

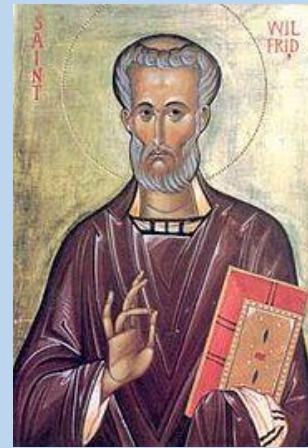
Weekly Newsletter During the Covid-19 Pandemic

23rd August 2020

Joint Parishes of St Joseph's and St Wilfrid's Gateshead
Parish Priest Canon Michael Brown, resident at St Joseph's
Presbytery High West Street Gateshead NE8 1LX

Telephone 01914771631

Email:- michaelbrown6@btconnect.com or shaunadevitt@tiscali.co.uk



Today is the Feast Day of **Saint Rose of Lima**



Saint Rose of Lima

1586 – 1617

Patron Saint of Peru, florists, and gardeners

The New World's first saint, she conquered herself by direct attack

Today's saint was born Isabel Flores de Oliva in colonial Spain, today's Peru, to a middle-class Catholic family. She took the name "Rose" when she was confirmed by Lima's bishop,

the future Saint Turibius of Mongrovejo. “Rose” had been her nickname since infancy after a servant said that she was as beautiful as a rose. Young Rose was indeed beautiful and attracted the attention of various suitors. But she had decided from a young age to give herself to Christ alone.

Her natural affinity for the things of God was not reciprocated by her father, who blocked her desire to enter a Dominican convent as a nun. Instead, Rose became a Third Order Dominican, a lay woman dedicated to living Catholicism in accord with Dominican spiritual ideals outside of the cloister. But Rose pushed her Third Order spirituality beyond its natural limits. She lived poverty, chastity, obedience, and numerous other virtues far more rigorously than most professed nuns. Bending somewhat to his daughter’s desires, Rose’s father allowed her to live apart from the family in a small hut on his property. From that hut, and from a room in the family home where she cared for the sick and the poor, Rose became famous throughout Lima.

Rose’s fame was due to her generous care for the sick but, perhaps most of all, due to her extraordinary austerities and some related miraculous events. Rose’s spiritual model was Saint Catherine of Siena, the fourteenth-century Italian mystic who was also a Dominican tertiary. Rose did not fast merely on certain days or at certain times. She fasted from life itself. She ate no meat, slept on a bed of tile shards, and wore a crown, disguised with flowers, equipped with small spikes which pierced the thin, taut skin wrapped over her skull. Saint Rose lived a model life for her era, and was clearly motivated by love of God, and expressed such control over her natural, corporeal needs that sanctifying grace as her hidden strength cannot be discounted.

Rose died in the perfume of holiness at the age of thirty-one. Her funeral was held in Lima’s Cathedral with all local dignitaries in attendance. She was beatified in 1667 and canonized in 1671. She is interred in the same church as Saint Martin de Porres in central Lima. Her pre-Vatican II feast day of August 30 is a national holiday in Peru and her image graces that country’s highest denomination currency. She is known as a powerful miracle worker credited with numerous physical healings unto today.

Saint Rose of Lima, you were young and holy. You dedicated your body and soul to God while still a child. Through your example and through your heavenly intercession, help all Catholics, especially the young, to dedicate their lives to God from the very start.



Today is Twenty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time

(OF) Readings for today are: -

First Reading	Isaiah 22:19-23
Responsorial Psalm	Psalm 137
Second Reading	Romans 11:33-36
Gospel	Matthew 16:13-20

"But who do you say that I am?"

We have all heard or been taught over the years about 'who' Jesus is:- "My personal Lord and Saviour", "The Son of God", "God incarnate", "He's my life, the song I sing, my everything", "My friend", "Rock and comforter", "Teacher", the list could go on and on, endlessly but the question still remains "Who do **you** say I am?"

No one person can answer that question for us, it is held within each of our hearts, a personal relationship with Jesus, each one different and unique. We must answer it for ourselves, it is not so much a Theological or Biblical question, but more a question about our own lives.

Jesus does not want His disciples, us, to just parrot back the answers we've heard or read, He is asking for something more and perhaps this is why He pushes the disciples to move from what they are hearing around them – John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets – to what they are hearing within themselves. *"But who do you say that I am?"*

It is not always an easy question to answer, sometimes when everything in life is going well and we are happy it is easy to let all the things we have been taught about Jesus trip off our tongues, we readily accept and settle for "Sunday Jesus" answers, the easy, feel good, sentimental ones. The problem is life is not always easy, feel good, or sentimental.

