

Weekly Newsletter During the Covid-19 Pandemic 12th July 2020

Joint Parishes of St Joseph's and St Wilfrid's Gateshead

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Today is the 15th Sunday in Ordinary Time

(OF) Readings for today are: -

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| First Reading | Isiah 55:10-11 |
| Responsorial Psalm | Psalm 64 |
| Second Reading | Romans 8:18-23 |
| Alleluia | 1 Samuel 3:9 John 6:68 |
| Gospel | Matthew 13:1-23 |

Jesus told wonderful stories; especially parables, a parable is a story of everyday life with a message about the Kingdom of God, and the power of the parable is this; The more we think it over the more it surprises us with new meanings, that is why Jesus said: "he that has ears to hear let him hear it", so meditate upon it and apply it to one's own life and it will reveal the secrets of Gods kingdom. The way to love, joy and peace, for oneself and for society.

Today we have the parable of the sower, the seed is the Word of God and the sower is God Himself, and the prophets, John the Baptist, Jesus, St Peter and the twelve, the Church, the Popes, Bishops, Priests, Teachers, parents. With all these sowers the word has been well broadcast. The word comes from the action of the sower. He sows the



seed in a broad cast, the field is the world,; our homes; schools; churches; the society in which we live and work, there is much sowing of seed to be done out there, and the soil is the hearts and minds of the people in the world. Applying the parable to ourselves we find that we are good soil and there is much fruit in our lives; but many weeds as well, for good soil is also good for weeds, so we must be careful not to allow the weeds to choke the seeds.



There are two important lessons in this parable that we could easily miss, both helpful and encouraging. The first is that we must not blame the sower if there is little or no fruit, on the contrary, blame the soil, seeds cannot put down roots if there is only a thin layer of top soil over rock. All teachers, parents and priests have seen promising young people drop away once the heat is turned on from friends and work mates, challenging or ridiculing. We need to remember the words of Thomas More "I am the king's good servant, but God's first" The best of all teachers; Jesus Himself; had a failure rate of 1 in 12, Judas had no depth to his faith, it was not Jesus' fault. How many wonderful parents have been excellent sowers of the seeds of faith only to have their children adopt a different lifestyle? Do not blame yourselves, and do not judge them, God will see in their lives other fruits that we may not see; love them and pray for them.



And so, we come to the second lesson. Out there in the field of our world there is so much stony ground, hard hearts, and closed minds. Many in society reject Religion, it is met with indifference and hostility. There is an aggressive secularism to keep God out of public life. Many simply don not want to know because if they come too close to Jesus, they will have to change their behaviour and they afraid to do so. However stony ground and hard hearts must not stop us from sowing. Our Baptism and Confirmation make us sowers of The Word. We need Catholic men and women sowing the word in the corridors of power in our trade union meetings and our professional associations (especially medicine and science), in our political parties at both local and central government level. That is the field of the world and we will be judged for not sowing the precious seed which we possess. The greatest temptation today is political correctness and the greatest error in the church is separating faith from life.



We can be encouraged by the famous remark of St Sir Thomas More, one of England's greatest citizens, "If a man neglects his conscience for the sake of public duty, he takes his country on a direct route to chaos". As sowers of God's words we seek His Kingdom: Respect for every human life from conception until natural death; sharing the resources of the world fairly to eliminate rich and poor; non-violence; and reconciliation between the three great faiths of Abraham: Christian, Muslim, Jew.



So, keep sowing the seed, broadcasting the Word as widely as possible, do not be put off by failure, ridicule, and hard hearts.



Sixth Sunday After Pentecost
 (E) Readings for today are: -

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| Introit | Psalm 27, 8, 9 |
| Epistle 1 | Romans 6:3-11 |
| Gradual | Psalms 89, 13, 1 |
| Gospel | Mark 8 :1-9 |

The collect for today's Mass asks that God might grant "an increase of true religion." But what is "true religion"? It is of course the Catholic Faith, "*extra Ecclesiam nulla salus*" outside the Church there is no salvation. It is only in the Catholic Church that we can find the fullness of truth and the way to heaven. The readings show us what it means to be a member of the One True Church —the Sacraments, particularly the Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion.

The Epistle reading is St. Paul's famous discourse on Baptism, found in his Letter to the Romans. The Apostle is tackling the difficult issue of the role of the Law in salvation history: what was the purpose of the Law, since it is obvious it could not keep people from sinning? In fact, the introduction of the Law appears to make sin abound even more in the world (cf. Rom. 5:20).

St. Paul notes, however, that sin only afflicts the living—those who are dead do not sin. St. Paul reminds the Roman Christians that through their Baptism, they are dead—dead to sin through the grace of God. This is not a symbolic death, but a true death that wipes away the stain of Original Sin. As the Council of Trent taught, "If anyone denies that by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is conferred in baptism, the guilt of original sin is remitted, or even asserts that the whole of that which has the true and proper nature of sin is not taken away, but says that it is only touched in person or is not imputed, let him be anathema". This death means we are no longer slaves to sin, but instead have been raised in Christ and are free.

