

MP Numbers 9.15-end; 10.33-end, Luke 4.38-end

EP Deuteronomy 16.1-20, 1 Peter 1.1-12

**Tuesday 12 May**

MP Numbers 11.1-33, Luke 5.1-11

EP Deuteronomy 17.8-end, 1 Peter 1.13-end

**Wednesday 13 May**

MP Numbers 12, Luke 5.12-26

EP Deuteronomy 18.9-end, 1 Peter 2.1-10

**Thursday 14 May** *Matthias the Apostle*

MP 1 Samuel 2.27-35, Acts 2.37-end

EP 1 Samuel 16.1-13a, Matthew 7.15-27

**Friday 15 May**

MP Numbers 14.1-25, Luke 6.1-11

EP Deuteronomy 21.22-22.8, 1 Peter 3.1-12

**Saturday 16 May**

MP Numbers 14.26-end, Luke 6.12-26

EP Deuteronomy 24.5-end, 1 Peter 3.13-end

**Prayer List** – Barbara, Vere, Stan

**Departed** – Timothy Goodier, Rosemary Armstrong, The Revd Peter Holmes (Norbiton), Alastair

## NOTICES

**GIVING DURING DIFFICULT TIMES. THANK YOU** to those of you who are able to continue supporting the church by your regular giving during these unprecedented times. This is greatly appreciated.

The church is still functioning at local, national and international level; and it continues to need the financial, as well as the spiritual, support of its members, not least to maintain its support of local parishes and communities.

Some of you have kindly asked for guidance about the most helpful ways in which to make payments at this time and you will have received a message about this from the Treasurer.

St Paul's letters are full of useful advice about Christian giving, especially 2 Corinthians, chapters 8 and 9; he even gives specific directions in I Corinthians 16.2. It is almost as if he had foreseen our needs nearly two thousand years ago.

With renewed thanks for all your support in word, deed and prayer.

### **RAMBLES IN THE CHURCHYARD – permitted!**

Jeff Richards is posting a series of Churchyard rambles.

Take a look. It seems we can take a ramble, even in current times!

I attach a link to YouTube, where you can find Friends of St Nicholas Churchyard Rambles exploring the history of St Nicholas Church and Sutton

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLYTT2iWuCCrQVLU-c81xTmmDcyhmz5hCk>

**LOCAL ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIP** (St Nicholas, Sutton Baptist, Trinity Methodist/URC – *Churches Uniting in Central Sutton*)

### **Christian Aid Week, 10-16 May 2020.**

The United Service planned for Sunday 10 May 10.30am at Sutton Baptist Church will not take place.

We look forward to worshipping together again when that becomes possible.

Please take a look at the Christian Aid website [www.christianaid.org.uk](http://www.christianaid.org.uk) and support the CUCS fundraising activities:

### **Christian Aid recipes**

For the quiz and recipe book fund-raising activities across CUCS, please see these two web pages

Christian Aid Lockdown Quiz <https://www.trinitychurchsutton.org.uk/quiz>

Christian Aid Recipe Book <https://www.trinitychurchsutton.org.uk/recipes>

### **Diary dates**

The APCM will not take place on 3 May. More information to follow.

Monday 22 June 2020 at 7.30pm Confirmation Service at Christ Church with Bishop Jonathan.

[www.stnicholas.suttonteam.org.uk](http://www.stnicholas.suttonteam.org.uk)

[PCCSecretary.StNicholas@suttonteamministry.org](mailto:PCCSecretary.StNicholas@suttonteamministry.org)