But we shouldn't fall into the trap of thinking the question is merely academic or abstract, it is far greater than that, for it needs to be answered in context, whilst looking around at our world today; who is Jesus in:-

- Who is Jesus in Covid19, the sick, the dying, the isolation,
- Who is Jesus in the increasing racial tensions and black lives matter?
- Who do we say Jesus amidst the ongoing persecution of Christians and Muslims in China?
- Who do we say Jesus is as refugees cry out in need, as people in our town go to bed hungry, live amidst domestic violence, or work for a wage that cannot support a family?
- Who do we say Jesus is when a loved one dies, the doctor gives news we did not want to hear, or our life seems to be falling apart?
- Who do we say Jesus is when we are faced with decisions that have no easy answers, when the night is dark and the storms of life overwhelm us, when faithfulness means risking it all and taking a stand against a louder and seemingly more powerful majority?

‘Who’ we say Jesus is has everything to do with who, and how, we are and will be. In some ways our answer says as much or more about us than Jesus. It reveals how we live and what we stand up for. It guides our decisions and determines the actions we take and the words we speak. It describes the expectations and demands we place on Jesus. It discloses the depth of our motivation for and commitment to following Him, a motivation and commitment that will be challenged as we are invited by Jesus to take up our cross and die with Him.

Jesus is a good teacher and through His open-ended question He is not seeking a definitive ‘right’ answer, for there isn’t one, He is asking the question to get His disciples, us, to question ourselves, how do we witness and testify to God’s life, love, and presence in our lives and the world. It is less about our intellect and more about our heart. It is grounded in love more than understanding. It moves us from simply knowing *about* Jesus to knowing Him.

We will probably never, even for ourselves have a once and for all answer, the question is one we grow into, who Jesus was when I was a child is different from who He is for me today and hopefully, who He is for me next year will be different from who he is this year. It is not that Jesus has changed. I have. We are constantly engaging His question and in so doing we not only discover Jesus anew we discover ourselves anew.

Sometimes we discover a disconnect between the “Sunday Jesus” and the life we live, our words and actions do not always align, it is not always easy to recognize and live the truth that Jesus is “the Messiah, the Son of the living God.”

There will be many times for us all when we fall into the gap between our “Sunday Jesus” kind of answers and the circumstances of our lives and the world. Sometimes our answer to the question, “Who is Jesus”, is too simple, too small, too easy, and no match for the complexities of life and the pain of the world. At other times, our lives may not have reflected what we have said about who Jesus is; do we keep quiet when we should have spoken up? Have we remained passive when we should have done something?

Often falling into that gap is because we try to ‘play it safe’, but there is nothing safe about the question Jesus poses. How could there be? There is nothing safe about Jesus or the life to which He calls us.

Jesus’ life and presence amongst us calls into question everything about our lives, our world, and the status quo. We ought not answer His question too quickly, too glibly, or with too much certainty. It is not a question to be figured out as much as it is a question to be lived.



Today is the Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

EF readings for today are: -

Introit	Psalm 69:2-3
Epistle	2 Corinthians 3:4-9
Gradual	Psalm 33, 2.3
Gospel	Luke 10:23-37

"Blessed are the eyes that see what you see...., and the ears that hear what you hear"

Since the fall of Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, God's people had hoped for the future coming of their Saviour. They did not know what he would look like nor exactly how he would save his people. They had the promise, but there was still a veil over the eyes of God's people when it came to the full revelation of the mystery of God's Kingdom.

The disciples, however, saw God's kingdom, they received the full revelation of the mystery of God's Kingdom, they saw their Saviour, knew His name, heard His voice, touched Him. This goes for every one of you as well! You have heard the Gospel. You have heard your Saviour's voice. You know His name. You have seen him in the Breaking of the Bread. You have touched His very flesh and blood in this Breaking of the Bread, in the Lord's Supper. Before Christ's incarnation, God's people only saw this reality in shadows of things to come. In prophecy, in sacrifices, in the priesthood, in all the ceremonies and rituals of the Old Testament. Now that Christ has come in the flesh, died for us, been raised, ascended, and sent His priests into all the world, we see the fullness. Blessed are you! Many prophets and kings desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it!