Yet, sadly, although Baptism leaves an indelible mark in our souls, we can return to our former lives of slavery to sin that we had before our Baptisms. We need spiritual sustenance to stay faithful to our Baptismal vows and remain in Christ. Our Lord knows this, and this is why he gives us Himself as sustenance in the Blessed Sacrament. The Gospel points to his wonderful gift by telling of Christ's miraculous feeding of the four thousand. St. Mark tells us that even though they only had seven loaves of bread and a few fish, everyone in the crowd ate "and were filled" (Mark 8:8). This is what the Eucharist does for us, when we receive it worthily: it fills us with the Sacramental grace necessary to remain dead to sin and alive in Christ.

How do we achieve an "increase in true religion"? Of course, we must pray and evangelize. But most of all we must first put our own houses in order, and there is no better way to do that than to live a Sacramental life, living out our Baptisms and being nourished by Holy Communion.



Churches Open for Mass and Private Prayer

- *St Mary's cathedral*
- *St Bede's Bedlington*
- *St Paul's Alnwick*
- *St Charles Newcastle*
- *St Aidan's Ashington*
- *St Patrick's Consett*
- *St Joseph's Hartlepool*
- *St Mary's Hexham*

It is Essential that you consult individual parishes for regulations to attend Mass at any specific church as each church has its own conditions. Please DO NOT just turn up for Mass - you WILL be disappointed if turned away, most churches are operating a booking system.

Churches open for private prayer

(please note no young person under age 16 may attend unaccompanied)

- *St Mary's Sunderland*
- *St Mary's Bishop Auckland*
- *SS Joseph, Patrick, and Cuthbert Coxhoe*
- *St Augustine's Darlington*
- *Our lady of Mercy and St Godric Durham*
- *Immaculate Heart of Mary Gateshead*
- *St Charles Gosforth*
- *St Aloysius Hebburn*
- *St Teresa of the Infant Jesus Newcastle*
- *St Bede's Newcastle*
- *St Mary's Newton Aycliffe*
- *The Sacred Heart North Gosforth*
- *St Bede's South Shields*
- *St Joseph's Ushaw Moor*
- *Our Lady and St Columba Wallsend*
- *St John Boste Washington*
- *St Anne's Winlaton*

Churches preparing to open for private prayer

- *All Saints Lanchester*
 - *St Bede's Jarrow*
 - *St Peter's Gateshead*
 - *St Agnes Crawcrook*
 - *Sts Mary & Thomas Aquinas Stella*
 - *English Martyrs Stockton*
 - *St Patrick's Stockton*
 - *St Osmond Gainford*
 - *St Thomas Aquinas Darlington*
 - *Our Lady Immaculate Crook*
 - *St Andrew Newcastle*
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- St Mary Forest hall
- St Cuthbert North Shields
- St Edward Whitley Bay
- St Robert Newcastle
- St John Vianney West Denton
- St Joseph Sunderland
- St Joseph Durham
- St Cuthbert Durham
- St Michael Houghton - Le - Spring
- St Bede Sacriston
- St Joseph's Blackhall
- St Thomas of Canterbury Longhorsley
- Sacred Heart Amble
- St Elizabeth Minsteracres
- St Cuthbert Berwick
- St Aidan Seahouses
- St Ninian Wooler
- St Paul Cramlington

Please refer to individual church websites for more information

Opening our churches is no easy task, Parish Priests have been given detailed and complex guidance notes on how safe opening can begin to take place, the Bishop makes the decision about which church will be next to open, once the Parish Priest has been told it is his turn he will contact those who have volunteered to help. These volunteers along with the Parish Priest will attend a meeting, held by the Diocesan Property Department, to undertake a risk assessment and training. The opening of churches for private prayer is a pre-requisite to opening for Mass.

VOLUNTEERING

Thank You to all those who have volunteered to help with cleaning and stewardship, you will be contacted about the meeting when Canon Brown is given a date by the Bishop.

Your continued patience, support and understanding are very much appreciated, and we ask that you continue to pray for the absolute best decisions to be made.

An Act of Spiritual Communion


When we are unable to receive Holy Communion, it has long been the catholic tradition to make an Act of Spiritual Communion. St. Thomas Aquinas defined a Spiritual Communion as "an ardent desire to receive Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament and lovingly embrace Him as if we had actually received Him. One composed by St Alphonsus Ligouri in 1870 is: -

"My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen."

Act of Perfect Contrition

When we cannot get to confession the Catholic Church has made provision for our reconciliation with the Father through an Act of Perfect Contrition, Cardinal Vincent Nichols recently spoke these words, "What the Church teaches us, is that God in His mercy, forgives our sins when we are truly sorry for them. And when we turn to Him and express our sorrow in an Act of Contrition, it's called an Act of Perfect Contrition when its focus is on the mercy and the love of God rather than on the burden of our guilt. So to make an act of Perfect Contrition, we simply need to turn to God and be, as it were, overwhelmed by God's





mercy, and then express in our own words or in the words of the traditional Act of Contrition, the sorrow we feel for our offences against the goodness of God. When we do that in all sincerity of heart, we may rest assured that God forgives our sins and that we come away from that Act of Perfect Contrition freed from those sins And, as I say, the only thing we have to remember is, when it is possible to make a Confession again, that we mention the grievous sins which were forgiven by this Perfect Act of Contrition.