Today's Gospel account is such a rich parable of Jesus. Jesus has packed the entire message of salvation into just a few verses! The Parable of the Good Samaritan shows us that we are dead by the work of the devil and his demons, cannot save ourselves, and neither can the Law. The Parable of the Good Samaritan shows us that our only hope is that someone has compassion on us, saves us, and serves us. Our Lord teaches all of this, and much more in just one short parable!

A lawyer comes to test Jesus and asks Jesus what he must do to inherit eternal life. Since this man is a lawyer Jesus leads him down the path of following the law, "What is written in the Law? How do you read it?" The lawyer gives the right answer, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbour as yourself." Jesus says, "You have answered correctly; do this, and you will live." It appears simple enough, but the problem is we do not always 'keep the law'

Neither does this lawyer, he wants to justify himself by clarifying who exactly his neighbour is, probably hoping Jesus will say "Well your neighbour is every person just like you. Your neighbour is anyone that you think highly of and get along with", but, instead, Jesus answers the question through a parable. "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. So likewise, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side." The

priest and Levite represent the law that the lawyer has set his sights on as the way into heaven. "Surely these upstanding citizens would be the heroes!" is what the lawyer would think, but no, they walk on by leaving the dying man.

This is our state as well. We are dead in our trespasses in sin. We are even worse off than the beaten man in this parable. We are in a terrible state. We cannot help ourselves and neither can the Law. This priest and Levite see the man and KNOW that he must be unclean. That is all they do. They show by their action that the man is unclean and should be avoided. That is all the Law does for us when we try to use it to justify ourselves and gain salvation by our works. When we do this, the Law only accuses. It exposes just how unclean we are. The Law apart from faith in Christ exposes the fact that before we were brought to faith, we were no different than this lawyer who is testing Jesus. We cannot save ourselves and neither can the Law.

Your only hope is for someone to have compassion on you, save you, and take care of you.

After the priest and Levite leave without helping this half-dead, beaten and bloody man, "A Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was, and when he saw him, he had compassion. He went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he set him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him. Here is some more irony. It is not the priest or Levite that saves the man on the road. It is a Samaritan. Samaritans were seen as a lower class of humans by Jews like this lawyer, Jews had no dealings with Samaritans. A Samaritan, the lowest of the low in the eyes of this Jewish lawyer, is the hero. The Samaritan is the one who saves. The one who is despised by those who would be justified by their own works.

This is Jesus. Jesus is the Samaritan. The one who would be justified by their own works despises Jesus. But it is Jesus, and ONLY Jesus, who has the power to save. While you were an enemy of God. While you were dead in your trespasses and sins. Jesus willingly allowed himself to be despised, humiliated, tortured, and nailed to a cross to save you. By His death and resurrection, Jesus bound up your wounds, poured oil and wine on you. Jesus died for your sins and was raised for your justification.

Jesus has done even more than this. The parable ends in this way: "Then the Samaritan set him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him. And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying 'Take care of him and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.'" Jesus died for your sins. He anointed you with oil by baptizing you, by washing you with water and the Word. He gives you wine that is truly His blood of the new covenant which is poured out for the forgiveness of all your sins. He continues this work by taking you to the inn, which is the Church. In Christ's Church, an inn for beaten and bloody sinners, He leaves you in the care of an innkeeper. This is our Priests. Christ gives him two denarii, a double-portion of forgiveness. The Word and Sacraments to give to you until He returns on the Last Day. That is what Jesus wants for you here. A full-time innkeeper to care for His flock here in this place. To bring the rest of those people who are not here now into this same inn so that they will see and hear what you are blessed to see and to hear.

Reflection

Blessed are you! You have a faithful Priest who comes to serve you in the Church just as the Good Samaritan left the beaten man to be served in the inn by the innkeeper. We should thank God each and every day for our parish Priest, pray for him and this Church, faithful inn, where Jesus brings beaten, half-dead sinners. This is where He brings them so that He can anoint them with oil in their Baptism and give them bread and wine that is the Lord's true body and blood for the forgiveness of sins. This is the place where Jesus leaves those whom he has redeemed to be cared for by a faithful innkeeper, a faithful priest until that great and glorious day when Christ returns to raise us up and bring us into the kingdom prepared for us.

Mass Intentions

Please remember Canon Michael continues, as he has throughout the pandemic, to say daily Mass, if you have any intentions for Mass please put these in an envelope and pop through the letter box, or place them on the collection plate at the end of Sunday's Mass.

This Week 23rd – 30th August 2020

Sunday 10: People of the parish
12: Elizabeth Turnbull

Monday: No Mass

Tuesday; The Pope

Wednesday; Donald trump

Thursday: Ronald Turnbull and family

Friday: Holy Souls in Purgatory

Saturday: Joseph and Elizabeth Noon

Sunday: 10: People of the Parish
12: Intentions of Pat Turnbull

Mass is said at approximately 10.00am each weekday

*Please remember in your prayers the sick of the parish and all those who have recently
died*



Next Sunday

*We welcome Fr Philomeno who will be saying the midday Mass and asking for
volunteers for pro-life work*

Re-Opening Churches

Please see the Diocesan Website for information regarding churches which are open.

St Wilfrid's is to be amongst the churches to reopen in phase 6, in order to do this safely we need as many volunteers as possible, the roles to make the opening a success are varied - cleaners, stewards, ushers.

Please give your name and contact details to Canon Michael or to Veronica Georgeson, Health and Safety representative for St Wilfrid's

The re-opening of St Joseph's for Mass on Sundays has been a great success. Canon Michael has been delighted to see so many familiar faces and to have welcomed many new ones. There is still no need to pre-book a place for Mass as numbers so far have been accommodated with relative ease.

Please remember to bring a facemask with you to each Mass, this must be worn throughout the service, removing it only to receive Holy Communion.

Sanitise your hands, on entry to the church, prior to receiving Communion and as you exit church.

If you wish to be part of the 'Trace and Track' programme please remember to bring with you an envelope containing your name, contact details, the time and date of your visit. Place this in the box as you enter church, the box will be sealed at the end of the day and only opened if the need arises, otherwise it and all contents will be destroyed, in line with Data Protection, after 21 days.

Please follow the one way system displayed in church and heed the instructions given by the ushers, it will feel strange and over regimented not to be able to attend church in the same way as we used to, but all the guidance is in place for everyone's safety.

In order to comply with government advice, and to maintain a safe environment, we ask that you do not stop to chat with friends as you enter or exit church, keep the system flowing smoothly by keeping any important conversations to be held outdoors at a sensible distance from the exit and entrance routes. Thank you

Please remember that everyone is trying their best to enable Mass to be as welcoming, safe, and comfortable for us all. The precautions in place are necessary, and although the environment is not as we would like it to be we just need to accept it until times change, please do not take out your frustrations on the volunteers who are trying to make a difference.

There will be no collection during Mass, the collection plates will be at the back of church near the exit, please put your donations on the plate as you leave church.

More Volunteers Needed for St Joseph's

Thank you to everyone already giving up time to steward and clean St Joseph's church so that it remains open for Sunday Mass. Currently we have just enough to cover Sundays so it is unlikely that the church will open for weekday Mass until more volunteers come forward.

Apart from the Covid cleaning that must be done on Sundays, the church still needs its floors, glass and carpets cleaned regularly. We have a small rota of people to undertake this every 3 weeks. Please think of giving time on Sundays or adding your name to the normal Church cleaning rota.

If interested please give your name to Canon Michael, Shauna Devitt, or Pat Macgregor.

Toilet Facilities

At the minute there are no toilet facilities available at church, we apologise for this and are trying to work out how we can re-open them safely.

Thank you for your continued patience.



Donations

Thank you to all those who have continued throughout the pandemic to give so generously to the church. Last Sunday £378.32 was collected after our Masses and more donations were made through bank transfers.

If you would like to continue giving through direct debit, standing order or bank transfer, the details are below.

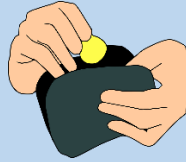
Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle
St Wilfrid's
Sort Code 40-34-20
Account Number 01164120

Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle
St Joseph's
Sort Code 40-34-20
Account Number 31164066

To donate via cheque please make out to
'DHN St Wilfrid's Gateshead' or 'DHN St Joseph's Gateshead'
These can be posted to the parish address

Please use the reference "Weekly Contribution"

We are continuing to raise money for the improvement of the 'Lourdes Garden' at St Joseph's, so far, we have had £100 donated, if you would like to help please use the reference 'Lourdes Garden'



TRIVIA

Did you know that, in Africa, Christianity is increasing, and by 2050 it's expected that the continent will be home to most Christians in the world with more than 1.25 billion followers!?!)

Answers to the Biblical names

1. WANDER = Andrew
2. I AM HERE = Jeremiah
3. LIE = Eli
4. HIT GOAL = Goliath
5. AIR TAME BUS = Bartimaeus
6. SO AM = Amos
7. I MOAN = Naomi
8. AS MOTH = Thomas
9. LAME US = Samuel
10. SO, MALE = Salome