Our Lady of Lourdes

The 'Lourdes Garden' to the side of St Joseph's church is undergoing some long overdue improvements. The statues of Our Lady and St Bernadette have endured a great deal of weather beatings and sadly some vandalism, they need replacing or repairing (if this is possible). We are seeking quotes for the repairs and have sourced suppliers for new statues, the cost of replacing the statues will be about **£2,000**.

We need to raise funds to update this peaceful, prayerful area of our church grounds and are therefore appealing for donations large and small. If you could mark your donation 'Lourdes Garden' it would be helpful, and I will be able to keep you up to date with the amount raised. As well as the statues, and the garden area, the fence needs to be repainted and the wording along the top re-done, also the mosaic on the wall below the fence is falling to pieces and looks quite an eye-sore now. All this work is going to cost money and take time, we have set a target of **£5,000** and 10 months for the work to be completed, hopefully in time for Our Lady's Month of May.

Donations may be made in the same way as weekly/monthly offerings as set out below.

Thank You

To all those who have continued to make donations to Our Churches throughout the pandemic, your generosity is invaluable.

To donate via bank transfer:

Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle

Gateshead St Wilfrid's

Sort Code 40-34-18

Account Number 01164120

Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle

Gateshead St Joseph's

Sort Code 40-34-18

Account Number 31164066

Please use reference: - Weekly Income

OR


Donate using a cheque made out to either parish

'DHN St Joseph's Gateshead' or 'DHN St Wilfrid's Gateshead'

St Wilfrid's

St Joseph's






Ford House



Sunderland Road




Gateshead NE8 3QR



Presbytery



High West Street





Gateshead NE8 1LX





KEEP YOURSELF UPDATED AND INFORMED



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- Parish Website and Facebook pages are updated regularly
 - Parish Newsletter is available on our website each week
 - Diocesan website www.rcdhn.org.uk
 - Bishops' Conference website www.cbcew.org.uk



Keeping us updated with your contact information





During this time of social distancing and self-isolation, Canon Michael Brown has tried to keep in touch with as many parishioners as he can to offer support and comfort. He has been able to do this only with those parishioners for whom he holds up to date contact details.



Please ensure your contact details are correct. Use parish email addresses or telephone to update your information.



Access to the Newsletter





If you know of anyone from either Parish who cannot access this newsletter via the website and would like to receive it by email, please ask them to give their email address to Canon Michael Brown email michaelbrown6@btconnect.com or Shauna Devitt at shaunadevitt@tiscali.co.uk



Diocesan News



Please see individual websites for information about Live Streaming of Masses



The following parishes have set up a live stream of Mass. Please visit the links for more details:



St. Mary's Cathedral, Newcastle



[Cathedral's YouTube Channel](#).



Our Lady of Mercy Parish, Sunderland



[YouTube channel](#). Or [Facebook page](#).



Billingham, St. Thomas of Canterbury



[Facebook page](#),



Chester le Street, St. Cuthbert and Sacriston, St. Bede



[Facebook Page](#).



Darlington, St. Augustine's



[Facebook page](#).

St. Mary's, Hexham

[website](#) or [YouTube channel](#)

St. Paul's, Cramlington

[Facebook Page](#).

Stockton Family Parish

[Facebook Page](#).

Parish of Our Lady Star of the Sea

[Facebook Page](#)

Pope Video



monthly thepopevideo.org

Community Support

Gateshead Council have a dedicated page on their website offering a network of support for those who need help: -

<https://www.gateshead.gov.uk/article/15181/coronavirus-COVID-19-Community-support>

Or phone 01914333000

Alcoholics Anonymous Call free on 08009177650 or email help@aamail.org

Pastoral Care

As part of the pastoral care of parishioners and others during this time several qualified counsellors and listeners have generously made themselves available to anyone who may be troubled by the negative effect of the situation. These councillors and listeners can be contacted through St Mary's Cathedral Listening Service on 01912326953

EU Citizens

All EU, EEA and Swiss citizens living in the UK MUST apply through its Settlement Scheme to continue living, working, and accessing services here. The deadline is **30 June 2021**. Details and links to the application process can be found at: gov.uk/eusettledstatus Assistance is available at: gov.uk/help-eu-settlementscheme

Justice and Peace

Please visit the Parish and Diocesan websites for updated information about the Refugee Project helping those who need it most.

New Apostolic Nuncio to Great Britain

The Holy Father, Pope Francis, has appointed Archbishop Claudio Gugerotti, until now Apostolic Nuncio in the Ukraine, as the Apostolic Nuncio to Great Britain. Bishop Byrne will write to welcome the New Nuncio to Great Britain and invite him to visit the Diocese.